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#1012



WAR OF THE GODS

11

WONDER WOMAN

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TALES FROM THE FRONT LINES

Chapter 18: He was a dark and stormy knight. Peering down the inky streets of Gotham City below like a living gargoyle, his intensity was obvious even from where I was positioned.

Any second now, I thought, this winged cobra is going to spring and attack. No mercy. No quarter. That's the way he's stayed alive all these years -- facing down crooks and murderers that overmatched a dozen lesser men at a time. Hell, that's why he's the Batman.

And now he even had a new partner wearing the mantle of Robin, another crazy kid who thinks he's immortal.



I was beginning to think this wasn't such a good idea after all.

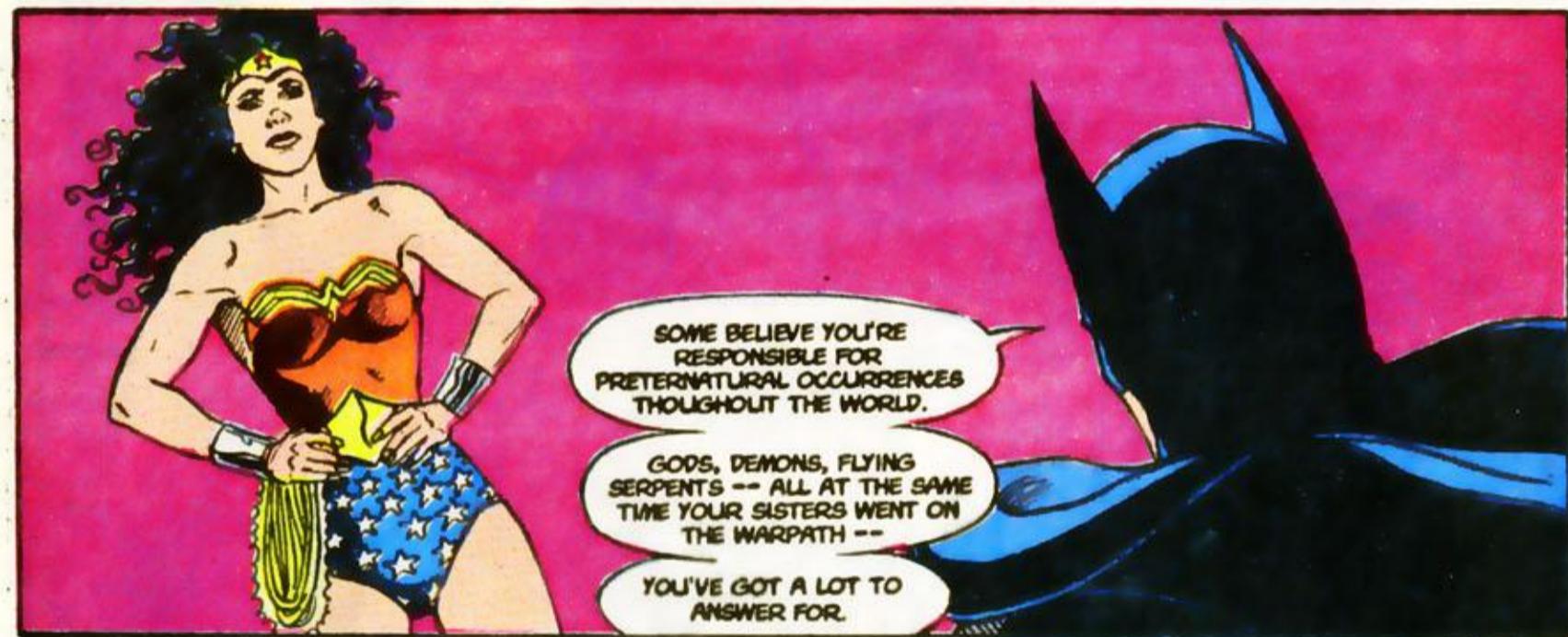
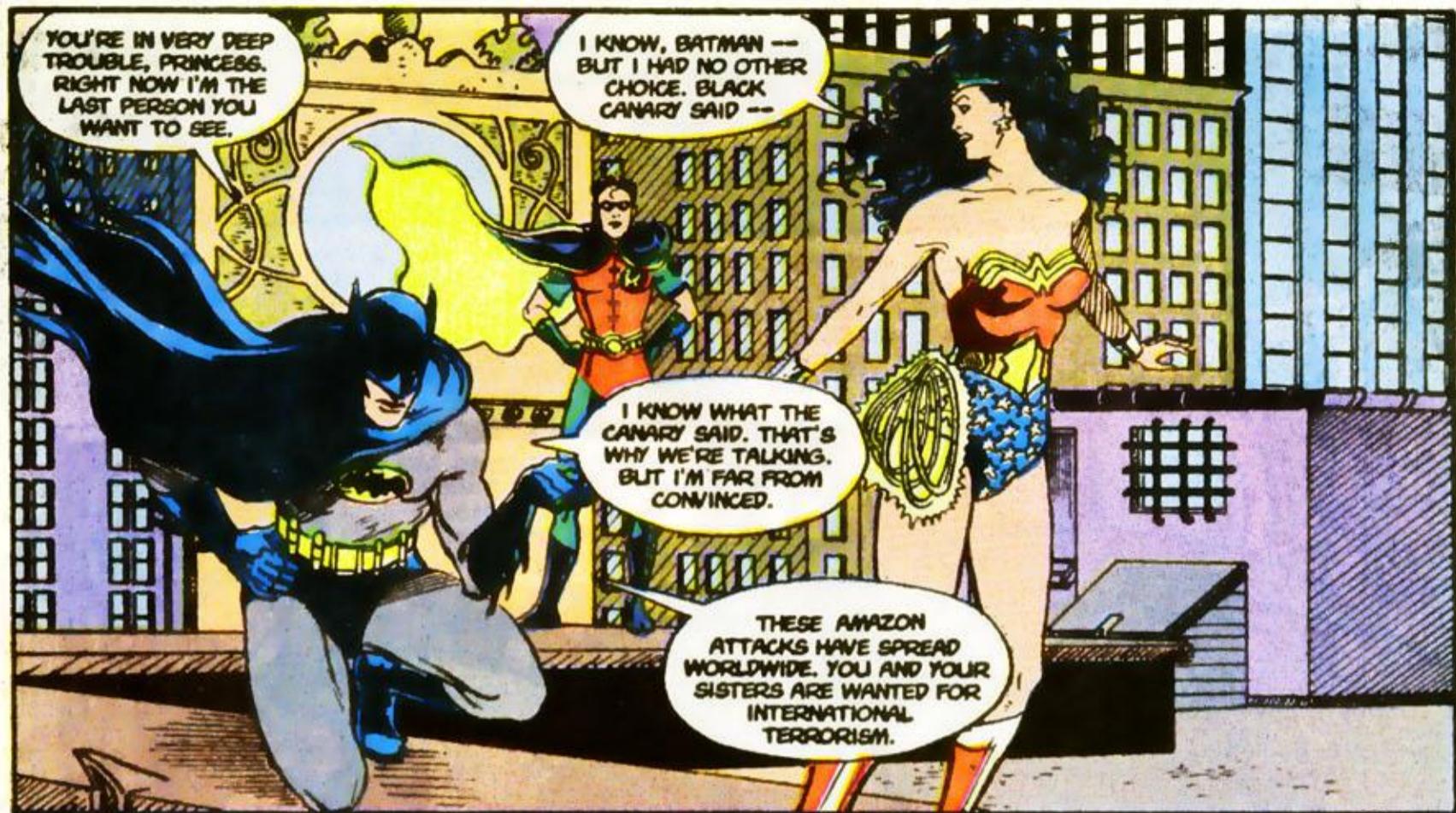
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?

A WAR OF THE GODS TAPE
written by GEORGE DEREZ
penciled by JILL THOMPSON
inked by ROHED TANGHAL

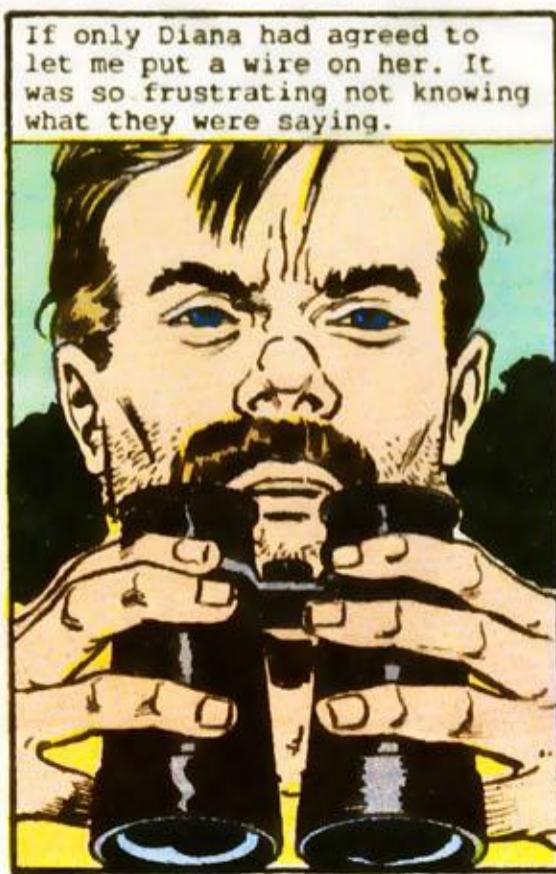
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Diana and Batman just stood there facing each other. I could feel eternity ticking away with each beat of my heart, now firmly lodged in my esophagus.



Ever since she appeared in my apartment last night, so haggard and desperate, my only desire was to help.

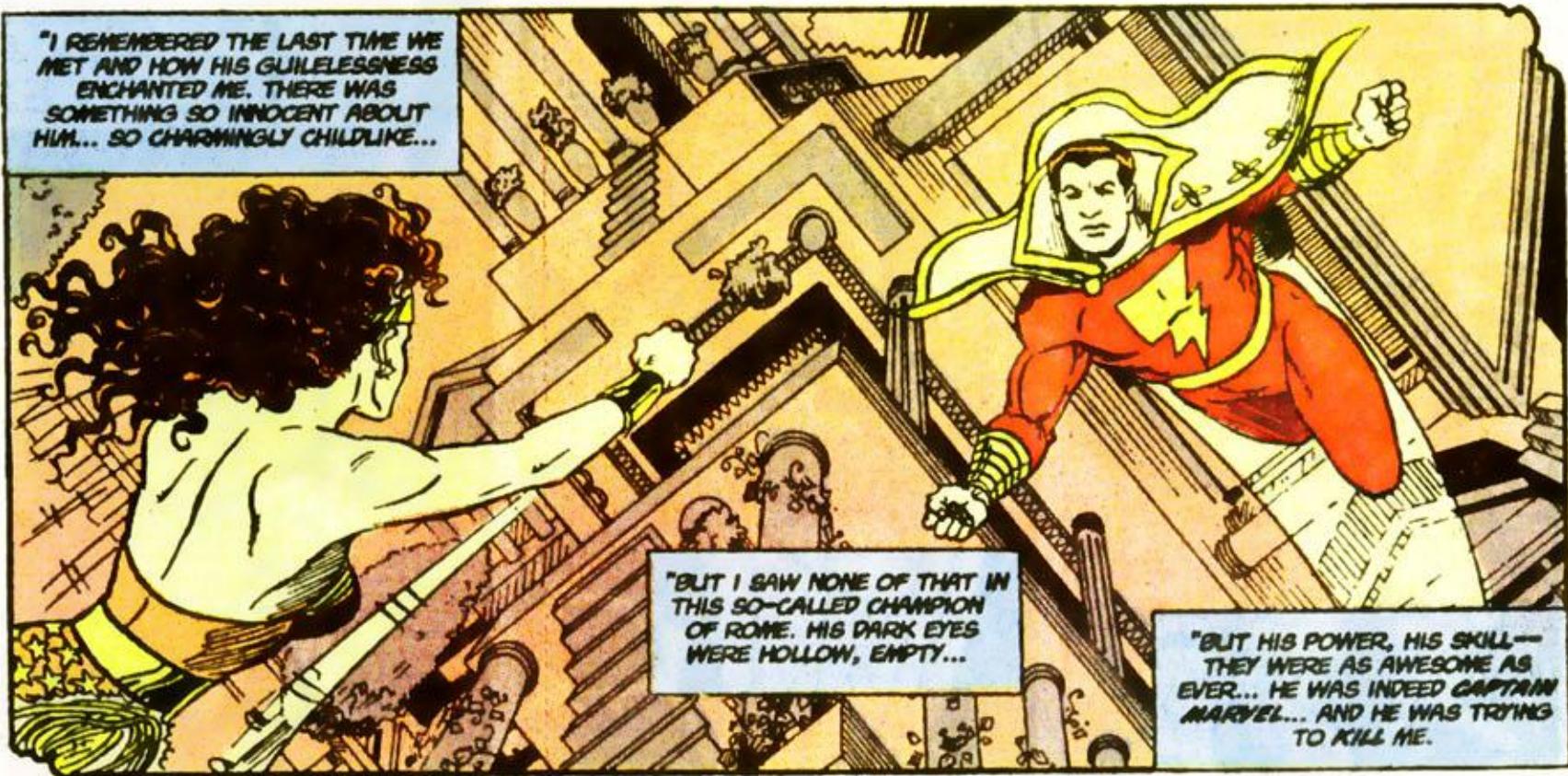


IT-- IT ALL HAPPENED SO FAST. I WAS ON NEW OLYMPUS... MY GODS' MAGNIFICENT NEW HOME...

