

done during the first meeting after I'd come back. When we started talking, we knew we wanted them to go to sleep and wake up 25 years later with Eve as an adult. But what she was going to be was open to debate. By the time we were done with that meeting, the arc was set. We always planned for her to be redeemed in the season finale. There was never any debate about keeping her evil for a long period of time. It was just how many episodes would lead up to the finale.

**SD:** We've also been introduced to Joxer's son, Virgil, during this arc. Was he named after the Roman poet who wrote *The Aeneid*?

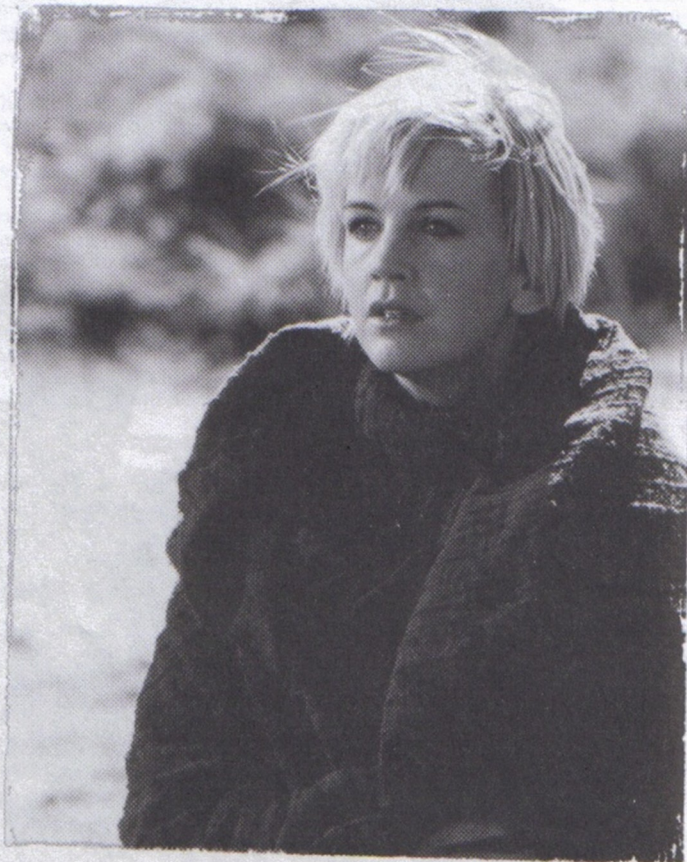
**RJ:** That was intentional.

**SD:** In this story, it was the gods trying to kill Eve that resulted in their deaths. If they had left her alone, they would have been okay. It became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

**RJ:** Exactly. I really liked that element of it, but I don't get any credit for it because that was developed while I was gone. I thought the idea of having the Fates say that was a cool element of the story.

**SD:** What was the real history of the death of the gods — the change from polytheism to monotheism?

**RJ:** There were many different religious beliefs in those days. Certainly there was a state religion that you would get into trouble for defying. Socrates was put on trial for corrupting his students and teaching them to be atheists. Of course, he insisted in his defense, *The Apology*, that he was innocent. The idea of one single god being transcendent was always there in Greek thought. Certainly Plato's concept that ideas come from a single transcendent intelligence is very much like a monotheistic god. The official end of polytheism was Constantine's conversion to



Christianity. Under his reign, the polytheistic state religion was replaced by the monotheistic state religion.

**SD:** And because Xena falls into that time frame, you thought you would tell that story?

**RJ:** Yeah. It was Rob's decision to do it and I think it was a great direction to go in.

**SD:** You'll be visiting gods of other countries during the sixth season?

**RJ:** That is correct. We'll be seeing the Norse gods. But the stories won't be so much about the gods as about the whole hierarchy around them. The Valkyrie play as much a part in the stories as the gods.

**SD:** Who are the Valkyrie?

**RJ:** They are Odin's personal guard. They do his bidding. One of their duties is to transport slain warriors, who die bravely with a sword in their hand, into Valhalla. They play an important part in Wagner's opera "The Ring." We're doing three episodes based on this saga entitled "The Rheingold," "The Ring," and "The Return Of The Valkyrie."