DC
WONDER WOMAN
103
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BY JOHN BYRNE
AGAINST APOKOLIPS!
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THE NIGHT IS STILL AND DARK BENEATH A SKY SHOT THROUGH WITH DIAMONDS.
A STILLNESS AS OF THE GRAVE LIES ON THESE ANCIENT HILLS.
A STILLNESS SHORTLY TO BE SHATTERED BY THE OPENING OF A PORTAL BETWEEN WORLDS...
EEEEEEE
...AND THE ARRIVAL OF A WARRIOR KNOWN TO SOME AS...
WONDER WOMAN

SECOND GENESIS

PART THREE

EASY DOES IT, OFFICER. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE. AND I GUESS IT'S PAST TIME YOU CALLED ME SOMETHING OTHER THAN "OFFICER."
WHOUF!
THE NAME'S SCHORR. MIKE SCHORR.
AND... THIS IS YOUR HOME, DIANA?
IT... WAS. HERE I WAS CREATED...
...AND HERE I LIVED WHAT WOULD BE BY YOUR MEASURE THE FIRST TWENTY-TWO YEARS OF MY LIFE.

"CREATED"? "BY YOUR MEASURE"?
THERE'S... A LOT MORE TO YOU THAN MOST PEOPLE KNOW, ISN'T THERE, DIANA?
YES. MUCH MORE.
AND I MUST NOW ASK FROM YOU A VOW OF SECRECY, MIKE..
ANYTHING YOU LEARN HERE, YOU MUST NEVER REVEAL TO ANOTHER LIVING SOUL.
NOT MUCH CHANCE OF THAT, DIANA. IF EVERYTHING HERE IS AS WEIRD AS WHAT I'VE SEEN SO FAR, I WON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT.
THANK YOU. NOW... I SUGGEST YOU FIND YOURSELF A DEFENSIBLE POSITION...

...WHILE I ATTEND TO THESE INVADERS.

SHE MOVES WITH ALL THE SUDDEN SPEED OF A SUMMER STORM.
THE SOLDIERS OF DARKSEID ARE AMONG THE MOST FIERCE, THE MOST RELENTLESS IN ALL THE UNIVERSE...
...YET THEY SHRINK BEFORE DIANA'S FURY AS TENDER BLOSSOMS SHRINK BEFORE A HURRICANE.