"THEN THE OTHERS CAME-- THE GODS OF ROME WHO CLAIMED OLYMPUS AS THEIR OWN..."



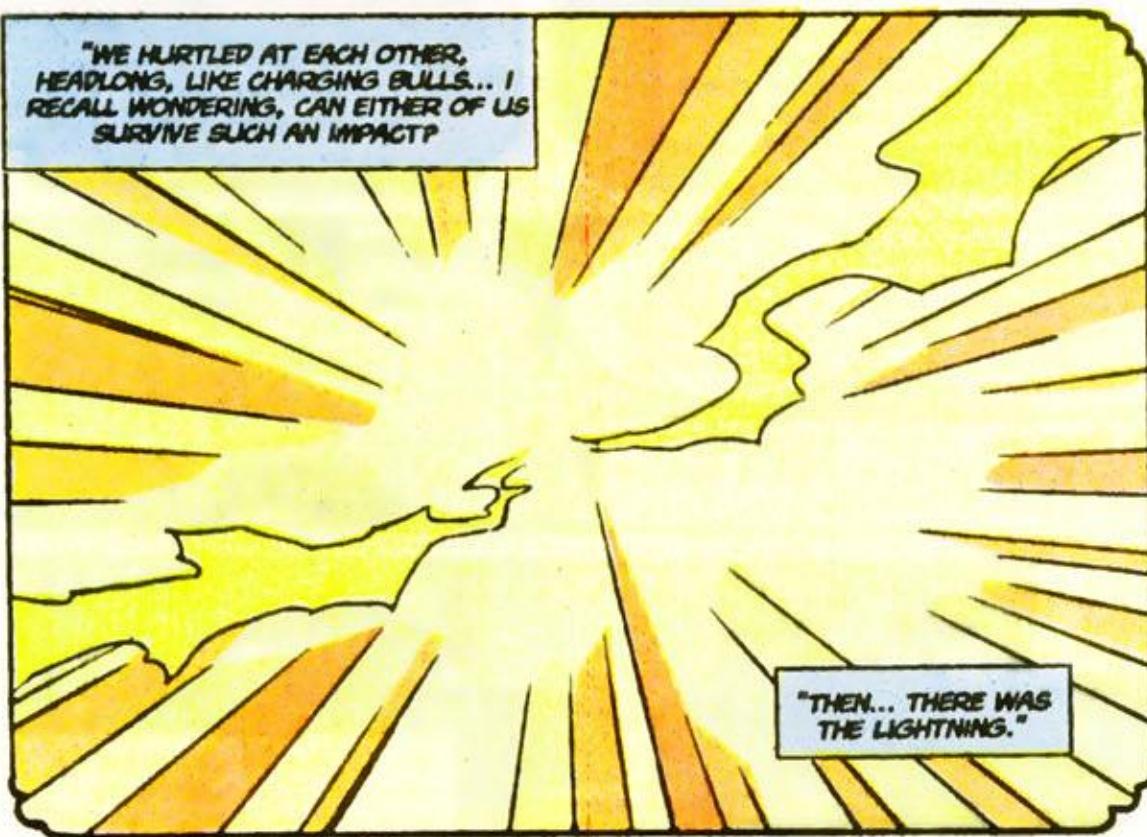
"I REMEMBERED THE LAST TIME WE MET AND HOW HIS GUILELESSNESS ENCHANTED ME. THERE WAS SOMETHING SO INNOCENT ABOUT HIM... SO CHARMINGLY CHILDLIKE..."



"WE HURTLED AT EACH OTHER, HEADLONG, LIKE CHARGING BULLS... I RECALL WONDERING, CAN EITHER OF US SURVIVE SUCH AN IMPACT?"

"THEN... THERE WAS THE LIGHTNING."

FOR A SECOND I THOUGHT IT CAME FROM LORD ZEUS OR JUPITER, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING... PECULIAR ABOUT THAT BOLT.



"BUT THEN, WE FELL
INTO CHAOS."

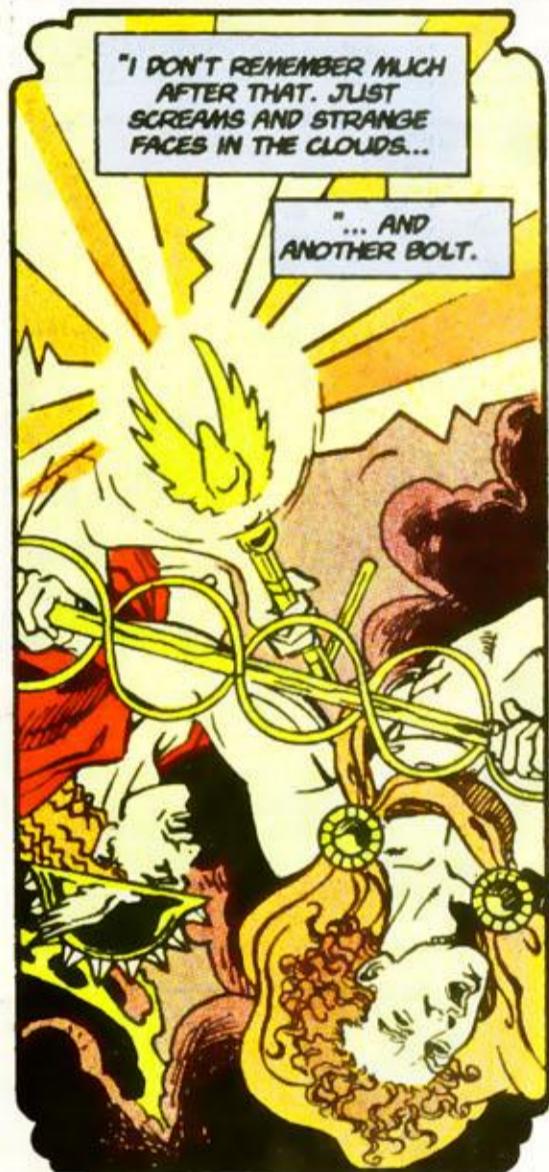


"LORD HERMES AND HIS ROMAN
COUNTERPART MERCURY WERE AT
EACH OTHER'S THROATS AND
CAPTAIN MARVEL SEEMED ADDLED..."

"I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF
HIS CONFUSION."

"I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH
AFTER THAT. JUST
SCREAMS AND STRANGE
FACES IN THE CLOUDS..."

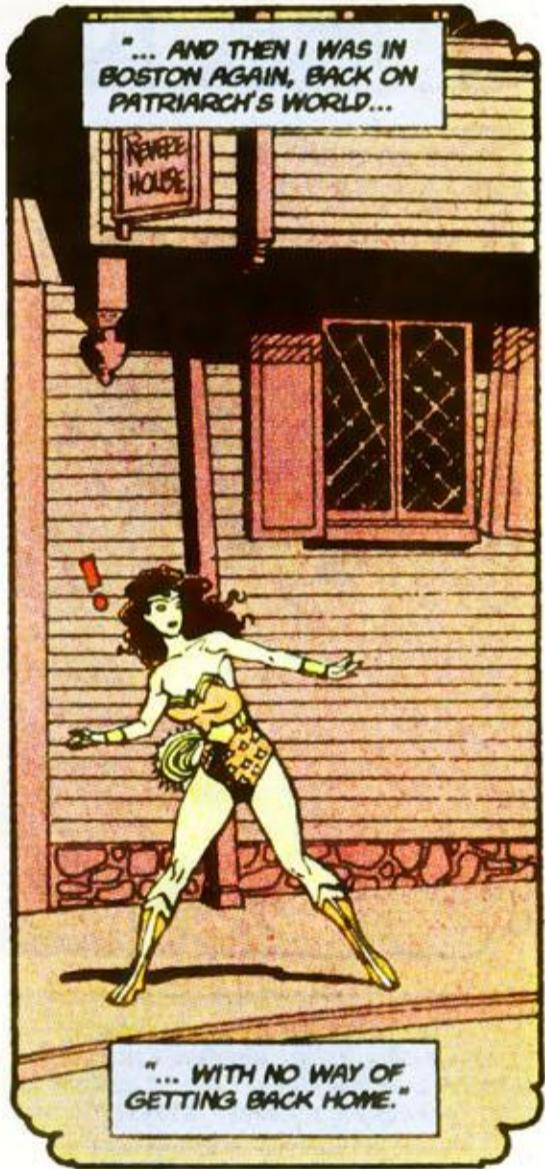
"... AND
ANOTHER BOLT."



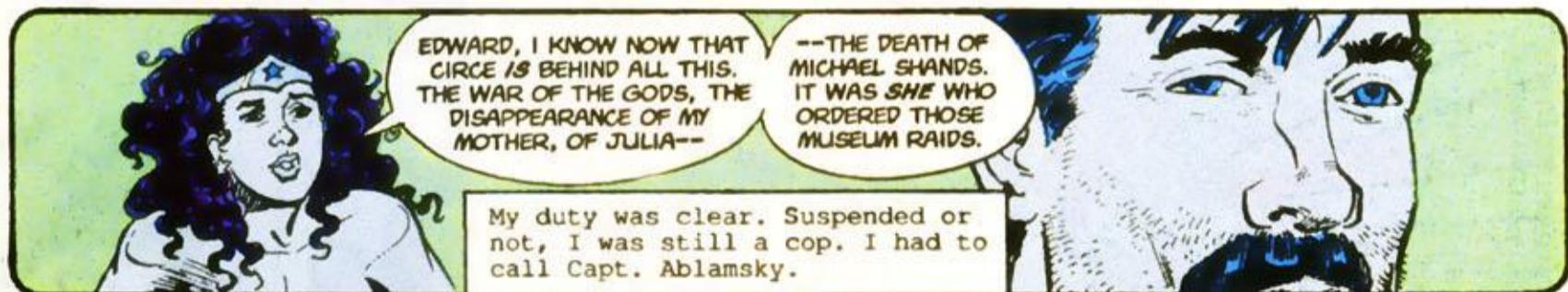
"FOR ONE BRIEF,
FRIGHTENING MOMENT I WAS
ONE WITH THE CHAOS..."

"... AND THEN I WAS IN
BOSTON AGAIN, BACK ON
Patriarch's World..."

REEDIE
HOUSE



"... WITH NO WAY OF
GETTING BACK HOME."

