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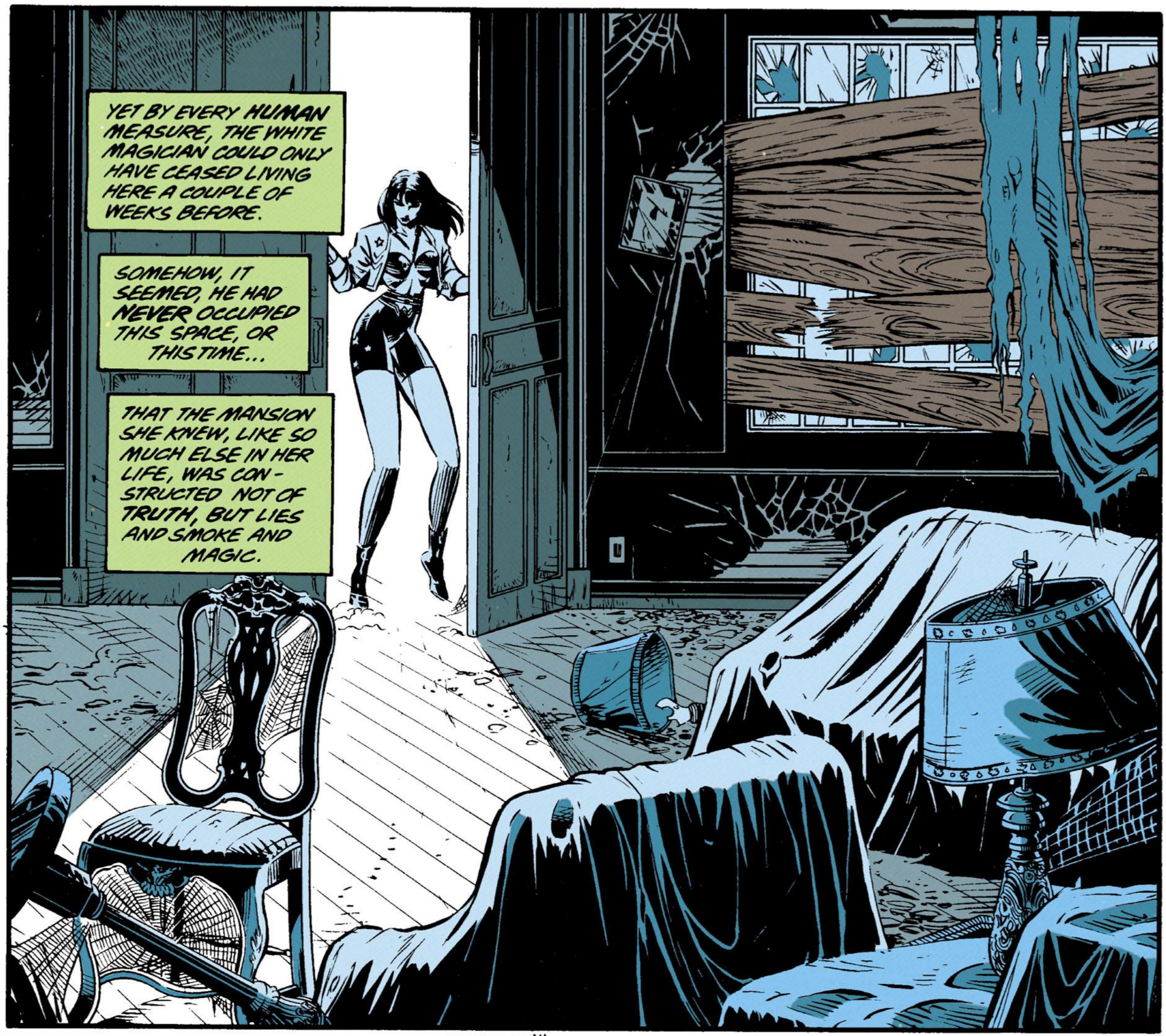
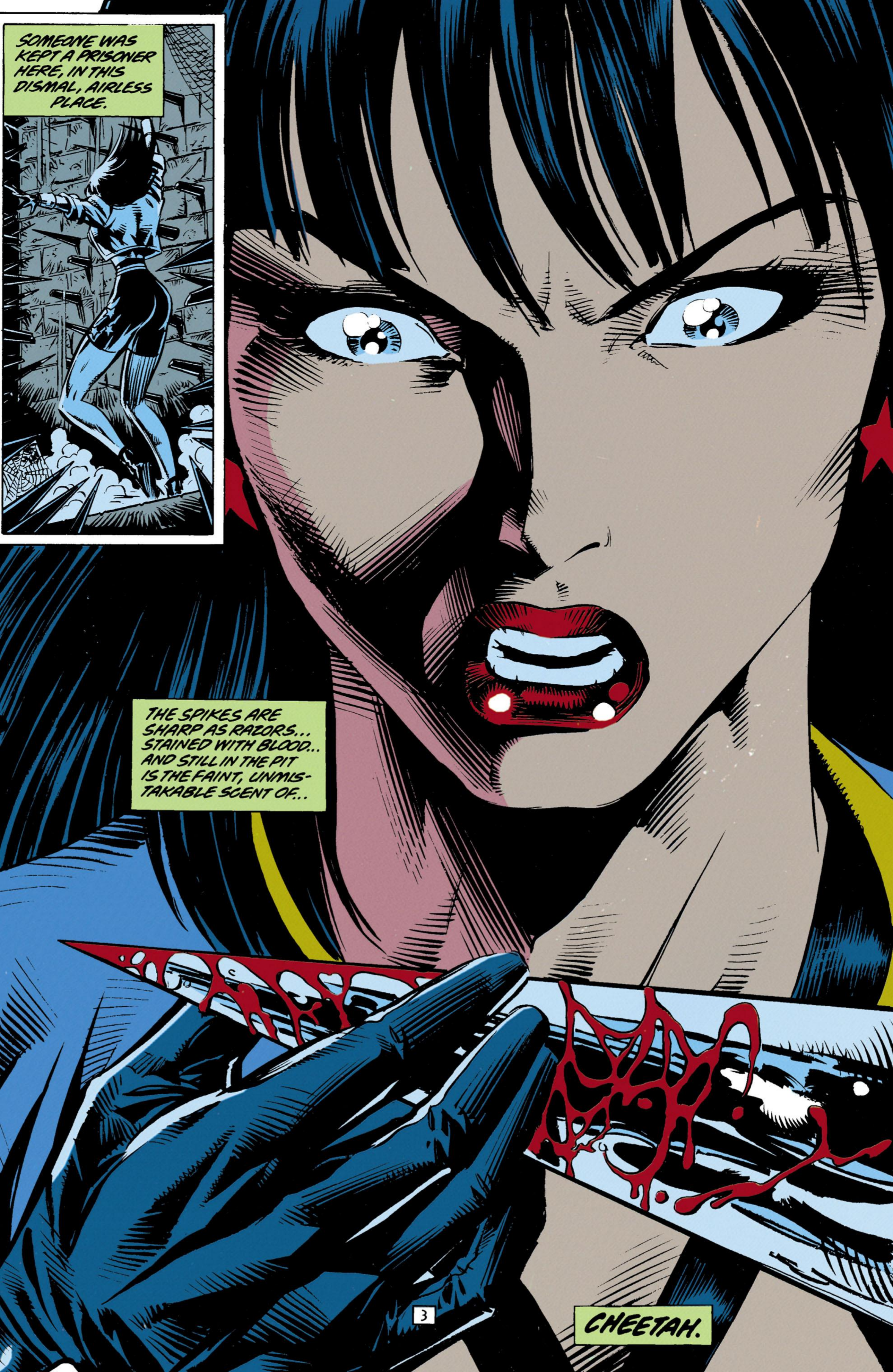
CENTENNIAL EDITION
LATE JUL 95 $2.95 CAN4.25 UK£2.00
LOEBS
DEODATO
FALL OF AN AMAZON!
WONDER WOMAN
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BOLLAND

