



decision to change her name. I think it was during the changeover from Bob and Alex to RJ when we were all meeting together that she became Livia.

SD: Why did Livia hate Xena so much?

George: The main reason was that Livia felt that Xena was solely responsible for destroying everything Livia had worked her whole life for. This was the moment in her career where everything was coming together. She was going to marry Augustus, become the Empress, and take over Rome. Xena foils that plan.

SD: Does Livia believe Xena is her mother?

George: Not at first. But she believes Ares when he tells her it's true. That doesn't mean she has any feelings for her either way. She doesn't crave her mother nor does she feel rejected because Xena wasn't around. As time passes, something inside her pulls her toward Xena and that just makes her more angry. She doesn't want to feel anything for this woman.

SD: Xena seems to have become a legendary character during the 25 years she and Gabrielle were out of circulation. Did Livia know who Xena was?

George: In our discussions, we figured she was aware of Xena and she admired her for what she had done when she was with Ares. That was why Livia accepted Ares as her mentor even without knowing she was Xena's daughter.

SD: I wondered how Ares and Livia got together.

George: In our very first version of this storyline, Xena killed all the gods but Ares who managed to escape to Rome and became the Roman God of War, Mars. We had come up with the Tablets of Fate which was the instrument Xena used to kill the gods. And using the Tab-

lets was what propelled Xena and Gabrielle into the future to a time when Ares would be vulnerable again. In real life, the Romans adopted the Greek pantheon of gods and changed their names. Xena would have landed in the future and been faced with Livia, Augustus and Mars and wondered, "Who are these people!" (laughing) So Livia would have been a disciple of Mars.

SD: How was season five going to end?

George: With Livia getting married to

Augustus and becoming the Empress. Season six was going to be Xena realizing who Livia really is and trying to convert her. Augustus knows that he learned all his military tactics from Xena and if she's still alive, she poses the biggest threat to his staying in power. Livia and Augustus tell all their soldiers in the Roman Empire, which stretches to Asia Minor, to capture Xena. So Xena becomes a kind of Robin Hood figure. She and Gabrielle have their regular adventures with the added problem that if she's recognized by any soldiers, they'll immediately attack her. And she still keeps trying to find a way to get to Livia and, first, convince her she's Xena's daughter and later on in the season that Livia has to give up this persecution.

SD: Was there any talk of a seventh season back then?

George: No, we figured the sixth season would be the last. And the plan for the last episode would be Augustus and Livia turning over a new leaf and introducing Pax Romana. And that it was Xena who was the cause of this.

SD: Was Eve going to be redeemed at the end of this episode?

George: The story we were thinking of telling at that time was that Xena was trying to turn her daughter around and coming to the conclusion it wasn't going to be possible. Xena would be wrestling with the greater good on one hand and having to kill her daughter on the other.

SD: All the while Xena and Gabrielle are trying to save Eve, she's murdering people. They're responsible for whoever dies while they're trying to stop her.

George: Absolutely. That was Xena's conflict. She wouldn't necessarily go after someone to hunt them down and kill them. She would try to turn someone around if she thought she could. But she's spending more time on her daughter than she would on anyone else. Xena wouldn't give someone else this much leeway and allow so much bloodshed to occur.

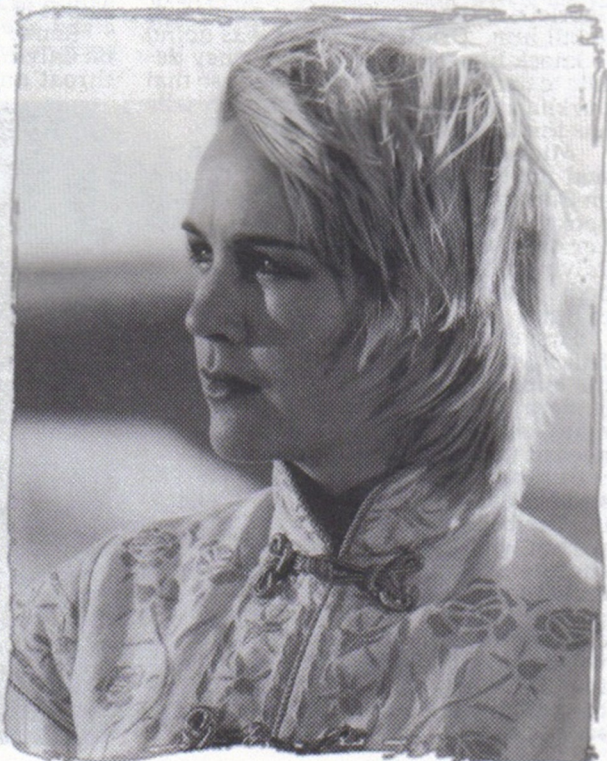
In one early outline, we had Xena and Gabrielle really in conflict about this. And Gabrielle saying, "You killed my child!"

SD: In the shooting draft, Gabrielle asks Xena if she could bring herself to kill her own child. And Xena answers, "You did. How can I do anything less?" But it was changed when they filmed it to, "If I had to, yes, I could."

George: We thought this reverse situation between Xena and Gabrielle was very poignant. For me, this story wasn't about Eve, but about Xena. Xena trying to do the right thing, having this great love for her daughter and being put into a situation where people are dying because of her love.

SD: Xena's all-too-human flaws are what make her so compelling. These past two seasons, we've seen the greater good goes out the window when it comes to Gabrielle or her daughter.

George: I totally agree. Her ability to make mistakes and to be defeated by herself or others is what draws people to watch the show. They recognize themselves in her struggles.



"HOW MANY INNOCENTS WILL DIE BEFORE I END THIS?"
- XENA TO GABRIELLE ("EVE")