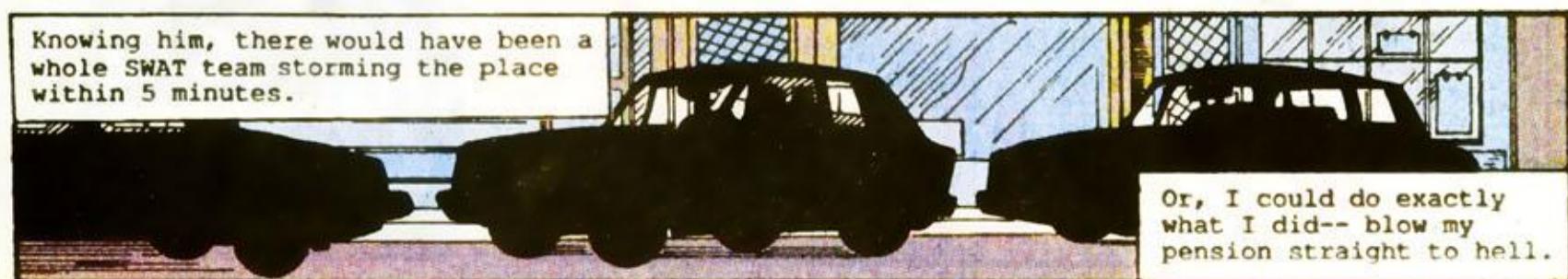


EDWARD, I KNOW NOW THAT
CIRCE IS BEHIND ALL THIS.
THE WAR OF THE GODS, THE
DISAPPEARANCE OF MY
MOTHER, OF JULIA--

--THE DEATH OF
MICHAEL SHANDS.
IT WAS SHE WHO
ORDERED THOSE
MUSEUM RAIDS.

My duty was clear. Suspended or
not, I was still a cop. I had to
call Capt. Abramsky.

Knowing him, there would have been a
whole SWAT team storming the place
within 5 minutes.



Or, I could do exactly
what I did-- blow my
pension straight to hell.

HANSCOM A.F.B. IN BEDFORD,
MASSACHUSETTS...

COL. STEPHEN ROCKWELL
TREVOR, YOU DO UNDERSTAND
THE GRAVITY OF THE CHARGES
BEING DIRECTED AT YOU, DO YOU
NOT? YOU DO FULLY COMPREHEND
THE PENALTIES YOU FACE BY NOT
COOPERATING WITH THIS
INVESTIGATION?

I COMPREHEND THEM ALL TOO
WELL, GEN. YEDZINIAK, AND I
AM COOPERATING TO THE
BEST OF MY ABILITY.

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO
PROVIDE INFORMATION
ABOUT THESE PURPORTEDLY
HOMICIDAL AMAZONS THAT I
DON'T HAVE.

I CAN ONLY REPEAT THAT ALL MY
EXPERIENCE WITH THE
THYMYSCHANS HAS REVEALED
ONLY AN ALTRUISTIC, TOTALLY
PEACE-MINDED SOCIETY.

AND THEY BORE YOU NO
MALICE, EVEN AFTER YOU
TRIED TO BOMB THEM?

NO, GEN. HILLARY, AS I
HAVE STATED OVER AND
OVER AGAIN, THE
AMAZONS KNEW THAT IT
WAS ALL ARES' DOING.
THEY FORGAVE ME--

ACCORDING TO
YOUR OWN
REPORTS, IT
WAS ONLY
BECAUSE OF
THIS WAR GOD'S
INTERVENTION
THAT YOU
MANAGED TO
Pierce THE
DEFENSIVE
BARRIER THAT
PROTECTS THE
AMAZON
ISLAND--

YET YOUR
MOTHER, A
DIANA TREVOR,
SOMEHOW
MANAGED TO DO
THE SAME THING
-- WITHOUT
THE AID OF THIS
LORD ARES.

LIKE YOU, SHE WAS GIVEN SOME GODLY
DISPENSATION. WHY, COLONEL? WHAT
MAKES THE TREVOR FAMILY SO
SPECIAL TO THESE "PEACE-MINDED"
WARRIORs?

YOUR MOTHER WAS
KILLED ON THYMYSCHRA.
WASN'T SHE, COLONEL?
THE AMAZONS CLAIMED
THAT SOME MYTHICAL
DEMON MURDERED HER.
YOU REALLY BELIEVE
THAT?

HOW VERY
MAGNANIMOUS OF
THEM, COL. TREVOR.

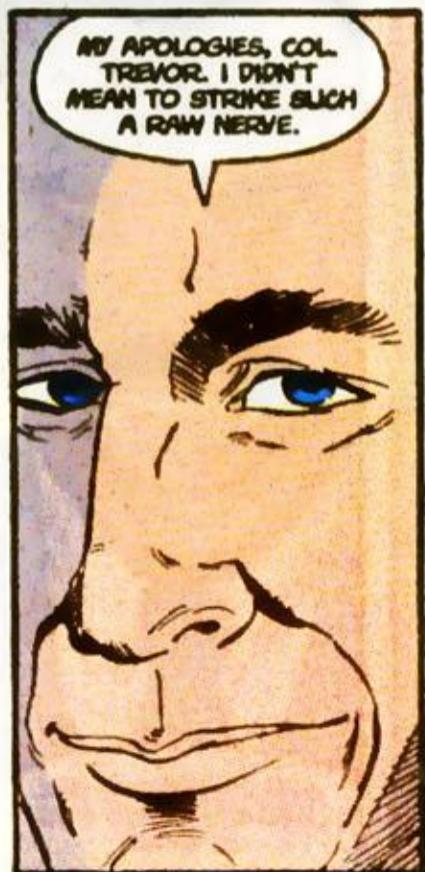
LEAVE MY MOTHER
OUT OF THIS! SHE
WAS A HERO TO THE
AMAZONS! I WON'T
SIT HERE AND--

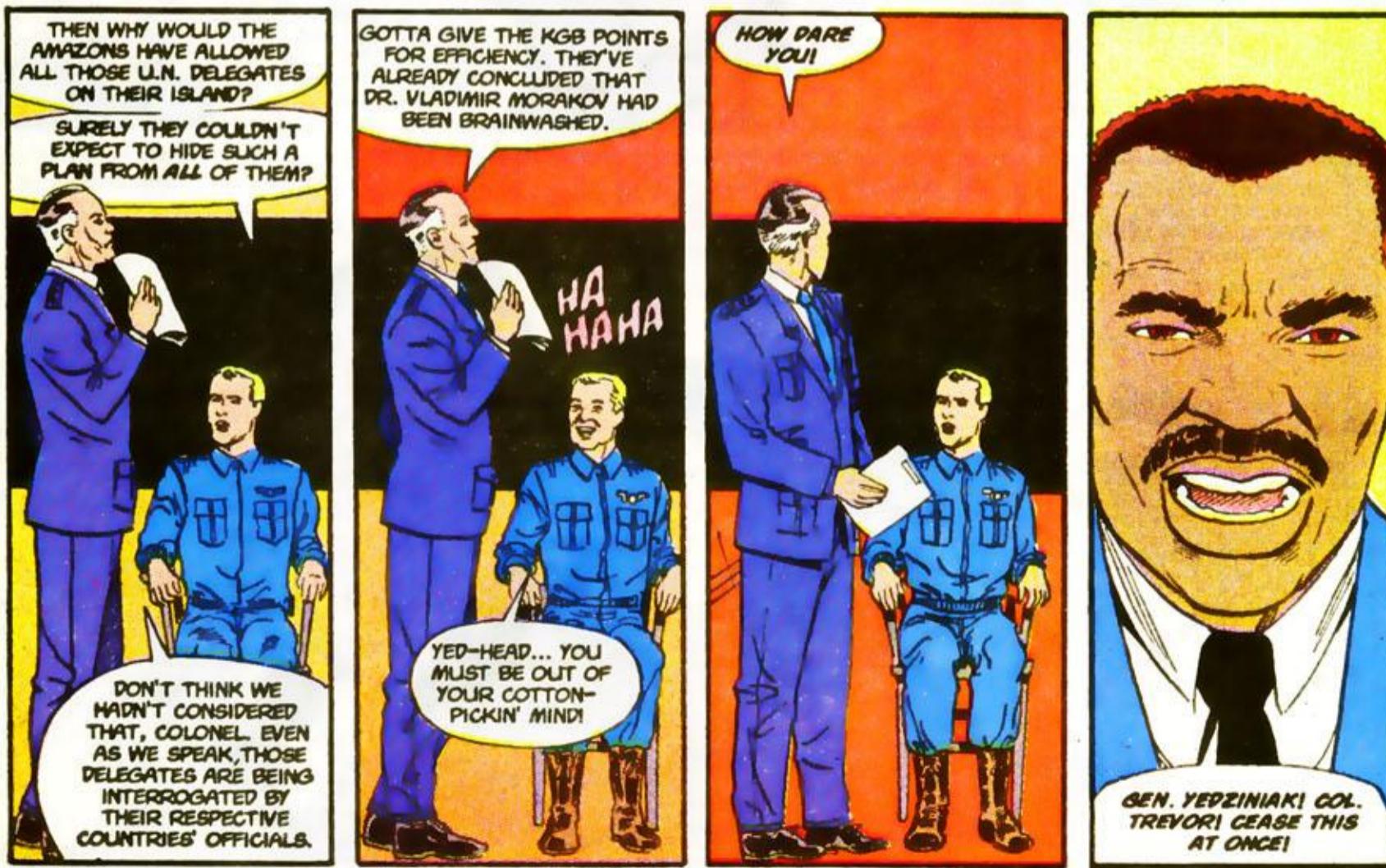
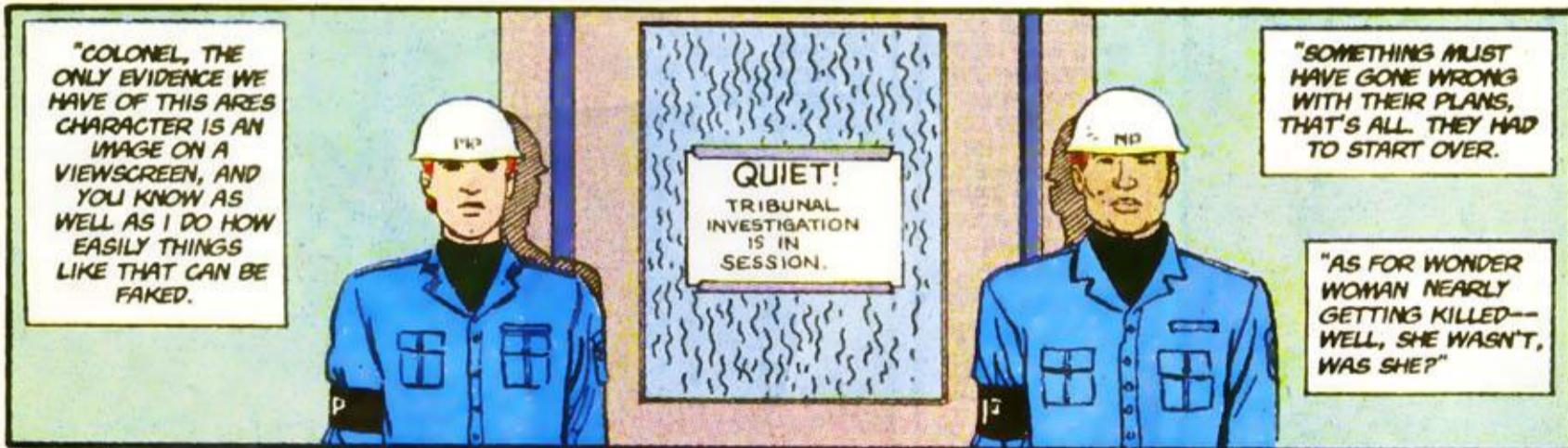
MY APOLOGIES, COL.
TREVOR. I DIDN'T
MEAN TO STRIKE SUCH
A RAW NERVE.

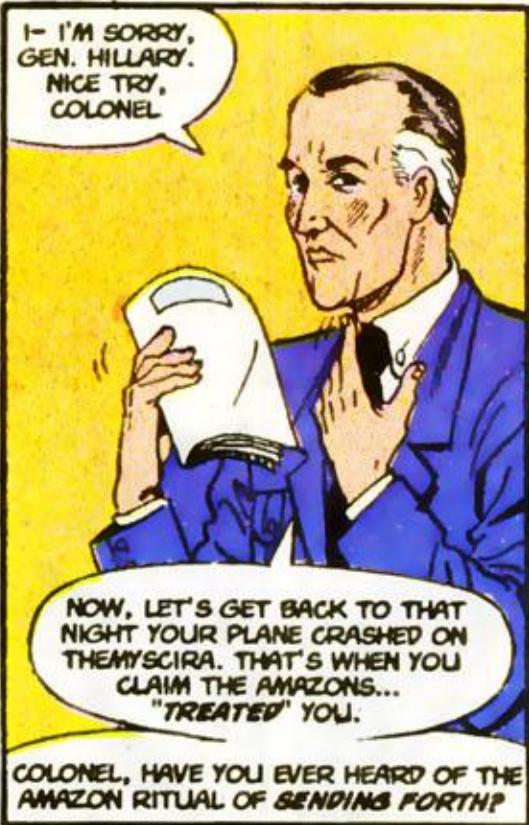
GEN. YEDZINIAK, I MUST OBJECT
TO THIS LINE OF QUESTIONING!
WHAT POSSIBLE BEARING COULD
THE COLONEL'S MOTHER HAVE ON
THE CASE AT HAND?