"Everything Ends." THE COUNTESS DE RESZI, THE FORMER DOROTHY WILLIS, UPON BEING INFORMED THAT THE BASTILLE HAD FALLEN.
SHE KNOWS HE IS GONE EVEN BEFORE SHE ALIGHTS ON THE TANGLED GRASS OR SEES THE BATTERED, PEELING PAINT.
THIS PLACE HAS ALWAYS BEEN IMMACULATE. IT WAS OVER TWO HUNDRED YEARS OLD--THE ANCESTRAL HOME FOR GENERATIONS OF RANDOLPHS.
ASQUITH RANDOLPH KEPT IT IN PERFECT ORDER DURING HIS DECADES AS A CRIME FIGHTER AND DURING HIS MUCH SHORTER RECENT CAREER AS A CRIMINAL.
NOW IT SAGS WITH DECADES OF NEGLECT. HE IS GONE.
BLANK
MADNESS

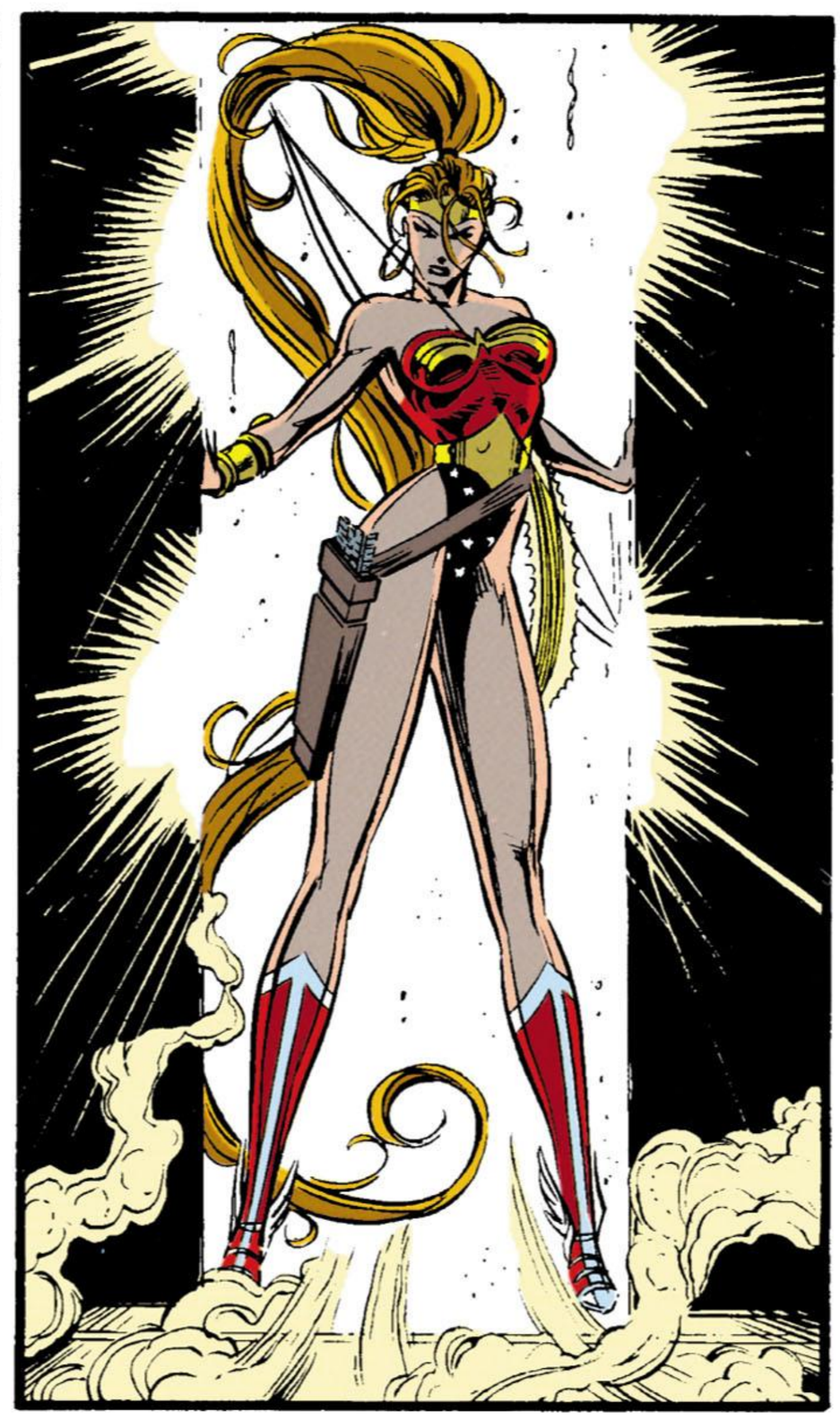

YET BY EVERY HUMAN MEASURE, THE WHITE MAGICIAN COULD ONLY HAVE CEASED LIVING HERE A COUPLE OF WEEKS BEFORE.
SOMEHOW, IT SEEMED, HE HAD NEVER OCCUPIED THIS SPACE, OR THIS TIME...
THAT THE MANSION SHE KNEW, LIKE SO MUCH ELSE IN HER LIFE, WAS CONSTRUCTED NOT OF TRUTH, BUT LIES AND SMOKE AND MAGIC.

AND UNDER THE MUSTINESS WAS THE SLIGHT, TEASING WHIFF OF EVIL.