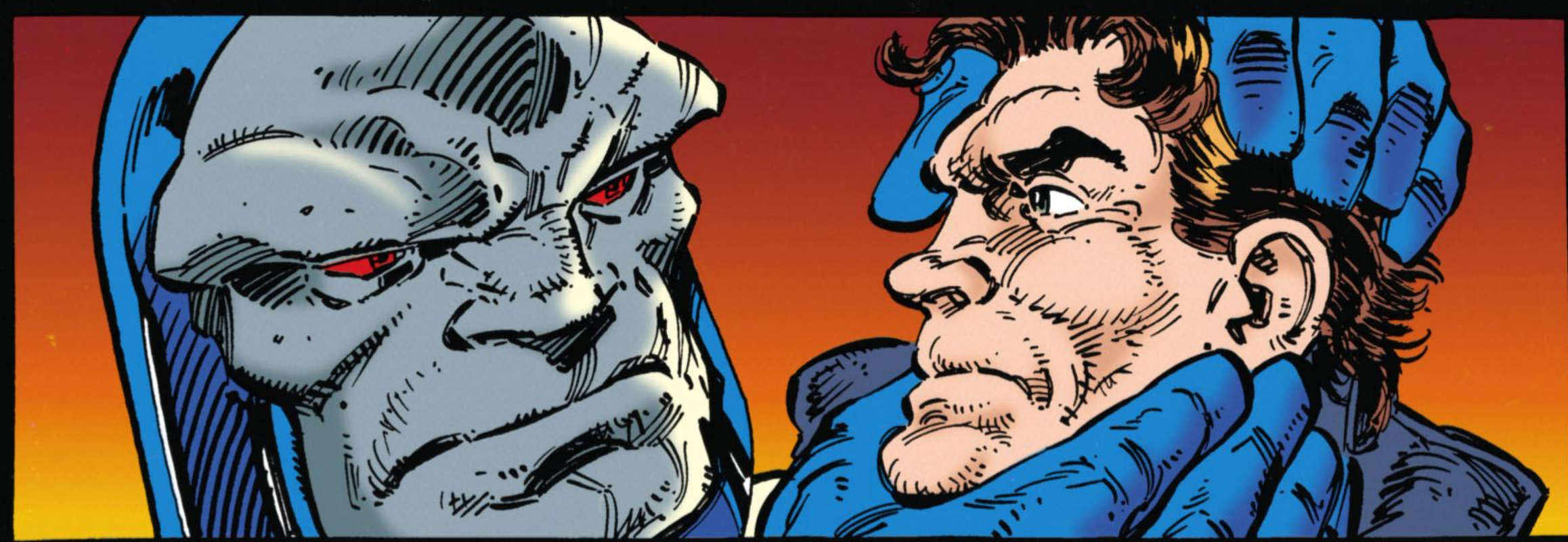
AND THOSE WHO HAVE THE CHANCE, BEFORE THEY FALL, TO LOOK INTO DIANA'S EYES...
...LOOK INTO A COLD AND SEETHING FURY THAT WILL HAUNT THEIR NIGHTMARES THROUGHOUT WHATEVER ETERNITY AWAITS THEM.
THIS IS A SIDE OF THE AMAZON PRINCESS FEW HAVE SEEN BEYOND THE SHORES OF THIS HIDDEN ISLAND.
