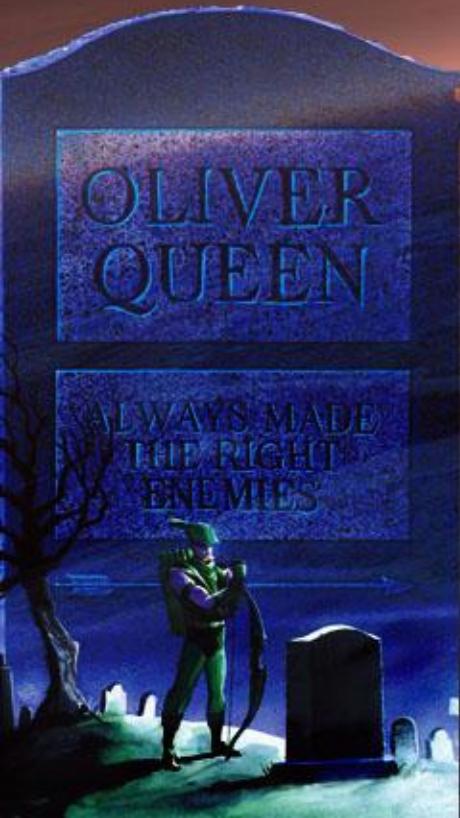


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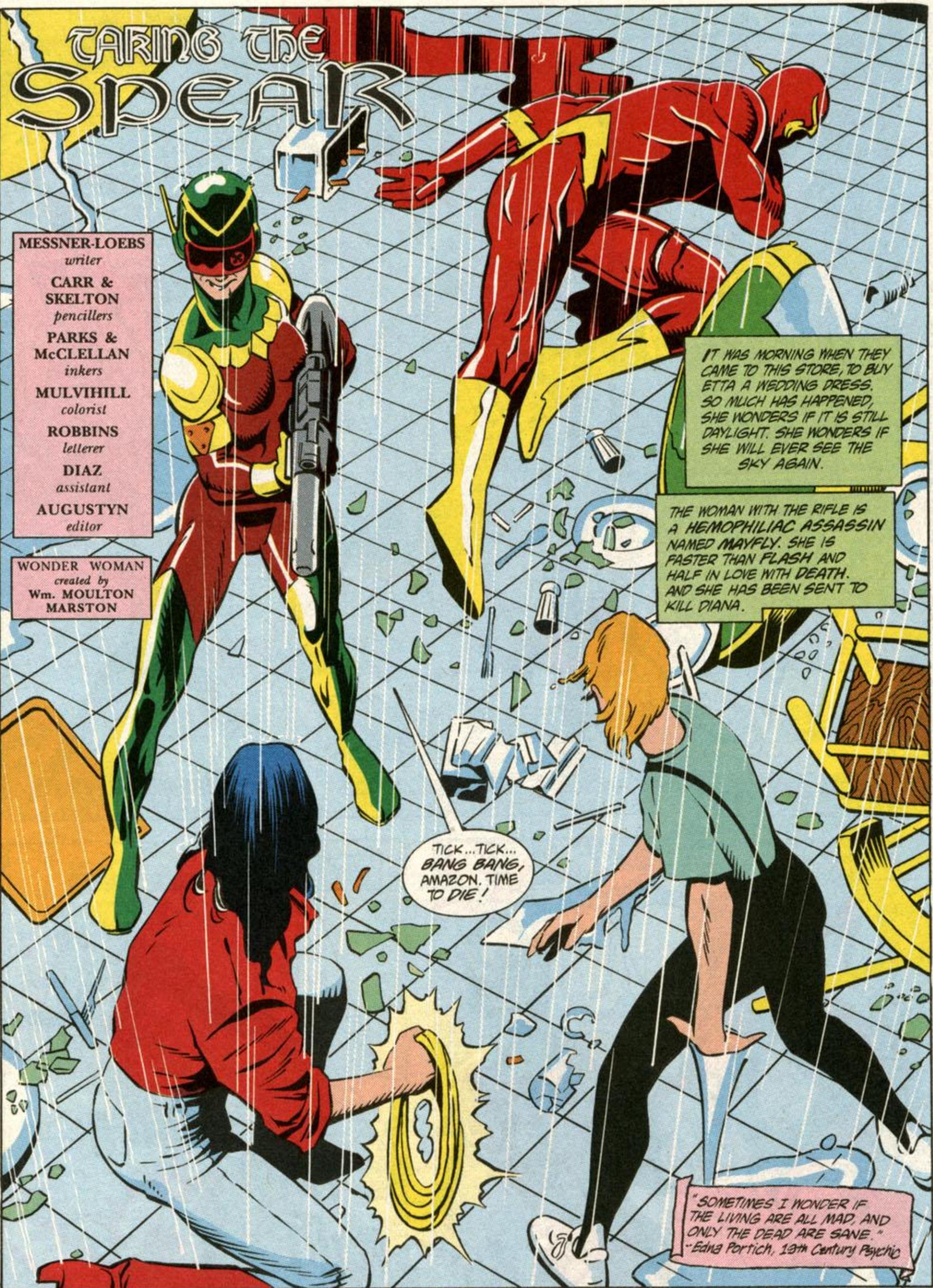
TRAPPED BY MAYFLY!

