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WONDER WOMAN

A
UNIVERSE
BESIEGED!

48-PAGE
**FINAL
ISSUE!**



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**PROLOGUE:
A PLACE THAT
IS NOT A
PLACE.**

THEN WE ARE AGREED,
LORD OF SHADES?

AGREED!
I WILL PROVIDE YOU
WITH THE WARRIOR
YOU WANT...

...AND YOU WILL REPAY ME
WITH HALF YOUR NEW-WON
KINGDOM!

AN HONEST
BARGAIN FOR
US BOTH, O
PRINCE OF
MOLES!

YOU TREAD
HEAVILY
UPON MY GOOD
WILL, ARES!
NEVER MOCK
ME!

WE ARE ALLIES,
YOU AND I... BUT
I AM NOT YOUR
FRIEND.



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PARADISE
ISLAND.

MOTHER,
YOU MUST
GO ON. WE
CAN'T STOP
FIGHTING
NOW.

THE FIRES ARE BURNING
OUT, BUT THE SCENT OF
SMOKE REMAINS... A GRIM
REMINDER OF BATTLE,
IN A WAR THAT MIGHT
NOT BE WON...

NOT JUST
PARADISE
ISLAND... NOT
JUST OUR
WORLD... THE
ENTIRE
UNIVERSE
IS AT
STAKE!

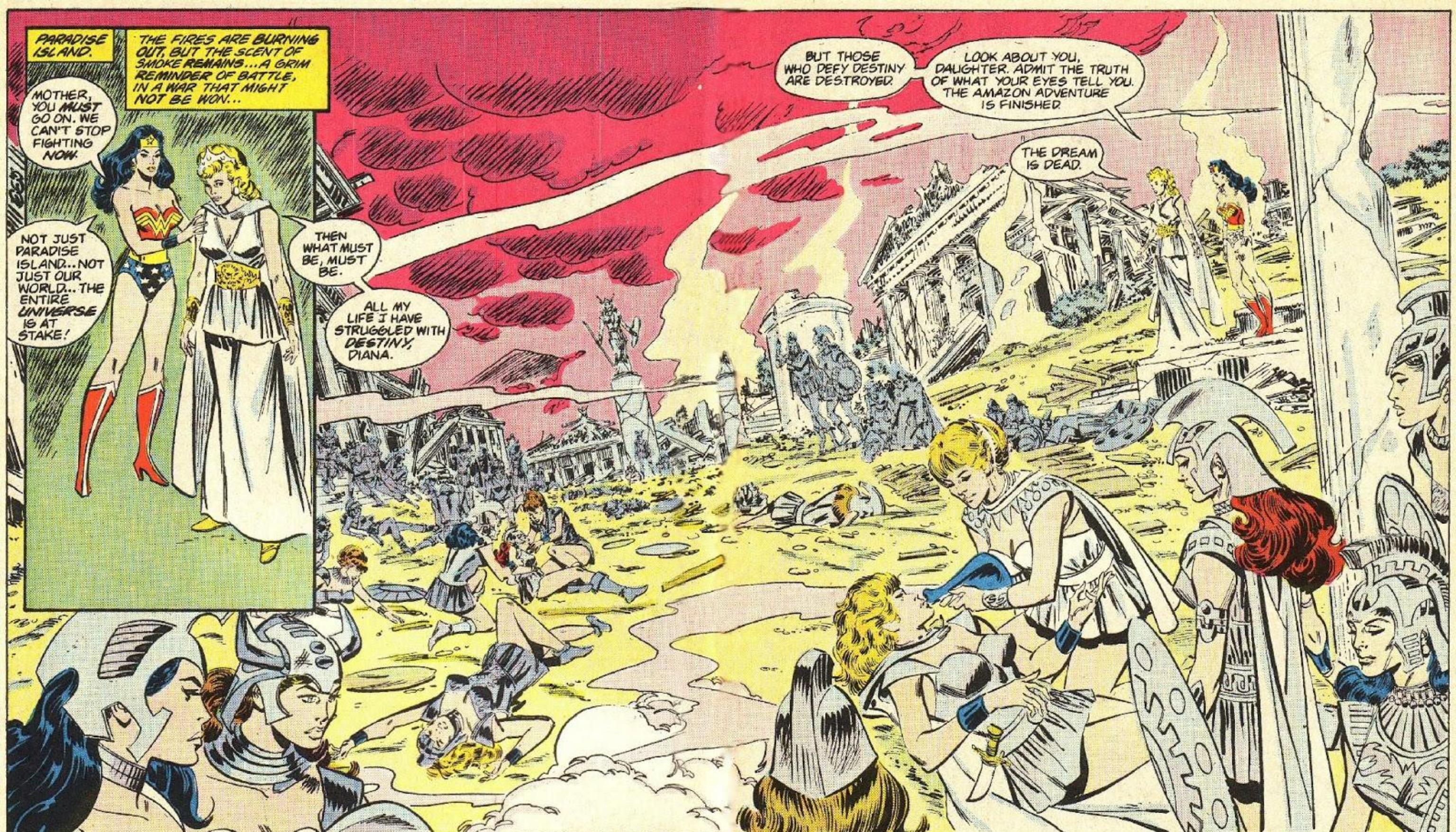
THEN
WHAT MUST
BE, MUST
BE.

ALL MY
LIFE I HAVE
STRUGGLED WITH
DESTINY,
DIANA.

BUT THOSE
WHO DEFY DESTINY
ARE DESTROYED.

LOOK ABOUT YOU,
DAUGHTER. ADMIT THE TRUTH
OF WHAT YOUR EYES TELL YOU.
THE AMAZON ADVENTURE
IS FINISHED.

THE DREAM
IS DEAD.



OF GODS AND MEN

A FINAL ADVENTURE OF

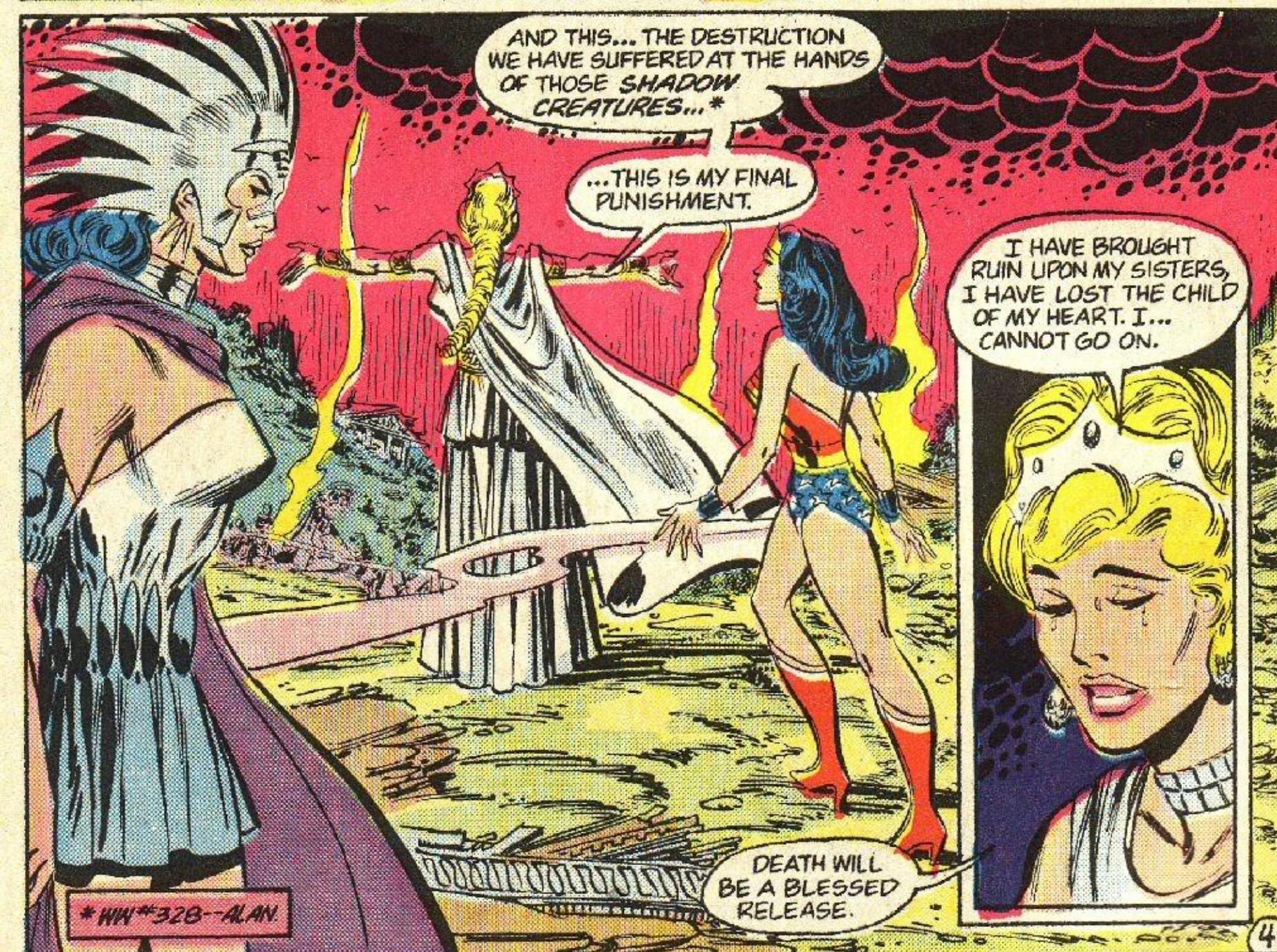


WONDER WOMAN®

GERRY CONWAY
WRITER

DON HECK
ARTIST

HELEN VESIK NANCY HOOGLAHAN ALAN GOLD
LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR



YOU WOULD NOT SAY SO, IF YOU KNEW THE SORROW OF HADES' KINGDOM.

I KNOW... I WHO SPENT HALF OF EVERY YEAR IN HIS COLD EMBRACE, RETURNING TO THE WORLD OF LIGHT ONLY AT WINTER'S END!

DEATH IS NO "RELEASE," HIPPOLYTA, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS.

IT IS A WAITING WITHOUT END.



OR SO IT WAS, TILL THE UNDERWORLD FELL TO THE ANTI-MONITOR'S DARK LEGION. NOW THE DAMNED ARE TWICE DAMNED. AND HADES, MY HUSBAND IS IN THRALL TO A SHADOW GREATER THAN HIS OWN.

YOU'LL FIND NO SUCCOR, THERE, HIPPOLYTA.

YOU'VE HEARD KORE, MOTHER. YOU KNOW SHE'S RIGHT. WHATEVER HAPPENED BETWEEN US, WHATEVER FEELINGS WE HAVE... WE MUST DEAL WITH IT HERE, IN THIS LIFE.



YOU SAY YOU'VE LOST MY LOVE, BUT THAT ISN'T TRUE.

I LOVE YOU, MOTHER... MORE THAN EVER NOW, WHEN WE FACE OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE. AND IF YOU TRULY LOVE ME...



...YOU'LL RALLY THE AMAZONS
AS ONLY YOU CAN... AND LEAD
US ALL INTO BATTLE!



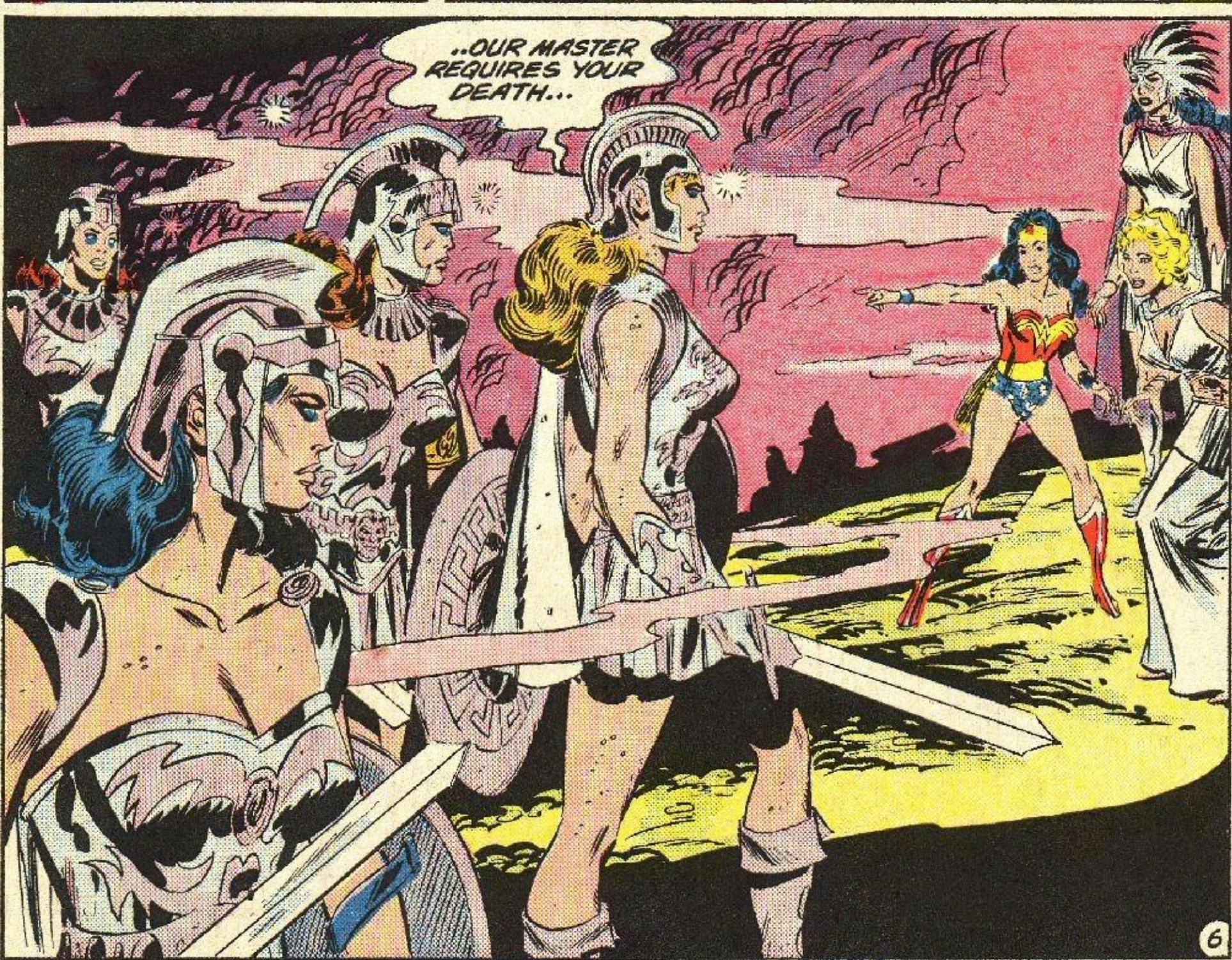
I GREW UP, MOTHER. I'M THE WOMAN YOU MADE ME. BUT I'M ALSO THE CHILD WHO WILL ALWAYS NEED YOUR LOVE.

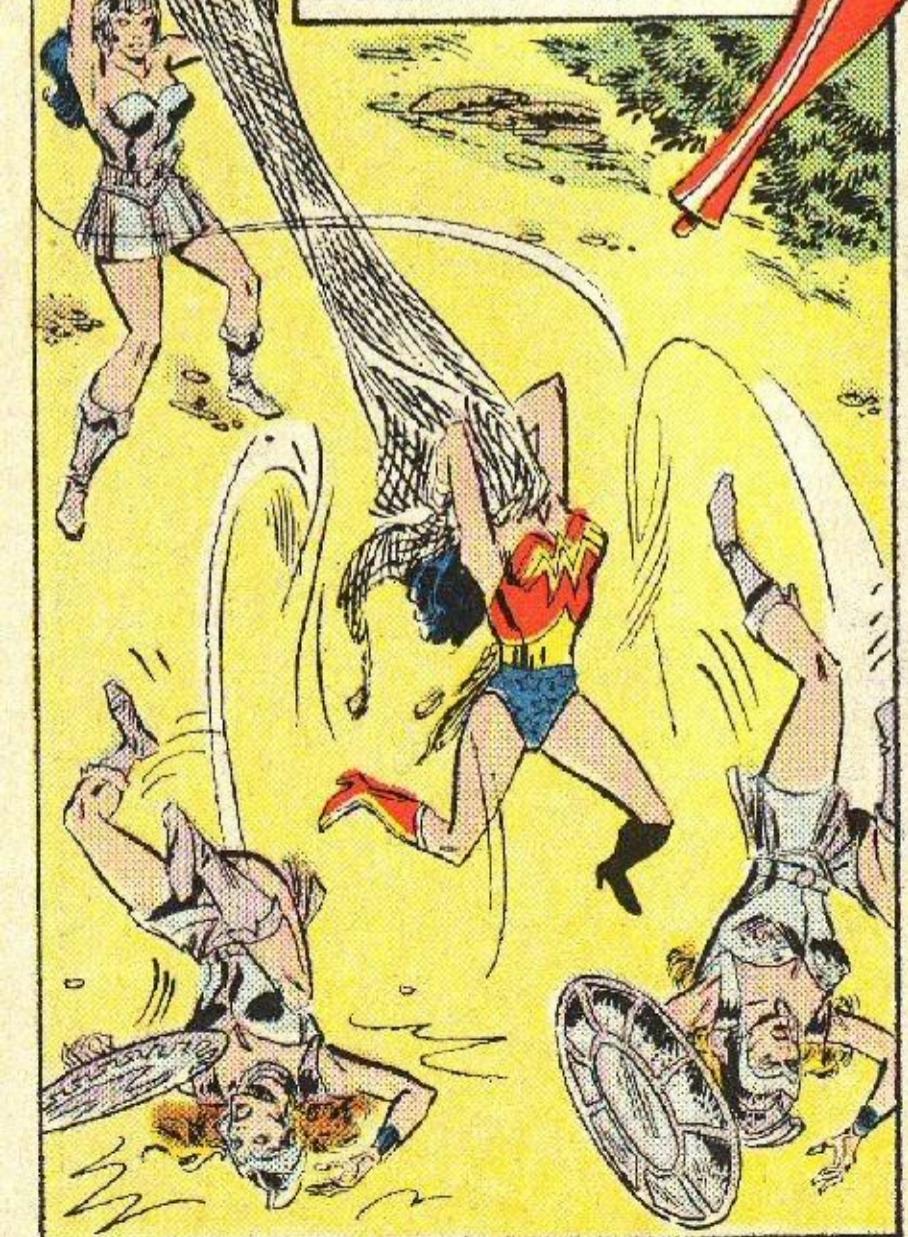
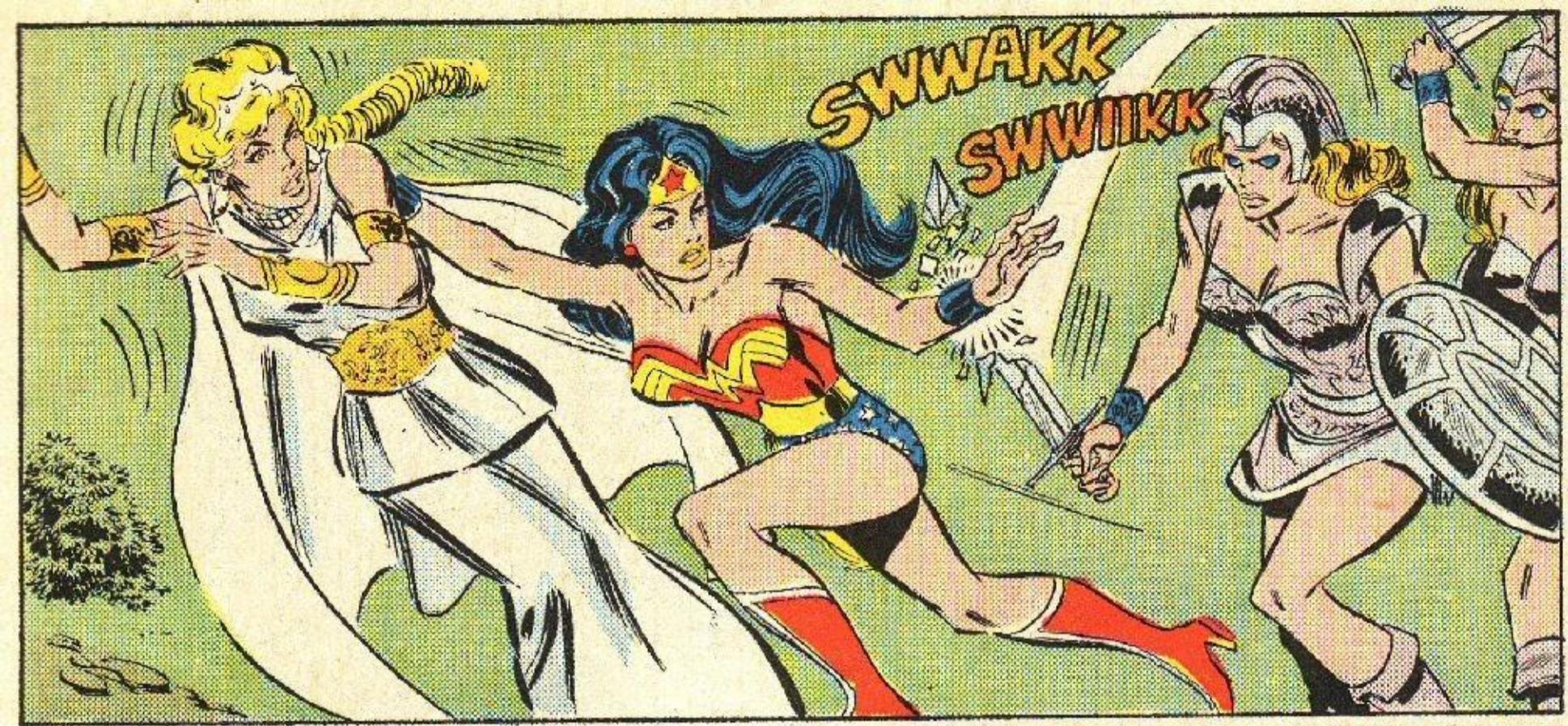