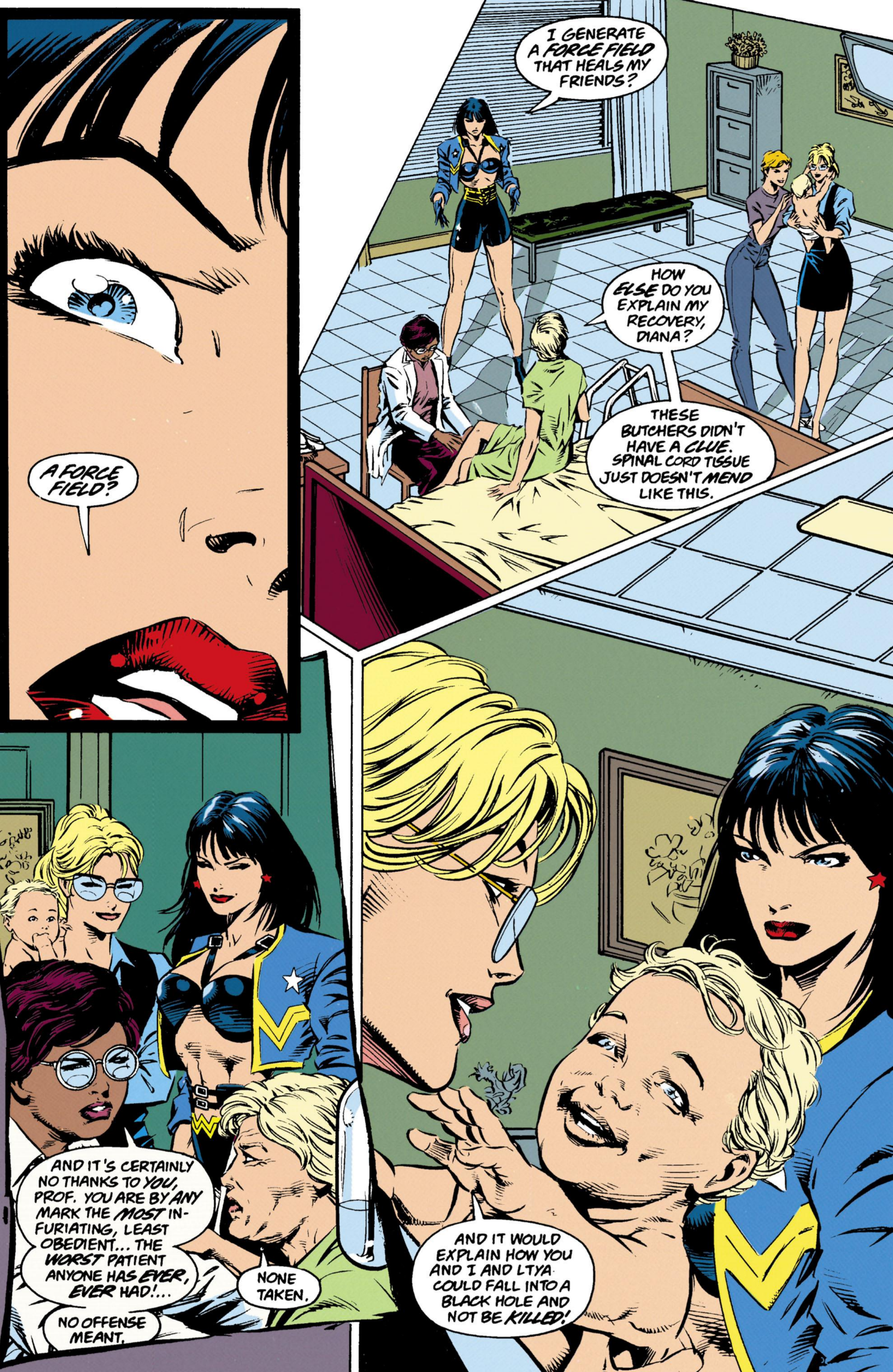
ANCIENT EVIL... WELL-BURIED.


SOMEONE WAS KEPT A PRISONER HERE, IN THIS DISMAL, AIRLESS PLACE.
THE SPIKES ARE SHARP AS RAZORS... STAINED WITH BLOOD... AND STILL IN THE PIT IS THE FAINT, UNMIS-TAKABLE SCENT OF...
CHEETAH.

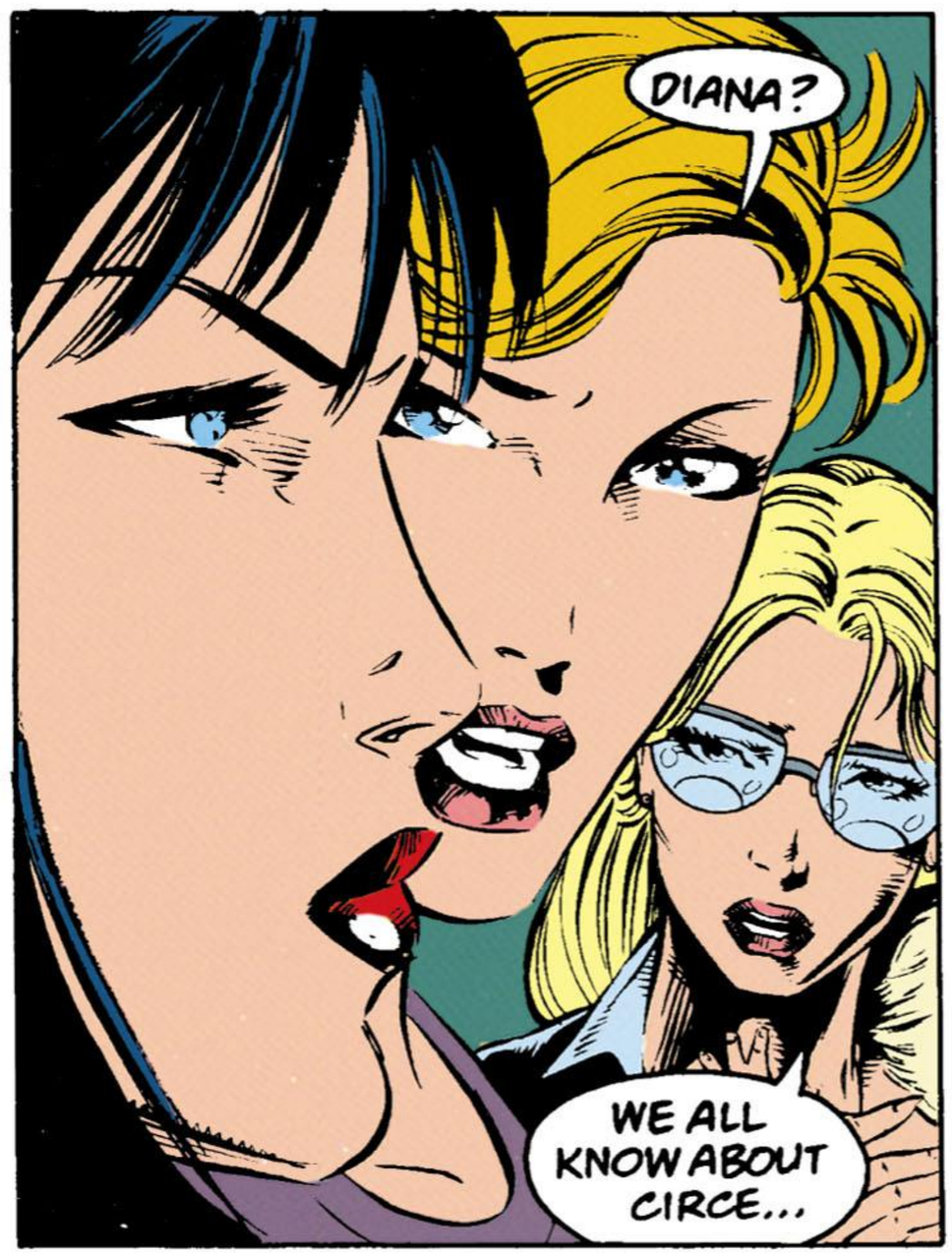
NO!
KRAK



MIKE LEODALO JR.


A FORCE FIELD?
I GENERATE A FORCE FIELD THAT HEALS MY FRIENDS?
HOW ELSE DO YOU EXPLAIN MY RECOVERY, DIANA?
THESE BUTCHERS DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE. SPINAL CORD TISSUE JUST DOESN'T MEND LIKE THIS.
AND IT'S CERTAINLY NO THANKS TO YOU, PROF. YOU ARE BY ANY MARK THE MOST IN-FURIATING, LEAST OBEDIENT... THE WORST PATIENT ANYONE HAS EVER, EVER HAD!...
NONE TAKEN.
NO OFFENSE MEANT.
AND IT WOULD EXPLAIN HOW YOU AND I AND LTYA COULD FALL INTO A BLACK HOLE AND NOT BE KILLED!