NOT THE MORTALS WHO BEFRIENDED HER, WHEN FIRST SHE JOURNEYED TO THE LANDS ACROSS THE SEA.
NOT THE HEROES OF THE JUSTICE LEAGUE, BESIDE WHOM SHE HAS STOOD IN FEARSOME BATTLE.

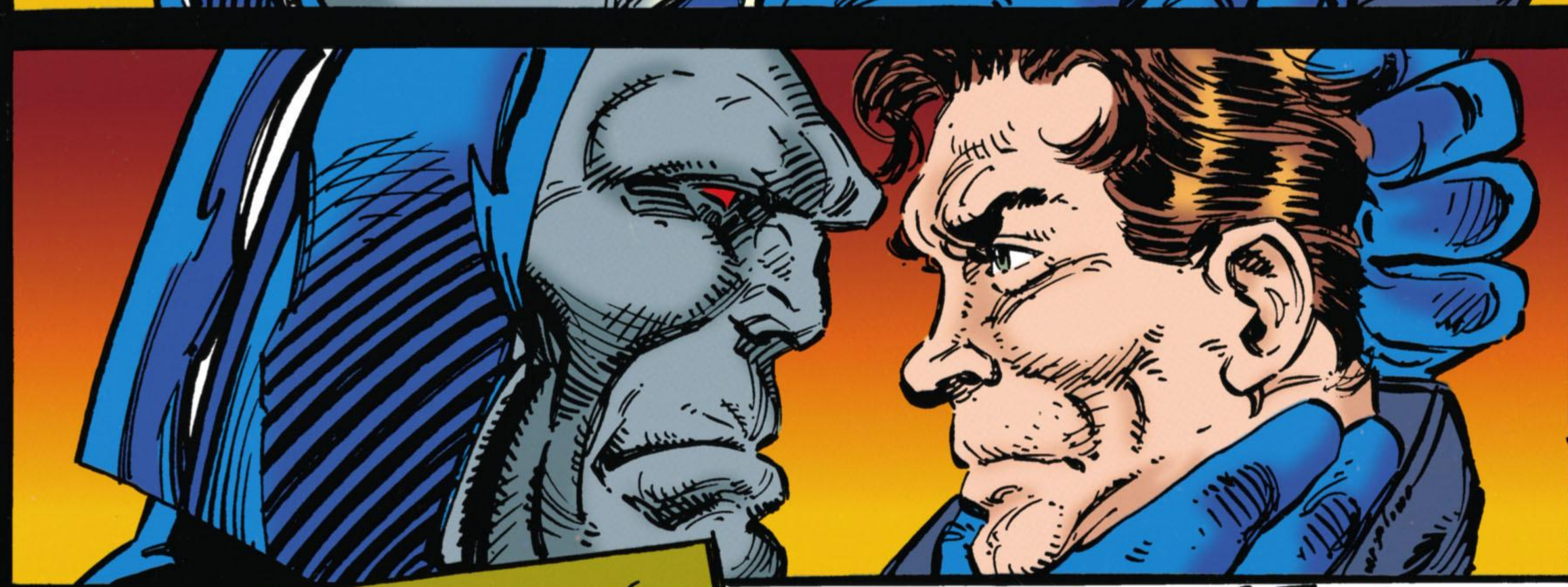
FOR NOW DIANA FIGHTS NOT FOR ABSTRACT CONCEPTS SUCH AS HONOR OR TRUTH.
SHE FIGHTS TO AVENGE THE VIOLATION OF THE ONLY PLACE SHE HAS EVER TRULY CALLED HER HOME.