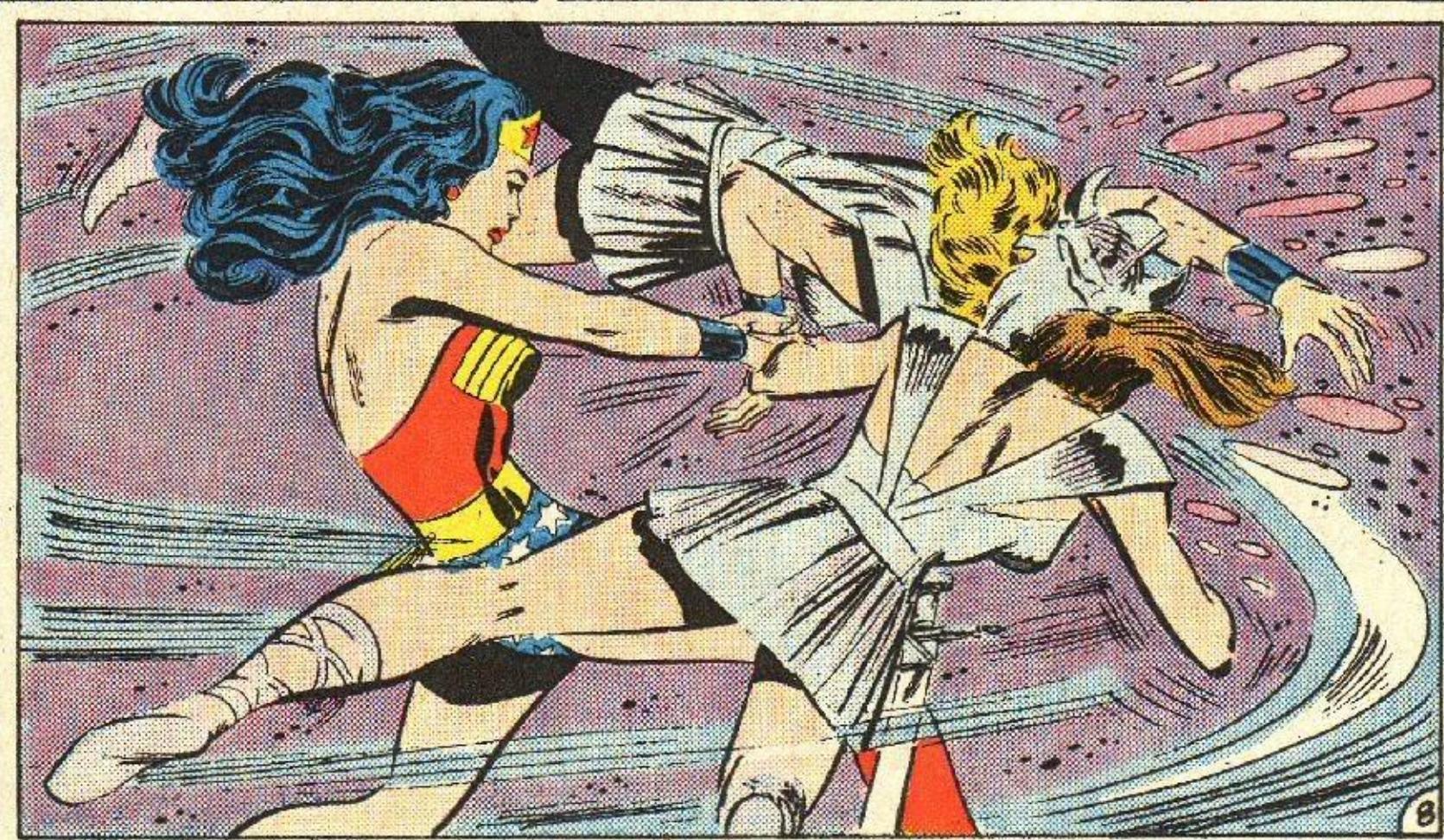
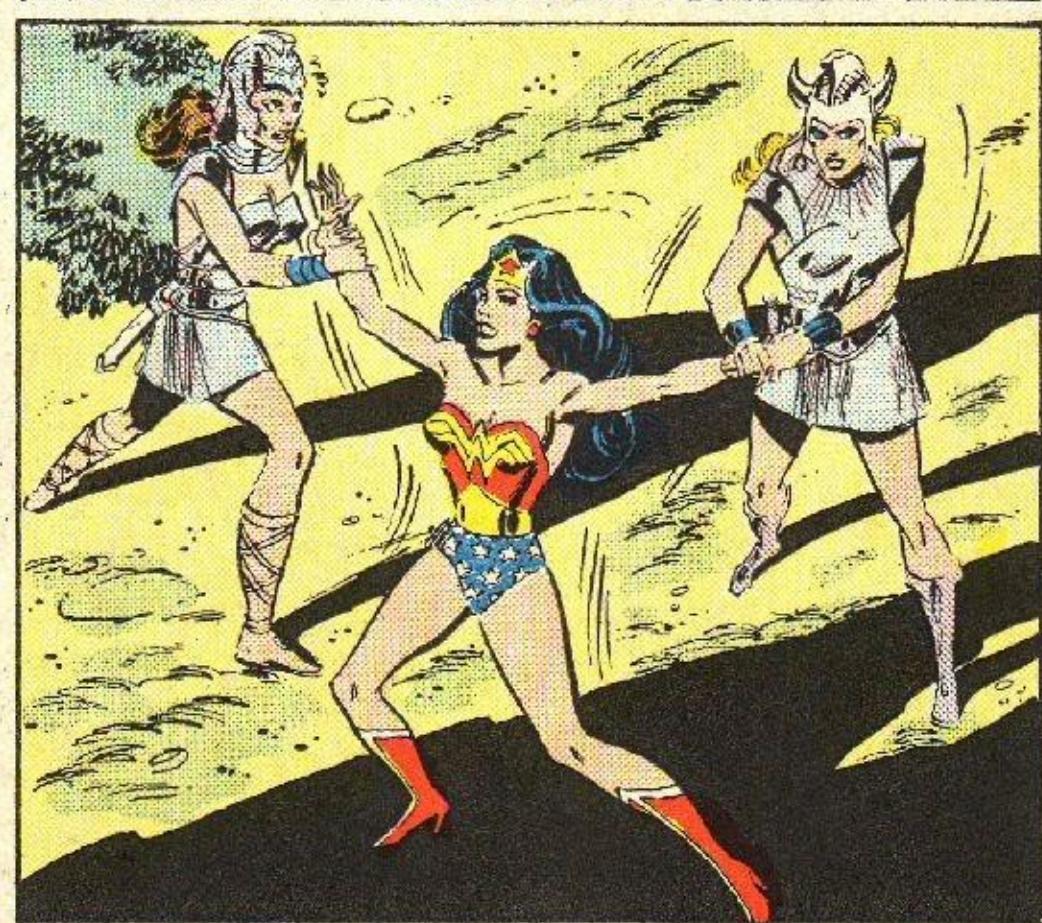
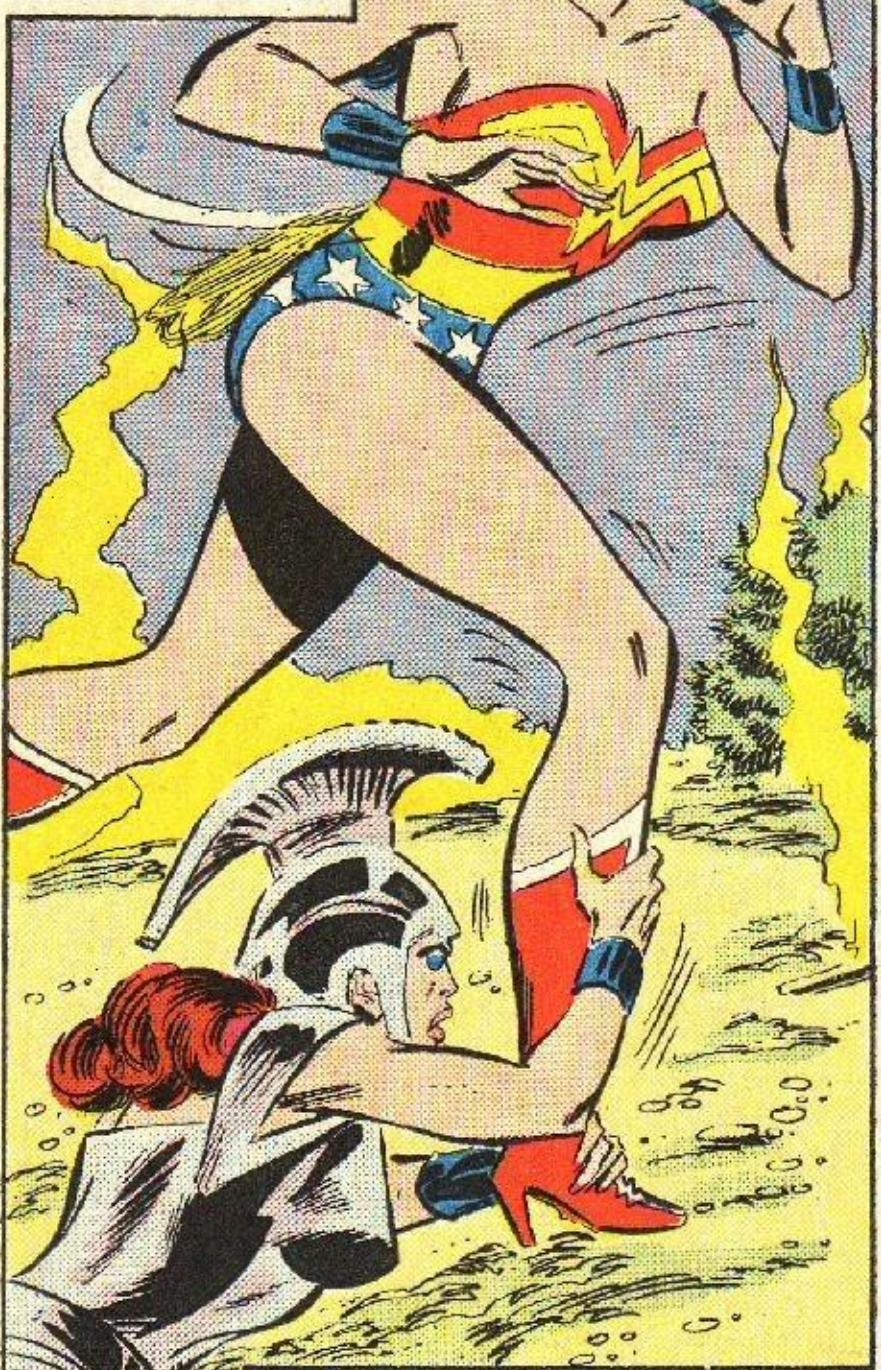
MY QUEEN...



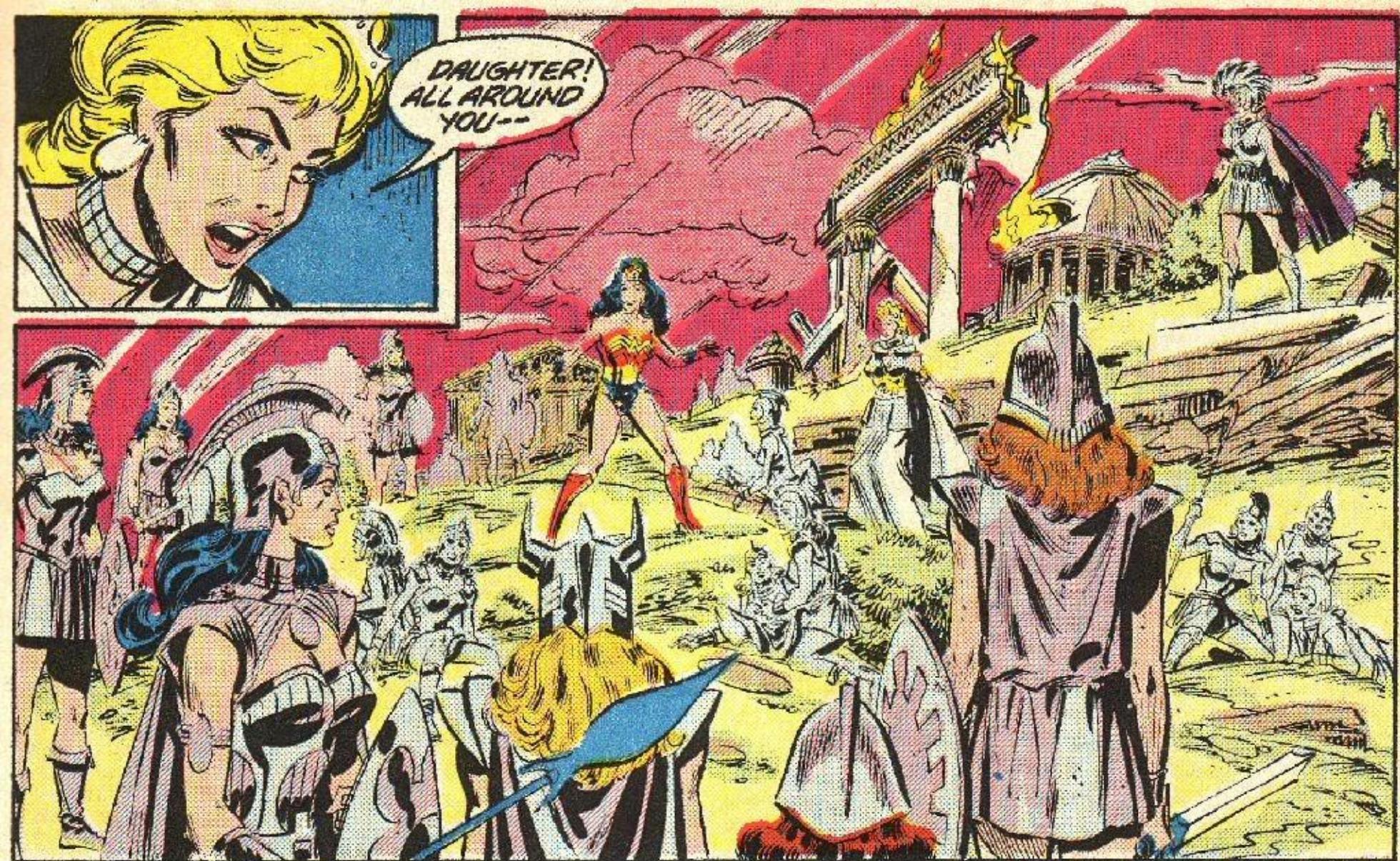
..OUR MASTER
REQUIRES YOUR
DEATH...



