

### The Bard Speaks



### The Discovery

"Hold on."

"I'm trying. But..."

"Look at me. Don't let go. I'll get there. I'll get you. Just hold on." There was desperation in her voice, but soon the dark-haired woman was peering over the ledge and reaching a hand to her smaller friend. "Just a little more. Reach. Don't be afraid. I've got you."

Their fingertips touched. Exquisite contact. Hand firmly clasped and then she was lying by her side, breathing hard, knees and arms atremble. After a few more ragged breaths she was able to prop up on an elbow and gaze into those supernaturally blue eyes. "Thank you, Xena." She rolled over and wrapped herself around the tall warrior. "I love you." And as she moved closer to that inviting smile...

"Jan...Jan. You okay? Wake up."

"Huh? What's happened?! Are we under attack?"

"No. Everything's all right. You were...talking in your sleep. That's all."

"You woke me up to tell me that?" Jan ran a hand through her hair and reached for the bedside table out of habit. No smokes. She'd forgotten. For Mel she was trying to quit. The moonlight was full-strength, white washing the walls, no need to turn on a light. She could read the dial on her watch. "It's three a.m."

"Sorry."

"So? What was I saying?"

Mel was sitting up on the edge of her single bed. "Not really very intelligible...a few words in an ancient Greek dialect."

"Really?" That was a relief. She propped herself up on her pillow and relaxed. A former lover had once told her that she could be pretty damn explicit when she was having...a certain kind of dream, but then she remembered who she was talking with here in the middle of the night.

"Uh...you recognize any of it? The words?"

"A little. You were having a regular conversation with....the warrior herself."

"Xena?"

"Yes."