WONDER WOMAN

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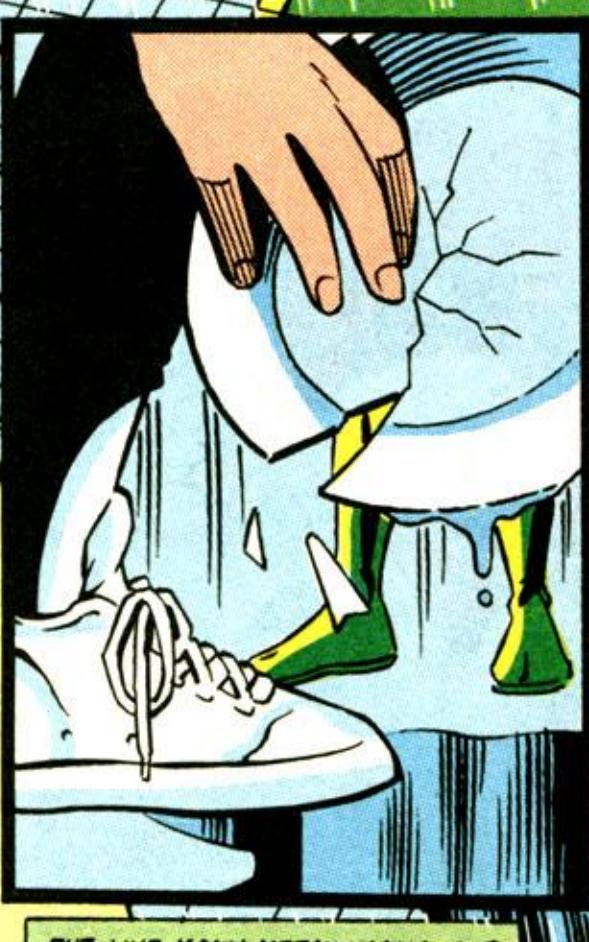
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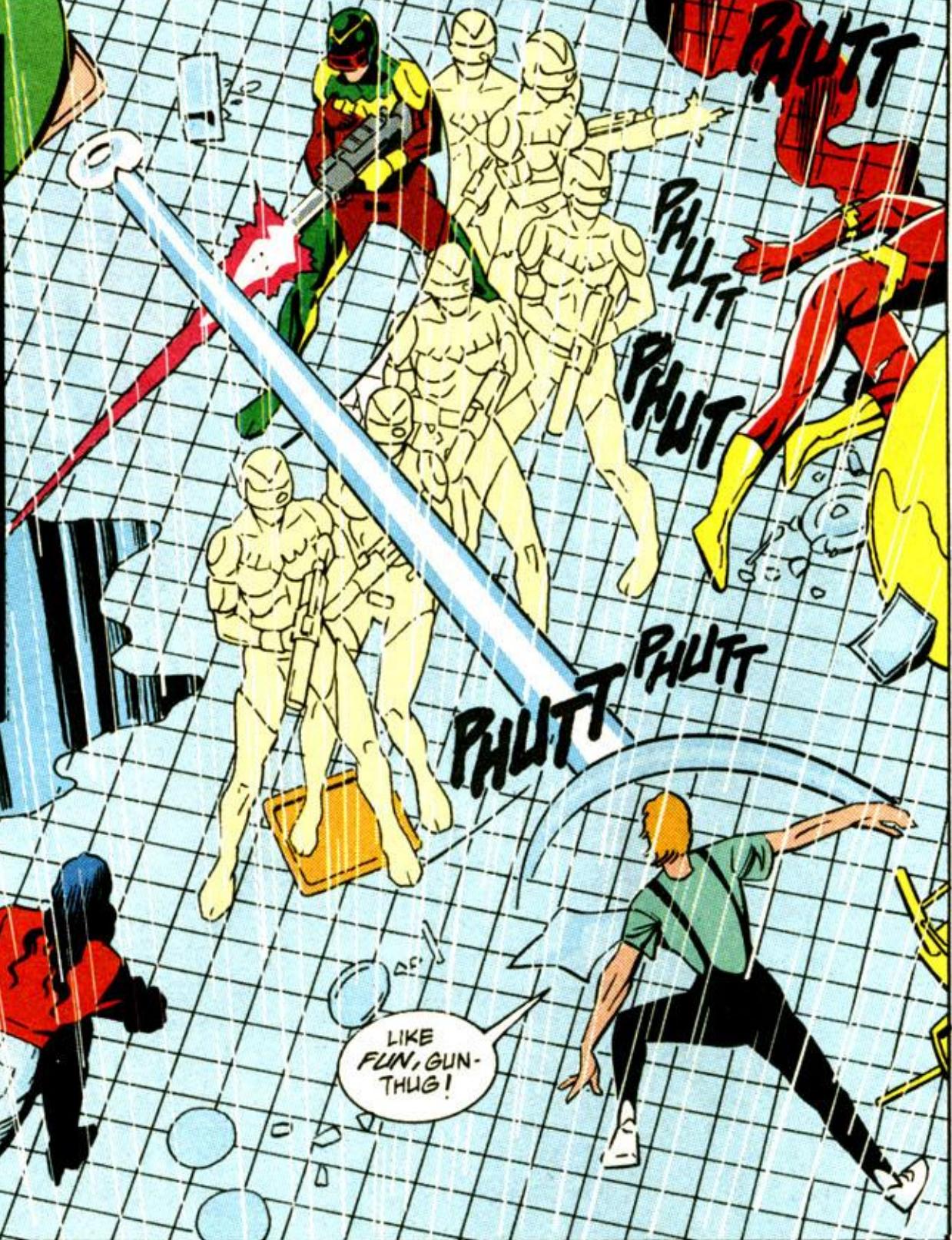