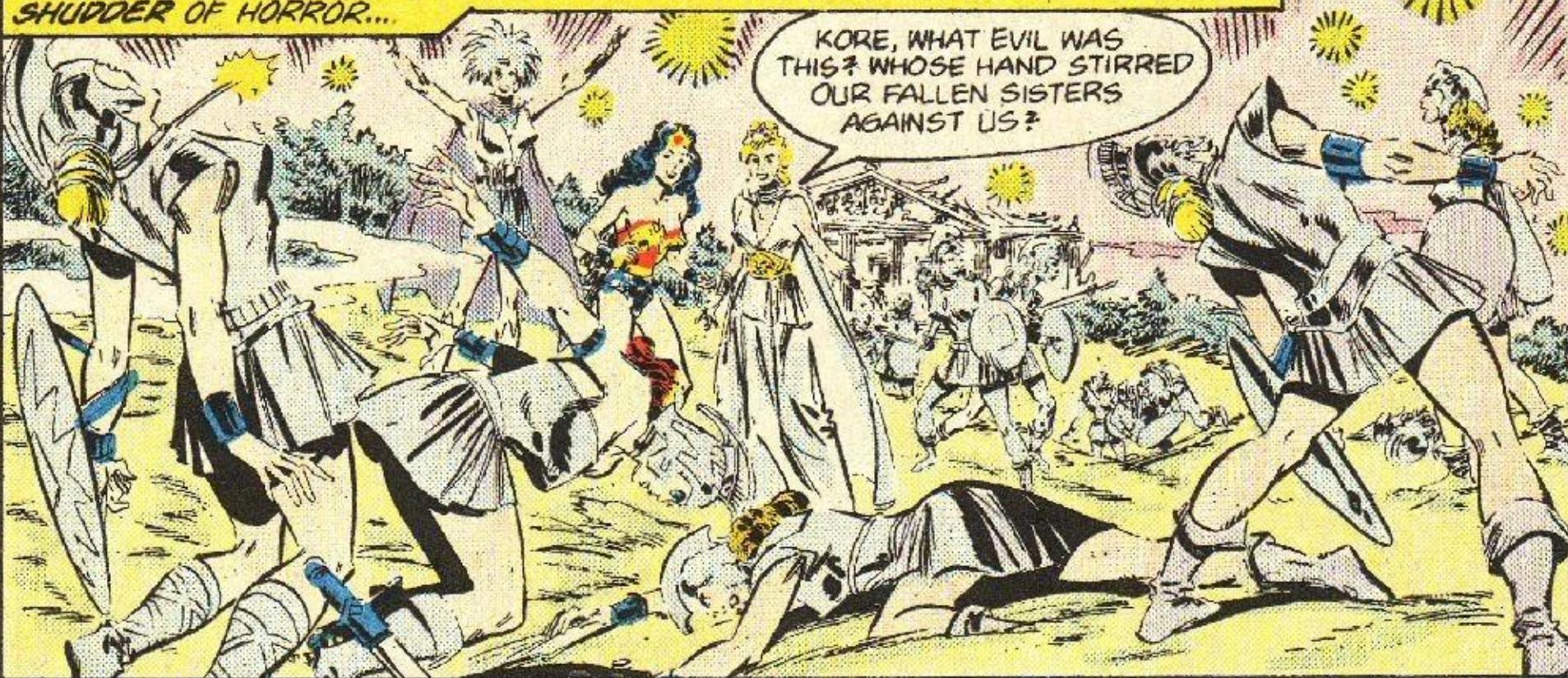




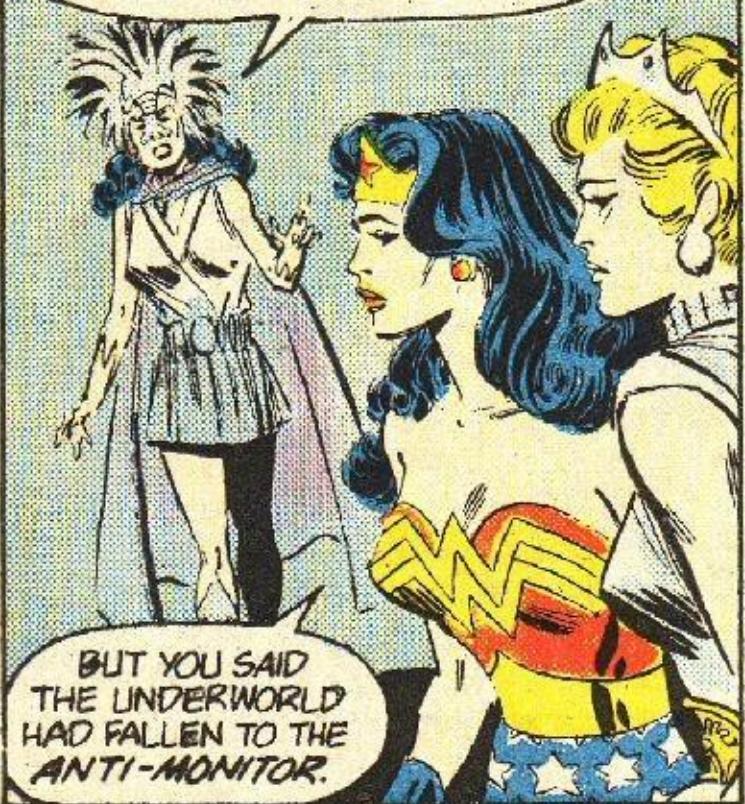
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LIKE PUPPETS SUDDENLY UNSTRUNG, THE AMAZON DEAD DROP TO THE RUBBLED EARTH, AS THEIR LIVING SISTERS LOOK ON--NOT WITHOUT A COLLECTIVE SHUDDER OF HORROR...



ONLY ONE BEING CAN RELEASE THE INMATES OF ETERNITY: MY ERSTWHILE HUSBAND, THE LORD OF THE UNDERWORLD... HADES.



EXACTLY. MY HUSBAND HAS TAKEN AN ALLY EVEN MORE HOSTILE THAN HE TO THE WORLD OF THE LIVING.



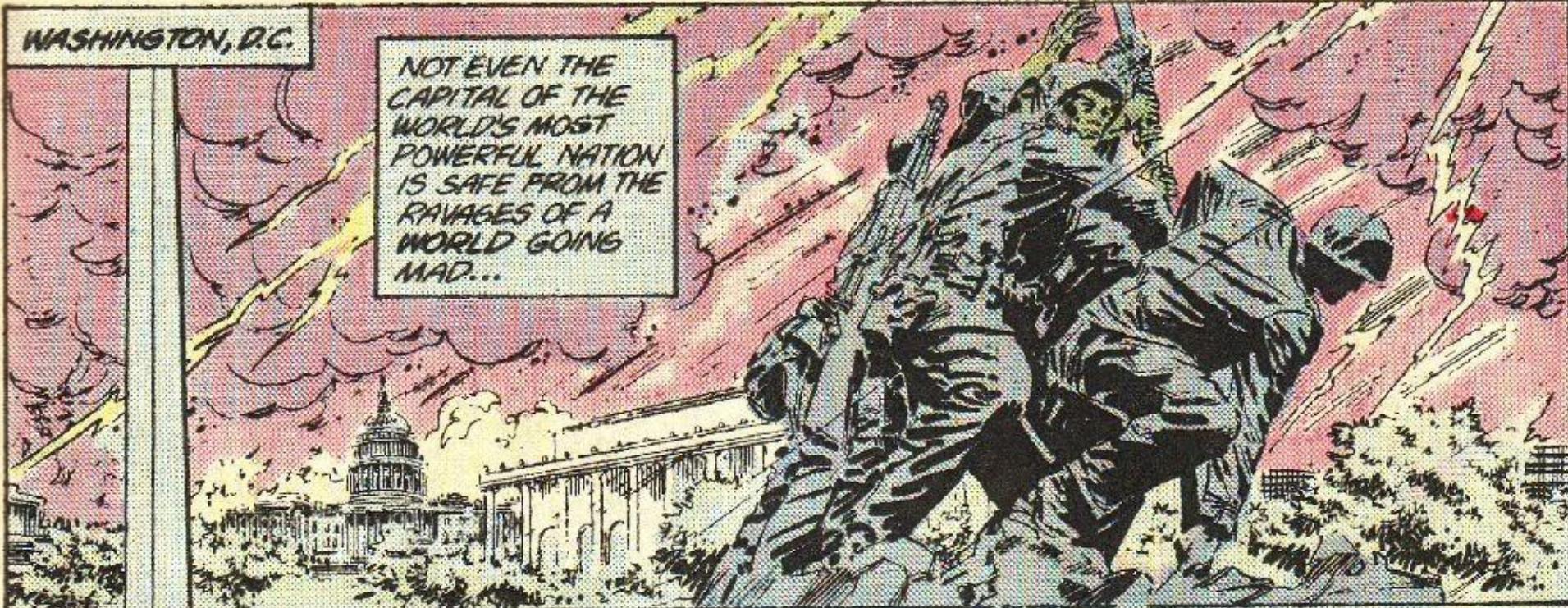
IF I KNOW MY HUSBAND... AND AFTER A NEAR ETERNITY, I THINK I DO... ATTACK ON PARADISE ISLAND WAS NOTHING MORE THAN AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

HIS TRUE TARGET REMAINS WHAT IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN, SINCE HE AND HIS BROTHERS OVERTHREW THE ANCIENT TITANS AND DIVIDED UP THE KINGDOMS OF THE UNIVERSE...

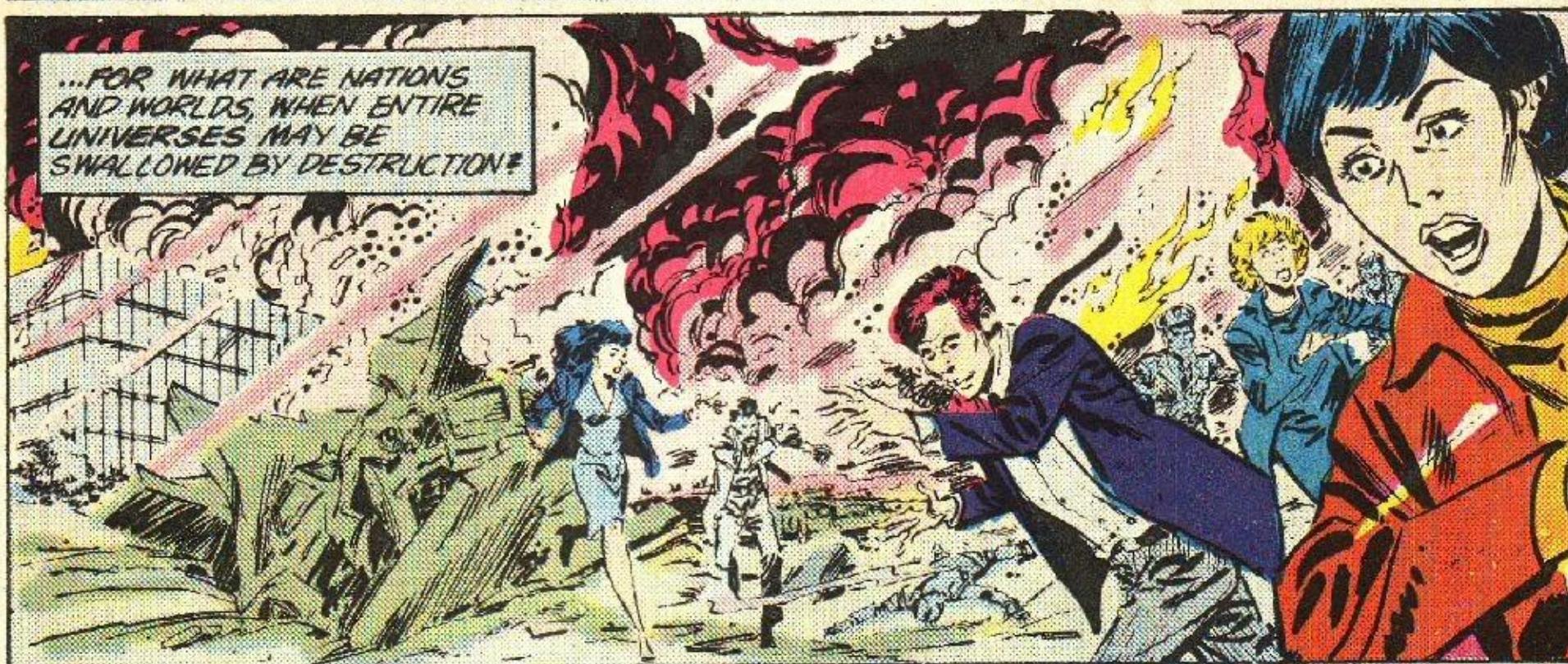


WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOT EVEN THE
CAPITAL OF THE
WORLD'S MOST
POWERFUL NATION
IS SAFE FROM THE
RAVAGES OF A
WORLD GOING
MAD...



...FOR WHAT ARE NATIONS
AND WORLDS, WHEN ENTIRE
UNIVERSES MAY BE
SWALLOWED BY DESTRUCTION?



YET HUMANKIND IS
NOTHING IF IT IS NOT
DEFIANT IN THE FACE
OF DESTINY!



DON'T
LET
GO!



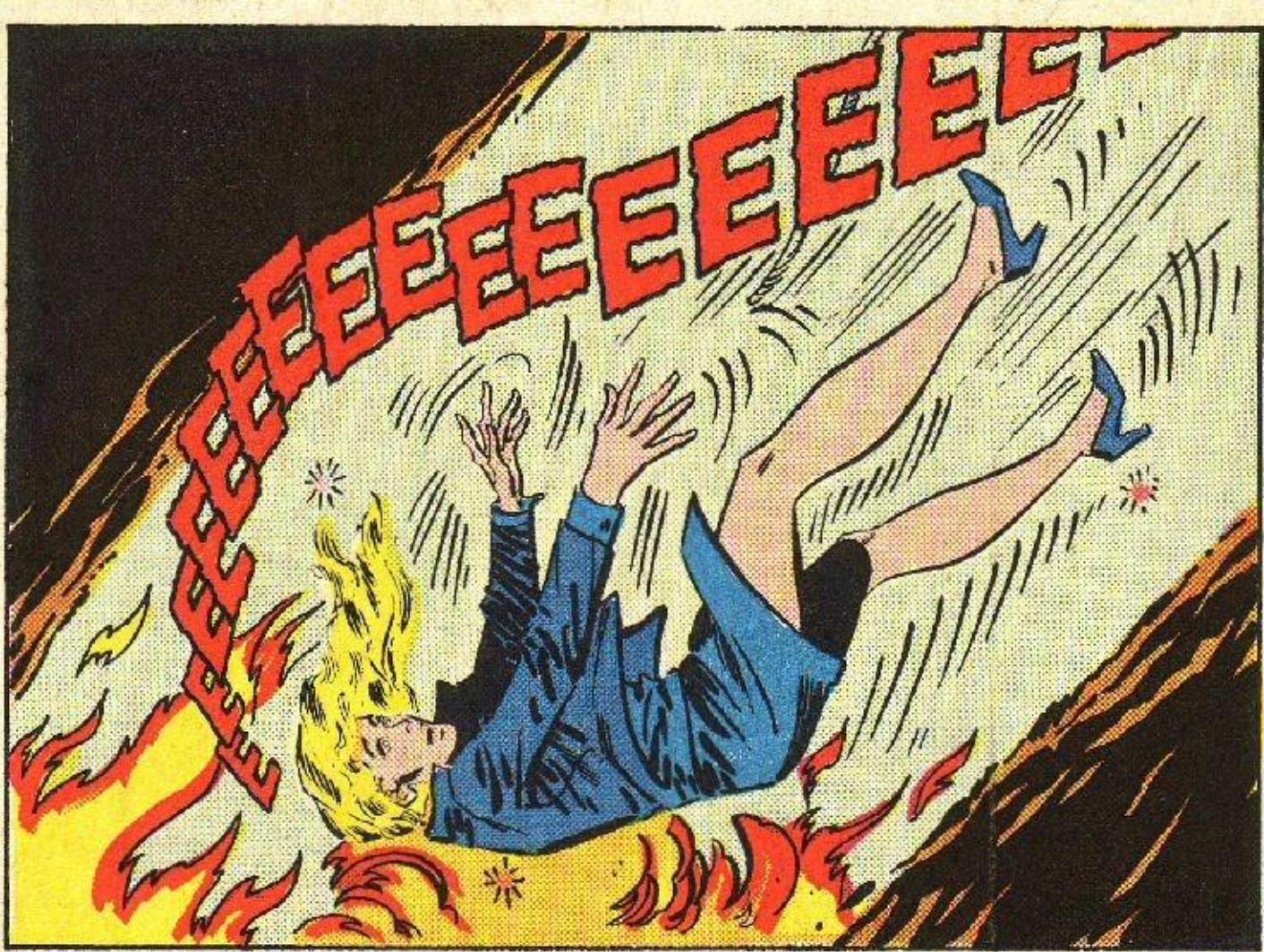
FOR GOD'S SAKE, LIEUTENANT--
YOU'VE GOT TO HANG ON!



COLONEL
TREVOR I--I
CAN'T!

OH, GOD--MY
FINGERS ARE SO
BLOODY--THEY'RE
SLIPPING ON THE
ROPE--





COLONEL
TREVOR!

I HEARD HIS
VOICE, ETTA--
EVEN OVER THE
NOISE OF THE
STORM!

HE'S HERE
SOMEWHERE!
WE HAVE TO
KEEP LOOKING
EVEN IF--

BOY, ARE WE
GLAD TO FIND
YOU. EVERYTHING'S
GOING CRAZY!

HAVE YOU
SEEN
LIEUTENANT
HALEY? SHE
RAN THIS WAY
WHEN THE
STORM BROKE,
AND WE
THOUGHT...

THERE
HE IS!
COLONEL!
COLONEL
TREVOR!

LAUREN HALEY IS
DEAD. SHE STUMBLED...
FELL INTO THAT
CREVICE...

I
COULDN'T
SAVE HER.
I HARDLY
EVEN KNEW
THE WOMAN...
AND SHE'S
DEAD.

...SHE ISN'T THE ONLY ONE. EVER
SINCE WONDER WOMAN--UH, I
MEAN, MAJOR PRINCE--TOOK
OFF AFTER THOSE WEAPONERS,
THINGS HAVE GOTTEN WEIRD--
AND DEADLY.*

