

SHIPPER SEASON SEVEN

“Bloodlust II”

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Logline

Eve's trial for the murder of Augustus continues as events from her past are revealed unknown until now.

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TEASER

FADE IN

[MONTAGE OF PREVIOUS EPISODE]

ANNOUNCER:

Previously on Xena...

DIDUS:

We're here to bring Livia here-- (he jerks his head at Eve) --to justice. Did your precious daughter not tell you? She murdered Emperor Augustus!

CUT TO

EVE:

I have the right to choose someone to act as my advocate, don't I?

DIDUS:

Yes.

EVE (raises eyebrow and then smiles):

Then I pick Xena, my mother.

CUT TO

EVE:

Hello Augustus.

CUT TO

Two warriors are in the arena, one with a sword at the other's throat. As Eve watches, Augustus gives a thumbs down sign. The warrior kills his victim.

CUT TO

EVE (disgusted):

You've changed--and not for the better.

CUT TO

EVE (speaking numbly):

And changed he had. Without me--without Livia there protecting all of his precious Empire, he had to do it himself. (suddenly looks scared, as she twists around to look at Xena who does not look happy.) And you know what the worst part was? He was right.

CUT TO

EVE:

Michael, am I doing the right thing? Am I doing what your god wants?

MICHAEL:

Yes, of course you are. You are Eli's Messenger--you know his will as well as any of us in Heaven.

CUT TO

EVE:

I don't expect you to ever forgive me, but I want you to know that if I could change one thing about my past as (voice breaks) Livia, it would be that your father could still see the wonderful man that he had for a son.

CUT TO

There is a trademark, familiar flash of blue light, which clears to reveal Ares standing in the middle of the stage. Murmurs go around the crowd, and we cut to Xena's, shocked face.

[END MONTAGE]

EVE:

Ares!

XENA (muttering under her breath, before sighing):

Ares...we really need to talk about your timing.

ARES (ignoring all of this, speaks to the woman in the witness stand):

Excuse me for interrupting, but Eve hasn't killed me yet.

DIDUS (respectfully):

My Lord Ares, I believe the lady was referring to Augustus.

ARES (patiently):

Maybe, but she mentioned the man who promised to give her the largest...yadda yadda. Augustus never promised her anything, he just wanted to marry her. He never counted on her having ambitions of her own.

XENA:

Ares, are you here for any particular reason?

ARES:

Does seeing you count?

XENA (rolling eyes):

No. Look, if you're just here to stop me from saving Eve... (takes a deep breath, trying not to snap) On second thoughts...I want to ask you some questions. Go over there-- (jerks her head towards the back of the room) --and I'll tell you when I need you.

DIDUS (angry):

Excuse me--but I don't recall agreeing that he could take part in this. (looks first at Ares and then at Xena who are giving him almost identical stares, but obviously don't realize it)

XENA (coldly):

You didn't.

ARES:

Roman, I am already this (holds up his right hand with his thumb and index finger a tiny distance apart) close to giving to you what you've got coming to you, but since this is a murder trial... If you drop the attitude, I'll let it pass...for now.

CLAUDIUS (from his throne):

Didus, calm down. (to Ares) You may speak when you're asked.

ARES:

Great... (to Xena) I'm looking forward to it already. (to Eve) So, Eve, been keeping busy?

EVE:

Pity you've not.

ARES:

Aw, that was cruel...you wounded me. (goes to the back of the room)

XENA:

Okay, that's enough. (to old woman in witness stand) I have no questions for you. (woman sits back down) Eve... I'd like to ask you some questions.

FADE OUT

ACT ONE

FADE IN

EVE:

Go ahead.

XENA:

Octavius--Augustus raised you, didn't he?

EVE:

I was sent away to the Provinces when I was very young, but he provided for me--sent the family I lived with money and things like that. I never really saw him.

As Eve continues speaking, we see a close up of her face, which morphs into a young Livia, no older than seven or eight. She is running around, playing happily with a dark-haired, wiry boy of about the same age.

EVE (voice over):

I lived with a good friend of Augustus, Toricles, his wife Orphelia and their son, Larus. Toricles was a Senator, and as we lived a good distance from Rome, we didn't see a lot of him. Orphelia was never interested in running a household. She'd have much rather lived in the city with Toricles. She kept herself shut away a lot, and I never really saw her. But Larus and I, we were always very close.

