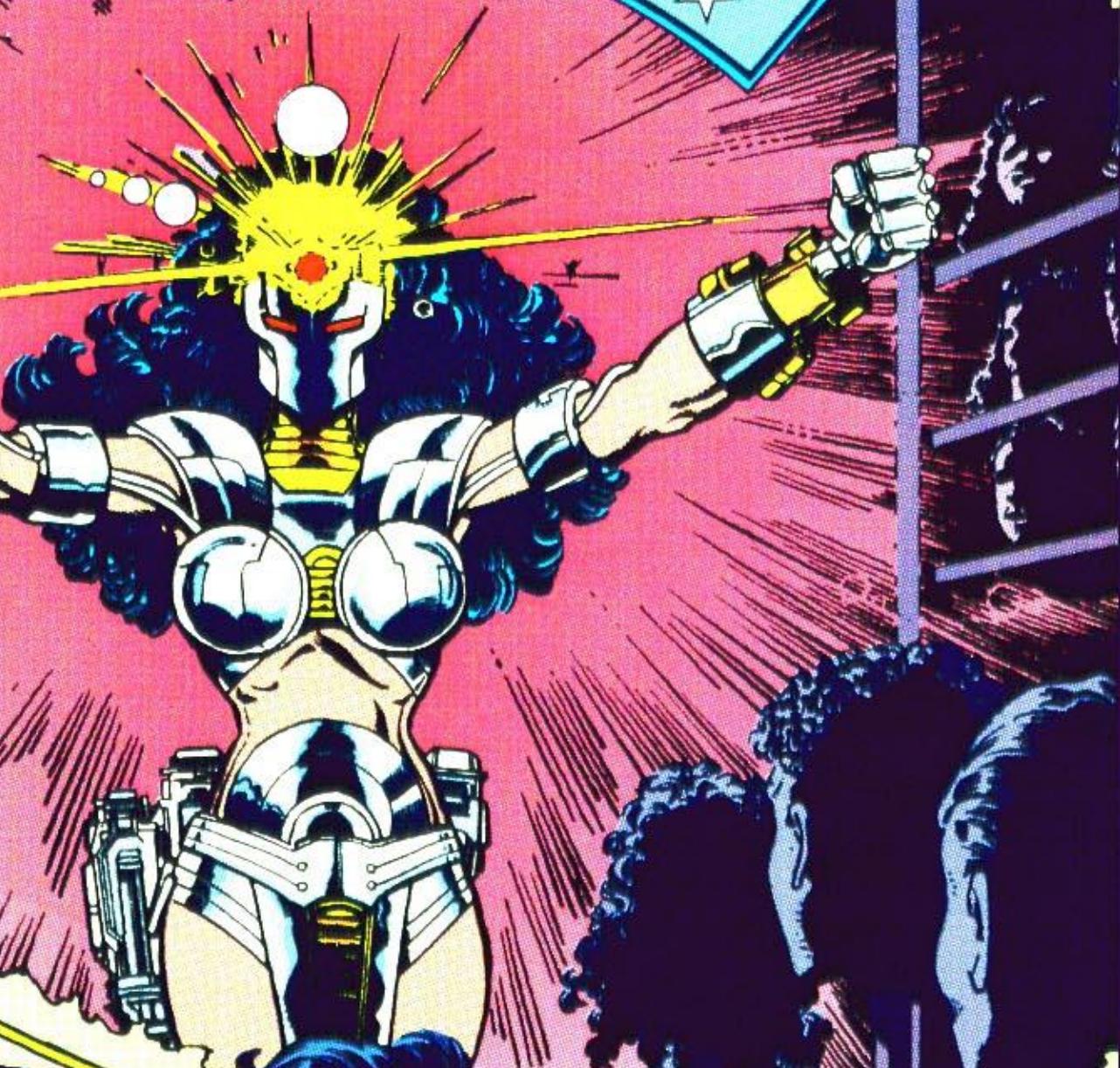




WONDER WOMAN



MARRINAN • PEREZ

PEREZ,
MARRINAN
& BLYBERG

PRINCESS DIANA OF THEMIS CIRA HAS FOUND THE GOLDEN GIRDLE OF GAEA IN THE MAGICALLY SEQUESTERED MIDDLE-EASTERN AMAZON CITY OF BANAMIGHORALL...

...A CITY NOW BOGGLED BY THE STORMY ARRIVAL OF ONE VERY ANGRY GOD OF OLYMPUS.

BLASPHEMOUS SWINE!

YOU DARE FIRE AT LORD HERMES!?

NEVER HAVE THESE WOMEN FACED SUCH SHEER POWER--SUCH RAW UNBRIDLED FURY!

BUT, DESPITE THE OVERWHELMING ONSLAUGHT, THEY FIGHT ON--THEY MUST.