AND I WAS SHOT AS WELL. SEVERAL TIMES. YOU KNOW, THOSE SCARS HAVE NEARLY FADED AWAY?
I...I SEE.
DID I MENTION I FOUGHT CIRCE TODAY, OVER THEMYSCIRA?
AS USUAL. I BRUSHED HER OFF... ALMOST AS IF SHE WASN'T REALLY THERE.
CIRCE IS A SORCERESS OF NEARLY LIMITLESS POWER...AND SHE HATES MY MOTHER AND THE OTHER AMAZONS.
AND YET I KEEP DEFEATING HER.
SHE HAS A FIRST-RATE INTELLIGENCE. HER SCHEMES ARE LIKE SYMPHONIES, WITH BURIED HARMONIES AND MOVEMENTS WITHIN MOVEMENTS.
AND YET, LATELY, SHE DOESN'T PLAN AT ALL. SHE JUST ATTACKS.
I...SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT.
8



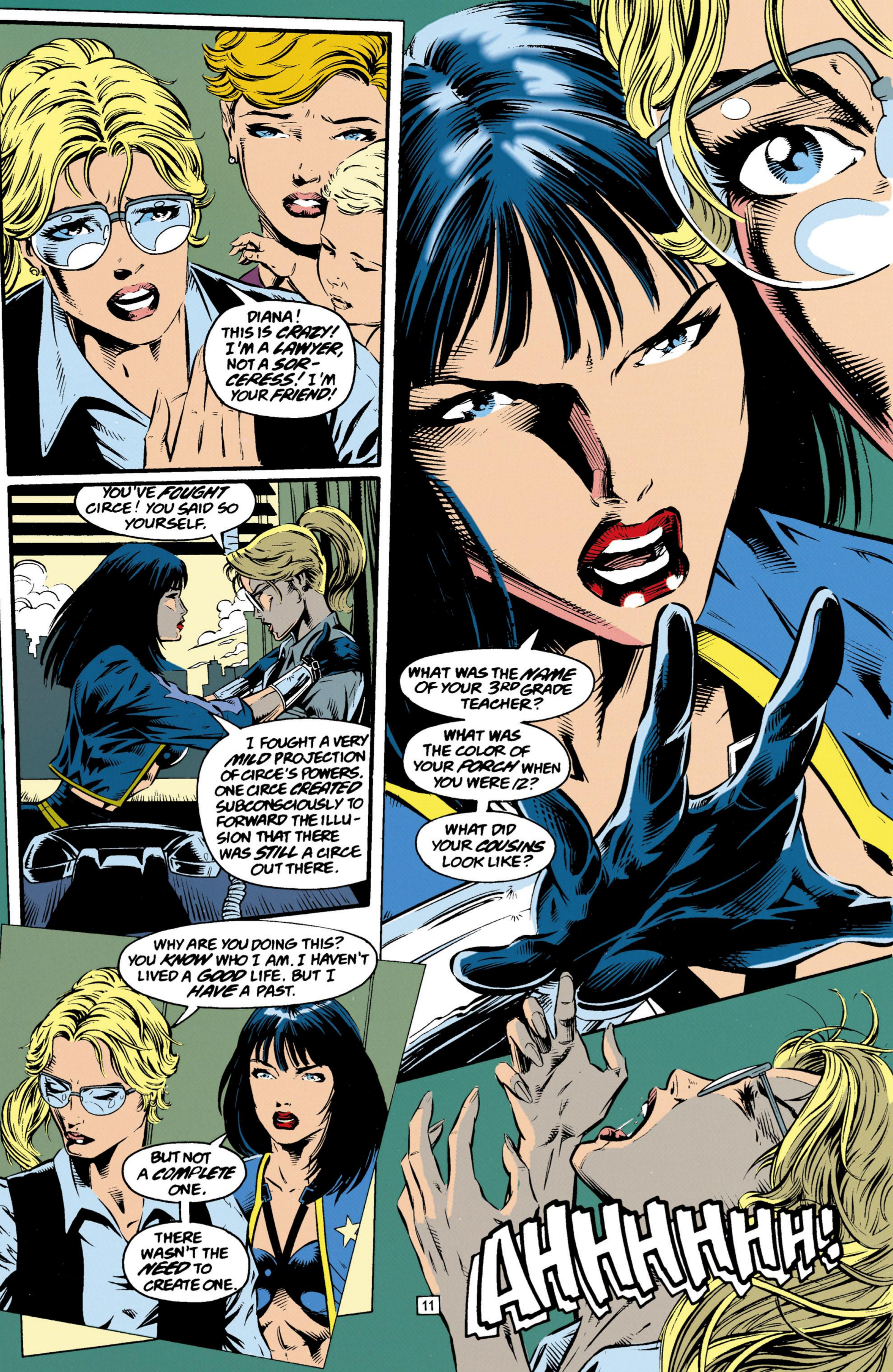
BUT WHERE WOULD SHE HIDE? SHE'D WANT TO BE CLOSE ENOUGH TO ME TO ENJOY MY SUFFERING.

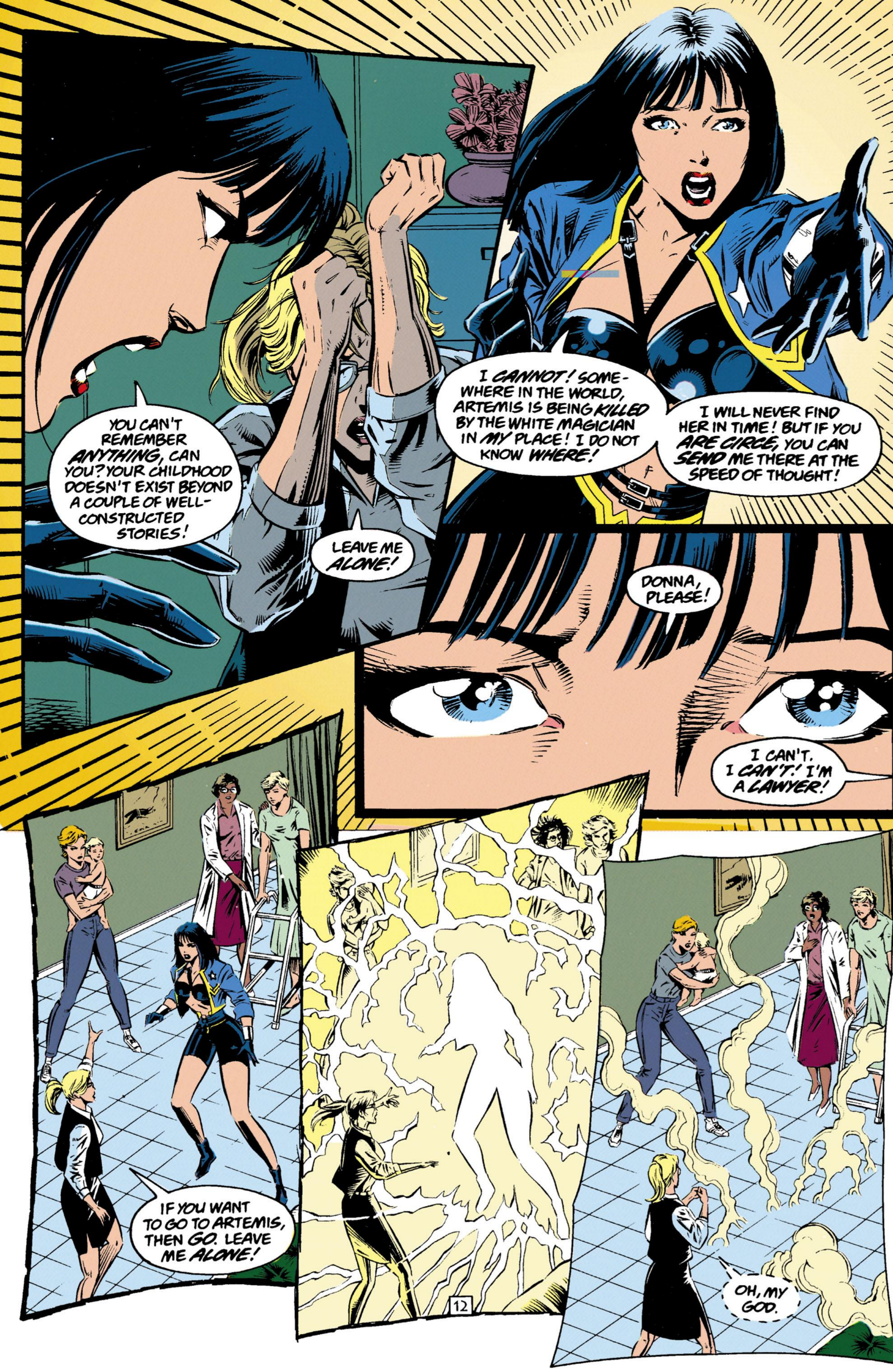
AND ARES BUCHANAN WAS COMING. SHE WOULD KNOW ABOUT HIM. SHE KNEW HE HAD THE PERCEPTIONS OF A DEMIGOD. HE COULD SEE THROUGH ANY DISGUISE.