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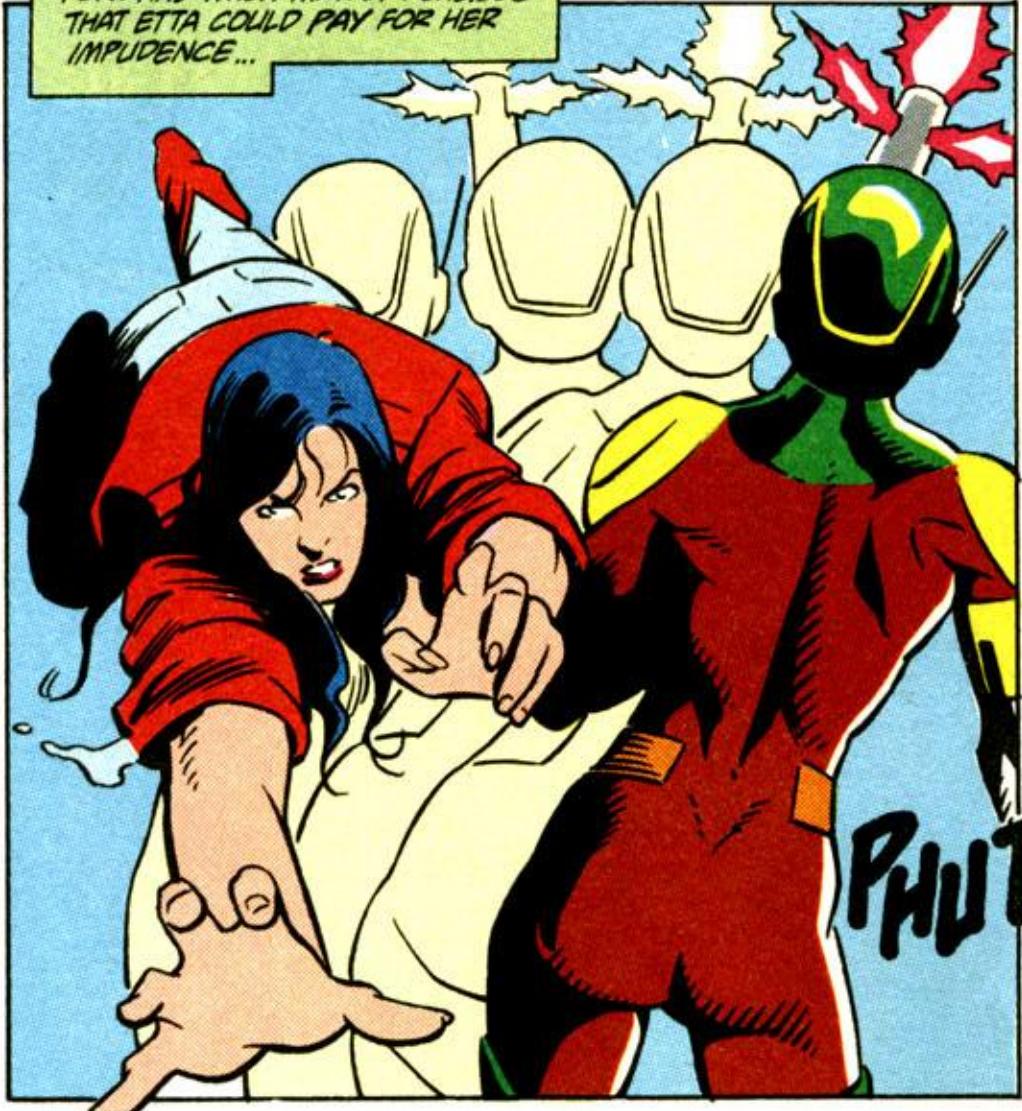