Scene morphs to a ten year old Livia and Larus sitting on a rug in a dark room, which is lit by a very few candles. They are pouring over a long scroll, very interested in it. A candle is perilously close to Livia's hair, which is tied up in the same way as it was in "Livia" and "Eve".

EVE (voice over):

It was a very lonely household, but we contented ourselves with...we had a great thirst for knowledge. I don't know what I planned to gain from it, but I remember always loving to read, from a young age. Larus enjoyed spending time with me--I had been in his family ever since we could remember, and no one ever mentioned that I wasn't a blood member of it.

[FLASHBACK]

LARUS (whispering):

I found something the other day--something cool. Want to see?

LIVIA (reading):
What is it?

LARUS:

A scroll. I found it hidden away in here the other day while you were out. I don't think it's ever been opened--so I waited for you.

LIVIA (leaves her scroll where it is, stands up):
What kind of scroll is it? Go get it. Did you leave it in here?

LARUS (has walked over to a shelf and is sifting through the piles of scrolls on it):
Where is it? Ah, I got it. It was buried under some others. (he takes a small scroll over to Livia)

LIVIA (examining it):
Do you know what this is? (she points to a fish emblem on the unopened seal) It's an Elijan scroll. Are you sure it was just in here? You could--we could--get in trouble for having it.

LARUS:
Not if we're careful! If we just read it once, and then put it back, it'll be okay. C'mon, Liv...I thought you'd be interested.

LIVIA:
I am...but I don't want to get arrested either. We can look, but I'm going to keep an eye on the door, just in case. (she goes and peeps out of the half open door, before closing it tight and returning to Larus, picking up the candle near her other scroll on the way.) Well, open it!

Larus fumbles with the seal, but eventually gets it open. He and Livia stand and read it. Eve voices over as we cut to Larus' bedroom. Larus is lying on his red four-poster bed and Livia is standing, watching him.

EVE (voice over):
Well, he didn't put it back like I told him. He read the scroll and decided that he agreed with it--and nothing would convince him otherwise. I wasn't so into it, but I had no problems with him believing in it.

LARUS:
Liv, will you promise me that you won't tell a soul? I know it's a *crime* to follow Eli's teachings, but I do, I guess. At least I hope so. But, seriously, if they catch me, I could be put in jail, or killed. And I'd prefer that not to happen, thanks.

LIVIA:
Larus, why would I tell on you? You're my brother--I don't want you killed at all! I am not going to tell a soul, so don't worry. You really like them, don't you?

LARUS:

I do...it just makes *sense*. Why bother persecuting people who believe in love and peace above all things?

LIVIA:

I don't know. But, I promise not to tell.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

FADE OUT

ACT TWO

FADE IN

The court room. Eve is still speaking, her eyes clouding over a little.

EVE:

We couldn't tell anyone because, in high-class Rome even now, Eli's followers are punished and killed for their beliefs. It's not even a rare thing. And if a Senator's son was found to believe in Eli, who knows what would have happened? Larus, with my help, kept his beliefs secret...but not from everyone.

[FLASHBACK]

A corridor in Livia's home. She is running down it, in a costume in a similar style to her warrior outfit, but made entirely of dark blue cloth.

LIVIA:

Larus! I need to talk to you! Where are you?

She runs into the library, rounding one of the shelves as she tries to slow down. Larus is lying on the ground near one shelf, the Elijan scroll open in his hand.

LIVIA (shocked):

Larus...Larus it's me. Are you okay? (she crouches down by his head, and shakes his body, growing a little agitated.) Larus, wake up! It's me! What's wrong? C'mon, wake up! (nothing happens. Livia sees the Elijan scroll, picks it out of his hands and realizes the awful truth. Throwing the scroll to the ground, she picks up Larus' head and brings it into her lap.) No. No, Larus, Larus, you aren't dead, I won't let you be dead! It isn't your time! Wake up!

We zoom out to see the whole picture--Livia kneeling down against a shelf, with Larus' head in her lap, the scroll to one side. She is leaning right forward so that her

head is close to Larus. Then, we cut to her face, which is absolutely stricken with grief. As we watch, a single tear falls from her right eye.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

This shot morphs to an identical one of Eve's face, with a similar tear and expression. We see Gabrielle and Virgil's shock and pity for her, and the barely controlled protective rage on Xena's face. In the back of the room, Ares is looking down. His expression is not readable. Gasps and murmurs head around the crowd and Claudius and Didus look a bit shell-shocked too.