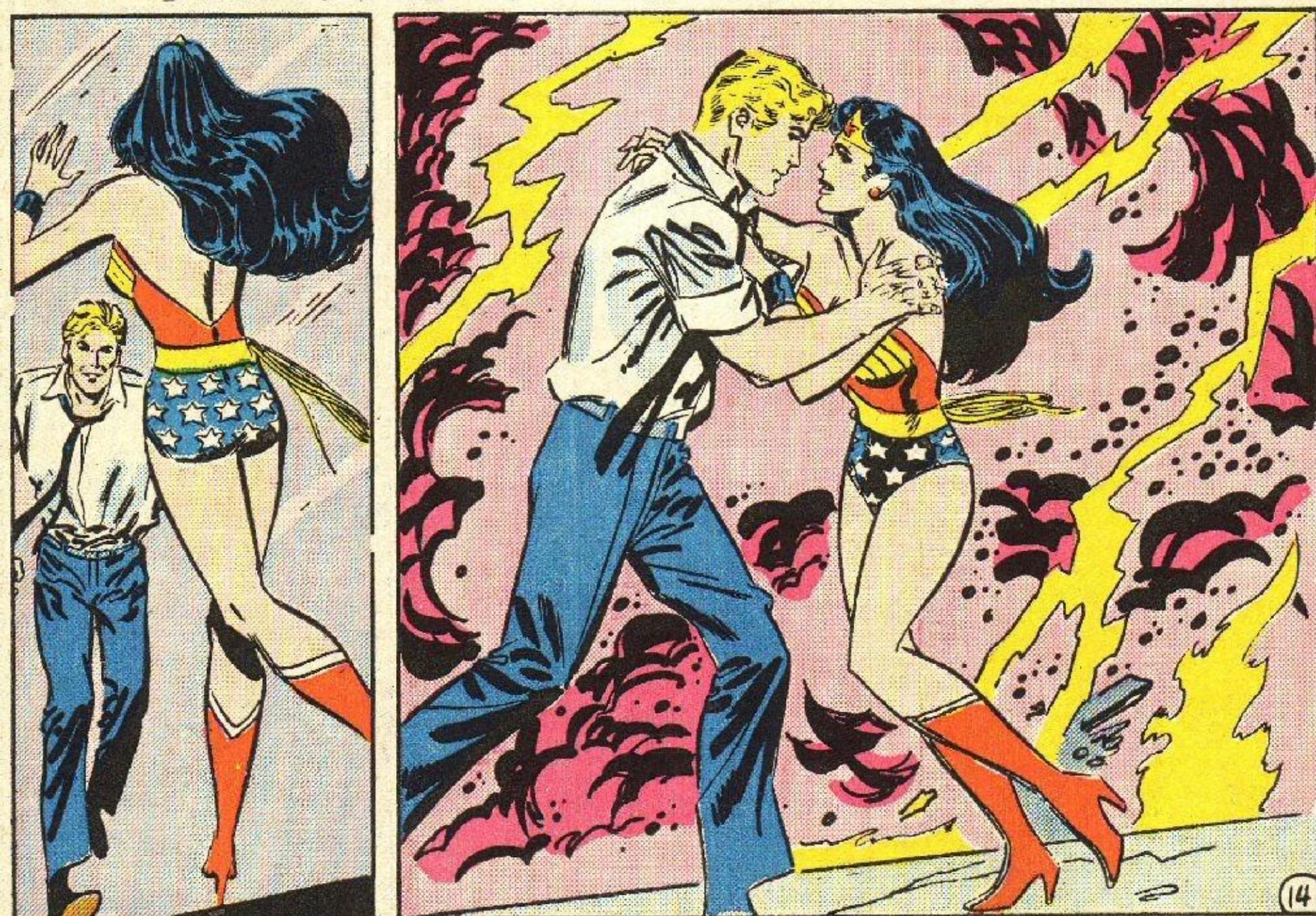
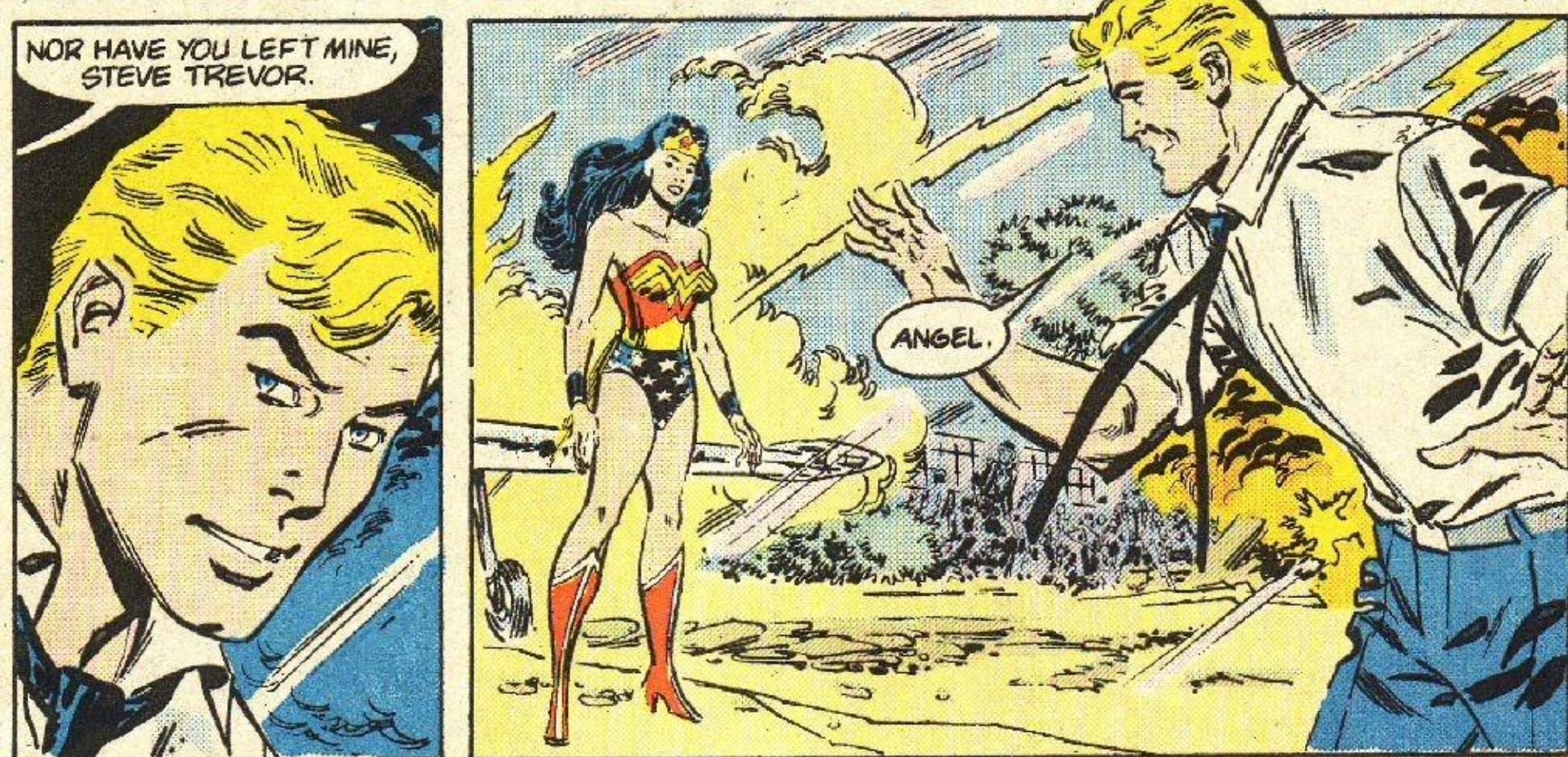
THAT STORM STARTED
FIRST, THEN THE EARTHQUAKES...
AND THINGS STARTED EXPLODING.
PEOPLE ARE DYING ALL OVER
THE PENTAGON.

HE KNOWS THAT...
HE'S BEEN TRYING TO HELP.
HE'S BEEN EVERYWHERE, ALL
OVER THE COMPOUND...
TRYING TO SAVE
PEOPLE...

BUT IT'S
NO GOOD, CO-
NEL! WE'VE HEARD
THROUGH THE
DEFENSE NET-
WORK, IT ISN'T
JUST WASHINGTON!
THE WORLD IS
COMING
APART....!

UH...
COLONEL...

*AS TOLD LAST ISSUE--ALAN.

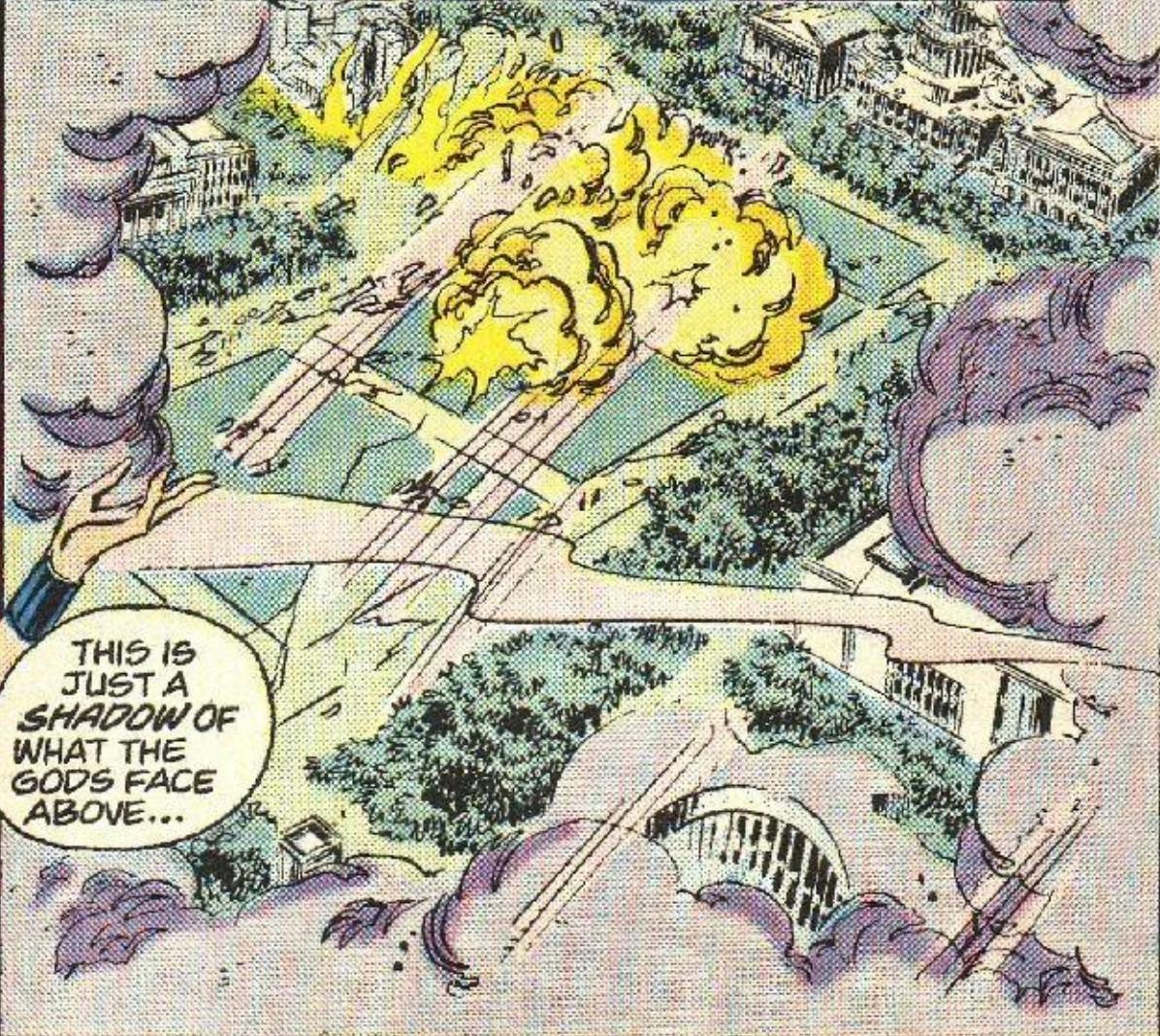




IF WE EVER HAVE THE CHANCE AGAIN... I WANT US TO SEAL OUR LOVE, AS MAN AND WOMAN.

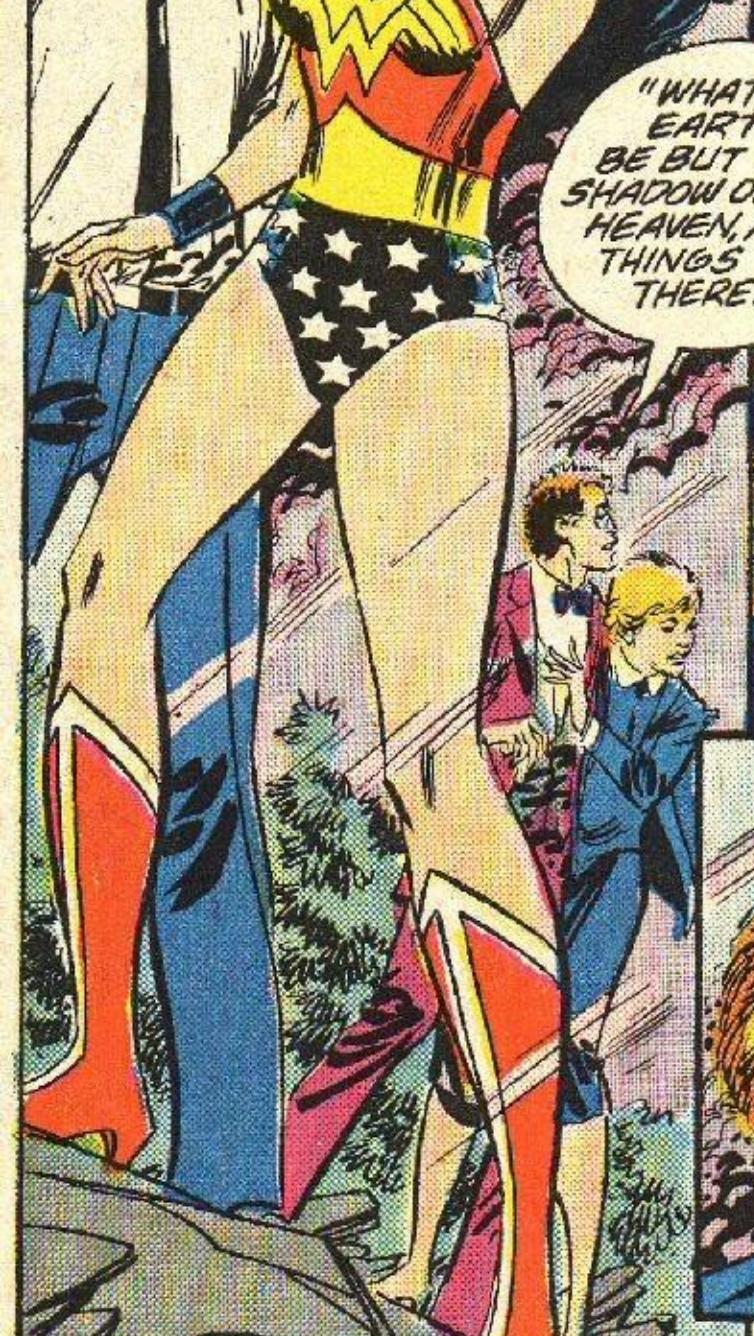
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "IF WE EVER HAVE THE CHANCE AGAIN..."?

THE GODS ARE AT WAR, MY DARLING... THE GODS, AND THOSE WHO MAY BE GREATER THAN THE GODS. LOOK AROUND YOU.

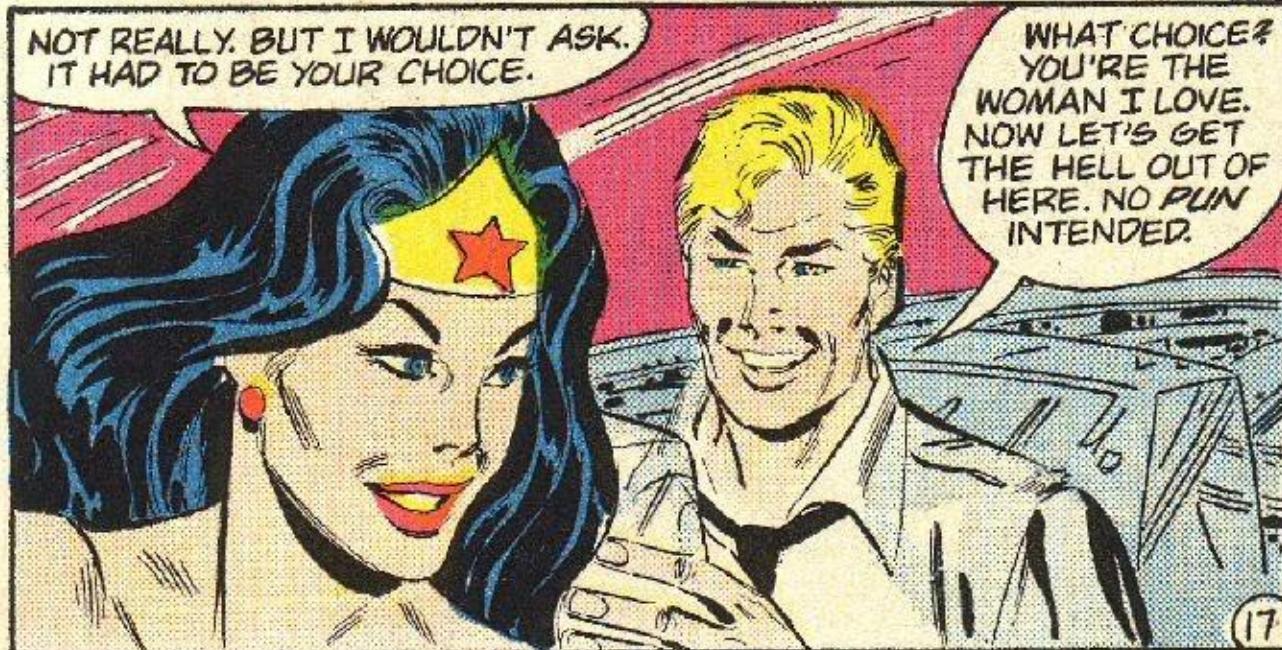


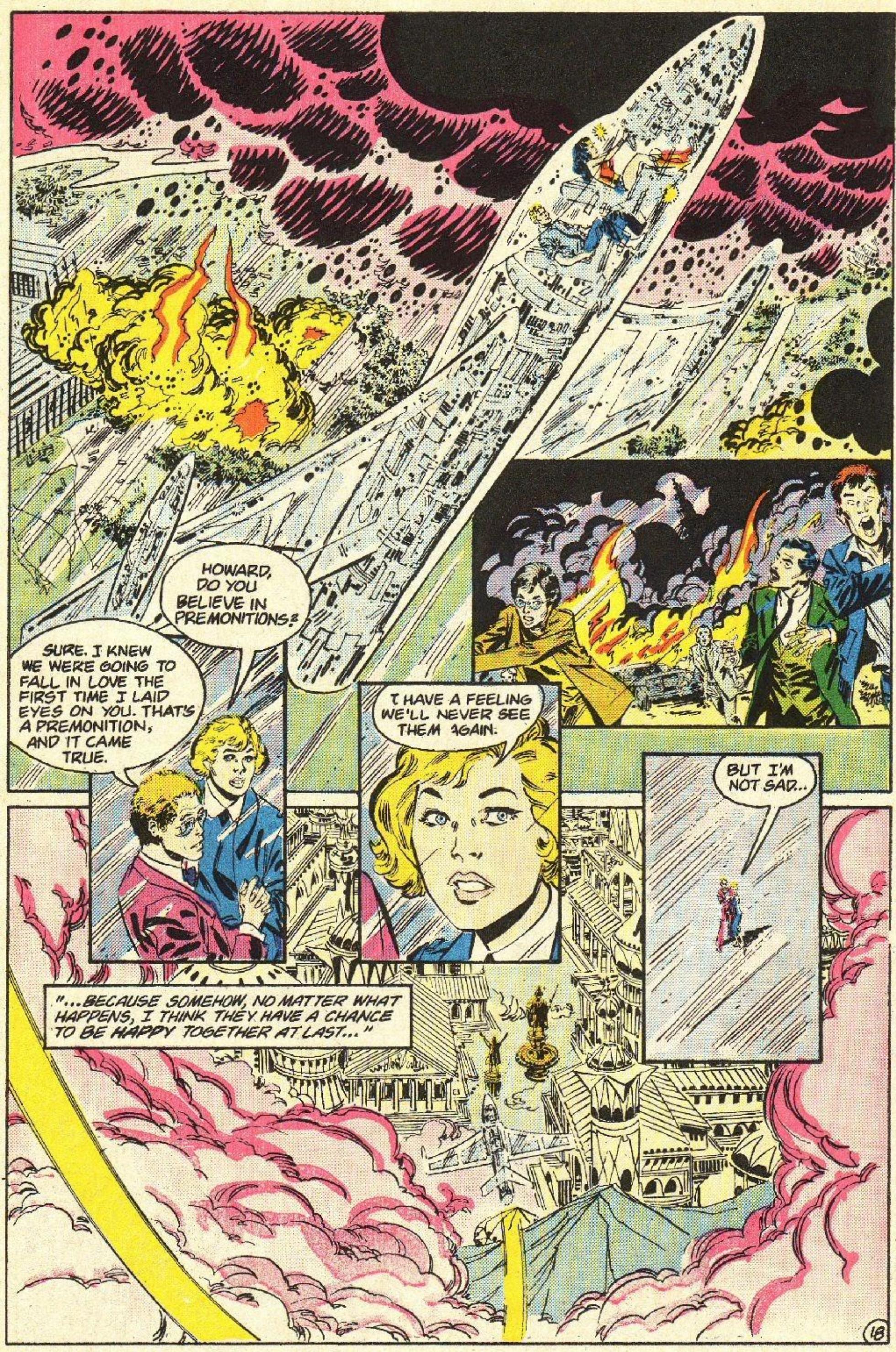
THIS IS JUST A SHADOW OF WHAT THE GODS FACE ABOVE...