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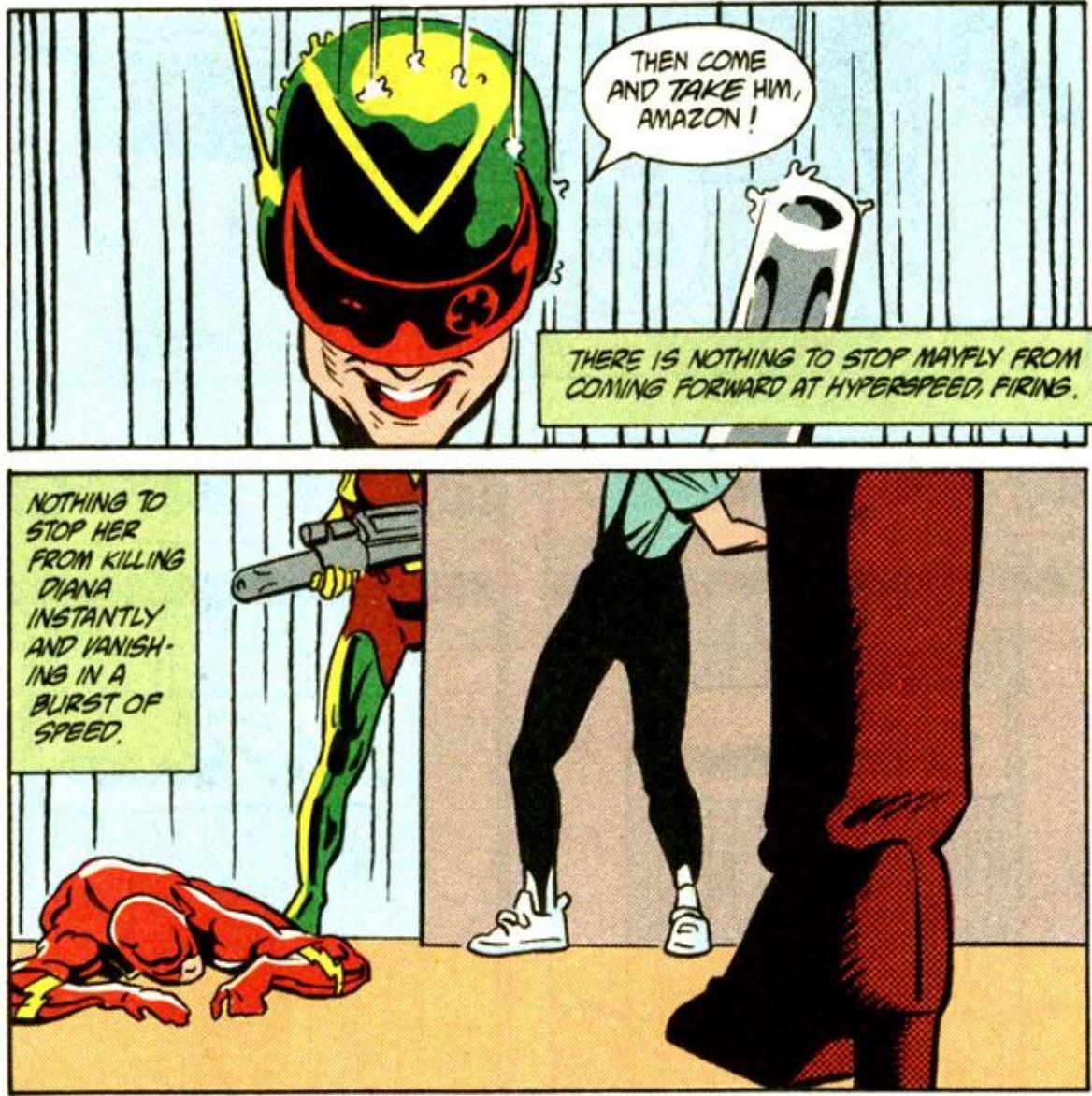