AND FROM THE JAGGED EDGE OF THE BATTLEFIELD, POLICE OFFICER MIKE SCHORR LOOKS ON IN STUNNED AMAZEMENT.
IN EIGHT YEARS ON THE GATEWAY CITY POLICE FORCE, HE HAD COME TO THINK HE'D SEEN ALL THE SIDES OF VIOLENCE AND PAIN THERE WERE TO SEE.
HE WAS WRONG.
AND NOW HE STARTS TO UNDERSTAND THAT ALL THE HORRORS MANKIND HAS UNLEASHED UPON ITSELF...
...ARE BUT A SHADOW OF THE SAVAGERY THE UNIVERSE HAS TO OFFER.
AND THAT THE MOST INHUMAN DENIZEN OF THE UNDERWORLD...
...IS, AFTER ALL, MORTAL FLESH AND BLOOD...

...AND NOTHING LIKE A VENGEFUL, ANGRY GOD.
PRINCESS DIANA!
HALT YOUR ATTACK UPON MY TROOPS...
...OR SEE THIS HUMAN'S BRAINS ADDED TO THE GORE THAT SOILS YOUR PRECIOUS ISLAND.

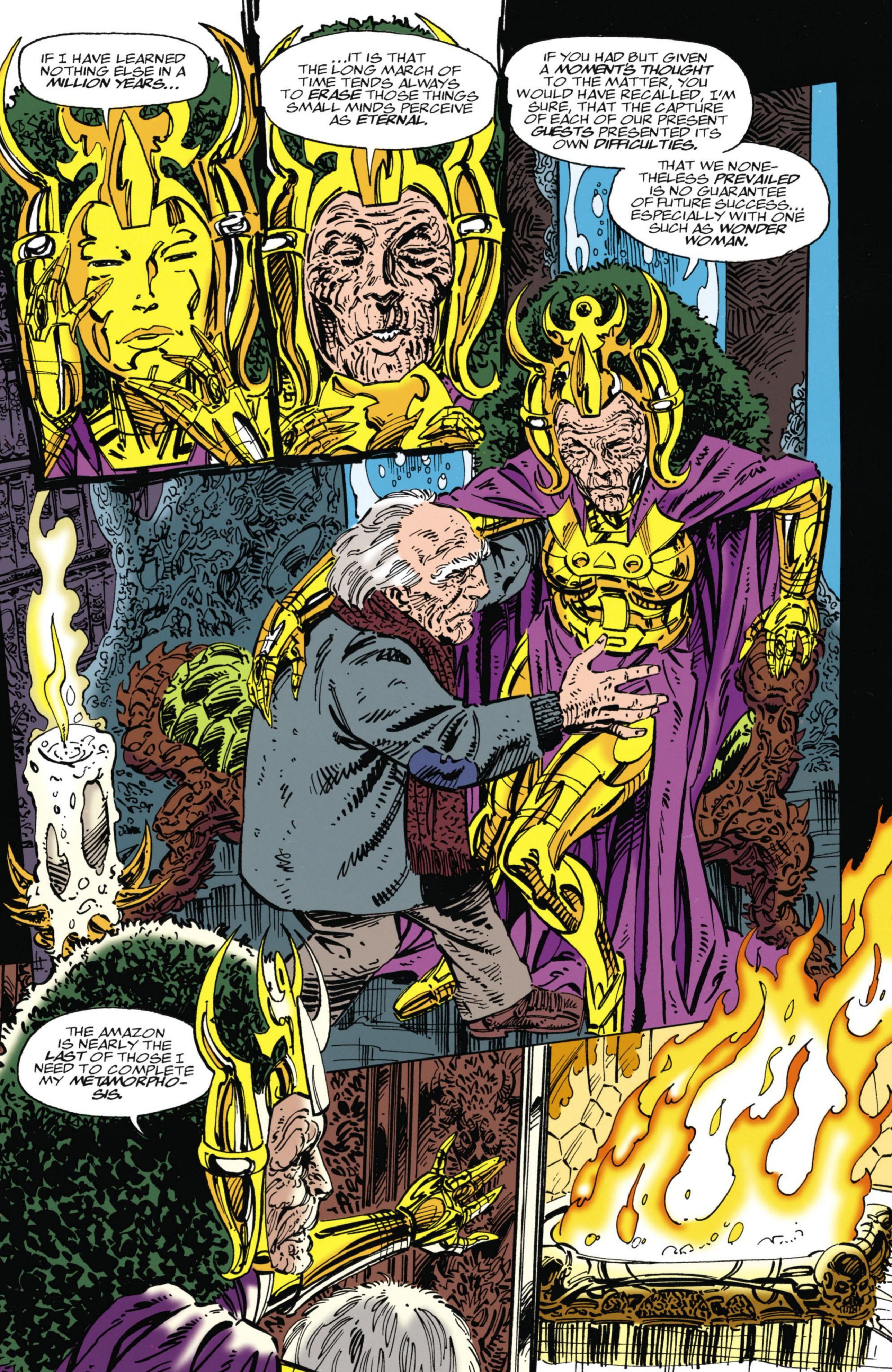
DARKSEID!
LET THE MAN GO, DARKSEID. THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN GAIN FROM HIS DEATH.
PERHAPS NOT.
BUT I WOULD BE INGENUOUS IF I DENIED THAT THERE IS A CERTAIN PLEASURE TO BE TAKEN...
...EVEN FROM A MEANINGLESS DEATH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, WONDER WOMAN!
KICK THIS BOZO'S UGLY GRAY BUTT!!