COL. HILLARY, I'M AWARE THAT
COL. TREVOR IS YOUR FRIEND,
BUT THIS IS MY INVESTIGATION.

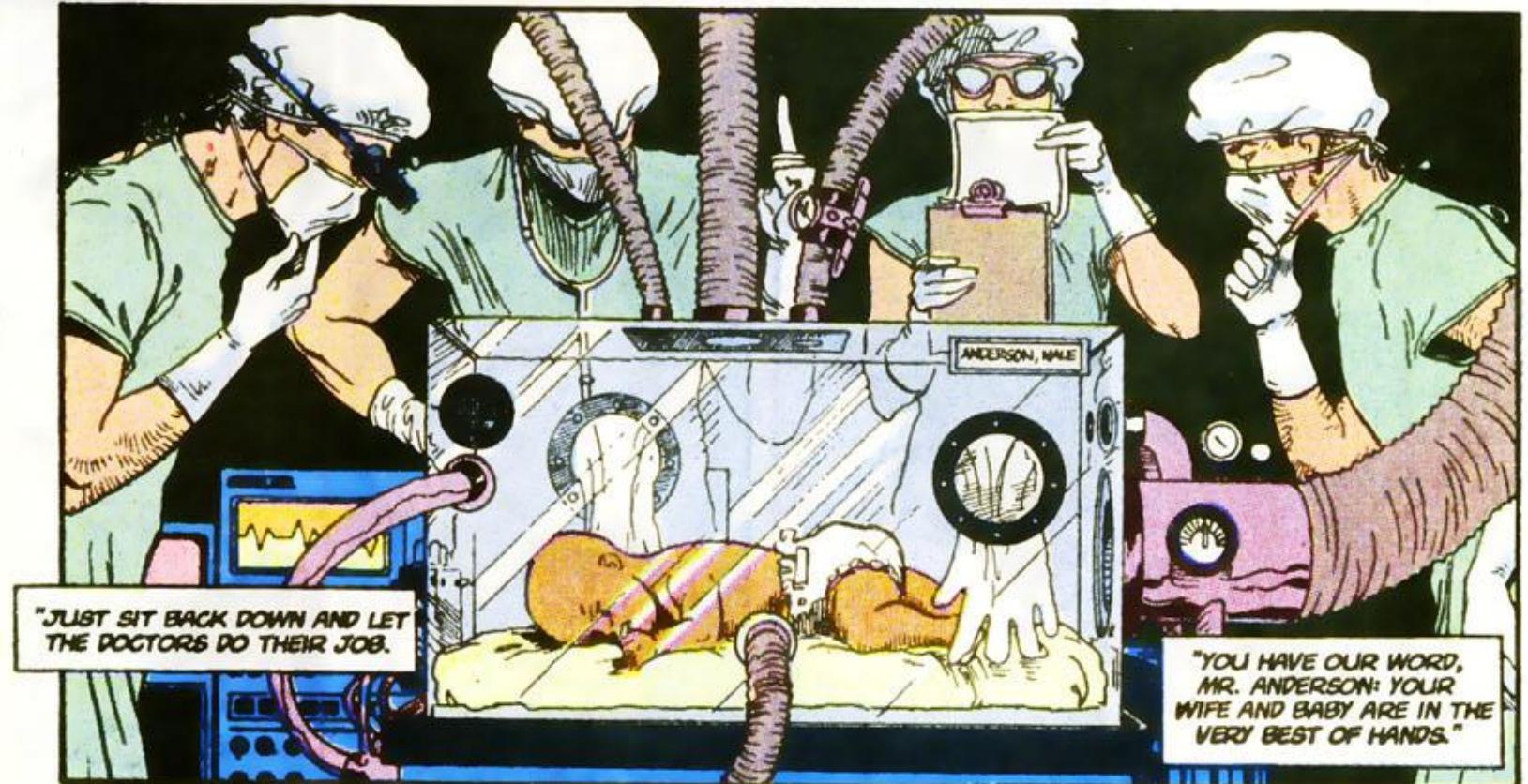
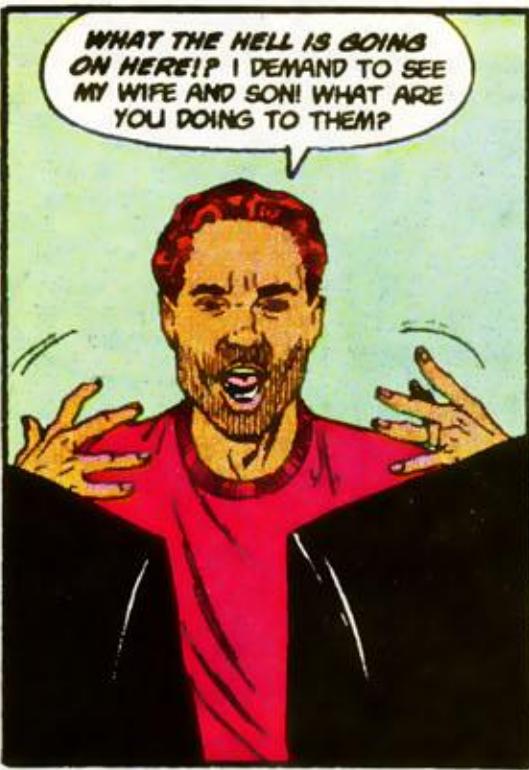
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T
NOTICED, WE'RE
RIGHT SMACK IN THE
MIDDLE OF A WAR!



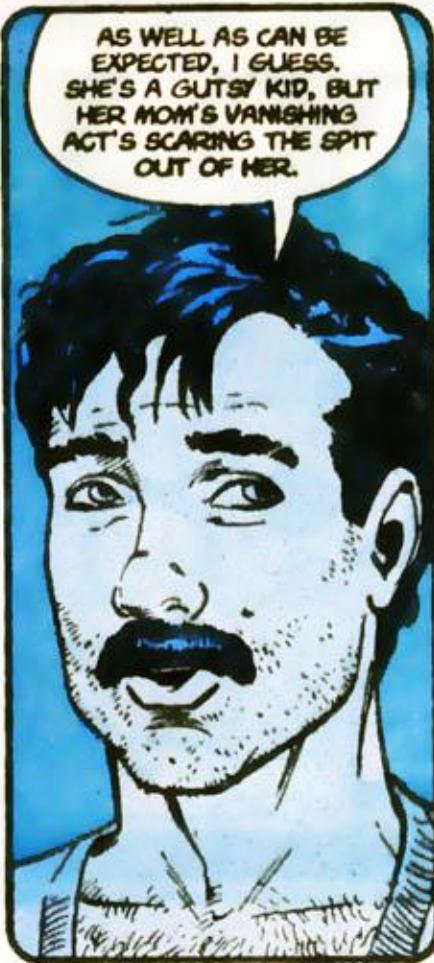
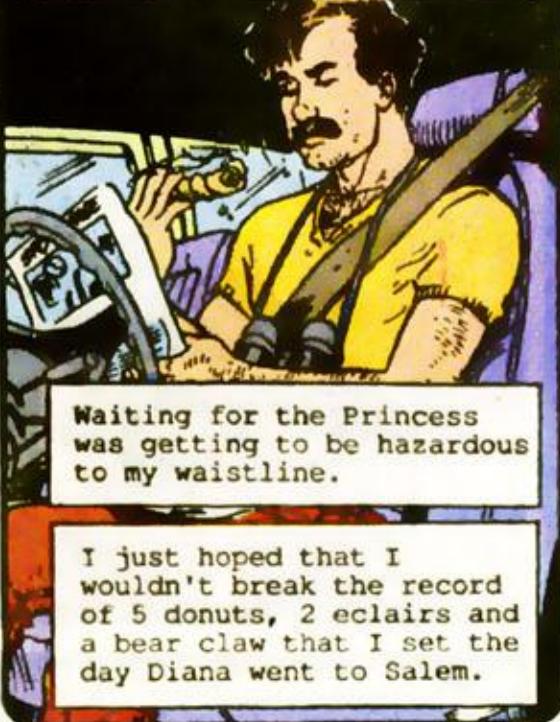


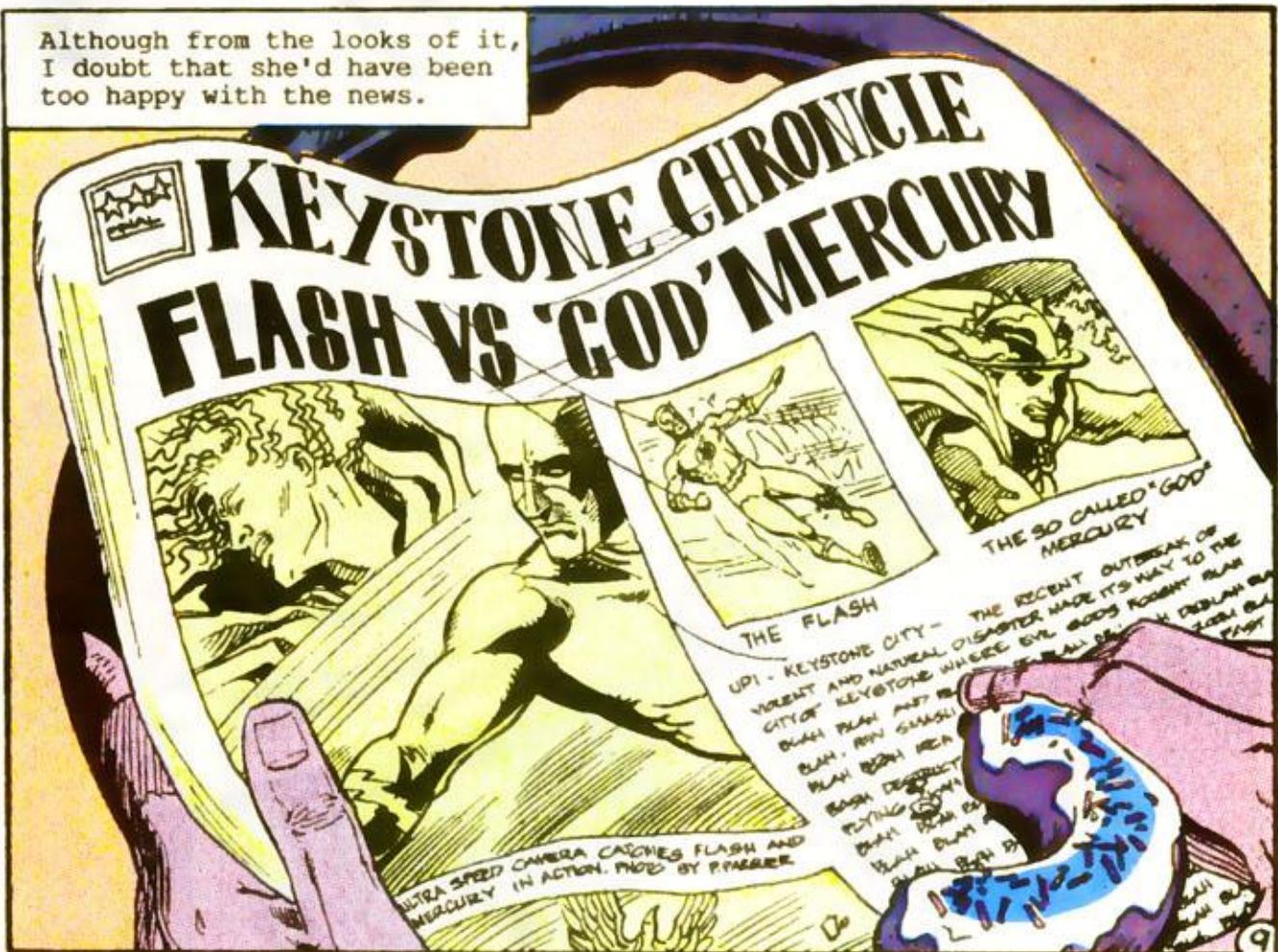


COLONEL, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE AMAZON RITUAL OF SENDING FORTH?



