

XENA

We don't have time for this.

He strikes, she deflects the flat of the blade with her wrist guard as she draws her own sword. They fight. His back to the sea, Xena's eyes grow wide with amazement as a grotesque thing rises from the water.

XENA

(she whispers)

Glaucus.

DINONICUS

Nice try.

The thing coils around him, lifting him off his feet.

DINONICUS

Help me.

XENA

Why? You were just trying to kill me.

The coils are tightening around him.

XENA

Are you still in there, old friend?

She addresses Glaucus; a bubbly raspy voice rusty from disuse rises from deep within the hideous body and finally makes its way past his blubbery lips.

GLAUCUS

Xena, or I forget myself.

XENA

No, Glaucus, you're right. You remember. And you obviously remember Dinonicus here.

The coils tighten further and the man YELLS and quivers.

XENA

I mean you no harm, old friend, but I'd appreciate you sparing him--for now, at least. As much as I hate to admit it, I might need him. We're here for Scilla.

At the mention of her name the monster drops his intended prey. Dinonicus lands on his knees, WHEEZING and GASPING for air.

GLAUCUS

Scilla.

He gives it a sibilant poignant desperate ring, it echoes

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