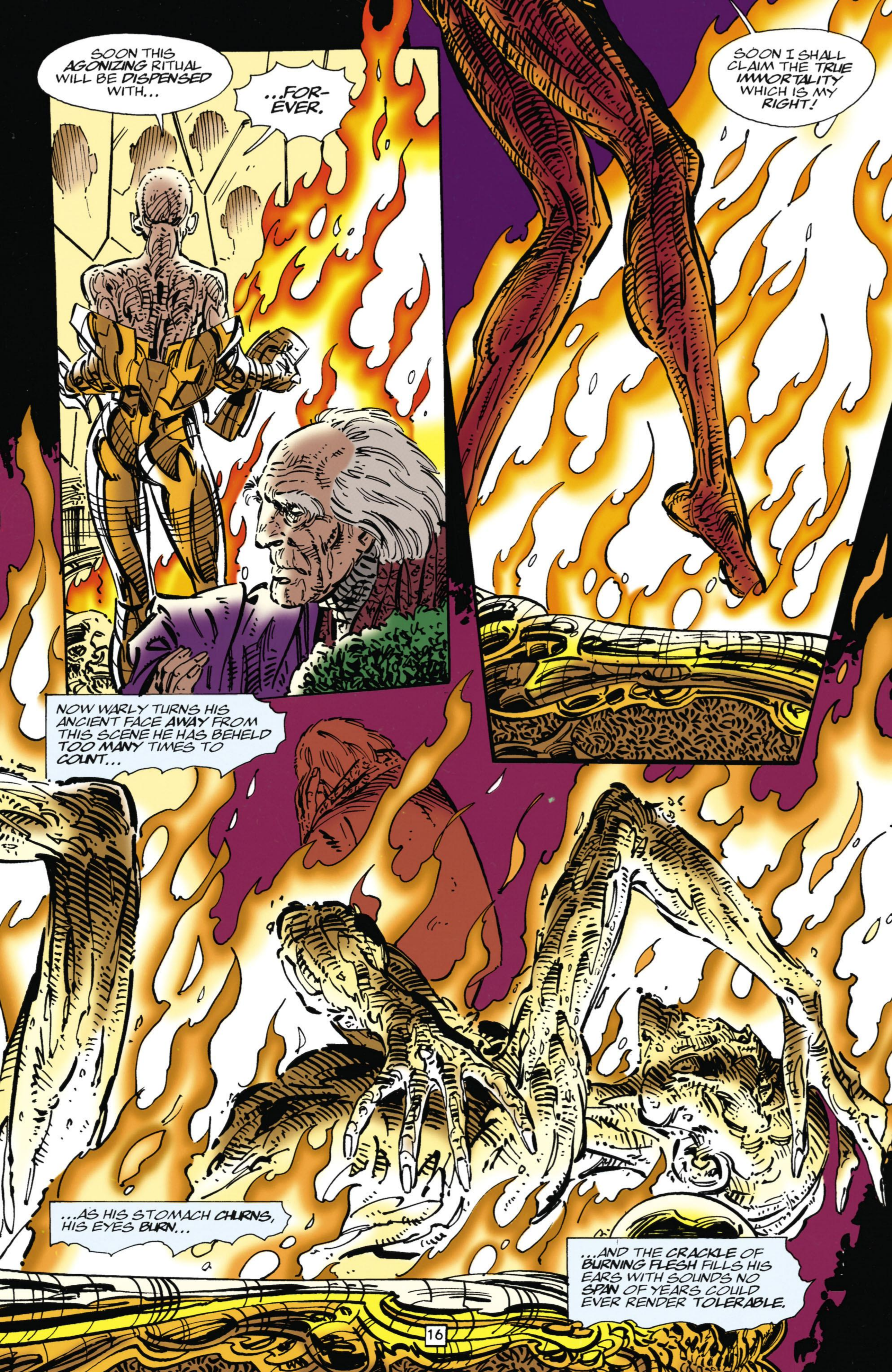




MEANWHILE...