UNLESS SHE MAGICALLY TRANSFORMED HERSELF... HID THE TRUTH SO DEEPLY THAT EVEN SHE FORGOT IT.

AND WORE A DIFFERENT PERSONALITY LIKE A MASK. THEN SHE COULD BE SAFE.

THAT WAY, SHE COULD BE AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO ARES BUCHANAN AND ME... READY TO STRIKE, TO SPRING THE TRAP!
BECAUSE SHE NEVER COUNTED ON FALLING IN LOVE, HAVING FRIENDS...LIKING ME, HER SWORN ENEMY.
HUMANITY CAN BE A POWERFUL DRUG.
BUT THAT NEVER HAPPENED, DIANA. THE "TRAP" WAS NEVER SPRUNG.
BUT, DIANA, I'D KNOW IF THERE WAS A PERSON LIKE THAT. AFTER ALL, WE WERE TOGETHER ALMOST ALL THE TIME. AND I WAS SLEEPING WITH ARES BUCHANAN...
NO!


DIANA! THIS IS CRAZY! I'M A LAWYER, NOT A SORCERESS! I'M YOUR FRIEND!
YOU'VE FOUGHT CIRCE! YOU SAID SO YOURSELF.
I FOUGHT A VERY MILD PROJECTION OF CIRCE'S POWERS. ONE CIRCE CREATED SUBCONSCIOUSLY TO FORWARD THE ILLUSION THAT THERE WAS STILL A CIRCE OUT THERE.
WHAT WAS THE NAME OF YOUR 3RD GRADE TEACHER?
WHAT WAS THE COLOR OF YOUR PORCH WHEN YOU WERE 12?
WHAT DID YOUR COUSINS LOOK LIKE?
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? YOU KNOW WHO I AM. I HAVEN'T LIVED A GOOD LIFE. BUT I HAVE A PAST.
BUT NOT A COMPLETE ONE.
THERE WASN'T THE NEED TO CREATE ONE.
AHHHHHH!


YOU CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING, CAN YOU? YOUR CHILDHOOD DOESN'T EXIST BEYOND A COUPLE OF WELL-CONSTRUCTED STORIES!
LEAVE ME ALONE!
I CANNOT! SOMEWHERE IN THE WORLD, ARTEMIS IS BEING KILLED BY THE WHITE MAGICIAN IN MY PLACE! I DO NOT KNOW WHERE!
I WILL NEVER FIND HER IN TIME! BUT IF YOU ARE CIRCE, YOU CAN SEND ME THERE AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT!
DONNA, PLEASE!
I CAN'T. I CAN'T! I'M A LAWYER!
IF YOU WANT TO GO TO ARTEMIS, THEN GO. LEAVE ME ALONE!
OH, MY GOD.

THE DAEMON-SMELL IS SO STRONG THAT IT CHOKES HER... BURNS HER THROAT...
AND SHE RECOGNIZES ASQUITH RANDOLPH, OR AT LEAST SOMETHING IN THE WAY HE STANDS... SOMETHING IN HIS EYES...
OR JUST BECAUSE THIS TWISTED, SLAVERING THING IS THE ULTIMATE EXTENSION OF RANDOLPH'S LUST FOR POWER!
GAEA!

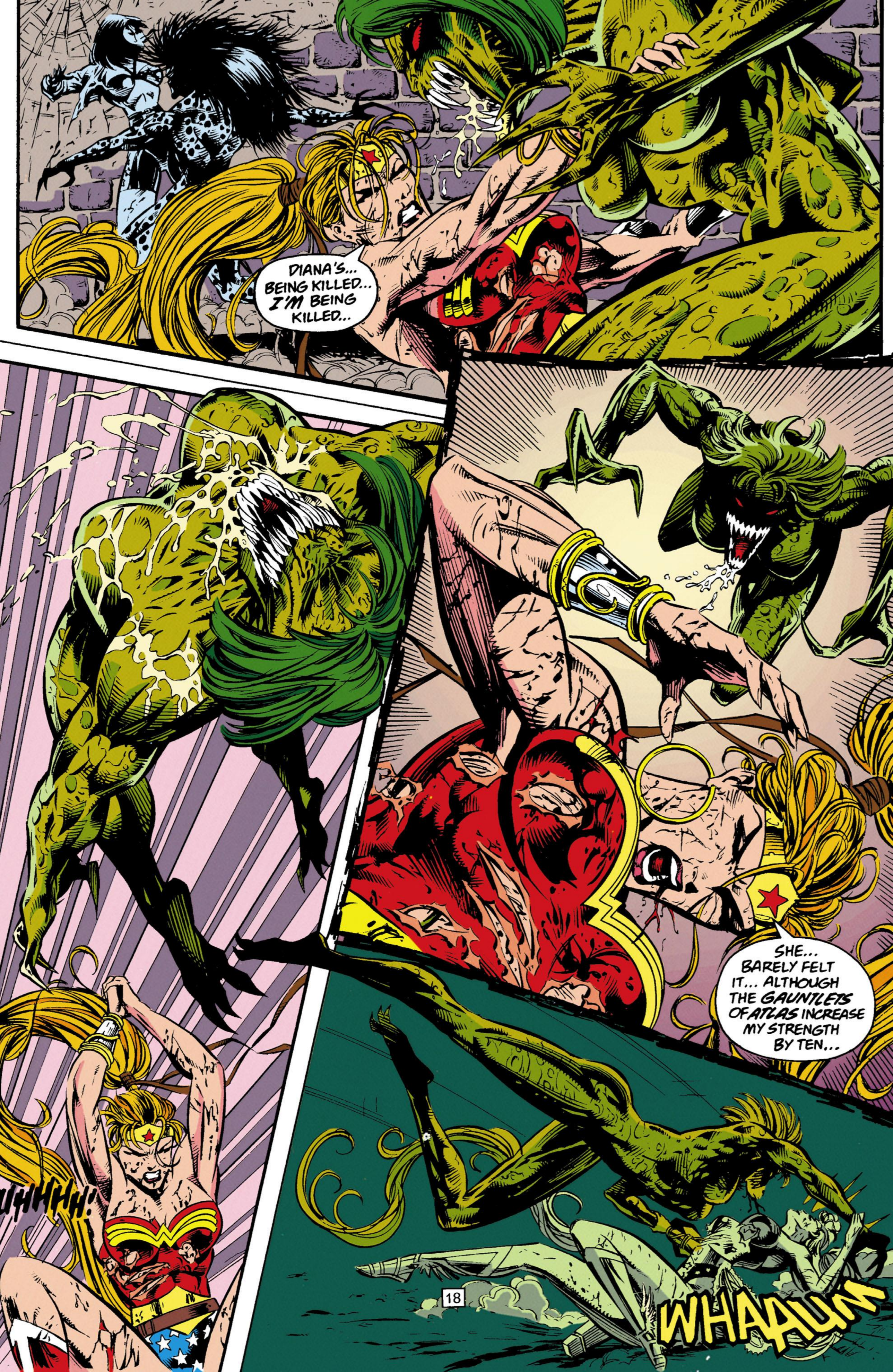
LET HER GO!
AEERRGGHH
YOU KNOW MY ALLIES, I THINK! CASSANDRA ARNOLD AND THE CHEETAH! SOON YOU'LL JOIN THEM IN SERVING ME!
DO YOU THINK YOU CAN STOP ME, NOW THAT I'VE COME INTO MY POWER?
YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE!