XENA (going to hug Eve):

I wish I could've been there for you. (she wipes Eve's tear away)

EVE:

Me too, Mother. Me too.

XENA:

Go sit down, you're upset. Go and calm down and then, if Didus wants to ask you anything, he can.

DIDUS:

No--she needs to answer my questions first. She stays until I've finished.

XENA:

Look, if you want decent answers from her, which I expect you do, then you'll let her get herself together first. (to Eve) Go sit down. (Eve does so, ignoring Didus) Okay, Ares, you can come up here now. I have some questions.

ARES (instantly appears in the now-empty witness box, impressing the crowd):

Yes?

XENA (not impressed by the act):

I take it that that was around the time that you first started taking an interest in my daughter--she was fifteen.

ARES:

Around then, yeah. A few months give or take though. After the boy was killed, she fell into a depression, not doing a lot for a while. Her family was busy with mourning, and no one found much time for her. She pretty much just stayed in bed.

XENA (looks at Eve, who confirms this with a nod):

And you know all this...how?

ARES:

Okay okay, I watched her...is that bad?

XENA (not looking pleased):

I'm not sure...but it's not important. When did she first know you were there?

ARES:

She always knew. She didn't know it was me, but she could sense me. Just in case you needed proof she was yours...

XENA:

Not funny.

DIDUS:

Can we please carry on with Livia?

ARES:

Where was I?

XENA:

You meeting Livia.

ARES:

Ah yes...

[FLASHBACK]

A pretty nice bedroom--the whole villa is nice--with a four poster canopy bed, a shelf filled with scrolls, a clothes cupboard and a dressing table and mirror. Livia is lying among a lot of thin silver and black blankets made of a sheer, silky material. She holds a scroll, but is staring listlessly at the wall.

Ares appears. Livia doesn't move, but looks surprised.

LIVIA:

Who are you?

ARES:

Someone who is going to snap you out of this grief thing.

LIVIA:

A name would be nice.

ARES:

Ares.

LIVIA (surprised):

The God of War? What do you want with me?

ARES:

I'm here to help. (to self) You're not quite up there with her in the brains department, but we have time...

LIVIA:

What?

ARES:

Nothing.

LIVIA (sighing):

What do you want?

ARES:

Livia, you miss your brother, don't you?

LIVIA:

Don't you talk about him.

ARES:

Bear with me. Answer the question...

LIVIA:

I miss him a lot.

ARES:

Do you wish he were still alive?

LIVIA:

What kind of a dumb question is that? Of course I do.

ARES:

I know why he was killed.

LIVIA (furious):

If you had a hand in this, I will kill you, god or no god.

ARES (puts a hand up to calm her down):

Whoa, whoa...no, I didn't have anything to do with it.

LIVIA (still angry):

Then what are you trying to say?

ARES:

I was trying to help, but... (starts to disappear)

LIVIA (standing up, obviously going against her better judgment here):

Wait. (Ares stops) Tell me whatever you came to say.

ARES:

Your brother--Larus, wasn't it? (Livia nods) Larus--he was an Elijan, wasn't he?

LIVIA (defensive--she is still sworn to secrecy on the subject):

What does it matter if he was or wasn't?

ARES:

Livia...Eli's followers aren't accepted here, you know that. (he walks over towards

Livia's bed and picks up the scroll lying on it, reading the beginning) Hm. An Elijan scroll...is it yours?

LIVIA (sullenly, finally admitting it):

It was his. (takes it from Ares' hand, rolls it up and puts it on her shelf)

ARES:

Now, bear with me here...see if you can connect the dots. Larus was murdered. (Livia nods) And he was an Elijan...and you found him with that scroll, didn't you?

LIVIA:

How did you know that?

ARES (shrugging):

Lucky guess? Are you sensing anything...odd about that?

LIVIA (reciting, in the way that a child asked to repeat something they know well does):

Larus might have been-- (Ares gives her a disbelieving look) Okay, was killed because he was an Elijan. But that can't be why because only he and I knew that-- and I didn't kill him.

ARES:

Wrong. Someone else had to know...but you'll probably never find out who, so forget getting revenge on them. Tell me how you feel about the Elijans.

LIVIA:

I don't care about them. If they want to get themselves crucified, so be it.