Shands and I used to time a stakeout by the number of donuts we ate. So far, Diana and Batman were 4 donuts and half a cruller in.





WHILE ON THE
DESIEGED ISLAND OF
THEMISCYRA...

THE ISLAND IS STILL TREMBLING,
ALTHOUGH NOT AS VIOLENTLY AS
IT WAS. WE SHOULD HIE BACK TO
THE CAPITAL CITY AND SEE HOW
OUR SISTERS ARE FARING.>

EUBOEAI! KEEP YOUR
SISTERS BACK! THERE
IS NOTHING ANY OF
YOU CAN DO HERE!

CNO. GO IF YOU SO
DESIRE. IPHTHIME, BUT
I CANNOT LEAVE HERE
WITHOUT LEARNING
THE FATE OF LORD
HERACLES.)

(HERACLES! LORD
HERACLES! CAN YOU
HEAR ME? WE WANT TO
HELP YOU! ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?)

(DOES HERACLES BELIEVE WE'D
ACTUALLY ABANDON THEM'SCIRAP
WHERE DOES HE EXPECT US TO GO?)

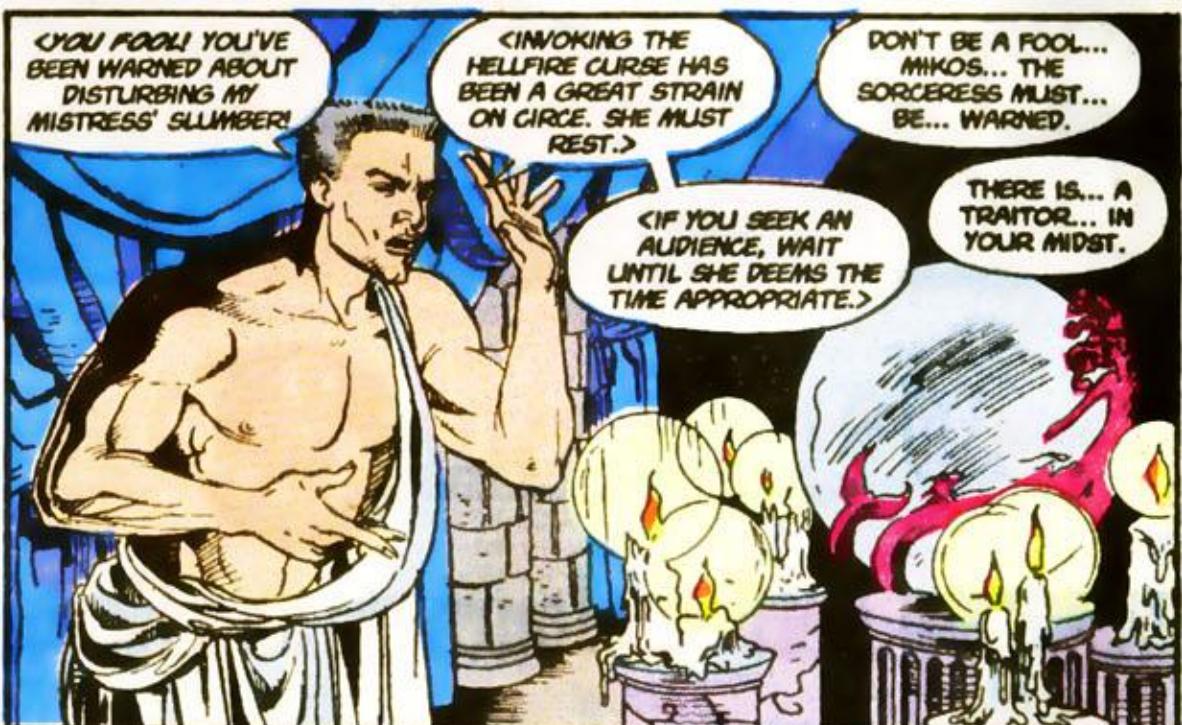
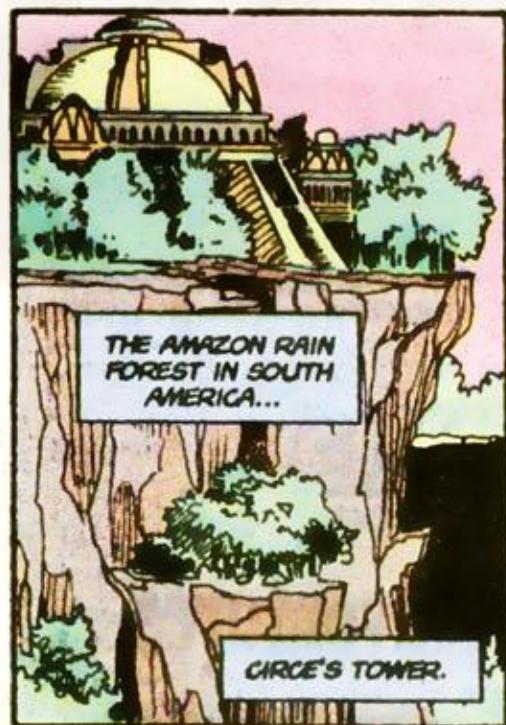
THOUGH I HAVE THE
STRENGTH TO BEAR THE
WEIGHT OF THIS ISLAND, EVEN
I CANNOT HOLD IT TOGETHER
FOR LONG IF THESE QUAKES
SO PERSIST.

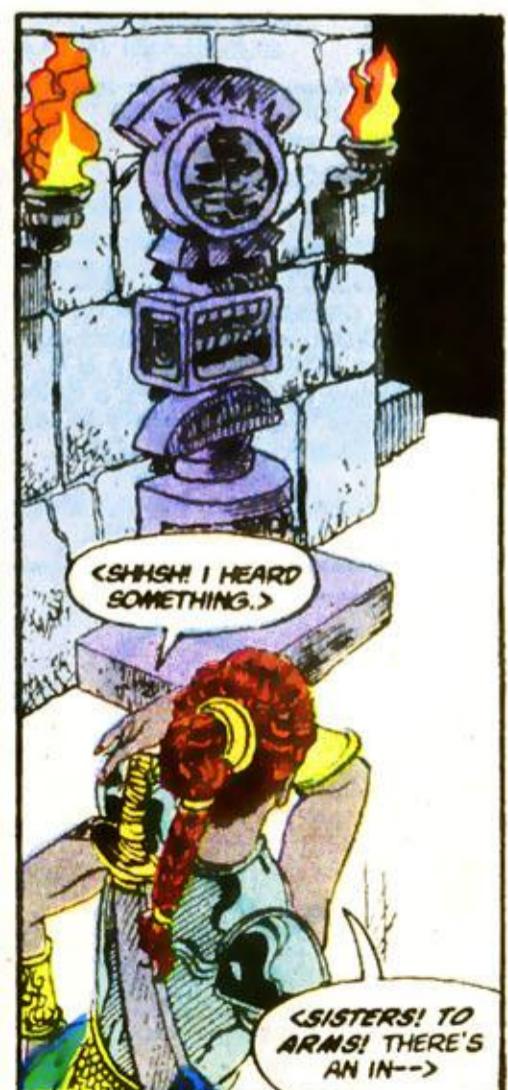
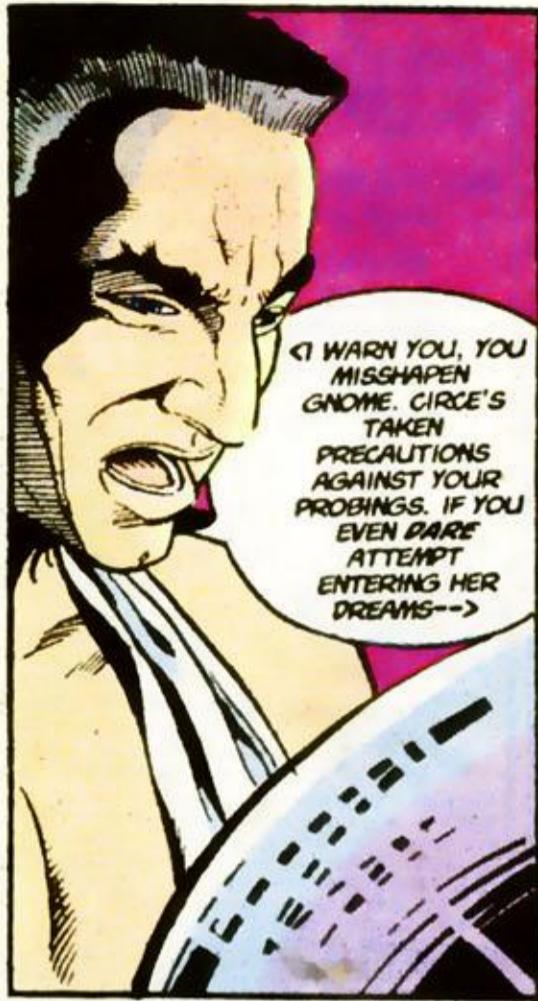
GET YOU ALL TO YOUR
BOATS, BEFORE YOUR
PARADISE CRUMPLES
INTO THE SEA!