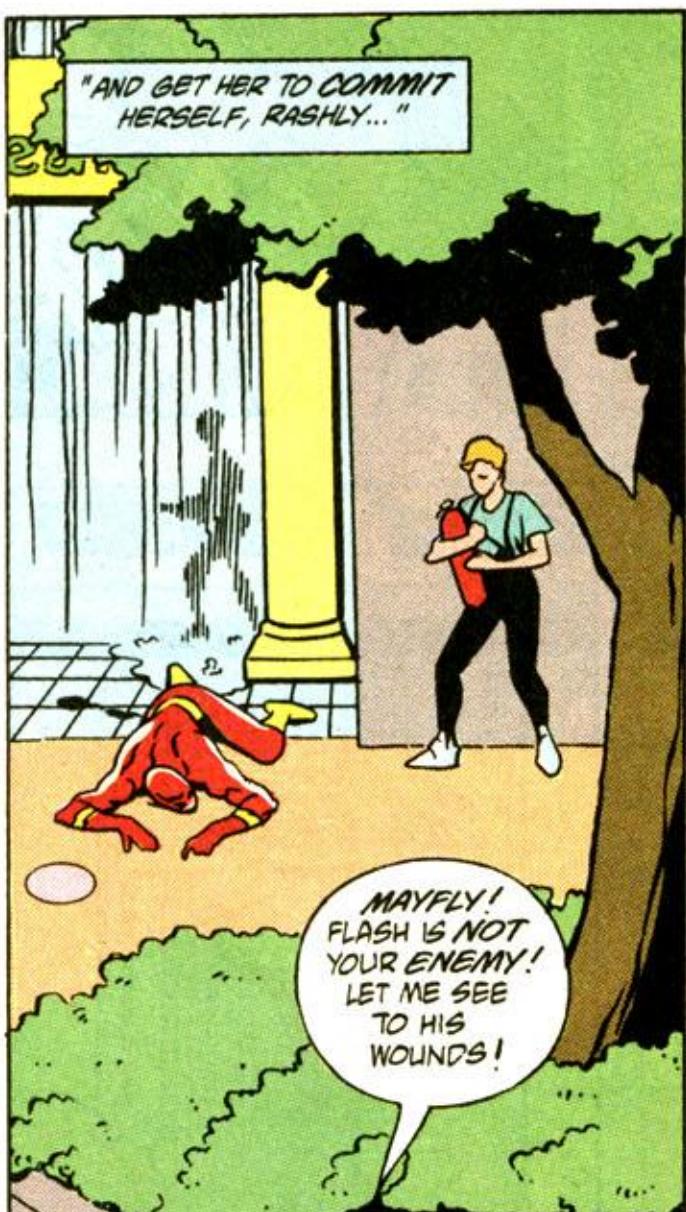
BUT, LIKE MANY METAHUMANS, SHE HOLDS "NORMALS" IN CONTEMPT...