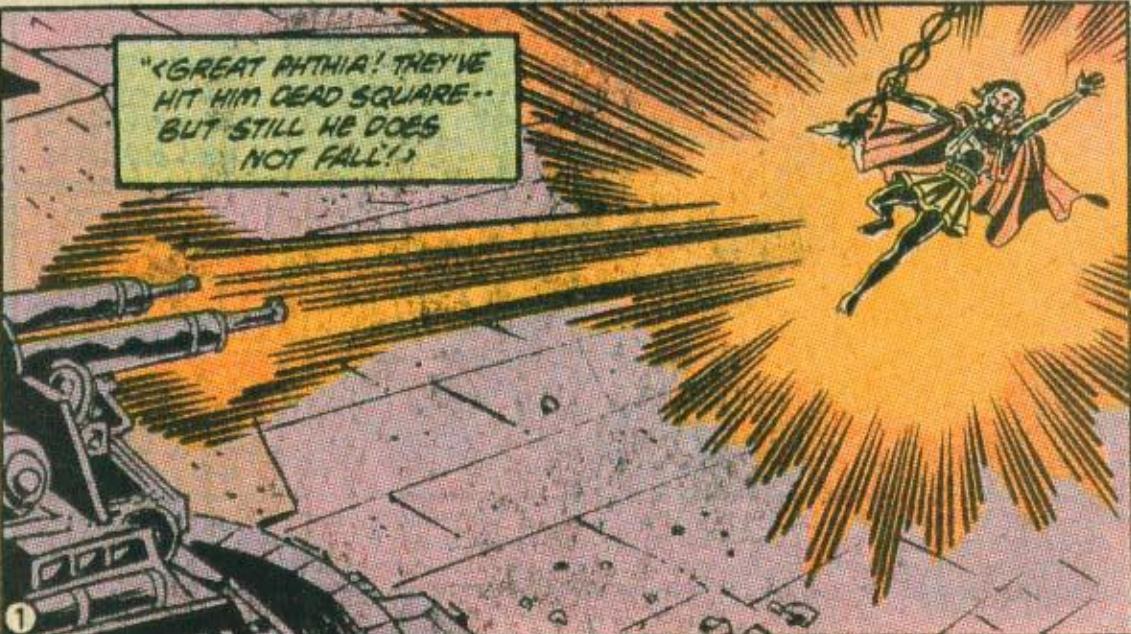
THEY ARE AMAZONS--THEY WILL SURRENDER TO NO MAN!

FIRE THE CANNONS! BLOW THAT INFIDEL APART!?

"GREAT PHTHIA! THEY'VE HIT HIM DEAD SQUARE--BUT STILL HE DOES NOT FALL!"

"HIS EYES! HIS RAGE IS GREATER THAN EVER!?"

"BY THE HEADS OF MY ANCESTORS--WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS HE!?"





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BUT AMID THE CACOPHONOUS CLAMOR OF BATTLE, THE GOD OF MESSENGERS DOES NOT HEAR DIANA--HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE HER.

JUST AS THE AMAZON PRINCESS FAILS TO NOTICE A SUDDEN DIFFERENCE IN HERMES' CRIES...

...THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANGER... AND PAIN.

«NO!!!

«AMAZONS! CEASE FIRE!!»

«CEASE FIRE!!!»

«REMEMBER THE LAST WORDS OF QUEEN ANAHID! CEASE FIRE!!»

«FATIMA! YOU KNOW THE LAW! IT WAS THE QUEEN'S DEATH WISH.»

«THE ARIADNA MUST BE SPARED.»

DIANA! THANK MY BRETHREN, I HAVE FOUND YOU!

MY LORD--YOU'RE HURT!??

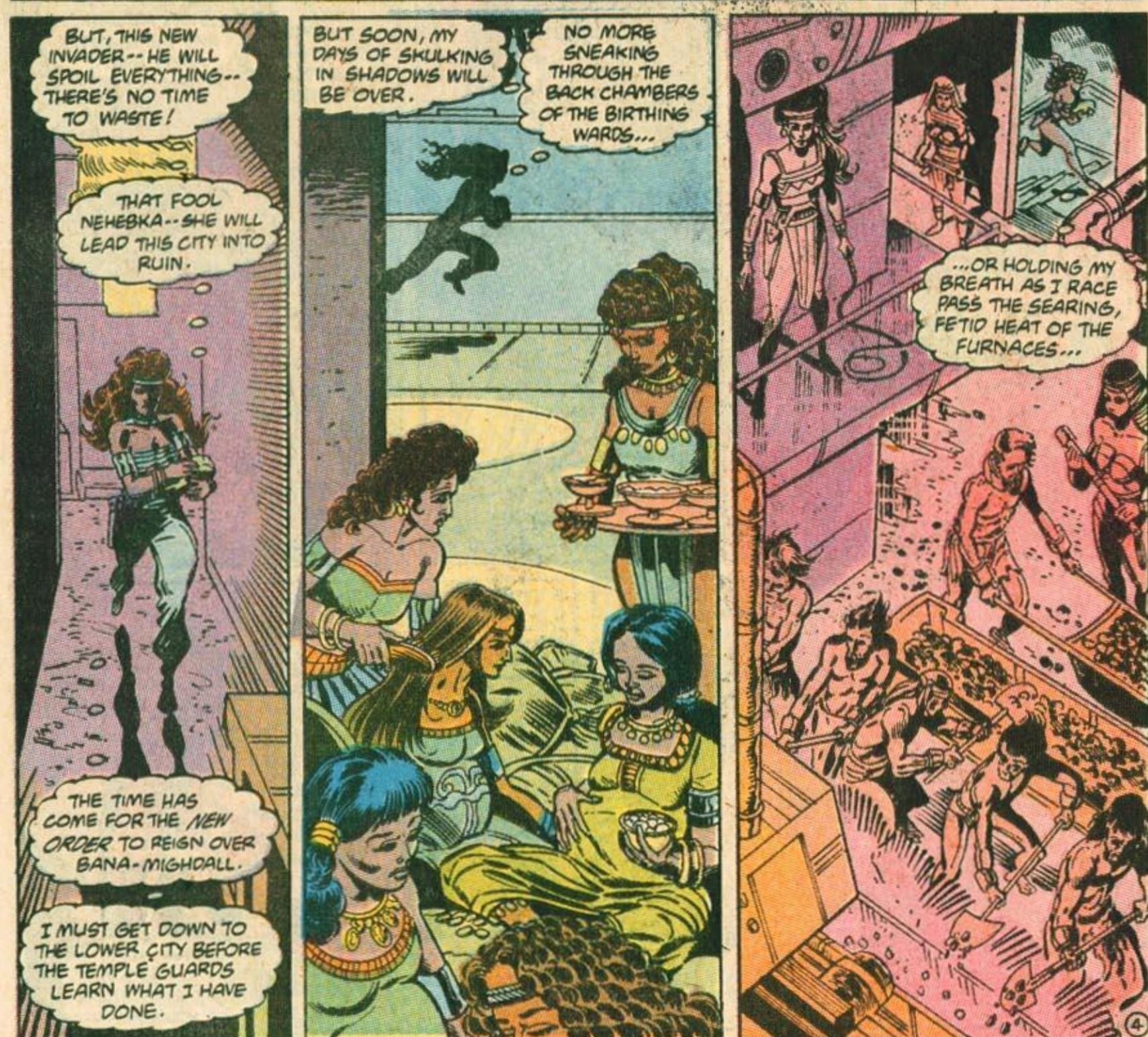
ZOUNDS! I'D FORGOTTEN JUST HOW MUCH YOUR BEAUTY RIVALS THAT OF APHRODITE HERSELF.