"TAKE THEM! EAT THEIR FACES! RIP THEM APART!"

ONE CHANCE... MAYBE I CAN THROW HER...
AIIIIEEEE
TOO... STRONG...

...TOO STRONG...
KUNK!
KAK

BRAK!
SKRACK!
WEAK... HSSSSST!
CHEETAH... HER MIND'S GONE... SHE DOESN'T KNOW ME...

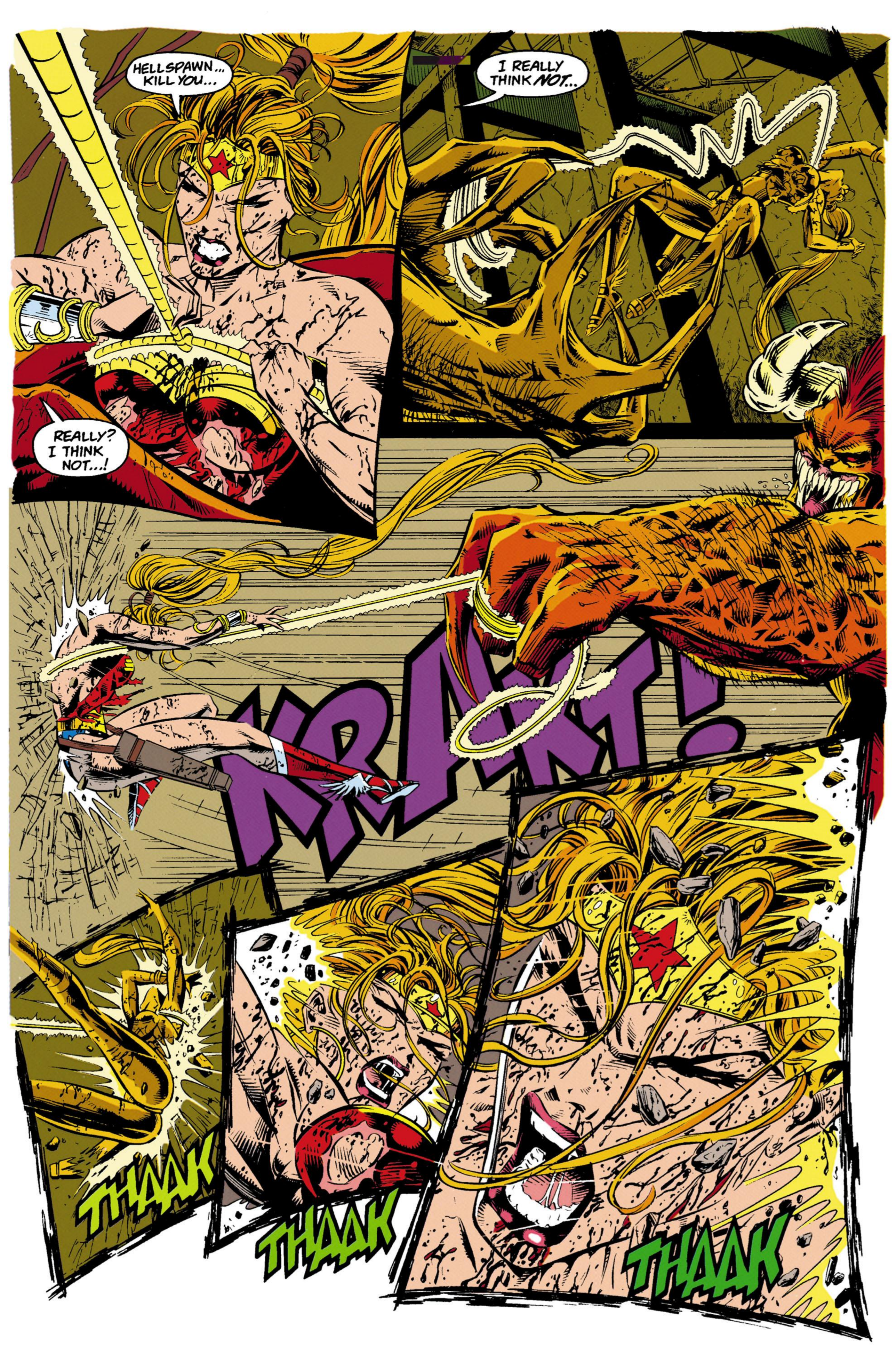

DIANA'S... BEING KILLED... I'M BEING KILLED...
UHHHHH!
SHE... BARELY FELT IT... ALTHOUGH THE GAUNTLETS OF ATLAS INCREASE MY STRENGTH BY TEN...
WHAAUM

UUUNNNN
THE OTHER ONE'S DEAD?
THEN BETTER HURRY UP IF YOU WANT A TASTE OF THIS ONE.
TOO MANY...CAN'T FIGHT...SO MANY...
DIANA...!
SEE HOW EASILY THEY BREAK? IS IT ANY WONDER I LOATHED BEING HUMAN?