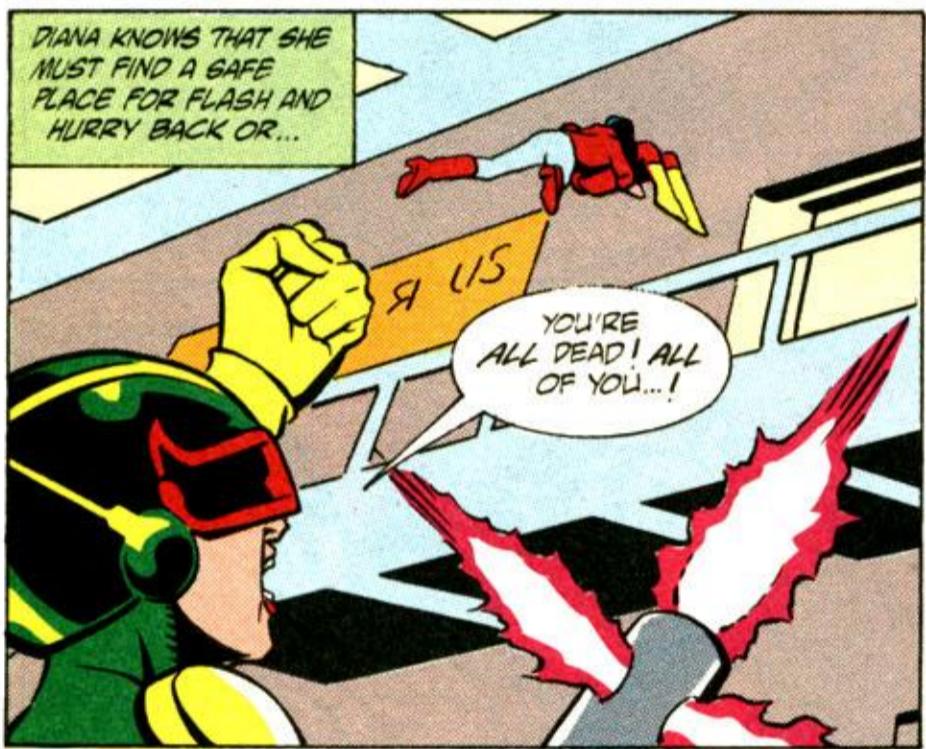
...A MISTAKE THAT NO AMOUNT OF SPEED CAN COMPENSATE FOR. AND WHEN MAYFLY REALIZES THAT ETTA COULD PAY FOR HER IMPUDENCE...