MY LORD HERMES, I'VE BEEN PRAYING TO YOU, CALLING FOR YOU, FOR DAYS...

NONSENSE! IT WAS MERELY... A RUSE...

WHY HAS IT TAKEN YOU SO LONG TO RESPOND?

DIANA, NOT UNTIL THIS NIGHT DID I EVEN KNOW OF YOUR PERIL.



AND WHEN NEXT I ENTER THESE BREEDING STABLES, I WILL CHOOSE MY SIRE PERSONALLY-- AND NOT BY LOT.

YES, I WILL ENJOY THIS NEW ORDER VERY MUCH.

BANA-MIGHDALL WILL BE MIGHTIER THAN EVER. WE WILL REACH OUT WITH WEAPONS DRAWN AND CARVE OUT A NEW KINGDOM BEYOND THE WALLS OF SAND.

I ONLY REGRET THAT YOU DID NOT LIVE TO SEE IT.

BUT, FEAR NOT, TEACHER, YOU SHALL NOT BE DEPRIVED OF YOUR GREATEST TRIUMPH.

I SWEAR-- UPON MY WORD AS AN AMAZON-- YOU WILL BEAR WITNESS TO THE TOURNAMENT OF THE CROWN.

KAHRI, BELIZAR-- WHERE IS SHE?

FARUKA! BY OUR ANCESTORS... THEN, THE TIME HAS COME... AT LAST?

YES... JUST AS IT WAS FORETOLD, KAHRI. AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON.

TAKE ME TO HER. THE TIME FOR WAITING HAS PASSED.

IF THE CROWN IS TO BE WON, WE MUST ACT NOW!

MEANWHILE, IN AN AIRFIELD
OUTSIDE THE EASTERN DESERT...



HELLO, OSMAN.
THIS IS A FRIEND
OF MINE--AND
THE PRINCESS'S.