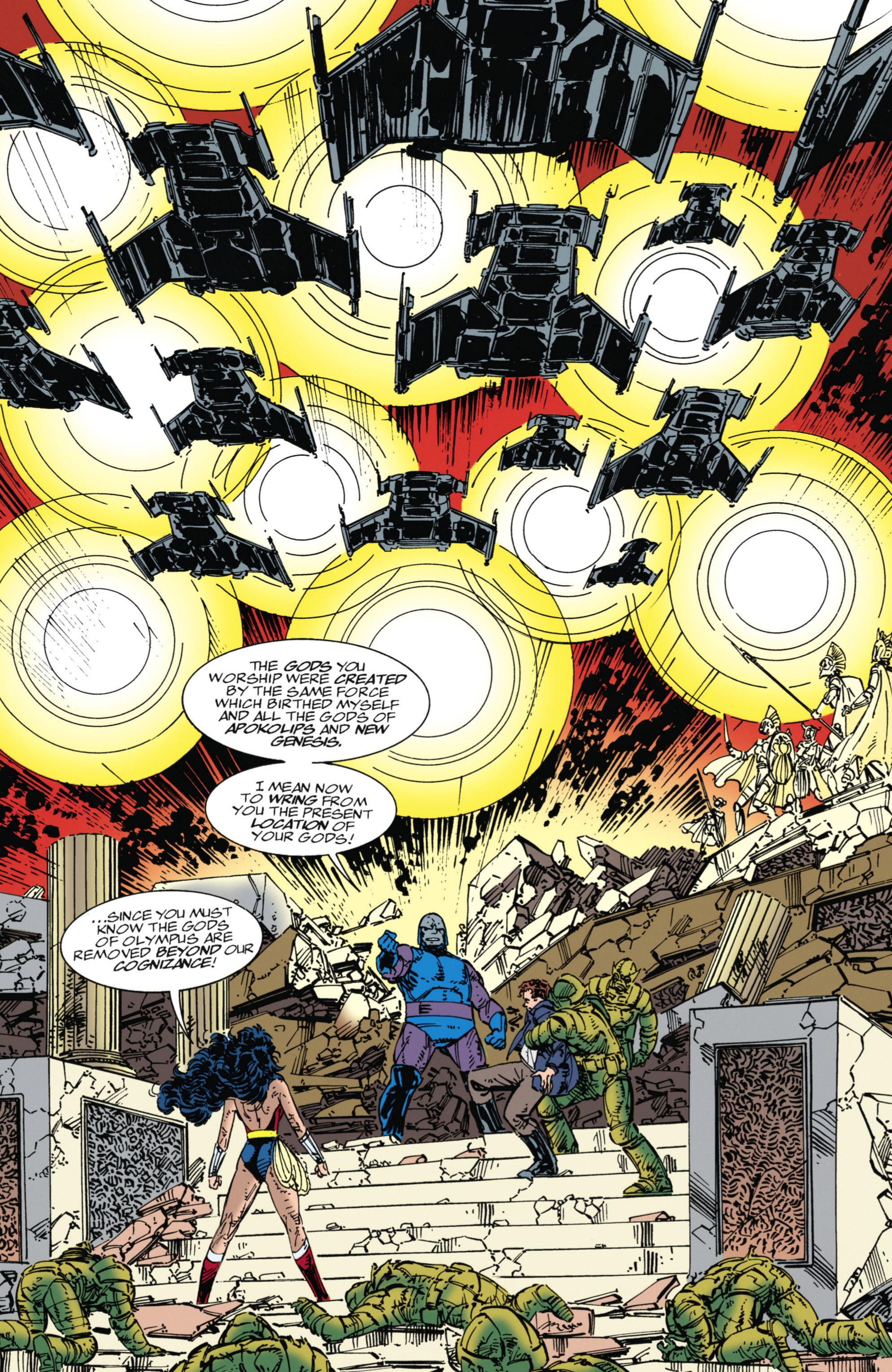
...ACROSS A GULF OF TIME AND SPACE BOTH LESS AND MORE THAN IT APPEARS...
...MISTRESS..?
ENTER, WARLY.
MAKE YOUR REPORT.
I HAVE FOUND HER, MISTRESS.
THE AMAZON IS HERE, IN GATEWAY CITY.
SPEAK TO ME NOT IN ABSOLUTES, WARLY.
NOW IT REMAINS ONLY FOR US TO COLLECT HER.
SOMETHING WHICH WILL DOUBTLESS PROVE EASY ENOUGH!


IF I HAVE LEARNED NOTHING ELSE IN A MILLION YEARS...
...IT IS THAT THE LONG MARCH OF TIME TENDS ALWAYS TO ERASE THOSE THINGS SMALL MINDS PERCEIVE AS ETERNAL.
IF YOU HAD BUT GIVEN A MOMENT'S THOUGHT TO THE MATTER, YOU WOULD HAVE RECALLED, I'M SURE, THAT THE CAPTURE OF EACH OF OUR PRESENT GUESTS PRESENTED ITS OWN DIFFICULTIES.
THAT WE NONETHELESS PREVAILED IS NO GUARANTEE OF FUTURE SUCCESS... ESPECIALLY WITH ONE SUCH AS WONDER WOMAN.
THE AMAZON IS NEARLY THE LAST OF THOSE I NEED TO COMPLETE MY METAMORPHOSIS.