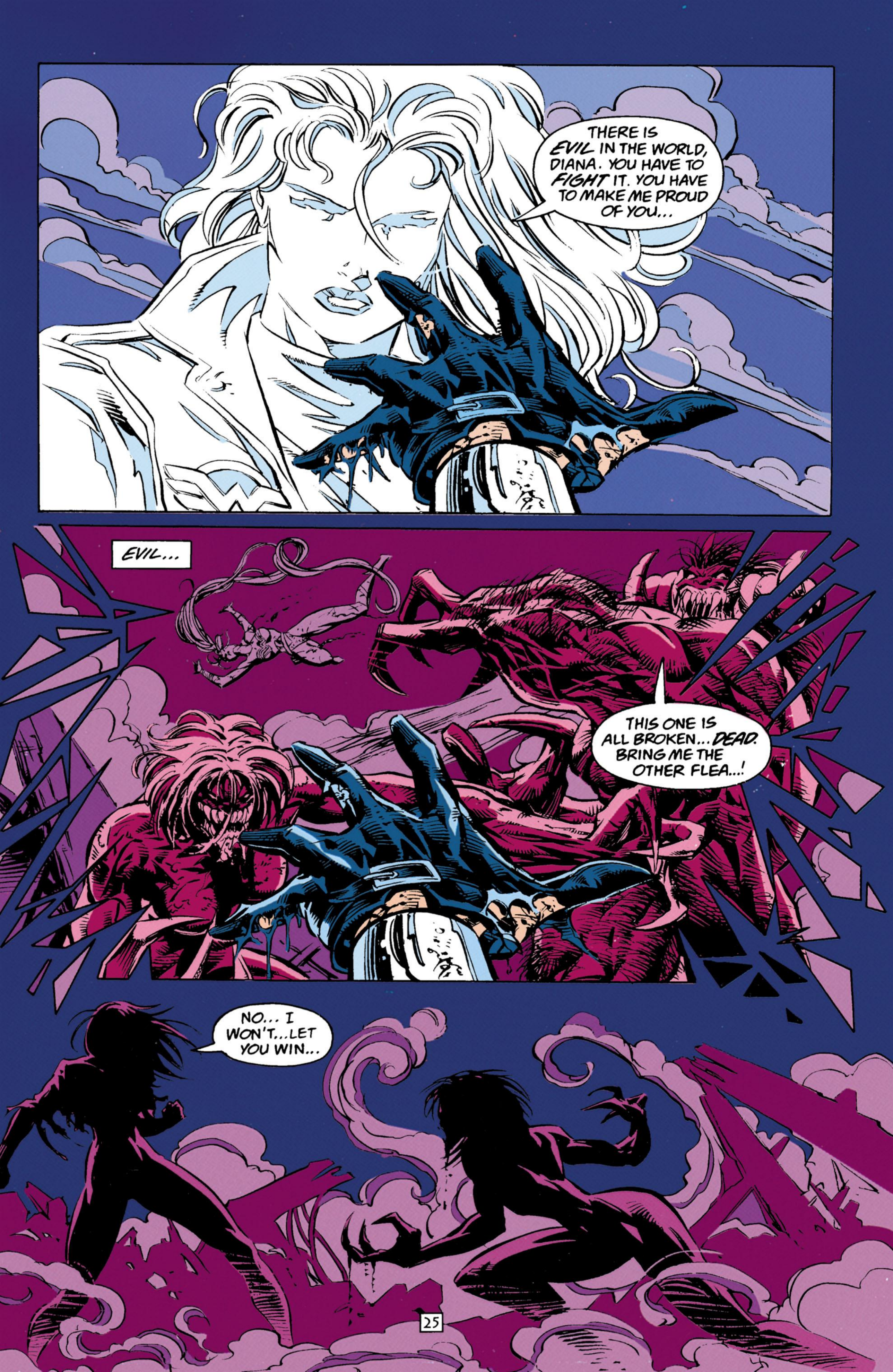
HAVE TO GIVE... THEM SOME-THING ELSE TO THINK ABOUT.
NOW DO YOU REGRET HUMILIATING ME, AMAZON? I'VE PUT MYSELF FOREVER BEYOND YOUR POWER!
I SHALL TEAR OFF YOUR HEAD AND WEAR IT AS AN ORNAMENT ON MY HORNS!
DO YOU WANT A FIGHT, DAEMON?
FIGHT THIS!
AH, THE LITTLE FLEA WANTS TO PLAY!

TPH!
THUNK!
UNNNGH!
LOOK, LADIES. THE FLEA IS TRYING TO PULL OUT HER OWN STINGER! HOW BRAVE!
CHUKK

WE SHOULD HELP HER.
AAHUUUGGG!
AND HERE'S ANOTHER STINGER...
ARRRRRHHHH
AH. THE LARIAT OF TRUTH. THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE UN-BREAKABLE. SHALL WE TEST IT?


HELLSPAWN... KILL YOU...
I REALLY THINK NOT...
REALLY? I THINK NOT...!
NO!
THAAAK
THAAAK
THAAAK

DIANA?
HER NAME IS DIANA TREVOR. SHE GAVE HER LIFE TO SAVE THE AMAZONS SO MANY YEARS AGO. IN GRATITUDE THEIR QUEEN NAMED HER ONLY DAUGHTER AFTER HER.
DIANA, YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP. YOU CAN'T SLEEP YET...


THERE IS EVIL IN THE WORLD, DIANA. YOU HAVE TO FIGHT IT. YOU HAVE TO MAKE ME PROUD OF YOU...
EVIL...
THIS ONE IS ALL BROKEN... DEAD. BRING ME THE OTHER FLEA...!
NO... I WON'T...LET YOU WIN...

AHHHHHHH!
NO! I CAN'T...
LET ME...? I'VE ALREADY WON!

HELLO, DIANA.
CIRCE!

I'M SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG. MY MEMORIES... ARE STRANGE TO ME. I HAD TO REMEMBER HOW TO MANIPULATE THE RIVERS OF MAGIC...!
THAT CREATURE CAN ONLY HOLD SO MUCH ENERGY AT A TIME...
AND I CAN FEEL THE STRENGTH AND ENERGY SPILLING OUT OF ME LIKE A GREAT WAVE!
TO SEND HIM BACK TO HELL!

WEAK, WITCH. VERY WEAK!
NOW MINE IS STRONG!
:COFF... COFF:... THERE'S SOME-WRONG. I CAN'T CONTROL THE FORCES AS I DID BEFORE. TOO MORTAL... TOO...
KILL HER!
DEVOUR HER!
HSSSSST
RRRAAAAGGRRR

BUT I CAN STILL DO THIS!
YOU'RE MY ONLY FRIEND, DIANA!
THAT JUST LEAVES THE TWO OF US TO FINISH OUT THE DANCE, AMAZON!
ALL THREE... GONE.

MORE OF HER FRIENDS ARE GONE. SHE IS ALONE. GRINNING, THE DAEMON APPROACHES. HE TAKES HIS TIME.

EXHAUSTED, SHE BRACES FOR HIM AS ONE ALREADY DEAD. HER SANDALS ARE SLIPPING ON THE SLICK CONCRETE. IT TAKES HER A MINUTE BEFORE SHE REALIZES THEY ARE SLIPPING ON BLOOD.

DIANA...

THE GAUNTLET GIVES YOU THE STRENGTH OF *TEN*. AND TEN TIMES *YOUR* STRENGTH MIGHT GIVE YOU THE *POWER* TO DEFEAT HIM.

ARTEMIS...

I CANNOT MOVE MY ARMS, DIANA.

SISTER...

WE'LL GET OUT OF THIS, ARTEMIS. I WON'T LET HIM HURT YOU ANYMORE...

I AM DEAD. THINK NO MORE ABOUT ME. TAKE THE GAUNTLET OF ATLAS.

ARTEMIS. THAT IS YOUR ONLY *PROTECTION*.

STRIKE DIANA, *STRIKE* BEFORE...

PROTECTION... I NO LONGER NEED. I WASN'T... STRONG ENOUGH. Y-YOU ARE.