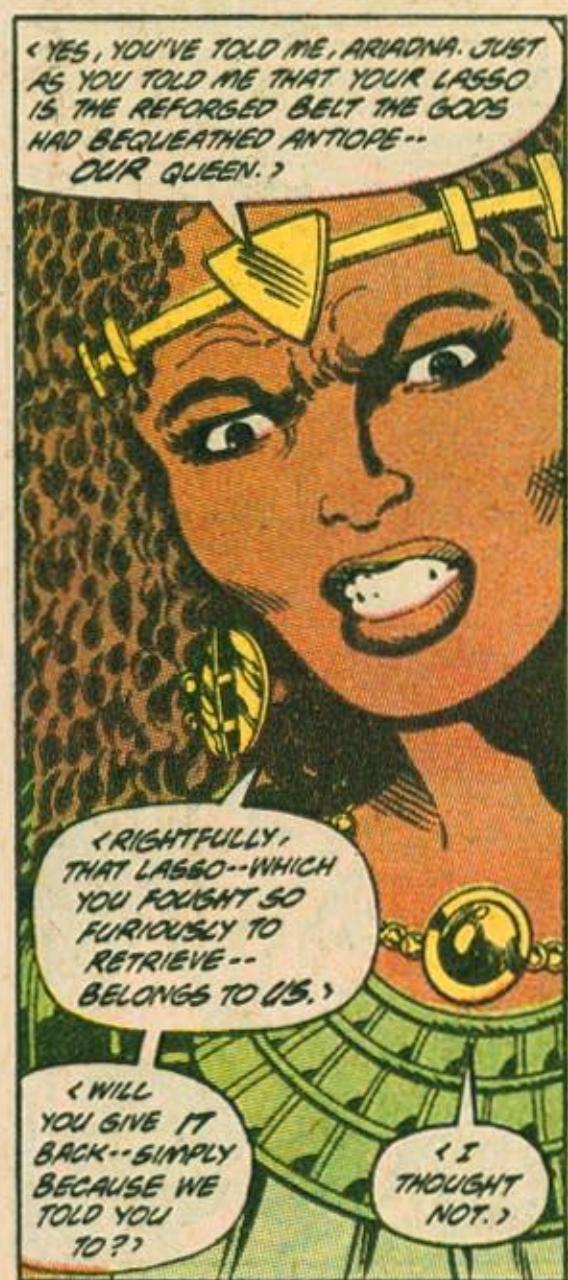
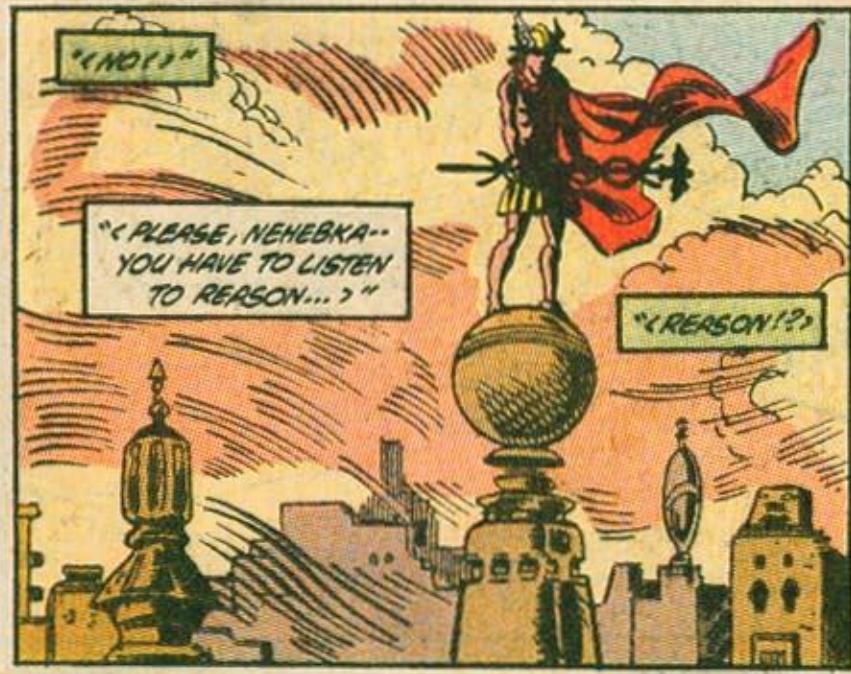
DR. OSMAN
SUAKIN--STEPHEN
TREVOR.