"WHAT IF EARTH BE BUT THE SHADOW OF HEAVEN, AND THINGS THEREIN..."



MILTON
"PARADISE LOST."





WHAT'S THE
PLAN OF
ATTACK,
DIANA?

MOTHER AND THE AMAZONS AWAIT MY
SIGNAL--WHICH I'LL GIVE ONCE I'VE
SCOUTED OUT OLYMPUS. IN THE MEAN-
TIME, THE GODDESS KORE WILL TRY
TO ENLIST ATALANTA AND HER
MORTAL AMAZONS FROM SOUTH
AMERICA IN OUR CAUSE.

IF HADES IS
INDEED RAISING
THE DEAD TO WAR
AGAINST THE GODS,
WE WILL NEED
EVERY FIGHTER WE
CAN FIND.

DIANA--WHAT
GOES ON HERE?
IS THIS
OLYMPUS?

WHERE IS
EVERYBODY?

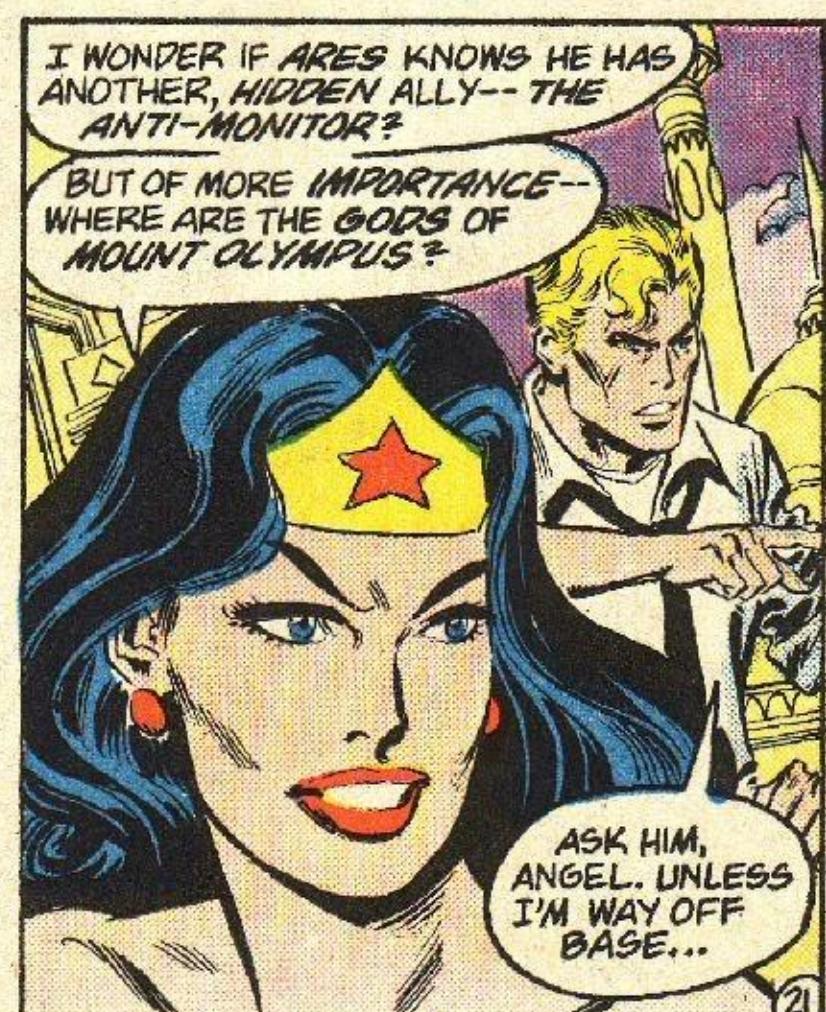
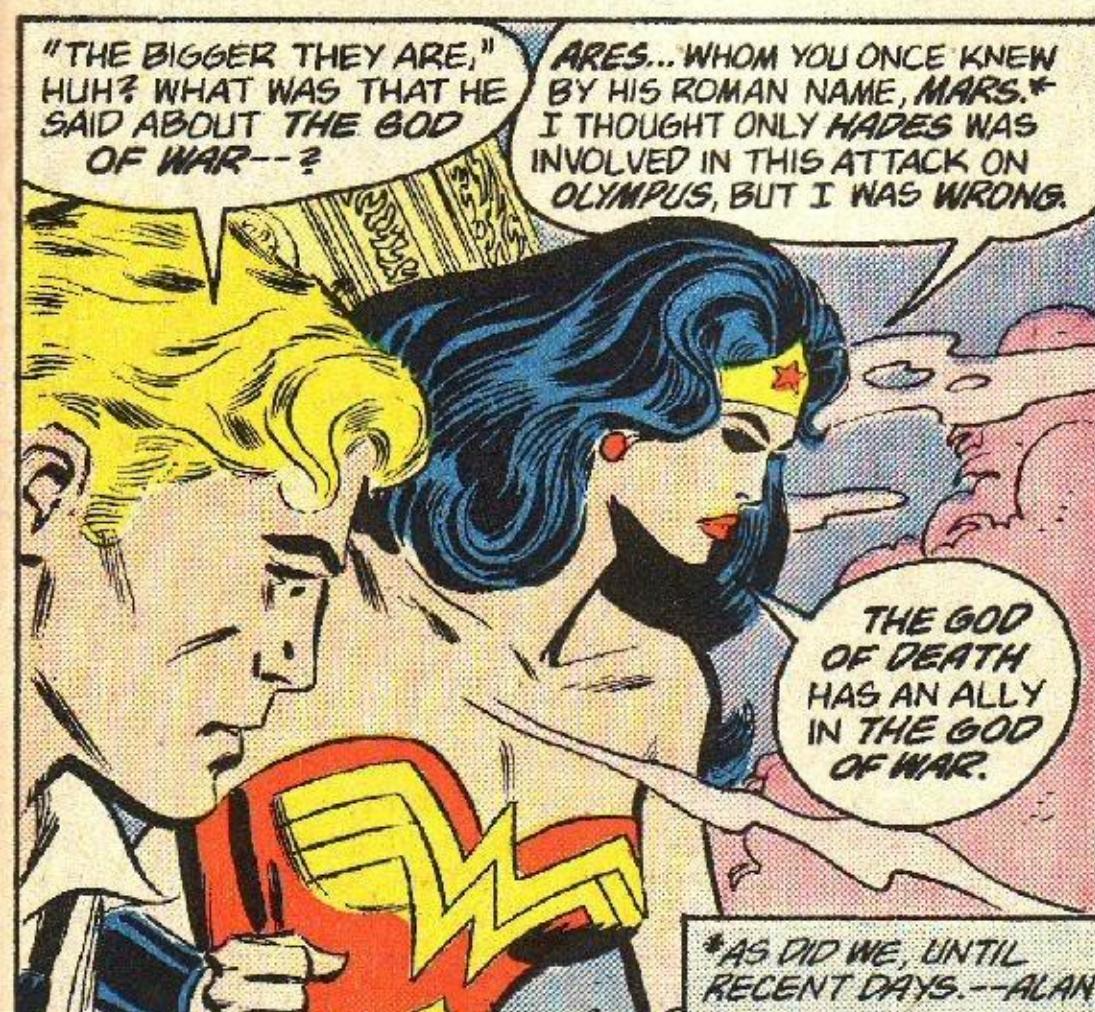
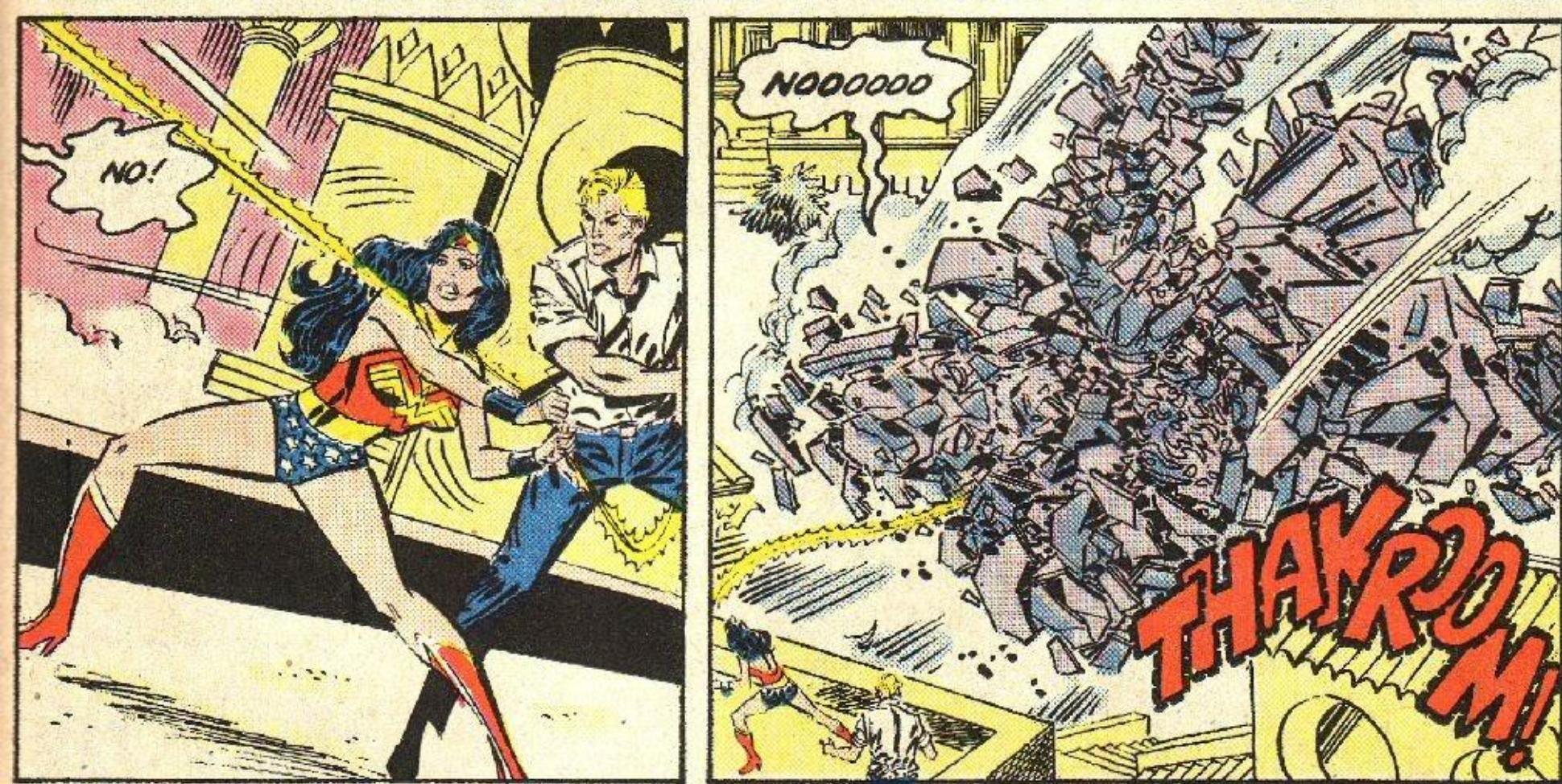
I DON'T
KNOW. I THOUGHT
THE WAR MIGHT
HAVE BEGUN
BY NOW...

THE WAR HAS
BEGUN, DAUGHTER
OF HIPPOLYTA!

THE WAR
HAS BEEN
FOUGHT--
AND WON!

KKRUNNCH





...HERE COMES THE
WAR-GOD NOW, AND
HE'S BROUGHT A
FEW FRIENDS.

ARES AND HADES...
RIDING IN COMMAND
OF AN ARMY OF
THE DEAD!

THEY ARE THE SHADES OF LEGEND, WARRIORS
WHOSE NAMES ARE HALLOWED IN THE EPICS
OF HOMER... MEN WHO FOUGHT WITH FIRE AND
FURY, FOR BLOOD AND HONOR AND DESTINY.

AGAMEMNON, LEADER OF THE ACHALEAN
GREEKS AT TROY... ACHILLES, FINEST WARRIOR
OF AN AGE... ODYSSEUS, BRILLIANT TACTITIAN,
FAVORITE OF ATHENA, WANDERER OF ANCIENT
SEAS... AJAX, GIANT AMONG MEN, SIMPLE
AND LOYAL...

THEY ARE HERE, THEY AND TENS OF THOUSANDS
AS NOBLE AND TRUE... RAISED FROM SHADOW TO
BATTLE ONCE MORE FOR GODS, AGAINST GODS,
IN THE NAME OF HATRED AND AMBITION.

AND IF THEY COULD FEEL,
THESE SHADOWS THAT
ONCE WERE MEN, WHAT
WOULD THEY FEEL?

REGRET & RESENTMENT THAT
THEIR WELL-EARNED REST HAS
BEEN SO RUDELY BROKEN?
RAGE?



WE MAY NEVER KNOW,
FOR THEIR LONG-
DEAD VOICES ARE
SILENT, AND THEIR
EYES REFLECT ONLY
THE DEEP DARKNESS
OF THE GRAVE...



AMAZON! I
SEE YOU FOUND MY
LITTLE ENCHANTMENT
LESS THAN AMUSING.
NO MATTER.

IN HONOR OF THE
BATTLES WE ONCE FOUGHT,
I OFFER YOU A SECOND
CHANCE TO SURRENDER... OR
SUFFER MY GODLY WRATH.



YOUR THREATS
DON'T FRIGHTEN
ME, ARES. YOU FEED
ON WAR, BUT IT'S
A FEAST YOU'VE
NEVER PREPARED
PERSONALLY.

WHERE HAVE
YOU IMPRISONED
YOUR SISTERS
AND BROTHERS?
WHAT HAVE YOU
DONE TO THE
GODS OF MOUNT
OLYMPUS?

'TWAS HADES WHO GAVE ME THE
SPELL--AND I DID WITH THEM NO
MORE THAN THEY'VE ALREADY
DONE TO THEMSELVES.



BLOODLESS
AND WITHOUT
PASSION HAVE THEY
BEEN IN SPIRIT
THESE TWO HUNDRED
CENTURIES,
FORGOTTEN BY
MANKIND...
REMEMBERED
ONLY IN
LEGEND.

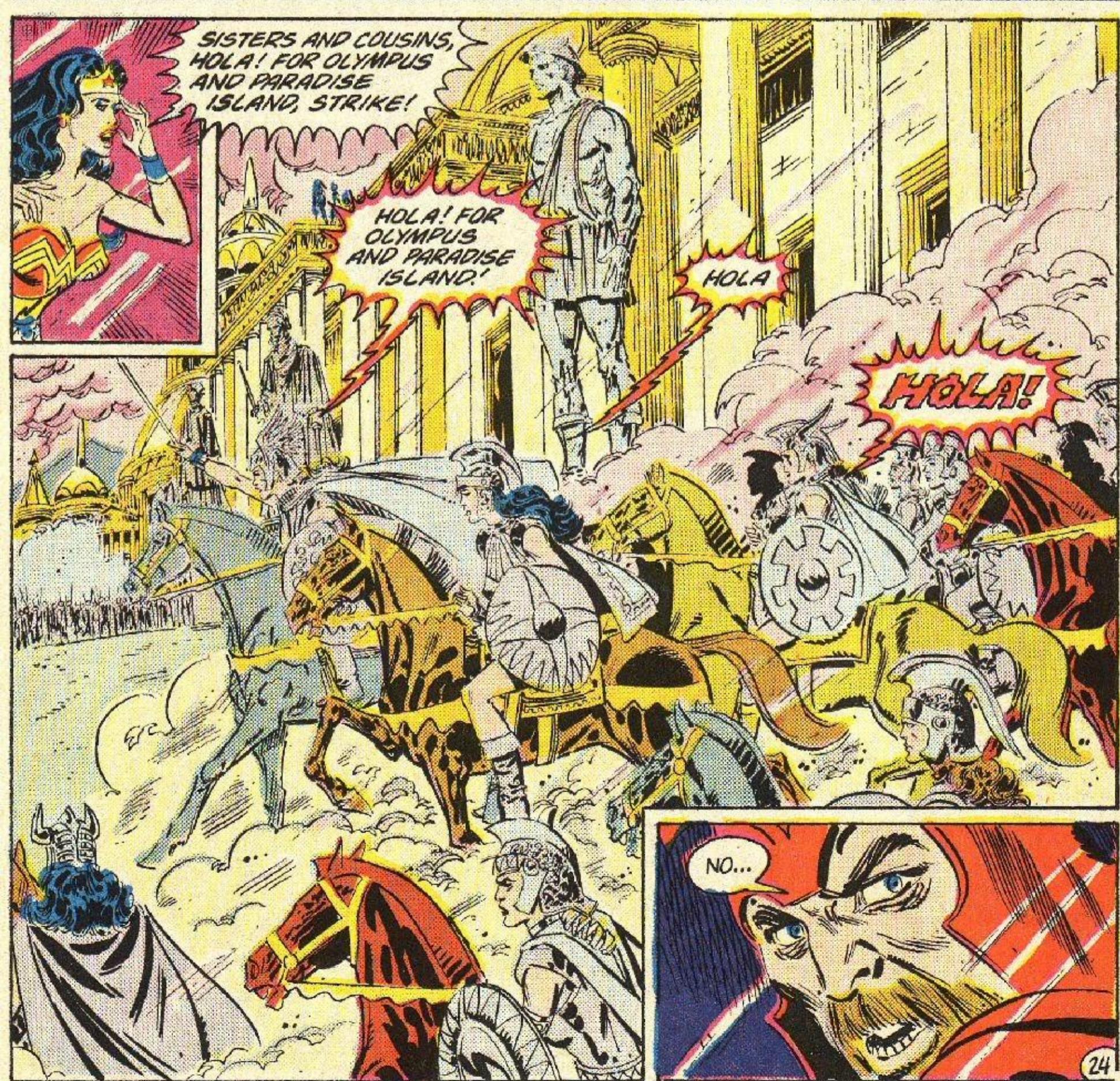
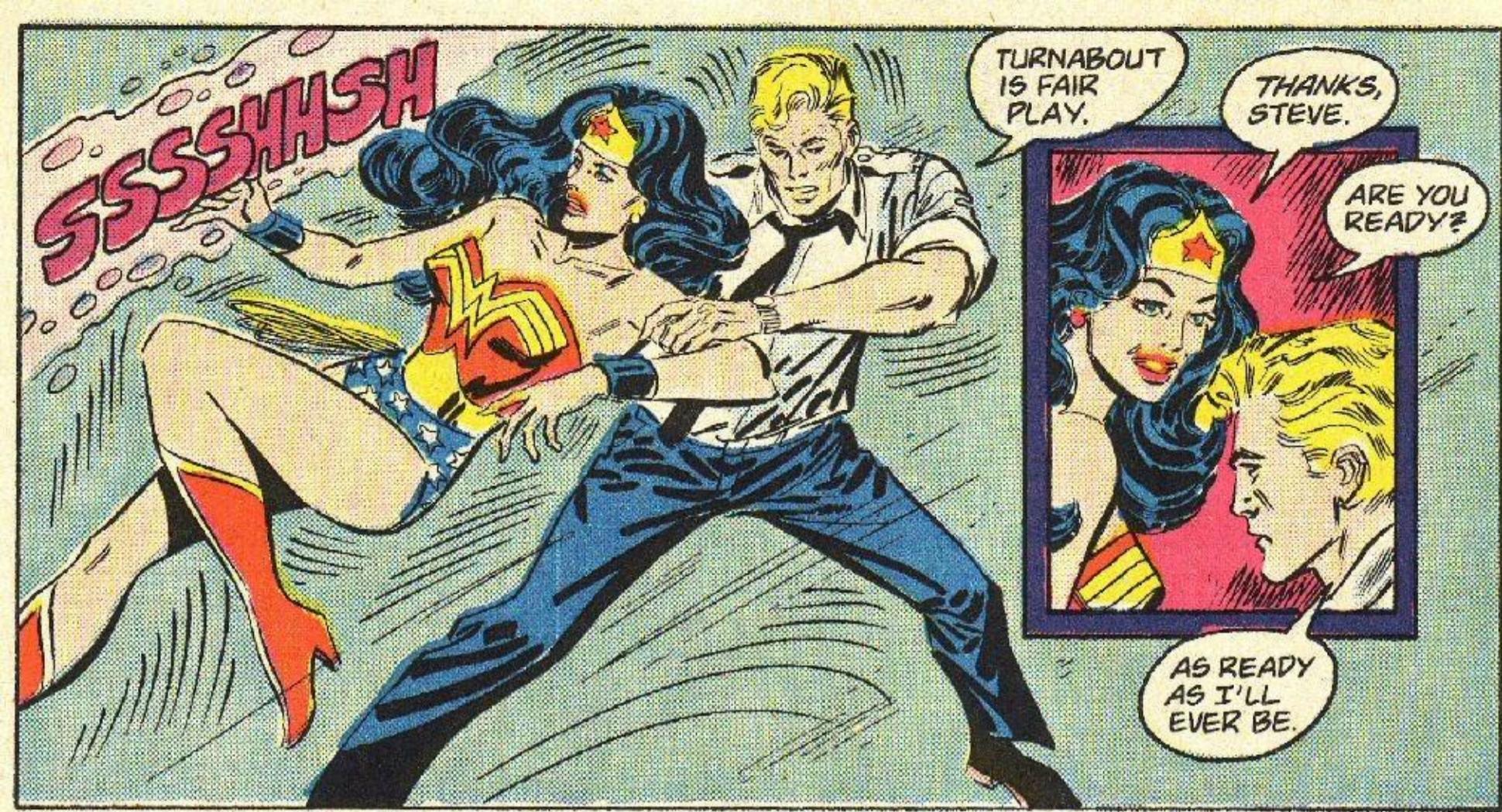
TIME AND AGAIN THEY IGNORED
MY DEMAND FOR WAR AGAINST
FAITHLESS HUMANITY. BLOODLESS
AND WITHOUT PASSION WERE
THEY, IN WORD AND DEED.