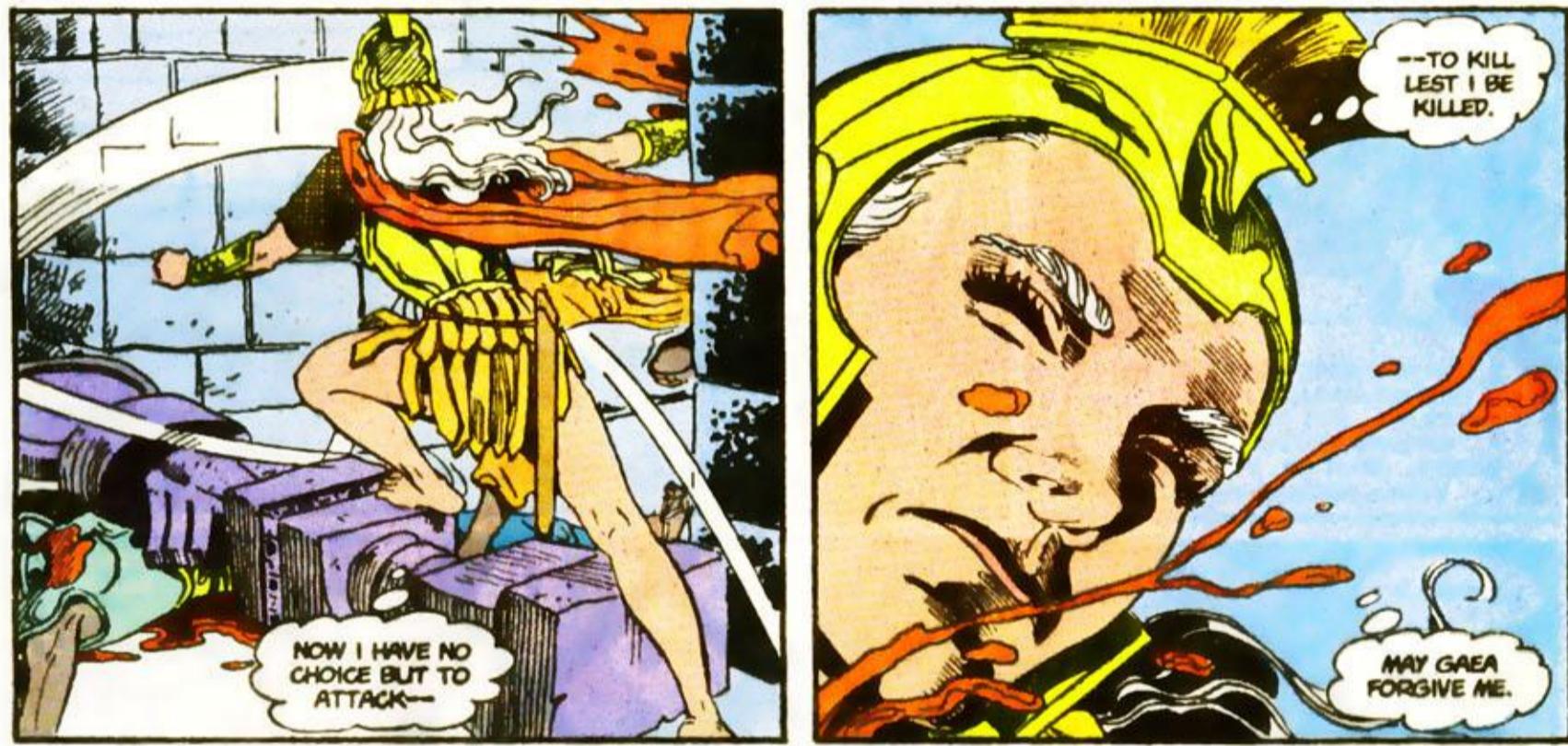
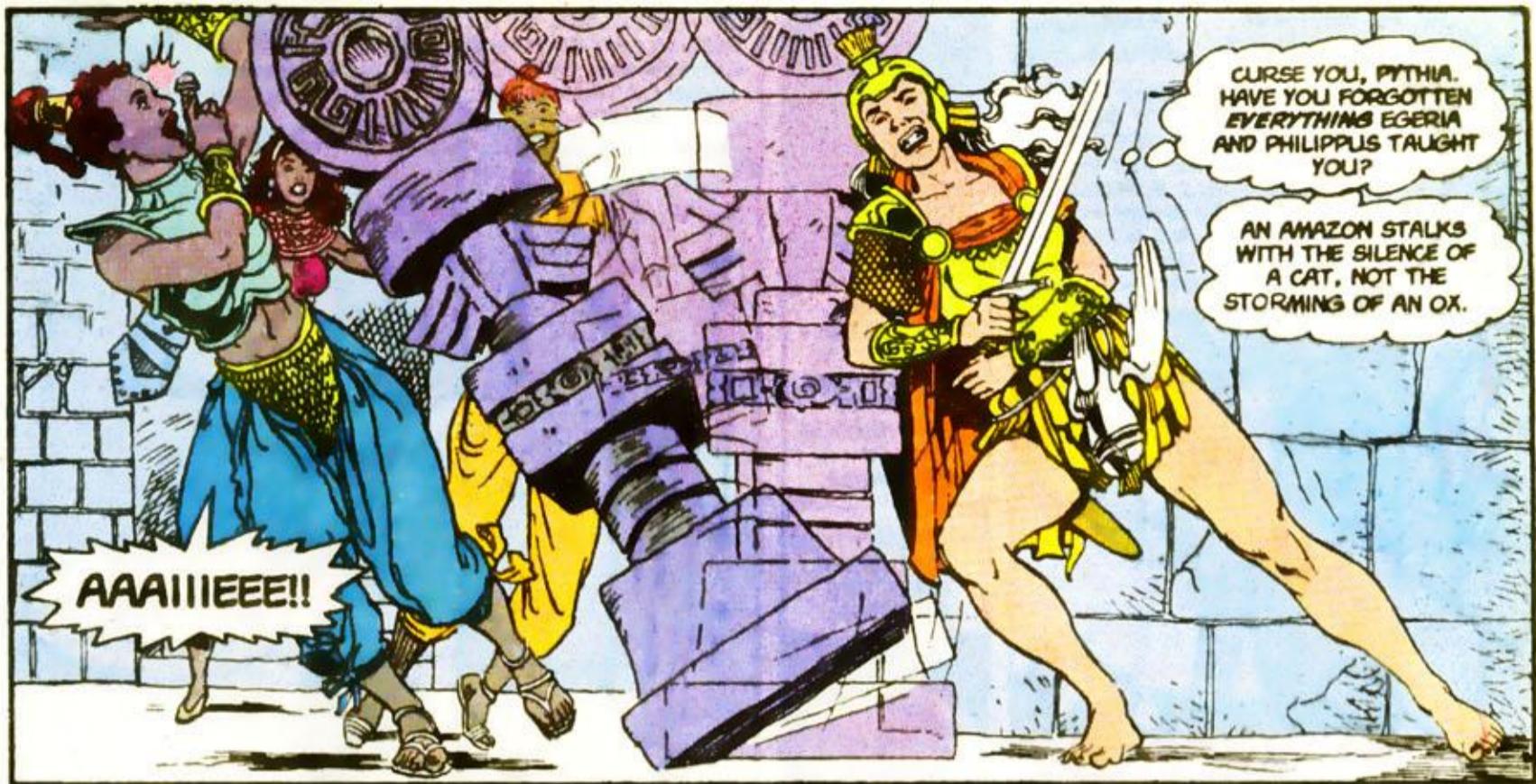
(THE SON OF ZEUS MUST BE
DELIRIOUS. WE MUST SAVE
HIM BEFORE HIS MADNESS
CONSUMES HIM.)

YES, IPHTHIME. I
KNEW YOU
COULDN'T TURN
AWAY FROM HIM.)

(NOW THE ONLY
QUESTION IS--
HOW?)







MY, MY. THAT WAS INCREDIBLY IMPRESSIVE.

IT'S NO WONDER CIRCE HOLDS THESE AMAZONS OF BANAMIGHDALL IN SUCH CONTEMPT. ALTHOUGH THEY MAY BE TECHNOLOGICALLY SUPERIOR, WHEN IT COMES TO SHEER FIGHTING PROWESS THEY ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO A THEMYSIRIAN AMAZON WARRIOR.

IF MY DEAR PYTHIA, YOUR INTERVENTION COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE ADVANTAGEOUS TO MY ENTERPRISE.

PROF. KAPATELIS IS FURTHER DOWN THIS CORRIDOR.

I... I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT... KONRAD KASLAK... BUT YOUR TONE OFFENDS. IN YOUR OWN WORDS... SHUT UP. IF YOU HAVE BEEN... FOOLING ME...

IF YOUR CLAIMS TO A PSYCHIC LINK WITH HER ARE GENUINE, THEN YOU KNOW I'M TELLING THE TRUTH.

JULIA! JULIA!!

(YES... I CAN FEEL HER-- STRONGER THAN EVER.)

(IN THAT PIT.)

...PYTHIA...?

(GAEA BE PRAISED.
THAT MAN KASLAK DID
SPEAK THE TRUTH
AFTER ALL.)

(TAKE HEART,
DAUGHTER, I WILL
FREE YOU FROM THIS
CAGE.)

TO FIVE
GODDESSES--
GRANT ME
STRENGTH!!!

OH, JULIA, I'M SO HAPPY TO HAVE FOUND YOU AT LAST. I WAS SO WORRIED... COME. I'LL GET US BACK HOME TO THEMYSCHARA.

CHURRY, EVERY SECOND LOST ONLY WORSENS OUR CHANCES-->

NO! STAY BACK. I WON'T BE FOOLED AGAIN!

HOW MANY TIMES WILL THIS SCENARIO BE PLAYED. DR. PSYCHOP THIS PYTHIA IS NO MORE REAL THAN ANY OF THE OTHERS.

DAMN IT-- I'VE PALLED ASLEEP AGAIN! THIS IS ALL JUST ANOTHER DELLUSION.

YOU CAN'T... FOOL ME AGAIN...

JULIA... PLEASE, MY AMERICAN IS ONLY ADEQUATE. I DON'T UNDERSTAND...>

"PEEL THE LINK BETWEEN US. REMEMBER MY WORDS TO YOU BEFORE I SENT YOU FORTH-- THAT I, AND THE GLORY OF GAEA, SHALL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS.)

GAZEE DEEPLY INTO MY EYES, DAUGHTER-- DEEPER, INTO MY SOUL. THIS IS NO DELLUSION, JULIA.)

"NOT LIKE YOU DID IN BOSTON WITH MORACE WESTLAKE. I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THEM SOONER-- THE STRANGE SPIRALS IN HIS EYES. SO HYPNOTIC..."

"NO! I WON'T BE FOOLED AGAIN! I WON'T BE FOOLED AGAIN!"

BUT, YOU HAVE TO TRUST ME. BOTH OUR LIVES DEPEND ON IT.)

"NO DELLUSION COULD TRULY SUBVERT THAT BOND BETWEEN US. I WOULD RATHER DIE THAN ALLOW THAT.)

(I BEG YOU, JULIA, PLEASE... TRUST IN ME...)

O MY GOD... PYTHIA... PYTHIA!

THANK GAEA)

Diana's pow-wow with the Batman had already eaten up all my baked goods and I was now on the potato chips clock, going for a new record.



Thankfully, I was always well stocked with newspapers, usually just to see how the Bruins or Sox were doing. Lately, however, I tended to stay in the front pages.

The Gods were everywhere now, even in New York.