ARES:

But what about all of their family? Their sisters, their daughters? Would you wish the pain you're feeling right now on all those people? No....you aren't that cruel, I can see it in your eyes.

LIVIA:

What do you mean "would I wish"? It's not my business what happens to them. Not anymore.

ARES:

Livia, I know you've had a bad childhood, that nobody loved you...they were all too wrapped up in themselves. But now...I'm here for you. You're very special, and your family was crazy not to notice that. But I'll notice, I'll be there. I'll say "Well done!" when you do well... I'll protect you from anything that comes to you.

LIVIA (looks tempted--this is the first time anyone has offered her anything resembling love, but resolved):

I don't need your protection.

ARES:

You're feeling pretty bad right now, huh? Now, I can't make that go away, but...we

could stop it happening to anyone else. The Elijans are...they have no real values or beliefs.

LIVIA:

Don't you talk that way about my brother!

ARES:

Did your brother ever fight against something he thought was wrong?

LIVIA:

Yes. He always did what was right.

ARES:

Would you abuse his memory by doing any different?

LIVIA:

No.

ARES (smooth-talking, persuasive):

Then help me. Help me rid the world of a burden it doesn't need. I will get you anything you ever wanted, and we can make a world of peace, a world of peace through force. Join me, Livia.

He steps closer to her and softly kisses her, before disappearing. We see Livia, with a thoughtful look on her face.

[END OF FLASHBACK]

FADE OUT

ACT THREE

FADE IN

XENA (looks completely disgusted, almost disbelieving):

You used one young, blameless girl's pain for your own dirty work?

ARES (puts his hands up in self-defense):

Oh, no, no! Not at all! Well, I guess you could put it that way, but I didn't purposely.

[FLASHBACK]

Ares' temple. It is almost exactly like the altar area in "Amphipolis Under Siege" except that there is a chakram design above the altar now--the old version. Ares is standing, looking at it, brooding. Michael appears.

ARES:

Who are you and what are you doing in my temple?

MICHAEL:

Ares. I'm a friend. Why so worried?

ARES:

You're obviously not really with the program here. Gods... Twilight... Why are you so cheery?

MICHAEL (who does indeed look cheerful):

Because I know how to prevent the Twilight from happening.

ARES (now looks interested):

How?

MICHAEL:

If you've done your research, you'll know that the one God of Love is set to take charge after you kick the bucket.

ARES (suspicious):

Why not you?

MICHAEL:

I'm not an Olympian...the Twilight doesn't apply to me. I answer to a higher being. But anyway, the God of Love is the same god that the followers of Eli believe in. There are very few Elijans left in the world, what with those cross-happy Romans. Barely enough to keep the God of Love in power...

ARES:

Do you have a point?

MICHAEL:

My point... What if the few Elijans still alive were killed? There'd be no God of Love to take over...meaning the Twilight couldn't happen. You went a good way to prolonging your family's lives when you killed Eli.

ARES:

So you're saying I need to kill the followers of Eli?

MICHAEL:

Exactly. You're the obvious choice for the job...if I'd asked any of the other gods they would worry about it being worth it. But you, you know which is worth more--the lives of the rulers of the world, or the lives of a few heretics set on bringing about your deaths?

ARES:

You expect the God of War to run around doing your dirty work?

MICHAEL (placating, soothing, appealing to Ares' ego):

No, no...not at all. I wouldn't dream of suggesting it. I have, however, taken the liberty of finding someone who could help you.

ARES (deliberately not sounding like he cares):

Oh, really?

MICHAEL:

Yeah--the sooner the Elijans are killed, the less likely it is that anymore of your family will suffer. Her name is Livia, and she lives with a Roman family in the Provinces. She is grieving her brother and wants revenge on his murderers--he was an Elijan--though she doesn't know it yet. You've trained female warriors before...you can save your family. She may have more potential than even Xena--she's very similar to the Warrior Princess... (he looks pointedly at the chakram above the altar)

ARES (angry--he is still grieving):

Don't you dare mention Xena! Don't you speak her name to me!

MICHAEL (put out):

I was trying to save your life...if you know a better way, feel free to try. (he disappears)

[END OF FLASHBACK]

ARES (now speaking only to Xena, not to the rest of the room):

But I got curious...I wanted to see if she was any match for you, so I went to see her anyway.

XENA (nods, puzzled):

Michael wanted to kill the Elijans? You aren't lying to me, are you, Ares?