BLOODLESS AND
WITHOUT PASSION THEY
ARE NOW AND WILL
FOREVER REMAIN.

FOR HERE, NOW AND
EVERMORE, ARES
RULES OLYMPUS.





...TWO ARMIES OF AMAZONS...
PINCHING MY FORCES
BETWEEN THEM...!

TACTICAL DISASTER!
IT CANNOT BE! IT
MUST NOT BE!

HOLA! FOR
OLYMPUS!

HOLA! FOR
ATALANTA!

HOLA!

YOU WERE RIGHT, DIANA. THE MORTAL WARRIORS OF ATALANTA LEFT THEIR RAINFOREST HOME MOST WILLINGLY TO FIGHT BESIDE THEIR SISTER AMAZONS IN THIS TIME OF NEED.

THEY, AND YOUR SISTERS FROM PARADISE ISLAND. NOW, AT LAST, THE BREACH BETWEEN MORTAL AND IMMORTAL AMAZON IS HEALED BY HONOR.

FROM THIS HOUR FORTH, THERE IS BUT ONE AMAZON FAMILY...ONE SISTERHOOD... ONE DREAM.

KORE! YOU BROUGHT THEM, AS YOU PROMISED!

THANK YOU, GODDESS...FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE.

STEVE...STAY WITH KORE. HELP HER FIND THE GODS OF OLYMPUS. NO MATTER WHAT WE DO, ONLY THEY CAN DECIDE THIS BATTLE.

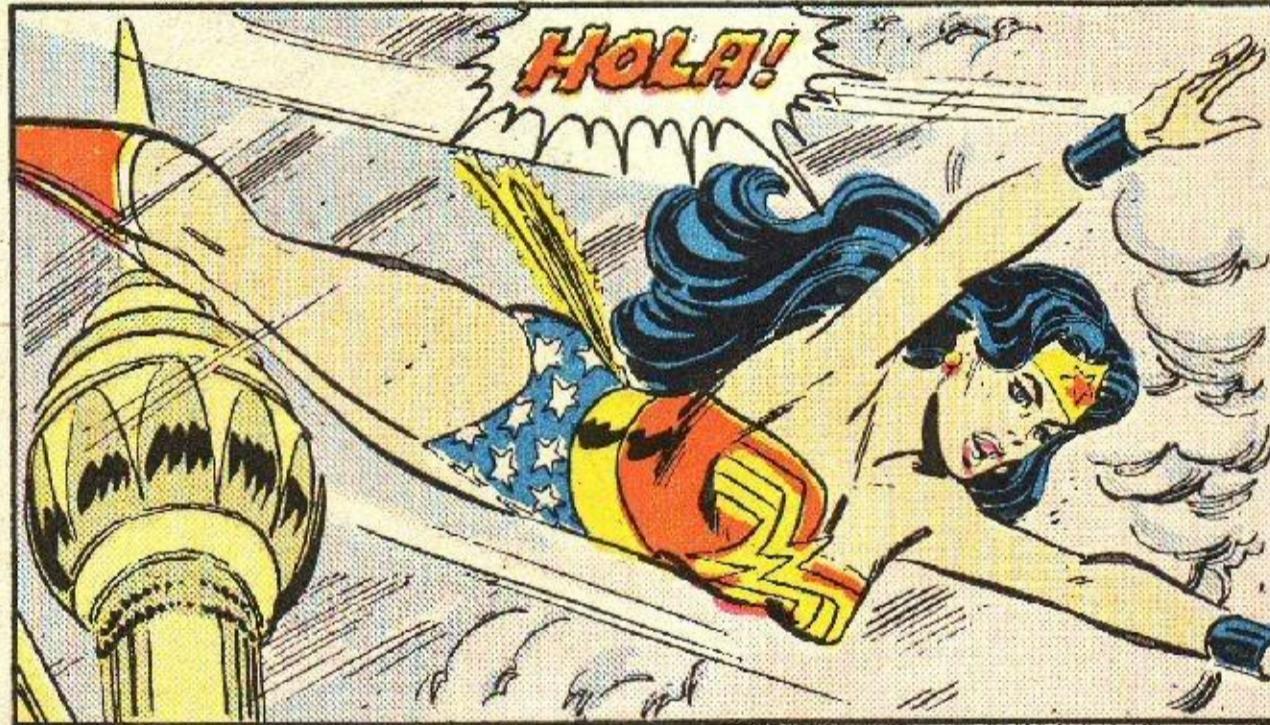
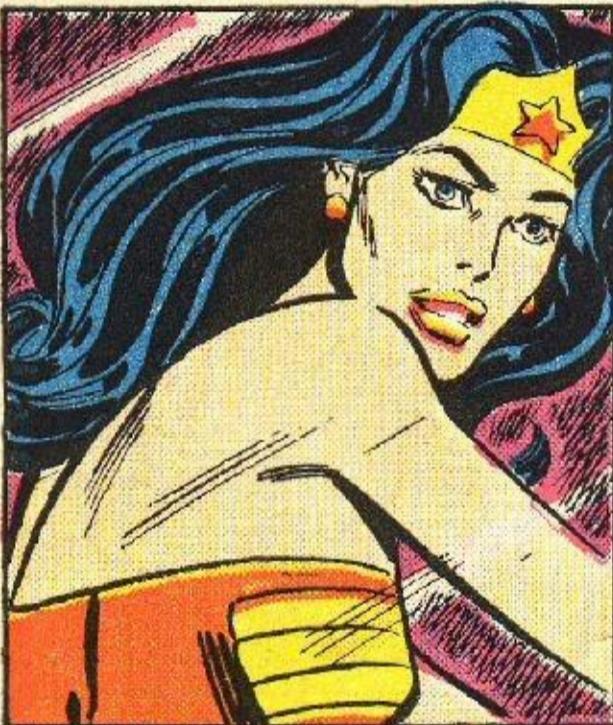
WAIT A MINUTE—I'M NOT LEAVING YOU, NOT NOW—

DO YOU BELIEVE IN DESTINY, MY DARLING? I DO.

OUR TWO LIVES HAVE BEEN
ENTWINED BY FATE SINCE
BEFORE THE WORLD WAS
BORN.

WHATEVER
HAPPENS... NOW OR
IN THE FUTURE...

...WE'LL BE TOGETHER TILL
THE END OF TIME.



KORE, YOU'RE A GODDESS...
WHATEVER THAT MEANS.
CAN YOU SEE HE FUTURE?



THIS CRISIS DIANA TOLD ME
ABOUT... THIS CONFLICT BETWEEN
MONITOR AND ANTI-MONITOR,
BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, WITH
WORLDS AND REALITIES HANGING
IN THE BALANCE... DO YOU KNOW
HOW IT WILL END?



WILL I EVER SEE
HER AGAIN?



MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF. I THINK IT'S THAT LOVE THAT'S BROUGHT ME BACK TO HER, TIME AND AGAIN... EVEN FROM DEATH.



SO, TOO, DID HADES LOVE ME... ONCE. PERHAPS THAT LOVE WILL YET REDEEM US BOTH.

IT DOESN'T MATTER. DIANA'S FIGHTING FOR HER LIFE... FOR THE LIVES OF HER SISTERS AND HER GODS... MAYBE FOR A WHOLE UNIVERSE...

...AND I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO!

BUT I STILL HAVE TO KNOW, WHAT ABOUT THE-KORE?

"AND I MAY JUST HAVE AN IDEA WHERE TO FIND THE GODS OF MOUNT OLYMPUS--!"

HERE IS LEGEND:

DAUGHTER OF HIPPOLYTA, AS LOVELY AS APHRODITE, AS WISE AS ATHENA, WITH THE SPEED OF HERMES AND THE STRENGTH OF HERCULES, SHE IS THE GREATEST OF ALL THE AMAZONS, A BEACON OF LIGHT IN THE GATHERING NIGHT!

UNWISE ARE THOSE WHO FORGET THE POWER SHE WIELDS-- THE POWER OF HOPE, THE POWER OF JUSTICE, THE POWER OF TRUTH RESTORED.

GONE! WHAT DID SHE MEAN, HADES' LOVE MIGHT REDEEM THEM BOTH!

SHE IS WONDER WOMAN...

...AND THIS IS HER FINEST HOUR!

THAT CURSED WOMAN...
THAT AMAZON! SHE WILL
BE OUR UNDOING! HER
WARRIORS ARE EVERYWHERE...
AND BY HER EXAMPLE, SHE
INSPIRES THEM TO EVER
GREATER HEROISM!

CALM YOURSELF.
LOOK MORE CLOSELY.

"YES, OUR SOLDIERS
FALL... BUT HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN? OURS IS
AN ARMY OF THE
DEAD..."

"...AND THE DEAD
CANNOT DIE BUT
ONCE, EVEN AT THE
HANDS OF SUCH
WARRIORS AS THESE."

"THEY FALL AND
RISE AGAIN..."

WE CANNOT FAIL. THE VICTORY,
ARES, IS ALREADY OURS.

YOU'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
TOO MUCH A
DEFEATIST FOR MY
TASTE, HADES. I'LL
MAKE THE VICTORY
CERTAIN BY SLAYING
THE AMAZON
MYSELF.

AND WHAT WILL YOUR
VICTORY WIN YOU,
HUSBAND? MORE SOULS
TO RULE IN HELL?

KORE!
TREACHEROUS
WOMAN, WHY
DO YOU COME
TO ME NOW?

I COME TO TURN YOU FROM
EVIL, HADES. BUT FIRST SAY
WHY YOU SPEAK OF
"TREACHERY" TO ME...

WHERE WAS YOUR FAITH IN THE HOUR
OF MY NEED? YOU FLED MY KINGDOM.
YOU ABANDONED ME TO UNKNOWN
FATE. HE TOLD ME WHY... THE
ANTI-MONITOR.

...WHO HAS
BEEN FAITHFUL
TO YOU SINCE
TIME BEGAN.

YOU HATE ME.
YOU HAVE ALWAYS
HATED ME.

HUSBAND, IT IS YOUR
HEART THAT IS
TWISTED BY HATE,
NOT MINE.

...I HAVE GIVEN YOU MY LOVE.
IF YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE
MY WORDS, THEN BELIEVE
THIS, HADES, MY HUSBAND.

TRUE, YOU HAVE
BEEN MORE A WARDER
TO ME THAN A LOVER. YET
I HAVE GIVEN YOU FIDELITY
AND UNDERSTANDING...
MORE THAN THIS...

AMAZON!

TURN. MEET
YOUR
DESTINY.



CALL IT A WILD GUESS, BUT
I'VE GOT AN IDEA I KNOW
WHERE THE GODS ARE.
AND I'LL SAY THIS
FOR ARES.

HE'S GOT
A PRETTY FINE
TASTE FOR
IRONY.

THEY FIGHT, GRUNTING
BUT WORDLESS, FOR
THERE IS NOTHING
LEFT TO SAY.

NEITHER WILL BE
SATISFIED WITH
LESS THAN TOTAL
VICTORY.

FOR THE OTHER,
VICTORY MEANS
HOPE AND LOVE.

FOR ONE, VICTORY MEANS
CRUSHING HIS ENEMIES.

KRASSH!

AGAINST SUCH POWER, EVEN A
GOD MAY NOT LONG PREVAIL...

...NOT EVEN A GOD
OF DEATH...

HE LIED. THE ANTI-MONITOR LIED. YOU DID NOT FORSAKE ME.

HE IS THE MASTER OF LIES, MY HUSBAND. HE IS DARKNESS. SERVE HIM NO LONGER.

BUT THE ANTI-MONITOR... HE HOLDS THE UNDERWORLD...

BREAK YOUR PACT WITH ARES. LET THE DEAD HAVE THEIR PEACE.

WE WILL FACE HIM TOGETHER, MY LOVE. WHAT WILL BE WILL BE.

"AS YOU SAY, WIFE.
OUR DESTINY IS AT HAND."

HIPPOLYTA, DO YOU SEE--?
THE DARK WARRIOR'S FADE LIKE A WAKING DREAM!

I SEE ATALANTA,
BUT I CAN SCARCELY CREDIT MY EYES! WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

IT MEANS, O QUEEN, WE'VE WON... FOR WHATEVER REASON, WHATEVER FATE...

"...WE HAVE WON!"

YOU HEAR, ARES? YOUR ALLY HAS ABANDONED YOU. YOU HAVE NO ARMY, YOU HAVE NO WAR!

IT'S OVER!