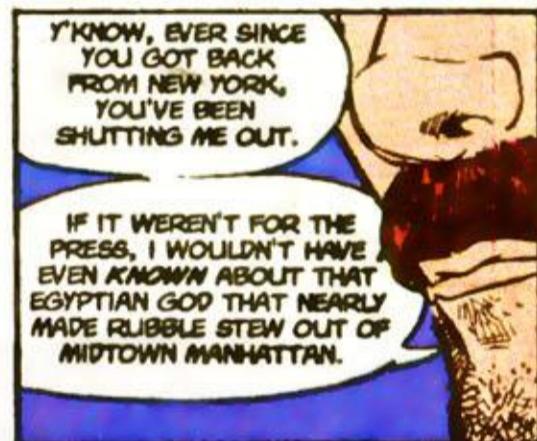


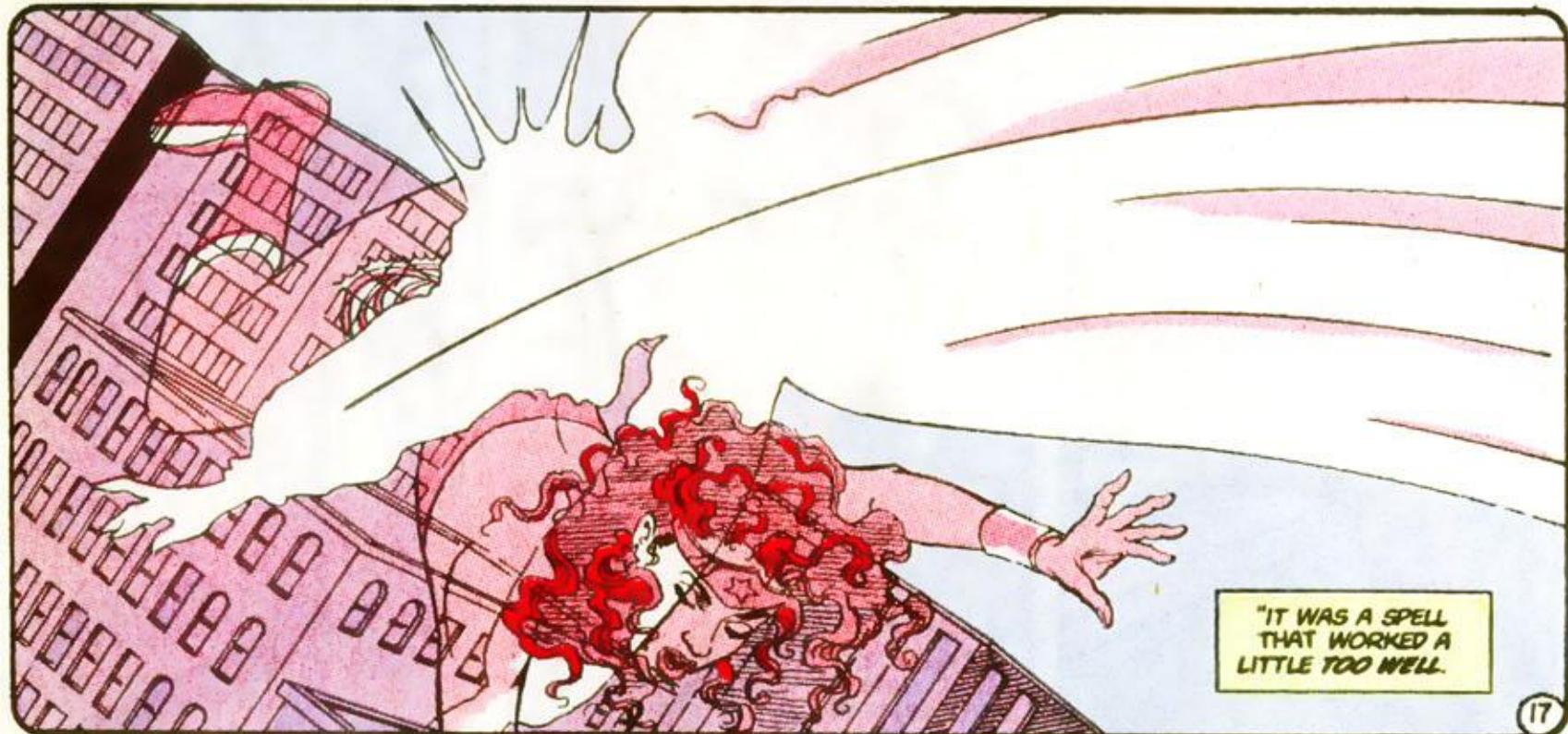
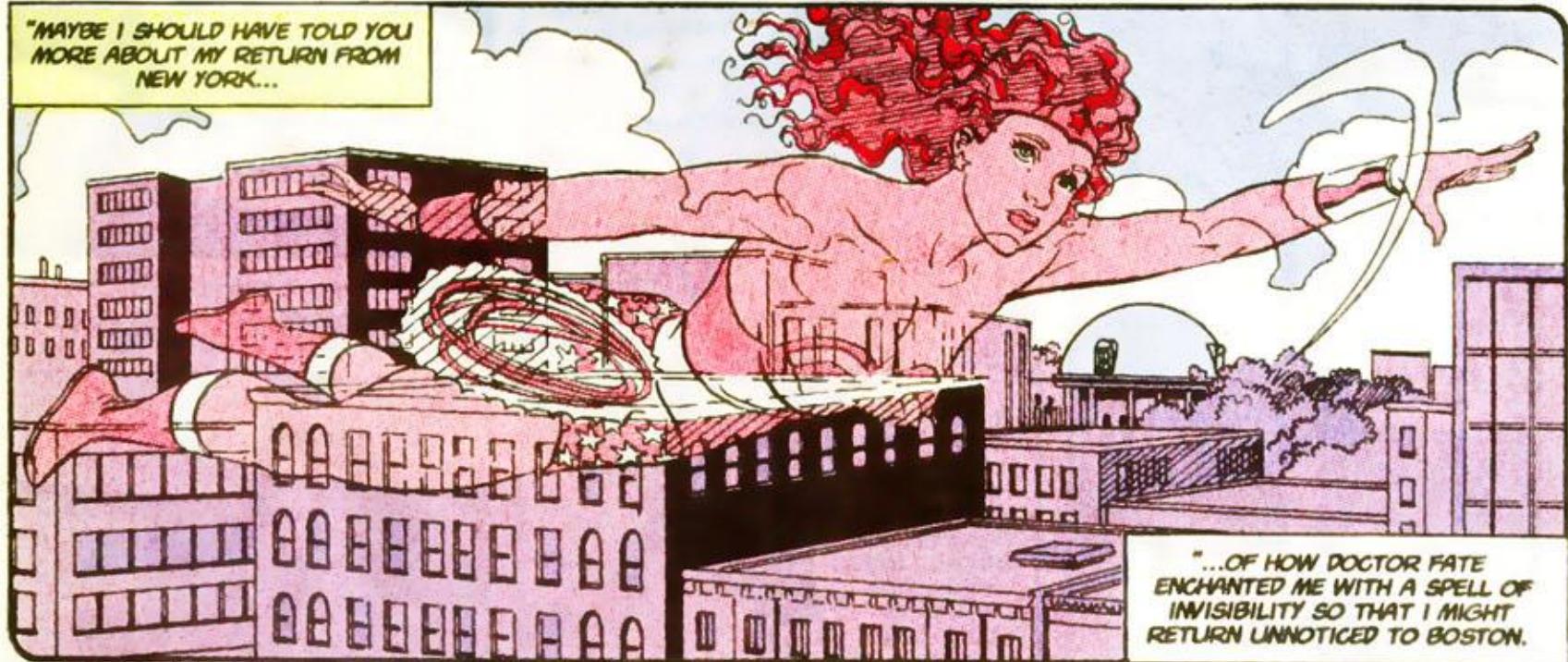
Even though it was Diana and Dr. Fate who stopped Thoth*, the press was already speculating that Wonder Woman must have had something to do with his arrival.

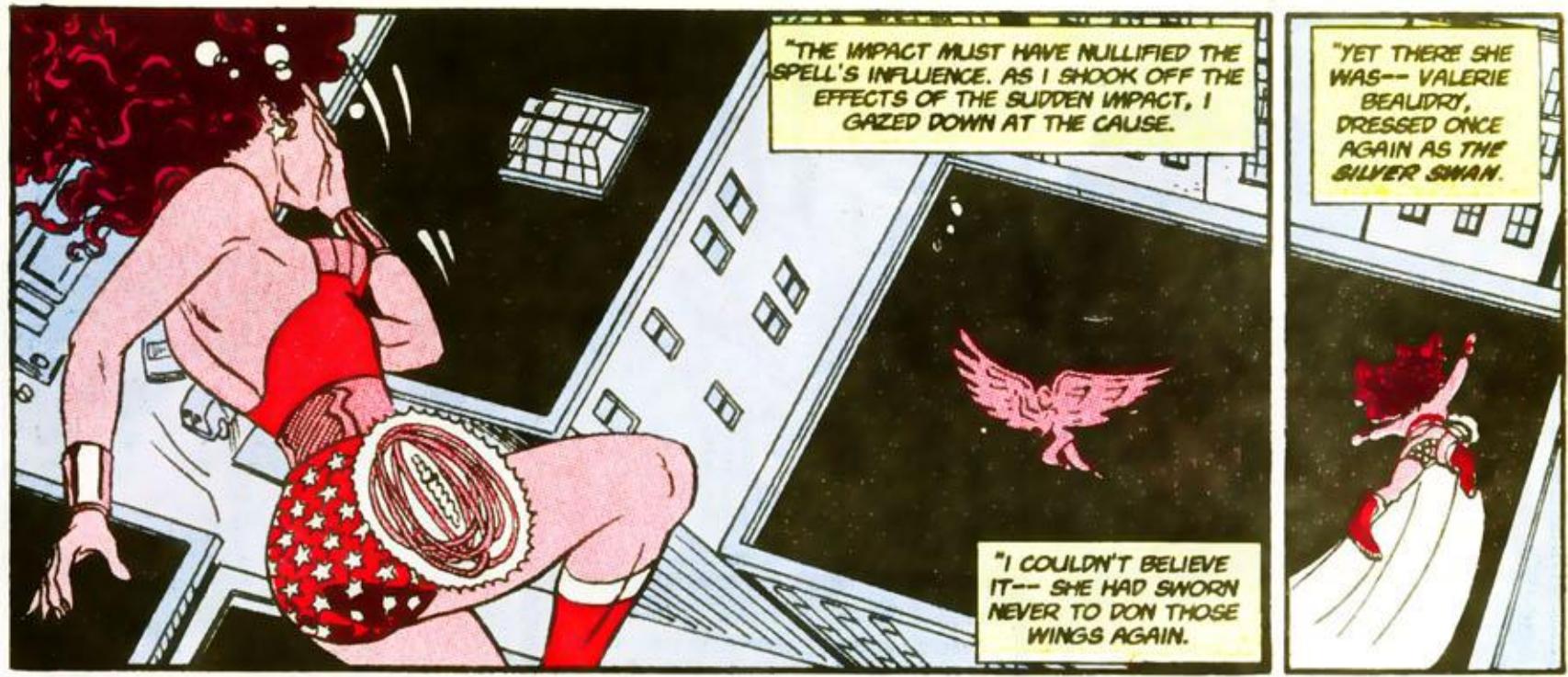


Considering Diana's fugitive status, it's a miracle she managed to get out of New York at all.

ALL DETAILED IN DOCTOR FATE NO. 52—KAREN AND TOM

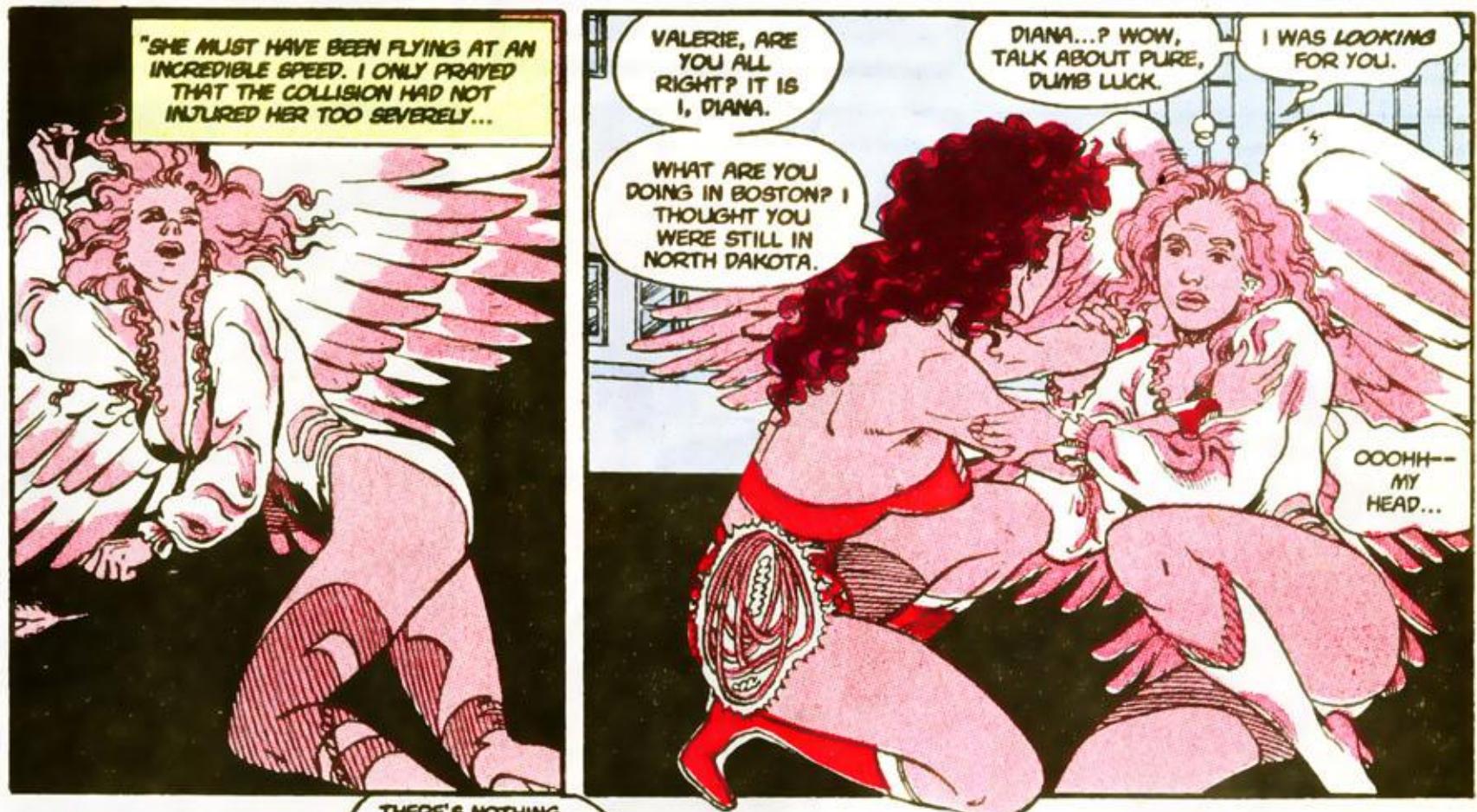






"I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT-- SHE HAD SWORN NEVER TO DON THOSE WINGS AGAIN."

"YET THERE SHE WAS-- VALERIE BEALDRY, DRESSED ONCE AGAIN AS THE SILVER SWAN."



VALERIE, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? IT IS I, DIANA.