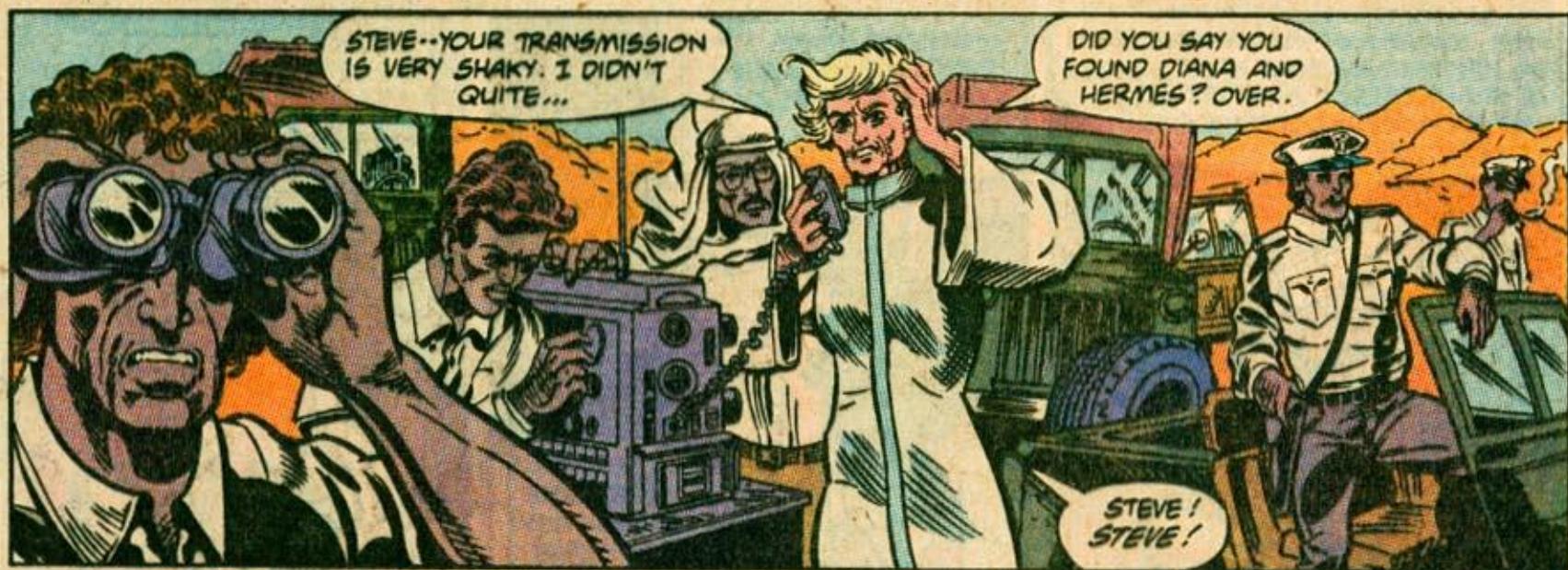
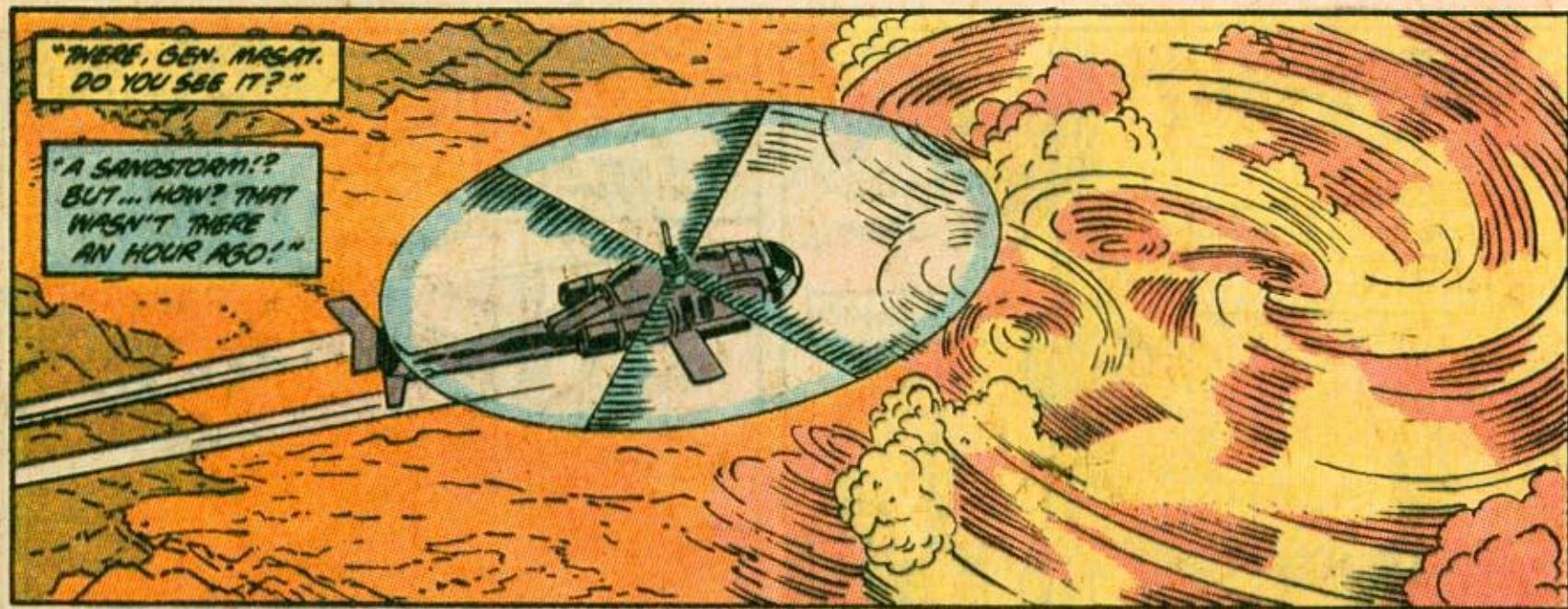
WELCOME TO EGYPT. I, ALSO,
HAVE HEARD MUCH--ABOUT
BOTH OF YOU AND THIS SO-
CALLED "WONDER WOMAN."

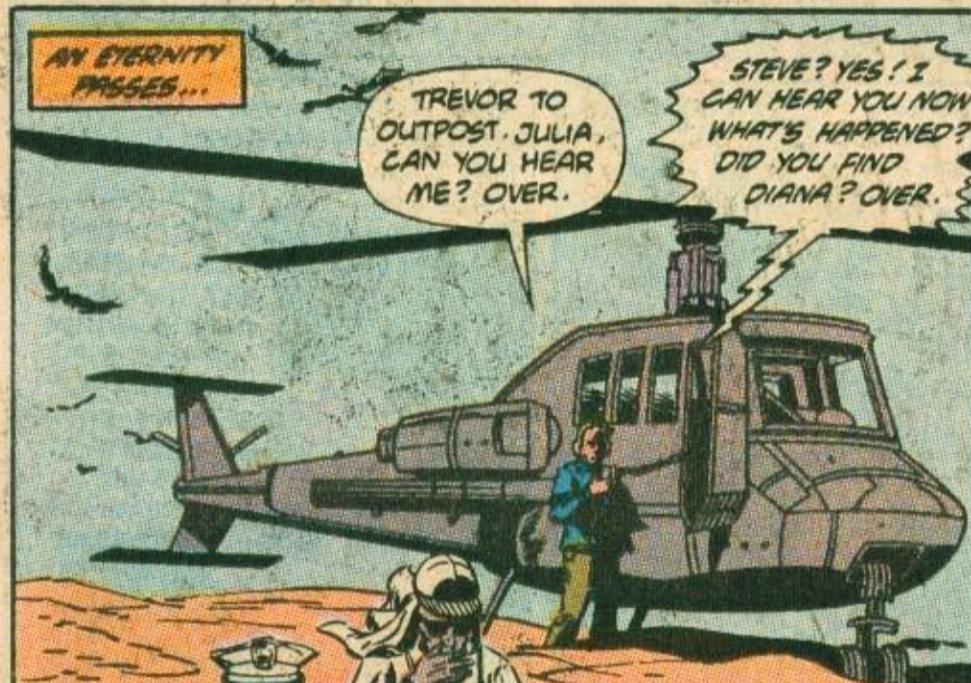


GEN. MASAT, THE CONSULATE HAS
ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF THIS
MATTER... LET'S NOT BLOW THIS
UP INTO AN INTERNATIONAL
INCIDENT.