I HAVE YOU, MAYFLY.
YIELD AND TELL ME
THE NAMES OF YOUR...

NOT YET,
AMAZON!

WHAT IS THE
POINT, MAYFLY?
THE LASSO IS
UNBREAKABLE!

A THOUSAND BLOWS, LANDING IN LESS THAN
A SECOND, CRASH AGAINST HER DIAPHRAGM...

ANOTHER HUNDRED
SMASH HER
JAW AND TEMPLE...

BUT ARE
YOU?

AND SUDDENLY SHE CAN NO
LONGER PROTECT HERSELF.

AND JUST AS
SUDDENLY,
MAYFLY
IS FREE.

SO THE ROPE IS
UNBREAKABLE,
EH, AMAZON?

HAVE TO HOLD
ON...TO THE
ROPE...MY ONLY
...CHANCE...

SHE CAN STILL
CAPTURE MAYFLY,
IF SHE CAN
REACH HER.
SHE CAN FLY...

TIME
FOR A LITTLE
RACE, THEN!

SHE IS FAST WHEN SHE
RUNS, FASTER STILL WHEN
SHE FLIES. BUT NOTHING
LIKE THIS. SHE WOULD
SCREAM, BUT THERE IS
NO TIME.

THE FORCE OF IT RIPS HER
FORWARD, LIKE THE BLOW
OF AN INVISIBLE HAND.

ESTA
197

SO THE ROPE IS
UNBREAKABLE,
EH, AMAZON?

SHE CAN STILL
CAPTURE MAYFLY,
IF SHE CAN
REACH HER.
SHE CAN FLY...

TIME
FOR A LITTLE
RACE, THEN!

SHE IS FAST WHEN SHE
RUNS, FASTER STILL WHEN
SHE FLIES. BUT NOTHING
LIKE THIS. SHE WOULD
SCREAM, BUT THERE IS
NO TIME.

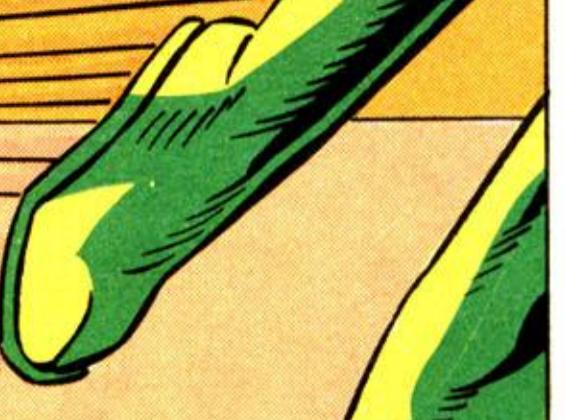
THE FORCE OF IT RIPS HER
FORWARD, LIKE THE BLOW
OF AN INVISIBLE HAND.

ESTA
197

THE SKIN IS RIPPED FROM HER BODY. THE AIR IS TORN FROM HER LUNGS.



SHE IS OUT OF CONTROL. AT THE MERCY OF THE ELEMENTS. ...LIKE A LEAF IN THE WIND...