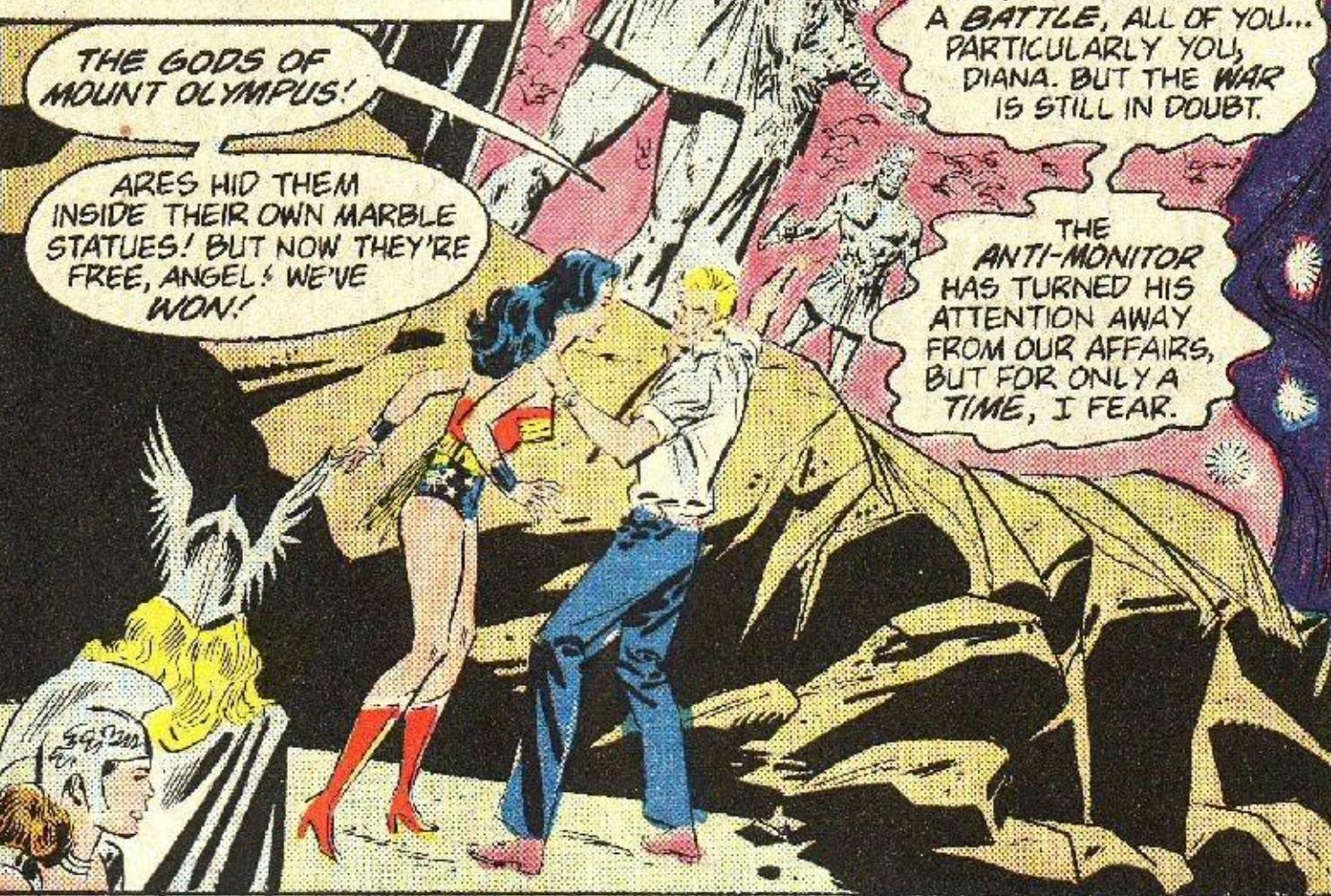
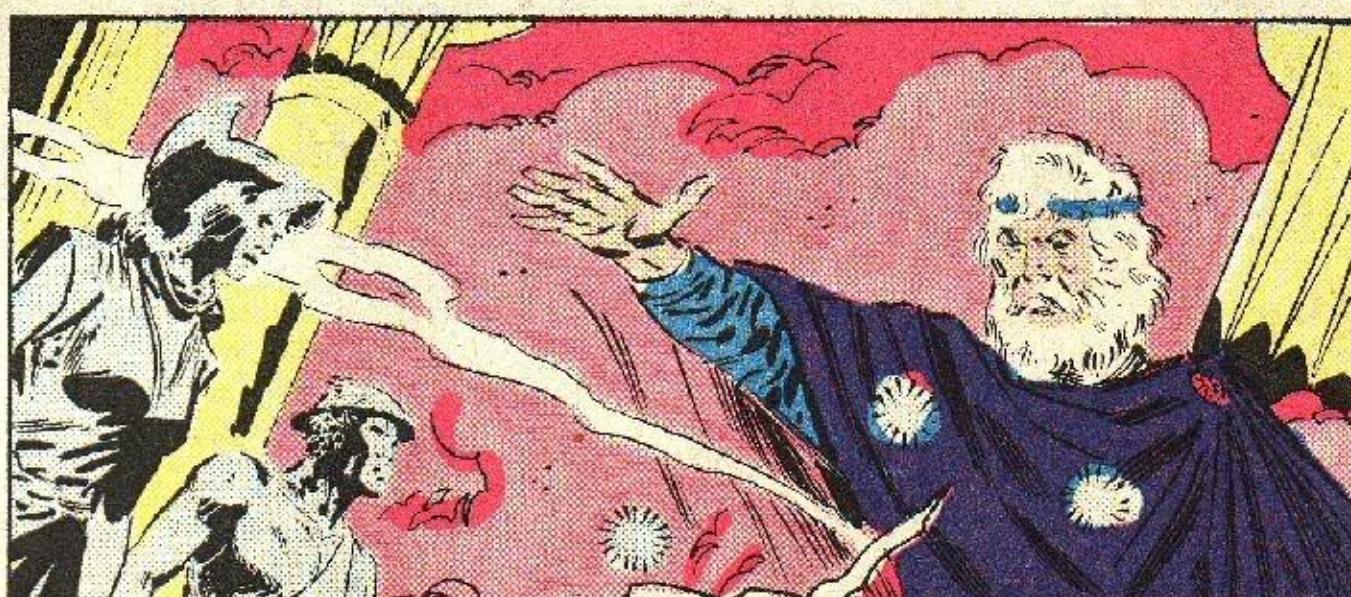
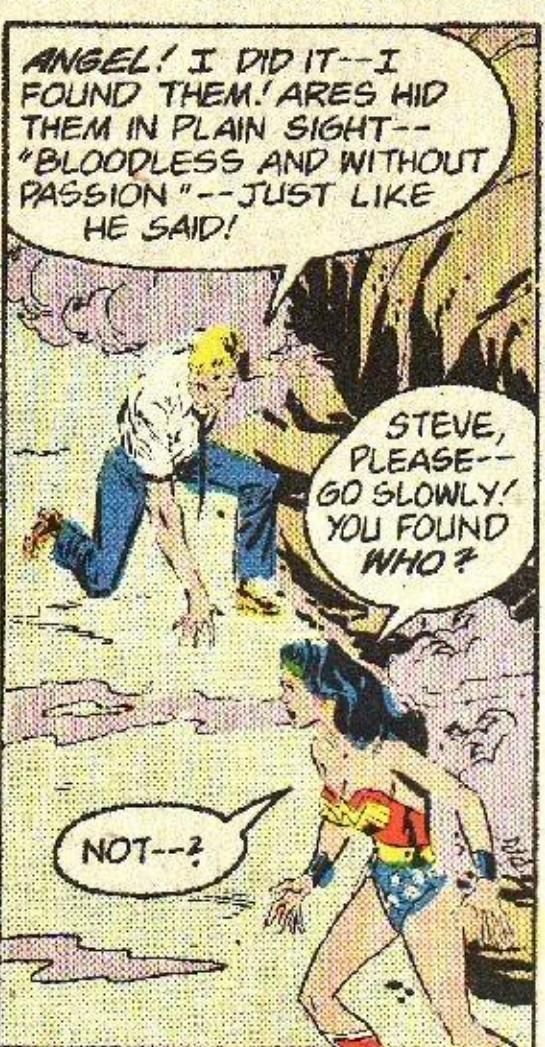
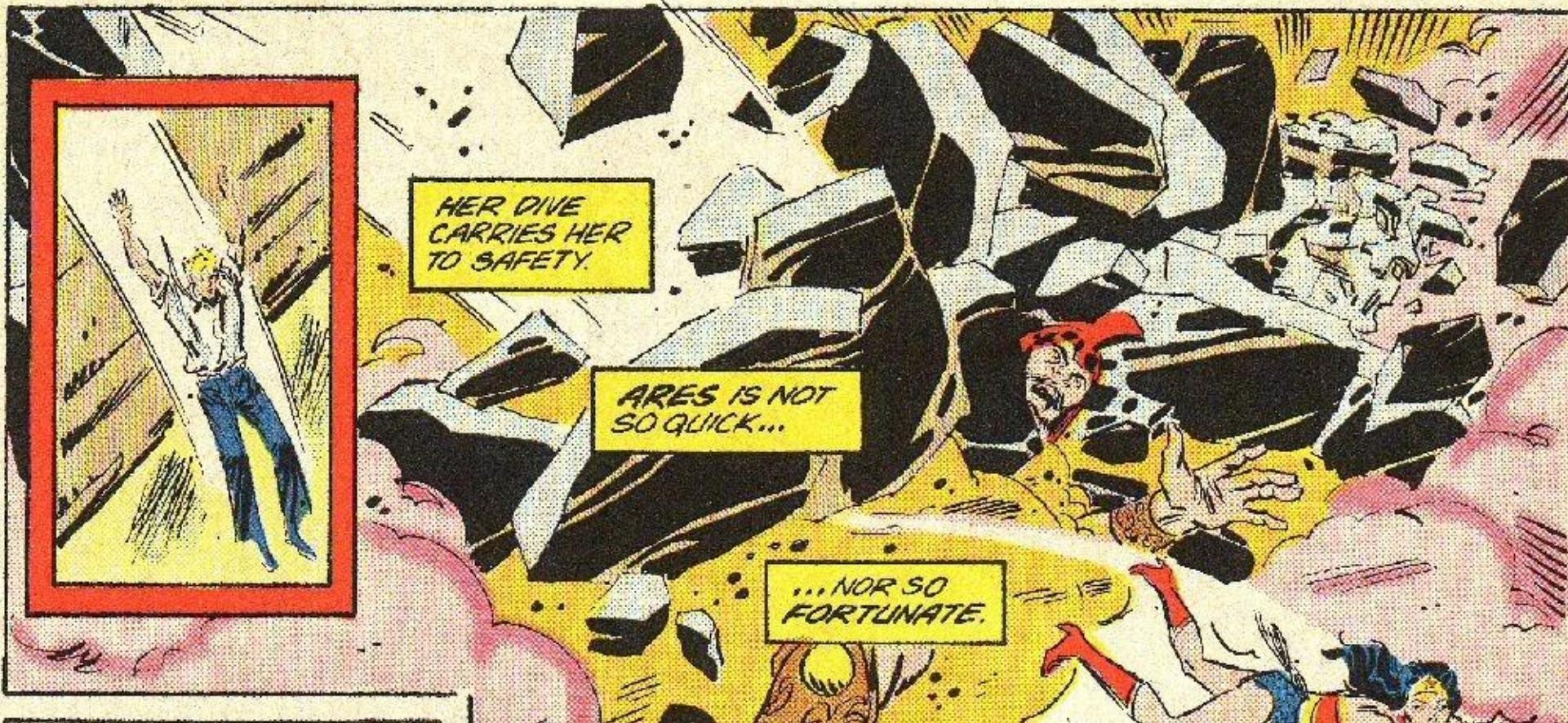
I STILL HOLD THE GODS, AMAZON! THEY ARE MY HOSTAGES! NOT EVEN HADES KNOWS WHERE I'VE IMPRISONED THEM--ONLY I HAVE THAT KNOWLEDGE!

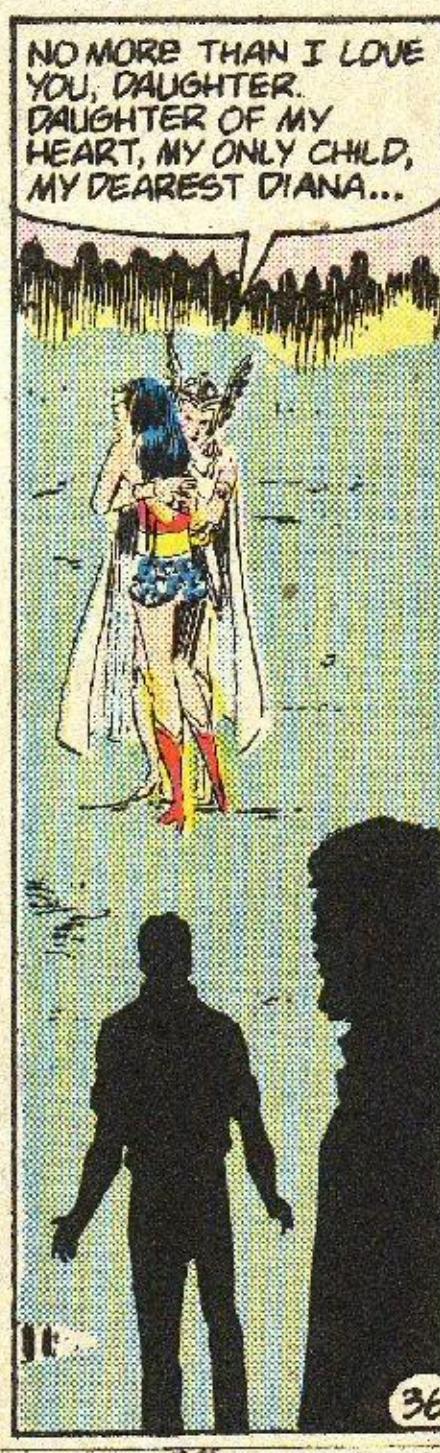
YOU HAVE NOTHING, ARES, BUT YOUR OWN BRITTLE HATE!

KRRACK!

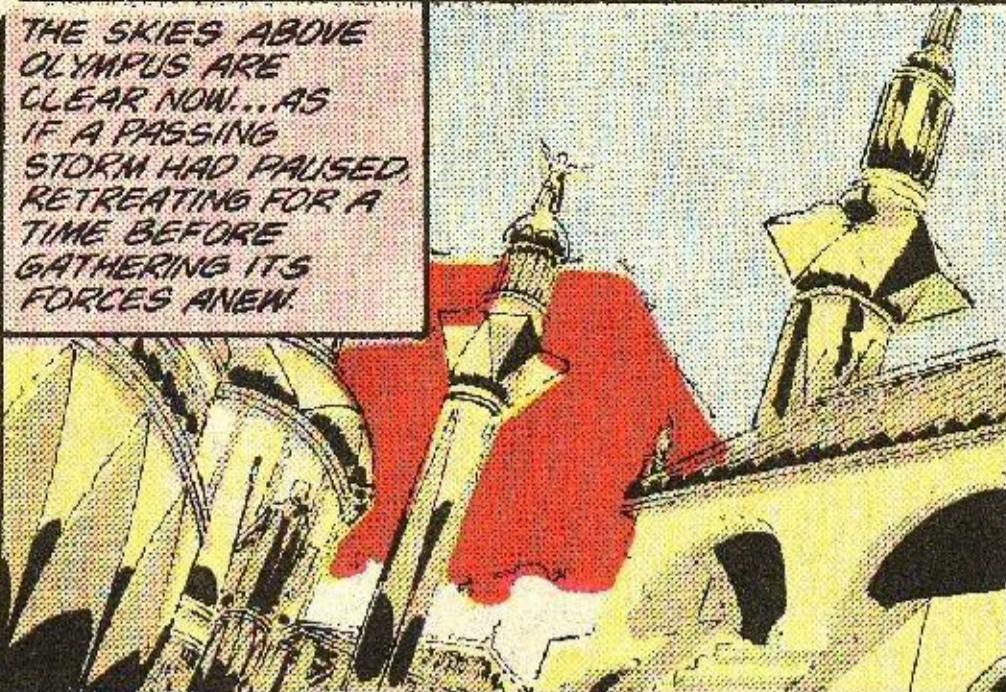
THE AXE BREAKS WITH A SOUND LIKE A CRACK OF THUNDER, SHATTERING HOPES, DREAMS, AND BITTER FANTASIES... AND IT IS ECHOED AN INSTANT LATER BY ANOTHER SOUND, A CREAK OF SLIDING MARBLE, AND A WILD TRIUMPHANT YELL...

SHE KNOWS THAT YELL. IT IS THE ONLY WARNING SHE NEEDS.