AN INFIRMARY IN
BANA-MONDOALL.

SO--THIS IS
BARBARA MINERVA--
THE MORTAL WOMAN
AT THE CENTER OF
SO MUCH DEATH
AND DESTRUCTION.

SHE LOOKS
SO PATHETICALLY
FRAIL NOW.

YES, LORD
HERMES, BUT AS
THE CHEETAH, SHE
WAS THE DEADLIEST
MORTAL FOE I'D
EVER ENCOUNTERED.

WHY HAVE
YOU CALLED ME IN
HERE, PRINCESS?

LORD HERMES, THIS WOMAN
IS IN GREAT PAIN, THE FIRES
OF ADDICTION BURN WITHIN
HER.

I CAN DO
NOTHING FOR
HER. YOU
MUST HELP
HER.

HELP HER? BY
ZEUS, WHY SHOULD
I DO THAT?

LORD HERMES, IT IS
BECAUSE SHE IS A BEAST
THAT I ASK YOU TO
SAVE HER.

AS I FOUGHT
THE CHEETAH, I
FELT THE BEAST
THAT IS WITHIN
ME TOO-- A
PERNICOUS
DEMON FIGHTING
FOR CONTROL
OF MY
SOUL.

IF EVER THERE WERE
A BEAST MORE WRETCHED,
MORE WORTHY OF TARTARUS--
SURELY, YOU OF ALL PEOPLE...

I WANTED TO KILL THE
CHEETAH SO BADLY THEN--PART
OF ME WANTS TO KILL HER NOW.

BUT, IF I DO--IF I JUST STAND
ABOUT NOW AND LET THIS
WOMAN DIE, THEN I AM NO
BETTER THAN THE CHEETAH.

AND THE
BEAST HAS
WON.

VERY WELL, MY CHILD.
VERY WELL.

AND PRAY THAT YOU
NEVER LIVE TO RUE
THIS DAY.

PLEASE,
MY LORD...

LET DICE METE
OUT HER JUSTICE
SOME OTHER TIME.

AS THE OLYMPIAN TEARS TO THE BEAST-WOMAN, THE AIR WITHIN THE CITY'S GREAT CONGREGATIONAL MOSQUE IS IGNITED BY VOICES IN HEATED DISPUTE.



"I TELL YOU, THAT MAN IS BUT ANOTHER OF THAT ACCURSED ARIADNA'S ACCOMPLICES-- AS THAT CHEETAH WOMAN WAS."

"HIS ATTACK UPON US ONCE PROVES THAT THEY'LL DO ANYTHING TO STEAL OUR SACRED TREASURE-- INCLUDING MURDER."



"THE TIME HAS COME, MY SISTERS, FOR US TO TEACH THOSE TREACHEROUS JACKALS THAT DEATH IS A BREW THAT NO ONE SERVES BETTER THAN AN AMAZON."

"BUT, FARUKA, IT WAS THE ARIADNA WHO STOPPED THE INVADER'S ASSAULT. HE COULD HAVE DESTROYED US EASILY-- THEN AND THERE."

"NEHEBKA HAS SPOKEN TO THE WOMAN. SHE BELIEVES THAT THE ARIADNA DOES NOT WISH TO KILL...."

"DAMN IT, BATIR! NEHEBKA IS NOT OUR QUEEN!"

"SHE IS NOTHING BUT A SPINELESS PAWN-- WHOSE GULLIBILITY WILL BRING THIS HOLY CITY CRASHING DOWN UPON OUR HEADS!"

"BRAVE WORDS, FARUKA--"

"THIS DAY HAS BEEN LONG IN COMING, WENCH. I KNEW THAT, EVENTUALLY AND INEVITABLY, IT WOULD COME DOWN TO YOU AND ME."

"IF THIS IS A ROYAL CHALLENGE, FARUKA-- THEN, BY PHTHIA, I ACCEPT ALL TOO GLADLY--"

"NO, NEHEBKA. IT IS NOT I WHO CHALLENGE YOU TO THE TOURNAMENT OF THE CROWN."

"I AM MERELY A REPRESENTATIVE-- A HERALD..."

"ME."

--FOR OUR FUTURE, RIGHTFUL QUEEN."







DIANA PLUNGE'S INTO THE PITCH BLACKNESS.

THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIERCE DISCHARGE AIR FORCES AWAY FROM HER SKIN...

...AND SHE CATCHES FROM THE AIR, FOR COLD.

AND THE SMALL-LIKE SHADOWS WATER MIXED WITH OTHER-ALL BUT DIESSES HER.

AS DIANA SLOWS HER ADVANCE, HER HUNTER'S EYES ADJUST TO THE HARSH GLARE OF PULSING TORCHES.

AND AMID THE DANCING SHADOWS, DIANA FINALLY DISCERN'S THE NATURE OF THIS OLYMPIC TEMPLE SHE HAS ENTERED.

GREAT GREA.

QUEEN ANAHID...

THEN, I HAVE COME UPON THEIR TEMPLE OF THE DEAD. LORD HADES... THERE MUST BE THOUSANDS OF THEM HERE.

ALL THEIR EYES, FROZEN IN ETERNAL STARES...