DIANA...? WOW, TALK ABOUT PURE, DUMB LUCK.

I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN BOSTON? I THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL IN NORTH DAKOTA.

OOOH-- MY HEAD...

I MUST HAVE BEEN FLYING SO FAST THAT I DIDN'T SEE YOU. STRANGE, MY VISION'S USUALLY MORE ACUTE THAN THAT.

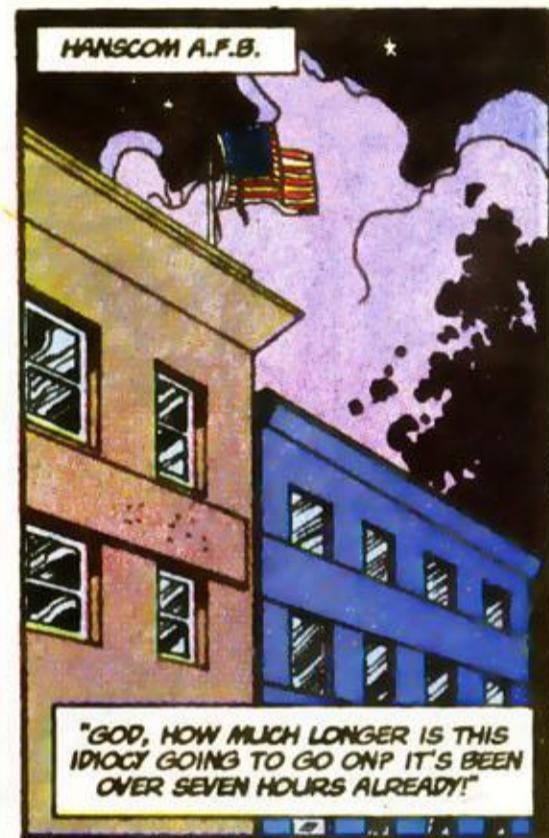
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH YOUR VISION, VALERIE. I'LL EXPLAIN AT ANOTHER TIME. THERE IS MUCH I MUST DO NOW.

CRUEL AS THIS MAY SOUND, IT WAS H.C. ARMSTRUSTER THAT MADE THE SILVER SWAN SUCH A DEADLY FORCE.

I'LL BET. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE. AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR ME, I FIGURE THAT I OWE YOU.

VALERIE, YOU OWE ME NOTHING, AND WHILE I APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER, I CANNOT LET YOU DO THIS.

AND I HAVE NO DESIRE TO TAKE HIS PLACE.



"MUST HURRY. I'VE LOST TOO MUCH TIME ALREADY."

THAT AMAZON'S ARRIVAL NEARLY RUINED EVERYTHING. CIRCE WILL ONLY BE ASLEEP FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.

AH, THERE IT IS-- THE GREAT ALTAR FROM WHICH THE SORCERESS SET FORTH THE HELLFIRE WEB-- UTILIZING THE POWER OF THE TOKENS OF EARTH'S VARIED MYTHOLOGICAL PANTHEONS.



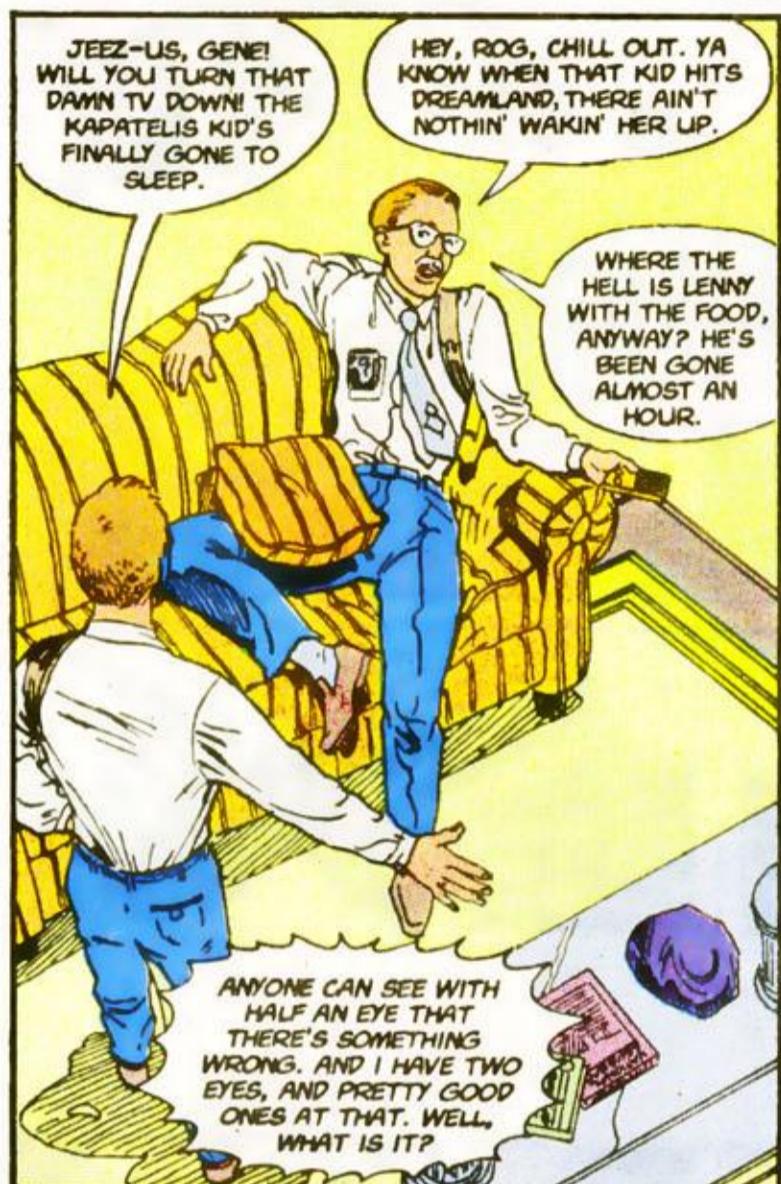
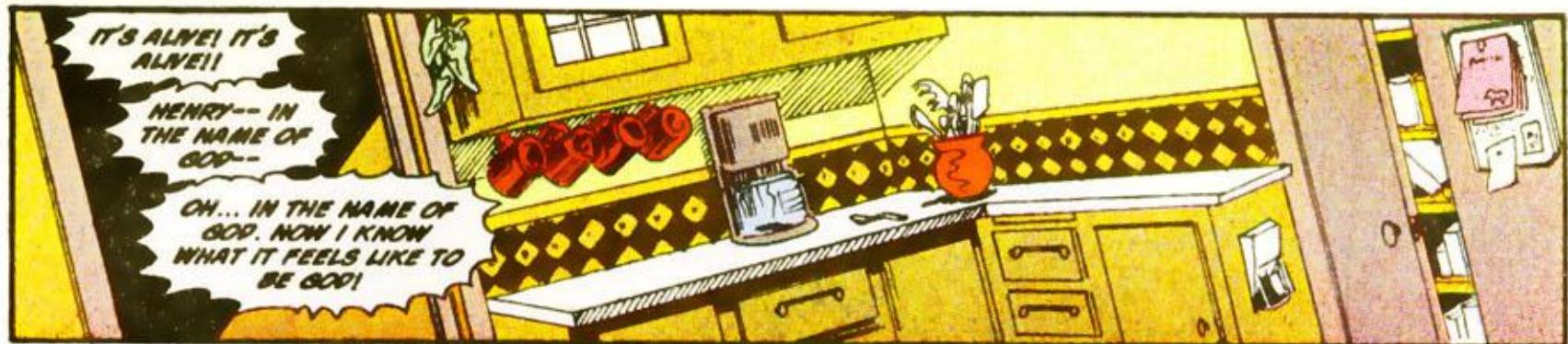
(IT'S COMING FROM THIS DUNGEON PORTAL.)

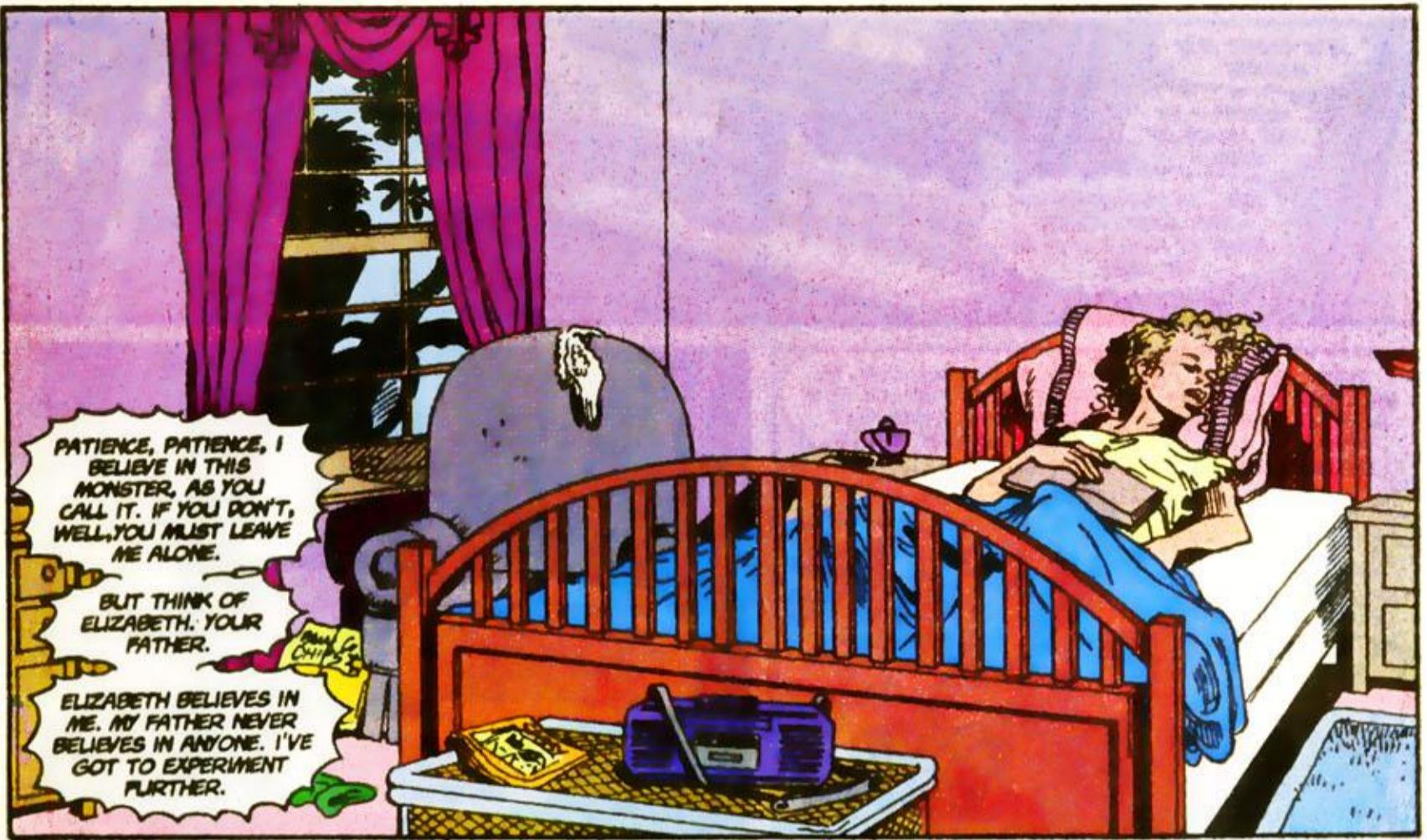
(O, MERCIFUL HERA....)

(MNEMOSYNE... EPIONE... AND TIMANDRA.)

(SO, TORTURE STILL HASN'T BROKEN YOUR SPIRIT, EH? WELL, I DON'T CARE WHAT THAT WITCH DOES TO ME! ONE OF YOU LEFT ALIVE IS ONE TOO MANY!)

(YOU PATHETIC EXCUSE FOR WARRIOR! THERE CAN ONLY BE ROOM IN THE NEW WORLD FOR ONE TRUE AMAZON RACE!)





TO BE CONTINUED IN WAR OF THE GODS
NO. 2 AND IN WONDER WOMAN NO. 60.
BE THERE!