EVE (from her witness box--she is now calm):

I don't think he is, Mother.

DIDUS:

You have not been asked to speak, Eve.

XENA (rolling her eyes--she is getting real sick of Didus):

Eve, what do you mean?

EVE:

Martyrdom, Mother. If I started killing the Elijans for no reason, they would become martyrs to their cause. That would give them more attention--and more sympathizers, if not outright followers. And the more people believe in him, the more powerful my god--and Michael become. But then I took it too far...so he let you come and stop me. (Michael appears, clapping)

MICHAEL:

Evie, I must admit, I'm impressed. I didn't think you'd figure it out, but you did. And you beat Mommy as well! I'm so proud.

XENA:

You bastard!

She flips over to him, and starts a punching motion. Michael disappears and reappears in front of the witness box in which Ares still stands right where Xena was a moment ago, right in time for Ares' fist to meet his face, with a resounding crack.

Gabrielle and Virgil go to Eve and Claudius to protect them and Xena and Ares proceed to kick Michael's butt in a dazzling combination of sword maneuvers, acrobatics and martial arts. They fight almost as one--they have fought with and against each other so many times before that they know almost instinctively which moves the other will use. Michael eventually ends up, beaten and bruised, being kicked by Ares so that he falls near to where Eve and Gabrielle are standing, with Xena's sword at his back.

Eve's eyes are dark with rage and she looks ready to kill. She stares at Michael, battling with an emotion she hasn't felt in a long, long time--hatred. The whole room goes tense, and all of the main characters--Xena, Ares, Virgil, Gabrielle, Didus and Claudius--wait for Eve to make her decision--to kill him or not to kill him.

EVE (shaking her head, she looks at Michael):

You aren't worth it. I'm not going to turn back into what I was because of you.

MICHAEL (chuckles):

My little pacifist. (he disappears, with a grin on his face)

FADE OUT

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

The characters stay as they were for a minute, as the tension in the room lessens, before Xena sheathes her sword.

CLAUDIUS (shakily stands up):

I think we can reach a verdict immediately. I pronounce Eve of the Elijans, Livia of Rome, guilty of manslaughter. The sentence is death by crucifixion. (he ignores the furious looks from Xena, Gabrielle and Virgil--Eve is staring at the ground and continues) However, as I think we have all just seen, she was not responsible for her actions. She will not be killed. (Xena looks slightly calmer, and Eve looks at Claudius in surprise--she was fully expecting the death penalty) Instead, she will be forbidden from returning to Rome for ten years. If she is seen in any of our territories, our legions will have permission to kill her on sight. She will have five days to get out of our lands.

Eve smiles at Claudius and the side of her mouth quirks up, in a motion very like Xena. Xena nods at Claudius, thanking him for sparing her daughter and allowing Eve the chance to make amends for her crimes.

CUT TO

A peaceful hillside. There are trees on both sides of a wide gap, and the hill looks down on Rome. The sun is shining. Eve, Xena, Gabrielle and Virgil are standing, all ready to leave, looking at the bustling city.

XENA (joking):

Well, Eve, it's a good thing this is the last time you'll see this view for a while. I wish I could say the same.

EVE (smiles):

You haven't exactly had the best luck with the place. But it's not so bad really...

VIRGIL:

I don't get it. Why would Michael do something so evil to his Messenger? Wouldn't his god object?

GABRIELLE:

You know, Virgil, I think there's a lot that we don't know about Michael.

She, Eve and Virgil start walking down the hill. Once they are out of earshot, Ares appears.

XENA (smiles):

Thank you for helping me save my daughter, again.

ARES:

It's getting to be quite a habit now, huh?

XENA (chuckling softly):

Eve getting into trouble or you saving her?

ARES:

Like mother, like daughter.

XENA:

Although it was partly your fault to begin with. I'm worried about her though. Michael is shaping up to be quite a nasty piece of work--and she's right in the firing line.

ARES:

Maybe, but he has to get through you first. But, if you ever need a bit more-- (he sends a lightning bolt in the direction of a nearby tree, which bursts into flames for a second before returning to normal) --power then you know who to call. (he winks at Xena, and then disappears)

XENA (looking at the tree):

I do.

She stands for a moment longer, before shaking her head and starting off down the hill to catch the others up. We watch her back for a moment as we:

FADE OUT

THE END

[No archangels were harmed during the production of this motion picture--something Xena was most upset about.]