...ALL LOOKING IN THE SAME DIRECTION...

GODS!

O MIGHTY OLYMPUS-- NO--

NEHEBKA!

YES, ARIADNA-- YOUR OLD FRIEND NEHEBKA--

--WHOSE EYES WILL JOIN THOSE OF ALL THE SISTERS BEFORE HER, TRANSFIGURED EVERLASTINGLY TOWARD THE EASTERN SKY--

--STANDING VIGIL OVER THEIR SOULS BEYOND THE GATES OF THE AFTER LIFE.

THAT FOOL
THOUGHT SHE HAD
THE POWER TO BE
QUEEN!

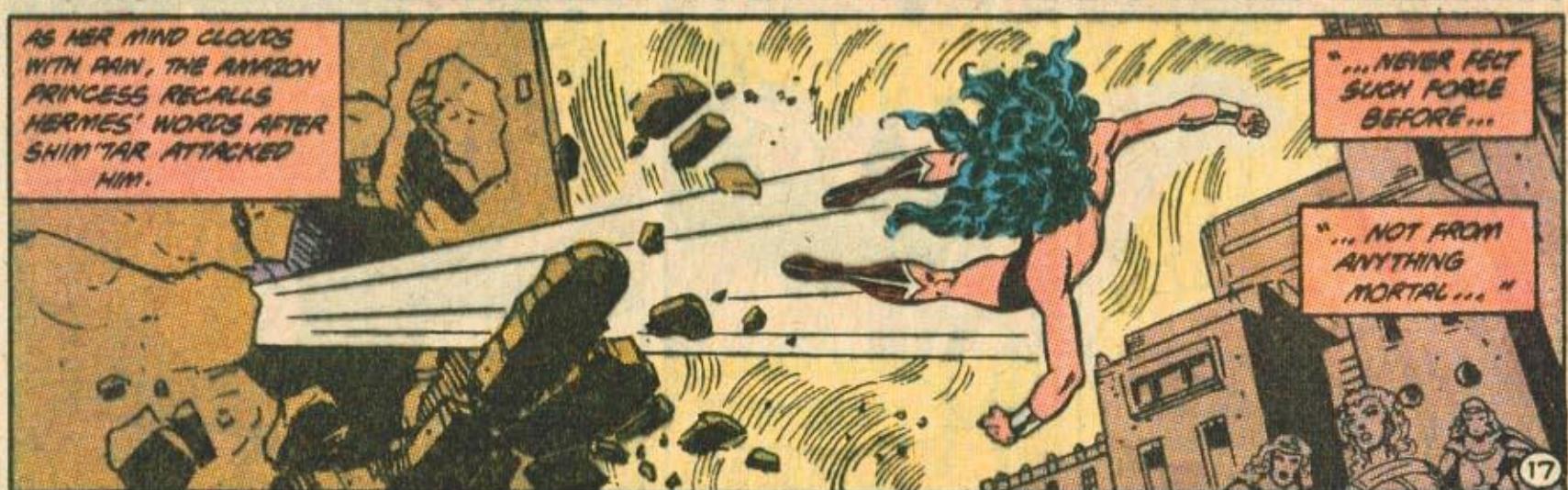
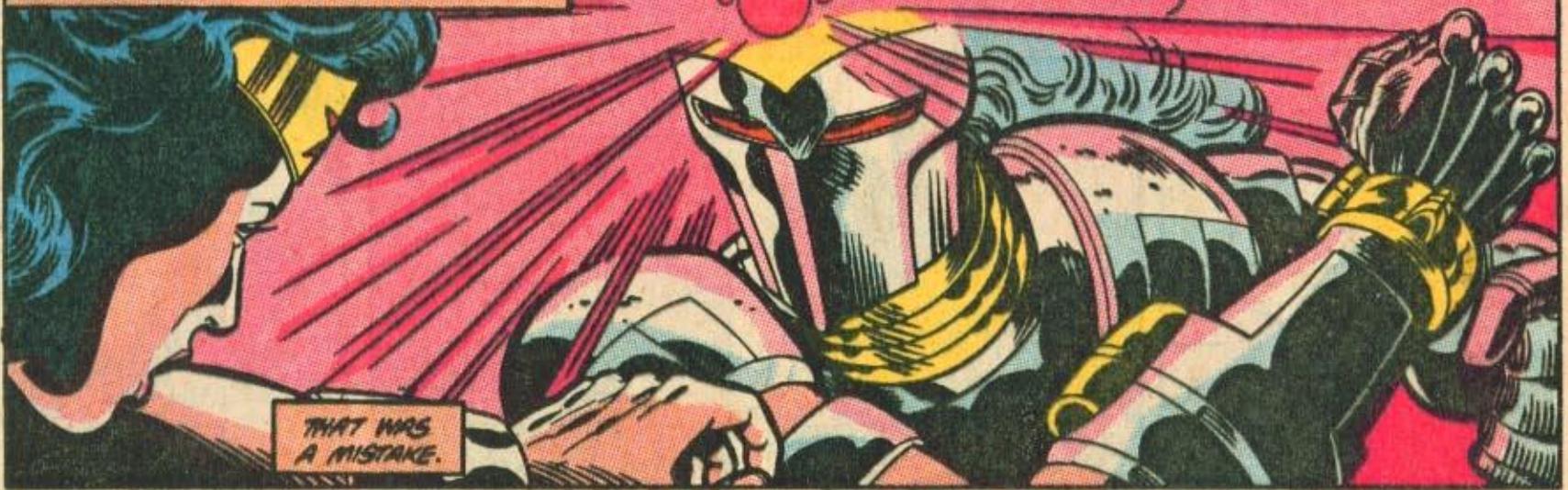
WELL, SHE
LEARNED WHAT REAL
POWER IS-- JUST AS
YOU, ARIADNA, WILL
ALSO LEARN.

