

something she's as adept at changing the subject as she is hurling the chakram.

SCILLA

He didn't die. Not right away at least. As far as we know. But any one of us would have put him out of his misery if we could have reached him. The sorceress transformed him, kept him as a pet until she grew tired of him. We saw him on the beach--a slimy, writhing mass of coils and fins with a human face, still recognizable through a glass. Maybe he's still out there somewhere.

She looks out to the sea and shudders. Finally it comes to Gabrielle as if her mind's been working on the puzzle all along.

GABRIELLE

(softly, slowly)

Odysseus spoke of the sorceress who transformed men...oh no--you've sent her against Circe?! Haven't you? How could you?

SCILLA

She understands the parameters. If any one can do it she can. Xena could go to Hades and back. Where's your faith, Gabrielle?

GABRIELLE

And if she doesn't come back...

SCILLA

Then I suppose I have a lovely and charming guest to keep me company.

GABRIELLE

I'm not your guest, I'm your hostage. What is this really about? You get even with her for an old wound. Friend for friend.

SCILLA

She owes me. One way or the other.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. SHIPBOARD - DAY

30

Xena stands, windswept, at the prow, more stunning than any