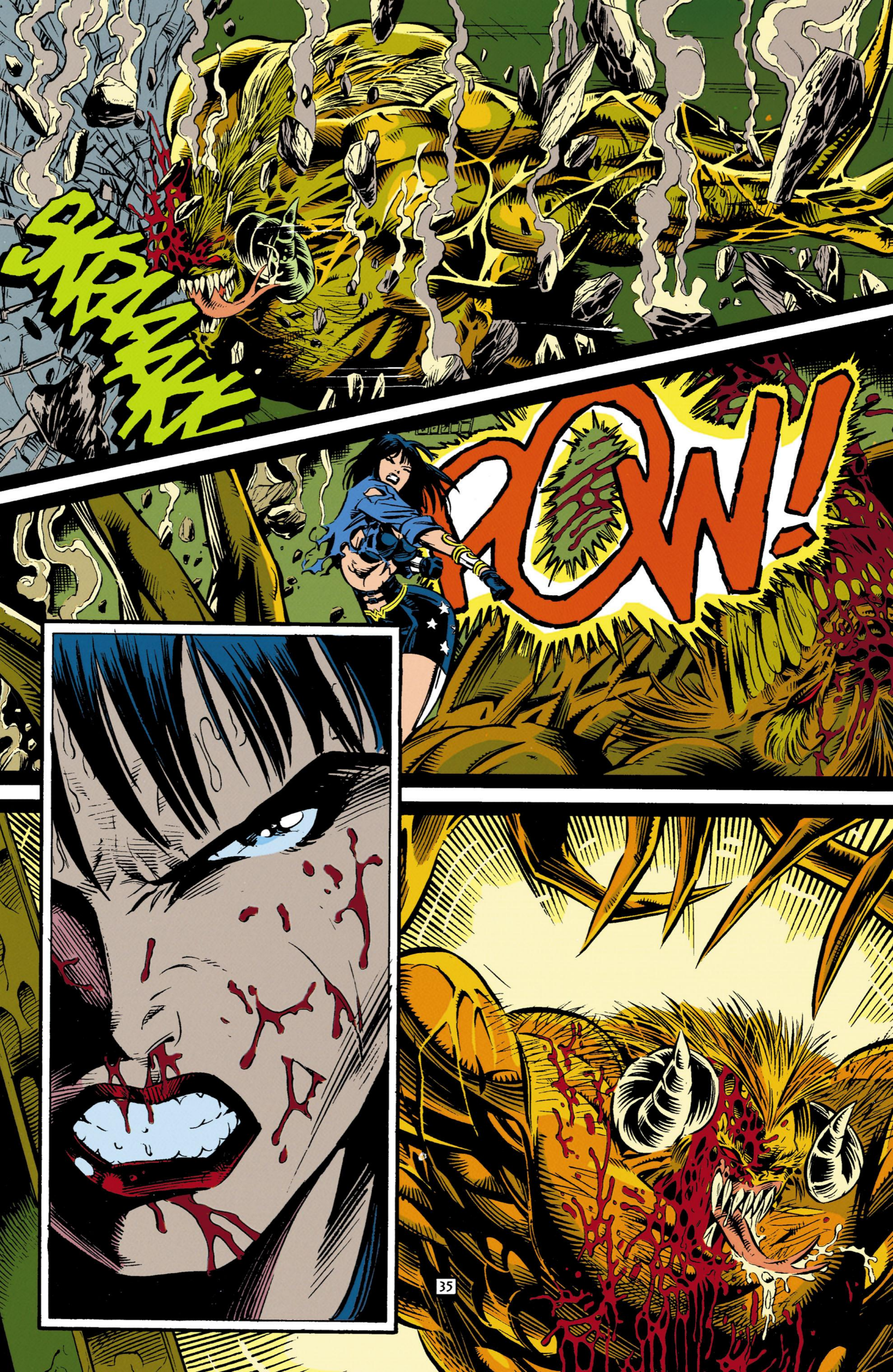
ENOUGH *MELODRAMA* FOR ONE DAY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? ENOUGH *THREATS* AND COUNTER-THREATS AND LAST-MINUTE RESCUES?

ISN'T IT TIME TO DIE?

YES!
WHUMB
BREAKING

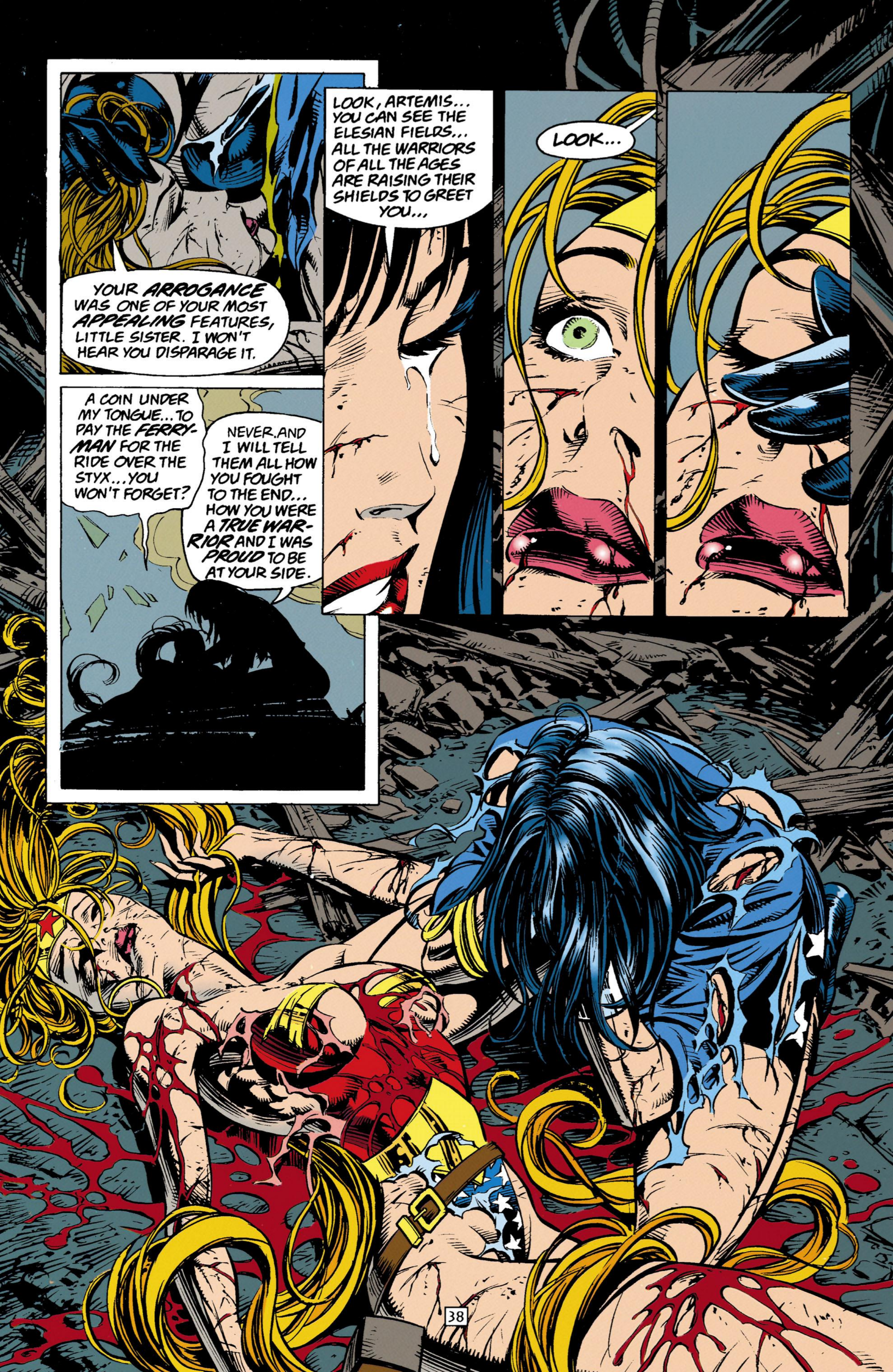
TH-WHAM
KRAK
KRAARD

WHOM
BRAK


SKREEE
POW!

NO... I... I...
NOOO! BURNING...
NO
OO!

ARTEMIS...?
IS...HE DEAD?
YES.
GOOD.
TAKE BACK YOUR UNIFORM, DIANA. I HAVE... DISHONORED IT. MY AMBITION AND... ARROGANCE NEARLY GOT... US BOTH KILLED...
YOU ARE WONDER WOMAN.


YOUR ARROGANCE WAS ONE OF YOUR MOST APPEALING FEATURES, LITTLE SISTER. I WON'T HEAR YOU DISPARAGE IT.
A COIN UNDER MY TONGUE... TO PAY THE FERRYMAN FOR THE RIDE OVER THE STYX... YOU WON'T FORGET?
NEVER. AND I WILL TELL THEM ALL HOW YOU FOUGHT TO THE END... HOW YOU WERE A TRUE WARRIOR AND I WAS PROUD TO BE AT YOUR SIDE.
LOOK, ARTEMIS... YOU CAN SEE THE ELESIAN FIELDS... ALL THE WARRIORS OF ALL THE AGES ARE RAISING THEIR SHIELDS TO GREET YOU...
LOOK...