ARIADNA-- I
INTRODUCE YOU NOW
TO THE NEW QUEEN OF
BANA-MISHDALL!

SHIM'TAR!



DIANA SPARES DEGRAY INTO THE PRISM
OF PIECES OF HER CHARMING OPPONENT,
SCOUTING FOR SOME HINKING OF
HUMANITY BENEATH THE ARMOR.



SHIM'TAR TROUNCED HERMES. IT IS NOT AN IMAGE DIANA CAN EASILY FORGET.

THE OBVIOUS QUESTION RATTLES THROUGH THE PRINCESS' ADDLED BRAIN:

HOW DOES AN AMAZON BATTLE AN ENEMY WHO FELLED A GOD?

ANSWER:
WITH ALL
HER MIGHT!

I MUST MOVE SWIFTLY--
CAN'T LET HER REGAIN HER ADVANTAGE--

UHGGGHHHH!!

DEAR GODS OF OLYMPUS, SHE IS AS FAST AS HERMES!

ONLY ONE WAY--

--HESTIA'S LASSO.

NO, ARIADNA. I AM NOT
SOME RUNAWAY STALLION
YOU CAN SO EASILY
SNARE.

I AM THE QUEEN OF
THE AMAZONS--

AND YOUR
EXECUTIONER!

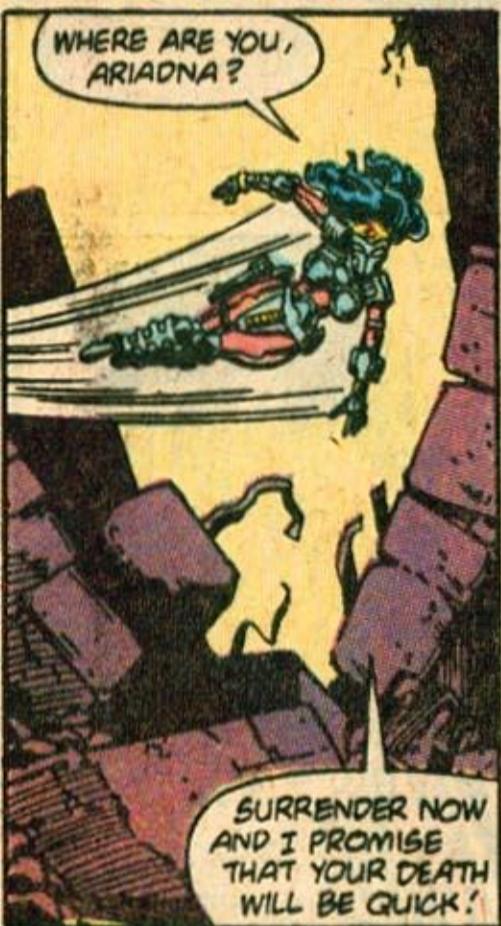
ARIADNA!
I'M OVER
HERE!

DIE!!

ONLY DIANA'S INCREDIBLE
REFLEXES AND HER
OLYMPIAN BRACELETS
SAVE HER FROM INSTANT
ANNIHILATION.

BUT THE BLAST'S TREMENDOUS
FORCE ROCKS THE ENTIRE CITY,
DOWN TO THE VERY FOUNDATIONS
OF BANA-MISHDALL!

AND AMID THE RIOTOUS MELODY OF TRIUMPHANT
CHEERS AND TERRIFIED SCREAMS COURSES AN
ARIA OF MANIACAL LAUGHTER.





SISTERS! LOOK!
A TEAR--IN THE
VERY FABRIC OF
THE STORM!

"DEAR PYTHIA...
I CAN'T BE!!"

"PILOT ONE TO OUTPOST.
SIR, THE EYE OF THE
STORM HAS OPENED
UP. WE CAN SEE
INSIDE IT."

"SIR, THE
AMERICANS WERE
RIGHT! THERE'S A
WHOLE DAMN CITY
DOWN THERE! WHAT
DO WE DO NOW?
OVER..."

PROFESSOR, THE PILOT SAYS
THE CITY WITHIN THE STORM'S
BELLY SEEMS TO BE THE
SOURCE OF ALL THE
PARANORMAL ACTIVITIES.
ALMOST MAGICAL.

DEAR LORD--DIANA AND
HERMES HAVE TO BE IN
THERE. THEY MAY BE IN
GREAT DANGER.

GEN. MASAT,
CAN THE FIGHTERS
GET ANY CLOSER
TO THE CITY?

IT'S OKAY, JULIA. IF OUR
FRIENDS ARE THERE, MAYBE
THE PLANES WILL SPOT
THEM AND...

THEY'RE
ALREADY DOING
THAT, RETIRED
COLONEL.

RETIRED
COLONEL, THIS
IS NOT A
SURVEILLANCE
ASSIGNMENT.
THE FIGHTERS
HAVE THEIR
ORDERS.

THEY WILL
BLOW THAT INFERNAL
CITY TO HELL!

NEXT
ISSUE:

JOURNEY'S END