SOON THIS AGONIZING RITUAL WILL BE DISPENSED WITH...
...FOR-EVER.
SOON I SHALL CLAIM THE TRUE IMMORTALITY WHICH IS MY RIGHT!
NOW WARLY TURNS HIS ANCIENT FACE AWAY FROM THIS SCENE HE HAS BEHELD TOO MANY TIMES TO COUNT...
...AS HIS STOMACH CHURNS, HIS EYES BURN...
...AND THE CRACKLE OF BURNING FLESH FILLS HIS EARS WITH SOUNDS NO SPAN OF YEARS COULD EVER RENDER TOLERABLE.

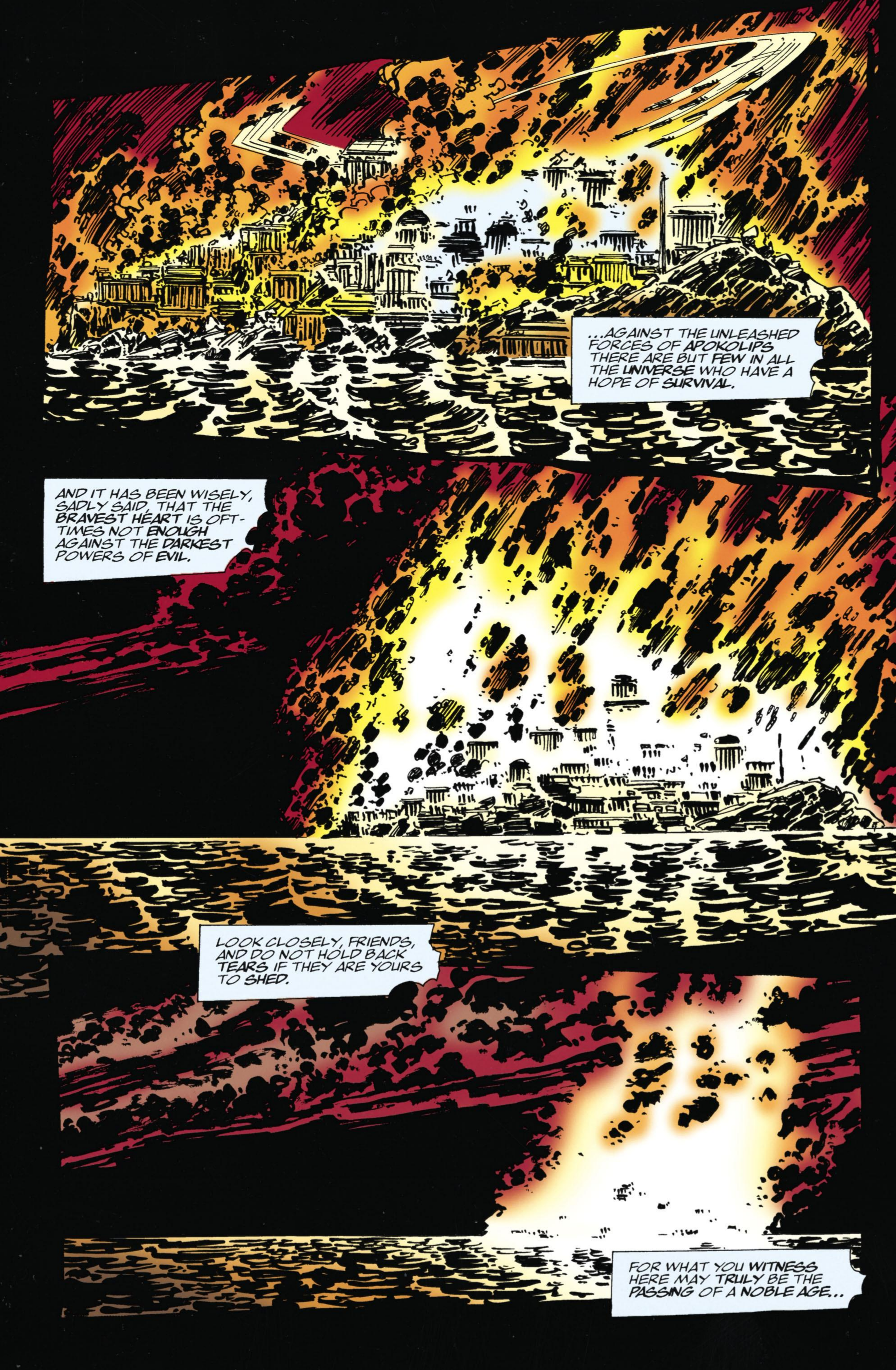
WHILE ON PARADISE ISLAND, IT WOULD NOT BE AMISS TO SAY NO TIME HAS PASSED AS WE LOOKED ELSEWHERE...
UNHAND HIM, DARKSEID. I KNOW NOW WHAT IT IS YOU SEEK, AND HE CAN BE OF NO HELP FINDING IT.
NO?
YOU WERE ABLE TO RESIST THE TENDER MINISTRATIONS OF MY FRIEND DESAAD, PRINCESS.
...BUT I THINK YOU WILL BE LESS WILLING TO WATCH ANOTHER SUFFER IN YOUR STEAD.
AH-HK!!
DON'T... TELL... HIM... ANYTHING... DIANA...!
AHGH!!
FOOL! DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THAT I COULD...