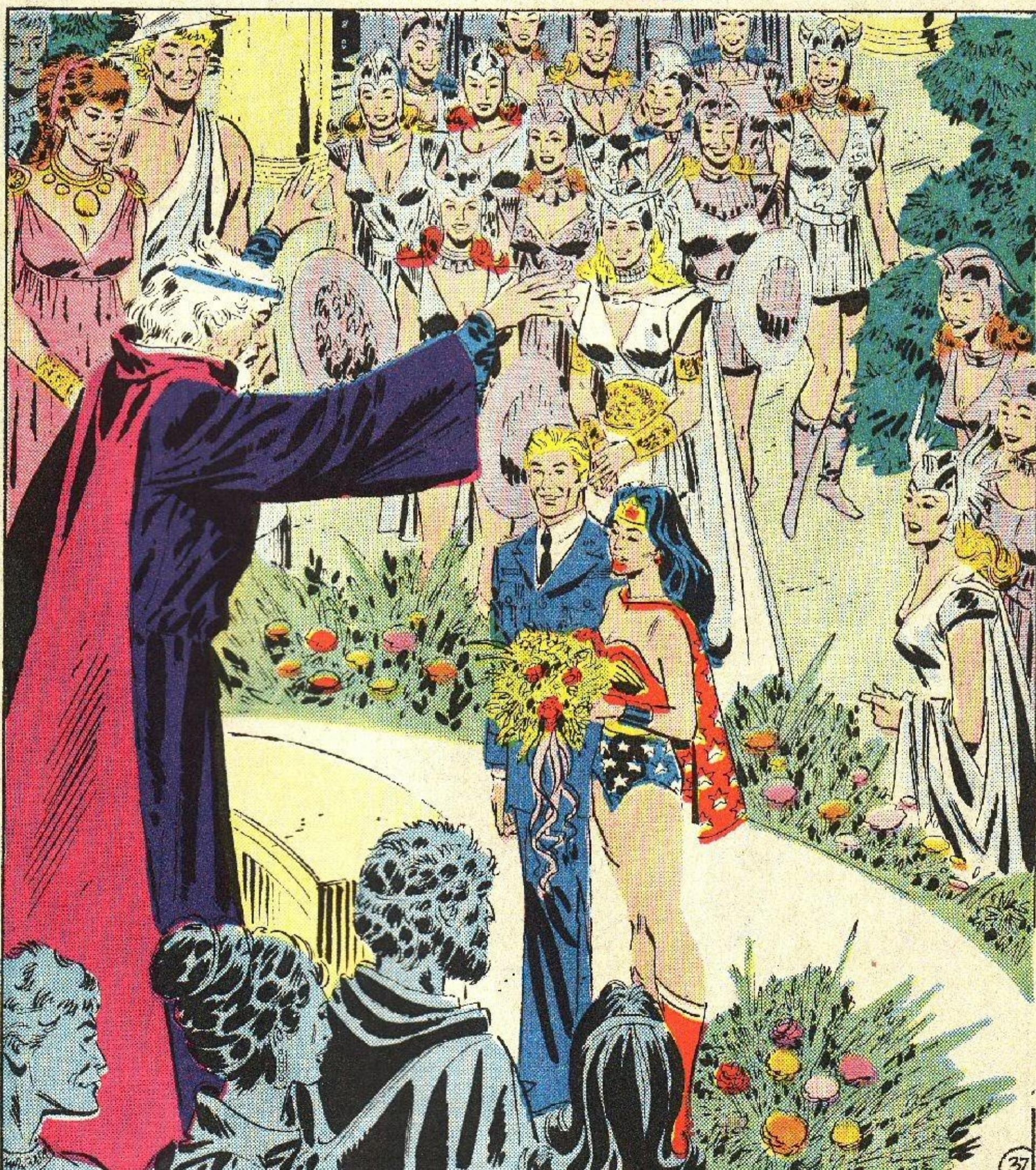


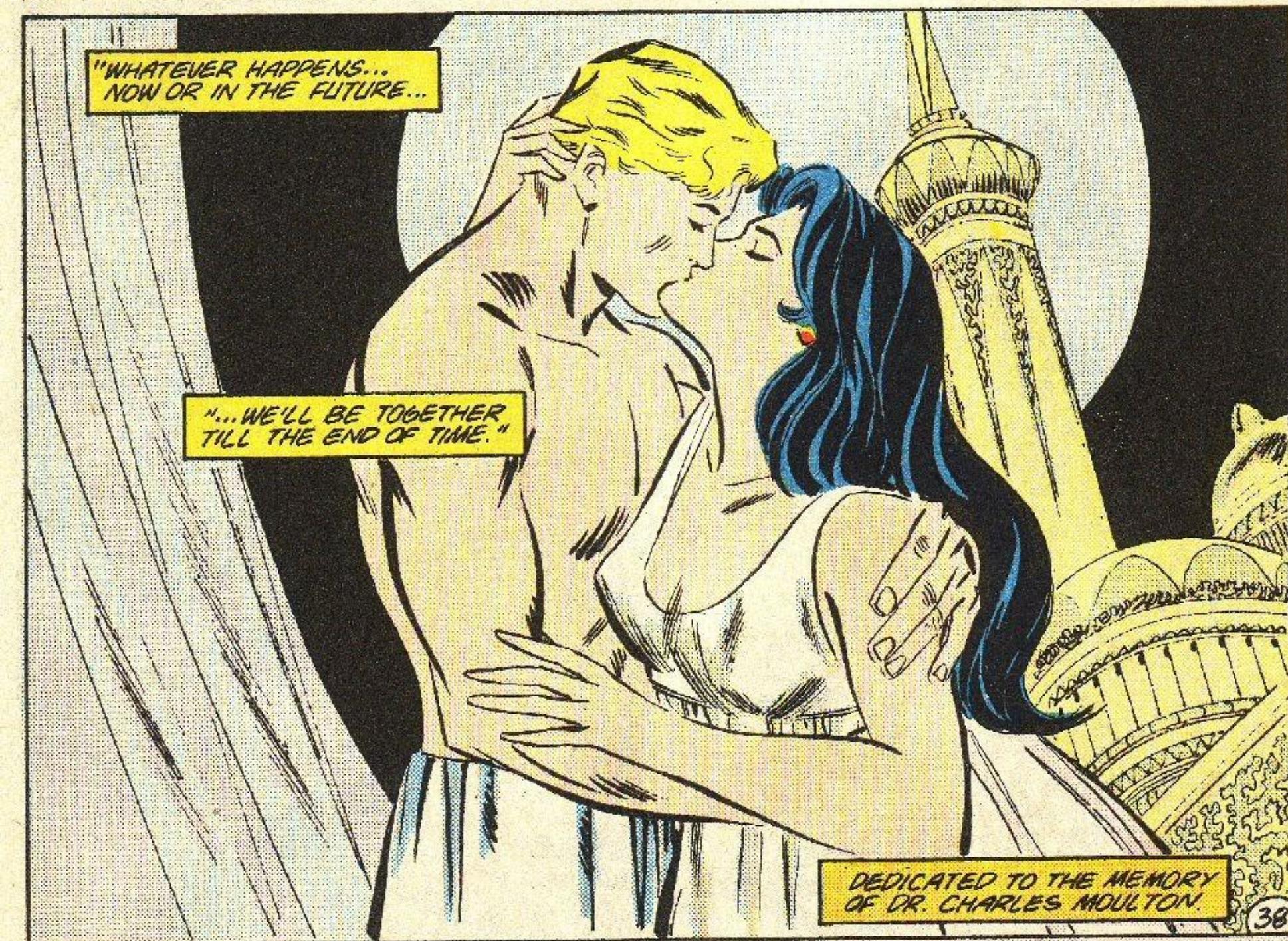
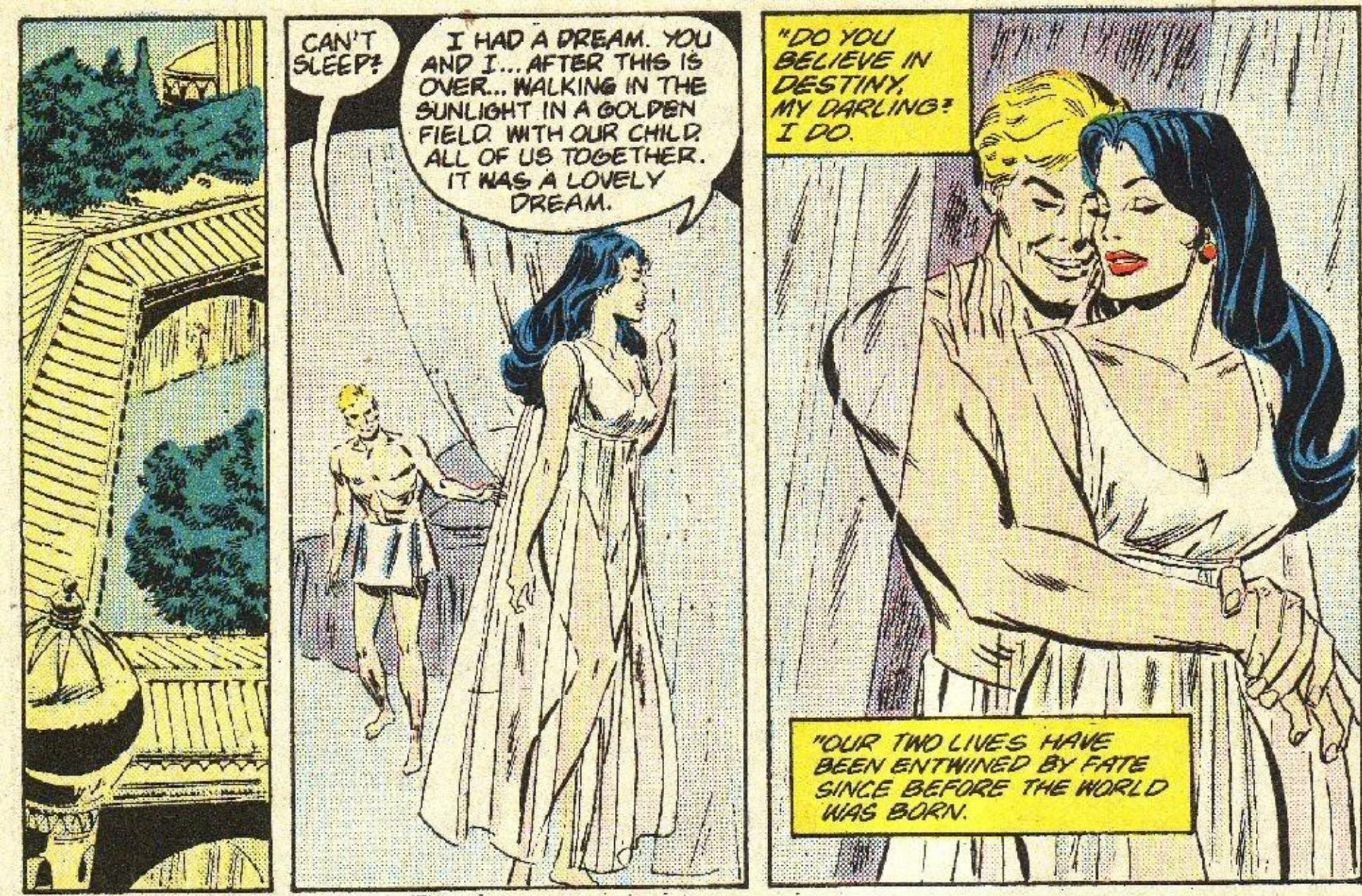


THE SKIES ABOVE OLYMPUS ARE CLEAR NOW...AS IF A PASSING STORM HAD PAUSED, RETREATING FOR A TIME BEFORE GATHERING ITS FORCES ANEW.

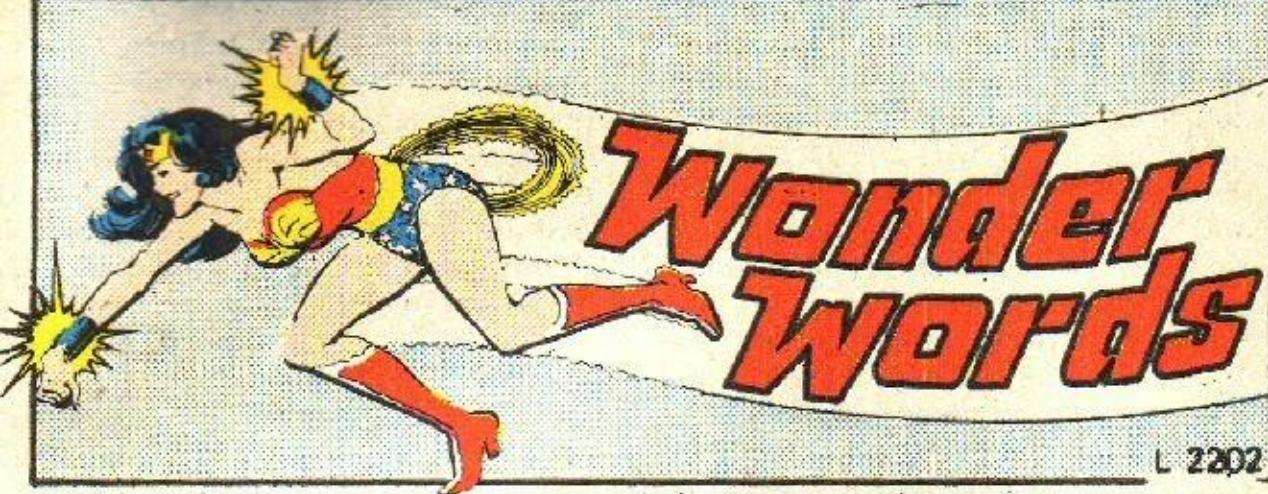


AND THE DAY IS HUSHED, SAWE FOR ONE RICH VOICE, ECHOING WITH DEPTHS OF WISDOM AND POWER UNIMAGINABLE BY MORTAL MAN...





NEXT MONTH: IN CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS #12
WONDER WOMAN FACES HER GREATEST, FINAL CHALLENGE!
NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN--NOTHING!



Wonder Words

L 2202

And so it ends ... for the moment.

In a few weeks, the final issue of DC's stupendous maxi-series, CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS, will be on sale. It will feature Diana, Princess of Paradise Island, in the most dramatic adventure of her life. Believe me, this is not just a lot of hot-air hooey! (And it's not exactly what you may be dreading, either, so settle down.)

After the CRISIS...

Well, as the blurb-bringers have it, Nothing Will Ever Be Quite the Same Again. Really.

To tell the whole story, early next year, if all goes according to schedule, I'll be turning over the editorial reins to Janice Race, who's ready, willing, and eminently able to set the team galloping ahead. She has been working for several months already, as a matter of fact, with a bright new writer named Greg Potter. Actually, he's not all that new, as those of you who followed his maxi-series, JEMM, SON OF SATURN, can attest. Anyway, they have plenty of interesting modifications in store for you—but don't you worry, this isn't going to be just a turn-her-on-her-head-and-spin-her-around "fix" that improves nothing. They're just trying to make a WONDER WOMAN series that's right for the post-CRISIS DC Universe.

In the meantime, there's a treat in store for you between this issue of WONDER WOMAN and Greg's first one.

You may be familiar with the work of a writer-artist named Trina Robbins. She's a co-author of Women in the Comics, and there is no greater fan of Wonder Woman. So one day I had a brainstorm, and I asked her whether she'd like to consider doing a four-issue mini-series for the Princess of Power. "Would H?" she shouted. Let's just put it this way—my acclaimed powers of persuasion weren't even given a quiz, let alone a full-fledged test.

To make a long story a bit shorter, she's already begun working on the series as I write this, and her first issue should be out shortly after the end of the CRISIS.

Dear Editor,

In answer to the question you posed in #326's lettercol: No, I don't think that Wonder Woman should fight "street-level" crime, at least not very often. Firstly, from an internal standpoint, it wouldn't make much sense for her to deal with "ordinary" criminals. She has great powers, which are far better suited to fighting the larger threats or super-villains that seem quite abundant

on Earth-1 (or whatever it will be called after CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS), rather than problems that can be handled by the police or by heroes with lesser powers. This doesn't mean she should ignore a mugging in the street if she comes upon one, but rather that her focus and energies are more logically directed towards bigger things.

From an external standpoint, I think that having WW fight street-level crime would hurt the mag's integrity and believability. Wonder Woman is very much a character of fantasy, of great ideals and fantastic powers, with literally mythological proportions. To plunge her into the grimy world of street crime is too big a contrast, too jarring a contradiction with what we know to be true. Better that she stick to fantastic adventures that can have a sweeping symbolic worth. When Hercules had to perform a "janitorial" task, he didn't sweep the gutters of Athens, but rather cleaned the Augean stables. Likewise, Diana should not be tied to the everyday world, but be a representative in dealing with our hopes, dreams, and fears writ large in the tapestry of our imaginations.

"T.M. Maple"
Weston, Ontario
Canada

Dear Alan:

I have just finished WONDER WOMAN #326, "Tropidor Heat." I must say that this is the kind of Wonder Woman story that I enjoy. A lot of action and good storyline without a lot of clutter.

Mindy Newell is doing a very fine job as writer on this series. I think that she is going to prove to be the writer for Wonder Woman. I wish her well.

There isn't a whole lot I can say about Don Heck. If you've read my letters before, you know that I am the number-one Don Heck fan in America. I have been for close to twenty years. It is so nice to see Don doing his own inks. I would still like to see one whole issue dedicated to Steve Trevor in a "Steve Canyon" style of story.

Stephen Scott Beau Smith
COMICAST
Barbourville, WV

Dear Alan,

"A World in Chaos" was even better than last issue! Tezcatlipoca's reign of madness as a prelude to the Crisis on Infinite Earths was handled very well by Mindy Newell. I especially enjoyed the

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
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part about the repeating time-cycle. It was quite a shock to see Lauren Haley die, then return to life, and Keith Griggs getting killed over and over again! Never has Tezcatlipoca looked more insane and Wonder Woman looked more determined during this bizarre scene. I always thought she had enough will power to fuel ten of Green Lantern's rings, and her valiant breaking of the time-cycle proves it!

The subplots have advanced even better than last issue. I like them paced this way. I'm really enjoying the one unfolding on Paradise Island, especially now that the gods of Olympus are becoming involved.

Thanks, everyone, for an excellent issue! Keep 'em coming!

Neil Ahlquist
Columbia Heights, MN

Mindy Newell:

What you have done with WONDER WOMAN in the first issue you wrote is nothing short of miraculous. Out of loyalty to the favorite childhood superhero of my youth, I had continued to buy WONDER WOMAN, but usually found myself reluctantly sitting down to plod through another issue instead of looking forward to it. Now I am looking forward to it and wish the title was again a monthly.

Suddenly, under your guidance, the characters are alive and I care about them again. Wonder Woman with a towel around her head, Etta losing her temper, Hippolyta's face showing lines of fatigue and strain, the intriguing new characters and plot lines, Wonder Woman having made a mess out of breakfast ... there's so many things and no need to list them all here. They all add up to raising WONDER WOMAN back to the level the title deserves. Yes, I look forward to reading it again now, and for that I and all her other fans can only thank you most sincerely—guess we're your fans too now!

Asa Drake
Dallas, TX

Dear Alan,

WONDER WOMAN has gone for so long without real and consistent quality that it is refreshing and exciting to see anything resembling quality in these pages. I have always been a fan of Wonder Woman the character, but not always a fan of WONDER WOMAN the book. I admire the character because to my interpretation she is the ideal of

womanhood—embodying grace, wisdom, beauty, etc. She is not a carbon copy of a male hero (such as Supergirl, She-Hulk, ad infinitum). She should be one of the most successful, interesting, thought-provoking characters in comics.

Instead we have seen her presented as everything from a female Superman (complete with Steve Howard/Trevor to play a male Lois Lane) to a man-hating belligerent female chauvinist. We have seen her stripped of power and we have seen her prove that Diana Prince can be a hundred times more boring than Clark Kent. We have seen her comic format changed to WWII to fit a TV show. "When," scream her remaining faithful, "will we see a real wonder of a woman?"

Whew. Sorry, had to get that off my chest. Anyway, I said that there was some quality here, and truly "Tropidor Heat" was the best WONDER WOMAN story in quite some time. Okay, that's not saying a whole lot, but it's still a lot better than so much of what we have seen in the past. Here is why the story worked:

1. The cover was excellent in portraying the true helplessness that one person—even a super-powered person—feels in the face of military chaos. It was an excellent enticement to the story. It was also strong artistically because of the extreme distance between a foreground and background that were equally important in portraying the moment.

2. The change of scenery was nice. Steamy tropical jungles are always a good backdrop for suspense and intrigue.

3. Suspense and intrigue—I mean come on! Di works with Army intelligence. This sort of mystery and action should be commonplace, instead of being seen so rarely.

4. The story started in the middle, near to the heart of the action. Sometimes, starting a story in the beginning is the most boring way to begin.

5. The supporting characters are becoming interesting, and the two reporters who have found themselves tangled in this plot added a lot in story interest.

6. No costumed idiot bad-guys running around (well, at least for the first 22 pages). To be honest, Wonder Woman has very few worthy costumed opponents, so until some good foes come along, it's best to keep that kind of conflict to a minimum.

The story had two weak points, however:

1. Wonder Woman should never have appeared in Tropidor in costume. She was not using the wisdom of Athena in that move. Surely she is aware that her skimpy, flashy suit would attract unwanted attention that might endanger the lives of Americans in the country if her presence was interpreted as outside intervention (which it was). It would have added much to the story if she had to work in plain clothes to find Keith Griggs.

2. (Out comes the soapbox.) The other weakness was the main character. Wonder Woman remains as bland and directionless and hard as I recall her being for many years. What is her purpose in Man's World? To battle evil and champion justice, like it says every issue, right? That's kind of generic, don't you think? And hopeless, too. No, the theme of Wonder Woman, from the beginning, has been to balance the qualities of womanhood with the shortcomings of Man's World. That just happens to include battling evil, etc. What qualities impelled Diana to do what she did for Steve Trevor those many years ago? Love, compassion, concern, tenderness. She came to bring those to Man's World. She came here to show us that men and women need each other; that the strengths and qualities of each sex balance the weaknesses of the other when they are in harmony. If you don't believe my statements, read the first few WONDER WOMAN stories and then see if I am correct. Somewhere over the years that theme has been totally lost, and it must be regained if this book is to ever amount to anything. Sure, Wonder Woman will profess love and peace between the sexes once in a while, but it is not a driving theme in her life. Her character is flat. She never seems to exist as an emotional being, or as a sexual (i.e., female) being, and (immortal Amazon technicalities aside) she seldom comes across as a human being. Indeed, the only two characteristics she consistently displays (strength and beauty) show her existing as only a physical being. And yet, didn't she come to show everyone that women exist as more than physical beings? She must be shown as more than that herself!

Whew, again! My keyboard is melting. I hope that this can get some thoughts flowing. Thanks.

Donald G. Shelton
Nicholasville, KY

Dear Wonder People,

I've been a reader of this title for about five years now, and I've written in only once before, to suggest making Paradise Island, the Greek gods and goddesses shown, and the Amazons more in keeping with the Ancient Greece they came from: in dress, behavior, and general culture. I was glad to see that very change soon after I wrote, whether my letter had anything to do with the change or not. This time I only have comments to keep doing what you're already doing. I really like the way the peripheral characters have been brought into the story and action, and how their individual adventures interweave with Wonder Woman's (Keith Griggs, Lt. Haley, Howard and Etta, and others). Thanks for slimming Etta down just a little.

I hope we've seen the end of the Aztec god of madness, Tezcatlipoca, after this story line (issue 327, "A World in Chaos"). Too much more of him and he

will degenerate into a silly villain. As one interested in past cultures, I liked seeing the Aztecs as living people for once, and not just carvings on a wall. The god of madness' exit was suitably dramatic, too, at issue's end: fading into a whirlwind with a warning about Man's World (what a lead-in to CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS).

Ron Smith

Thanks, too, to everyone else who wrote:

Chuck Birdwell
George A. Williams
Dave Breese
Ruben Gonzalez
Deely Gorman
Kenneth Perrin
Edward Witt
Paraic Kenny
Rodney Sneed
Keith Drawbaugh
Stephen Baer
Robin Miller
Jim Keplinger
Mitch Evans
Greg Armentrout
Rinaldo Mathews
Victor F. Martinez
Marc Wilkofsky
Craig Butler
James Roberson
Charles David Haskell
Robert Bruce Braley
Delmo (The Saint) Walters, Jr.
Brent, Burt, and Brian Bolen
WW's biggest fan, from Boone, NC

If I've omitted anyone, as always it was an oversight I regret. Sorry there wasn't space this time around for personal replies to your queries.

I'd like to thank Gerry Conway, too, for giving us a truly smashing and satisfying conclusion to this chapter in the life of Wonder Woman. And it would be downright negligent of me to refrain for one more minute from singing the praises of Mr. Don Heck, who outdid himself this time around. If anybody wishes to comment on these statements, he or she can send them to me, c/o DC Comics Inc. A few kind words mean a lot to everyone, even a well-established pro.

Now comes the hard part. In school newspapers, graduating journalists always sign their last columns "Thirty" and write all sorts of uplifting or lachrymose sententiousness about the Next Big Step in Life and all that stuff—and believe me, it's taking a lot of effort on my part to avoid such excesses.

Here's hoping you enjoy Trina's mini-series and Greg's new series, too. And I'm hoping to hear from a lot of you, too, in the letter columns of the other books I edit. (Modesty keeps me from naming them here. You'll just have to go to the comic racks and buy every DC comic you can find!)

—Alan



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