WHO DARES ?!?
WE DARE, DARKSEID.
THE SUDDEN, UNANTICIPATED RETURN OF OUR PRINCESS HAS GIVEN NEW HOPE TO THE WARRIORS OF THEMYSCIRA.
THEN IT IS A FOOL'S HOPE, FEMALE.


THE GODS YOU WORSHIP WERE CREATED BY THE SAME FORCE WHICH BIRTHED MYSELF AND ALL THE GODS OF APOKOLIPS AND NEW GENESIS.
I MEAN NOW TO WRING FROM YOU THE PRESENT LOCATION OF YOUR GODS!
...SINCE YOU MUST KNOW THE GODS OF OLYMPUS ARE REMOVED BEYOND OUR COGNIZANCE!

IT WOULD SEEM YOU ARE SLOW TO LEARN, MASTER OF APOKOLIPS...
...IF YOU THINK ANYTHING YOU SEEK CAN STILL BE TORN FROM US.
KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE IN YOUR PRETTY HEAD, GIRL.
POWERFUL YOU MAY BE, AND LIKELY SECOND ONLY TO SUPERMAN...
...BUT DARKSEID IS A GOD, AND HE WILL HAVE YOUR RESPECT...

...IN THE LAST MOMENTS BEFORE HE HAS YOUR SOUL!
DARKSEID GESTURES...
...AND FROM THE BRISTLING GUNSHIPS HANGING IN THE AIR ABOVE HIM FALLS A SEARING RAIN OF CHAOS AND DESTRUCTION.
POWERFUL THE WARRIORS OF THEMYSCIRA SURELY ARE, AND NEARLY FEARLESS.
BUT THOUGH THE LEGENDS OF AMAZON BRAVERY AND MIGHT ARE EACH AND EVERY ONE WELL-EARNED...


...AGAINST THE UNLEASHED FORCES OF APOKOLIPS THERE ARE BUT FEW IN ALL THE UNIVERSE WHO HAVE A HOPE OF SURVIVAL.
AND IT HAS BEEN WISELY, SADLY SAID, THAT THE BRAVEST HEART IS OFT-TIMES NOT ENOUGH AGAINST THE DARKEST POWERS OF EVIL.
LOOK CLOSELY, FRIENDS, AND DO NOT HOLD BACK TEARS IF THEY ARE YOURS TO SHED.
FOR WHAT YOU WITNESS HERE MAY TRULY BE THE PASSING OF A NOBLE AGE...