SKRIP

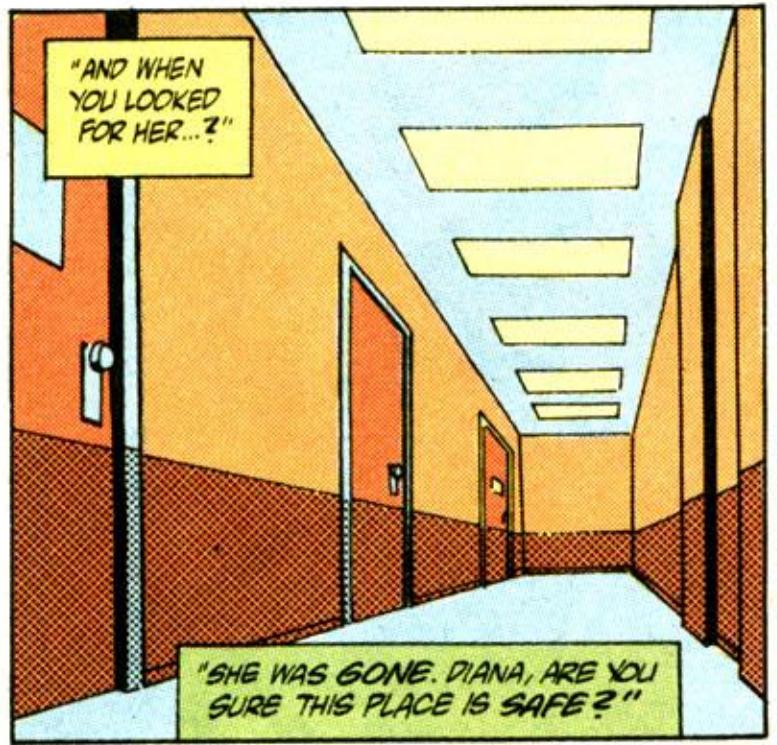
WHAAK

THAK

LIKE A STRAW IN A HURRICANE...

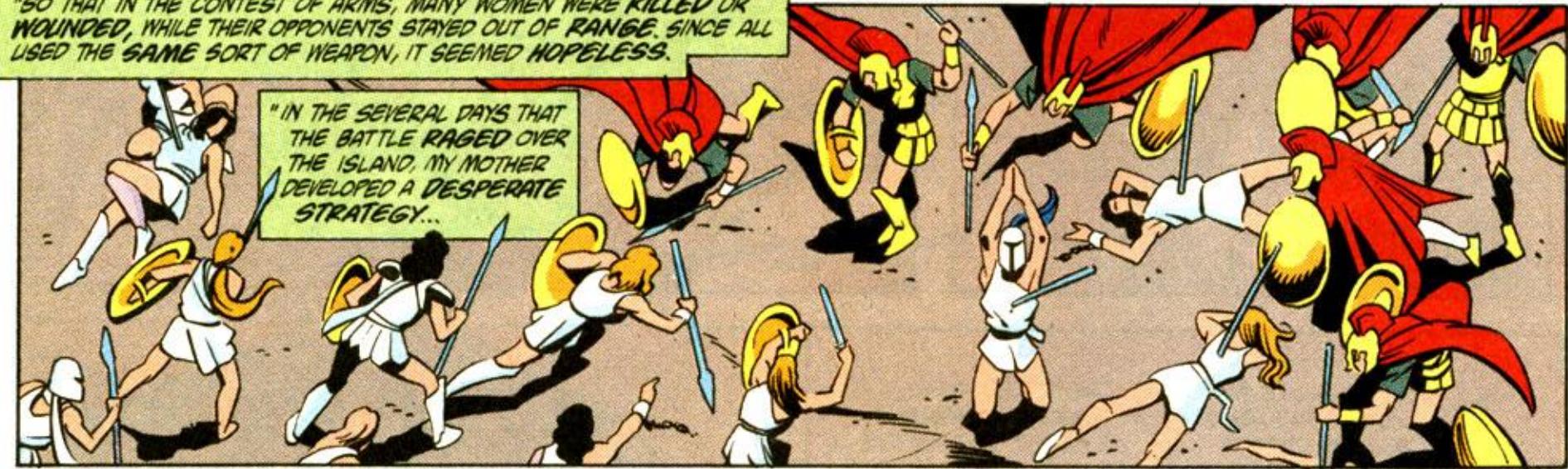








"SO THAT IN THE CONTEST OF ARMS, MANY WOMEN WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED, WHILE THEIR OPPONENTS STAYED OUT OF RANGE. SINCE ALL USED THE SAME SORT OF WEAPON, IT SEEMED HOPELESS."



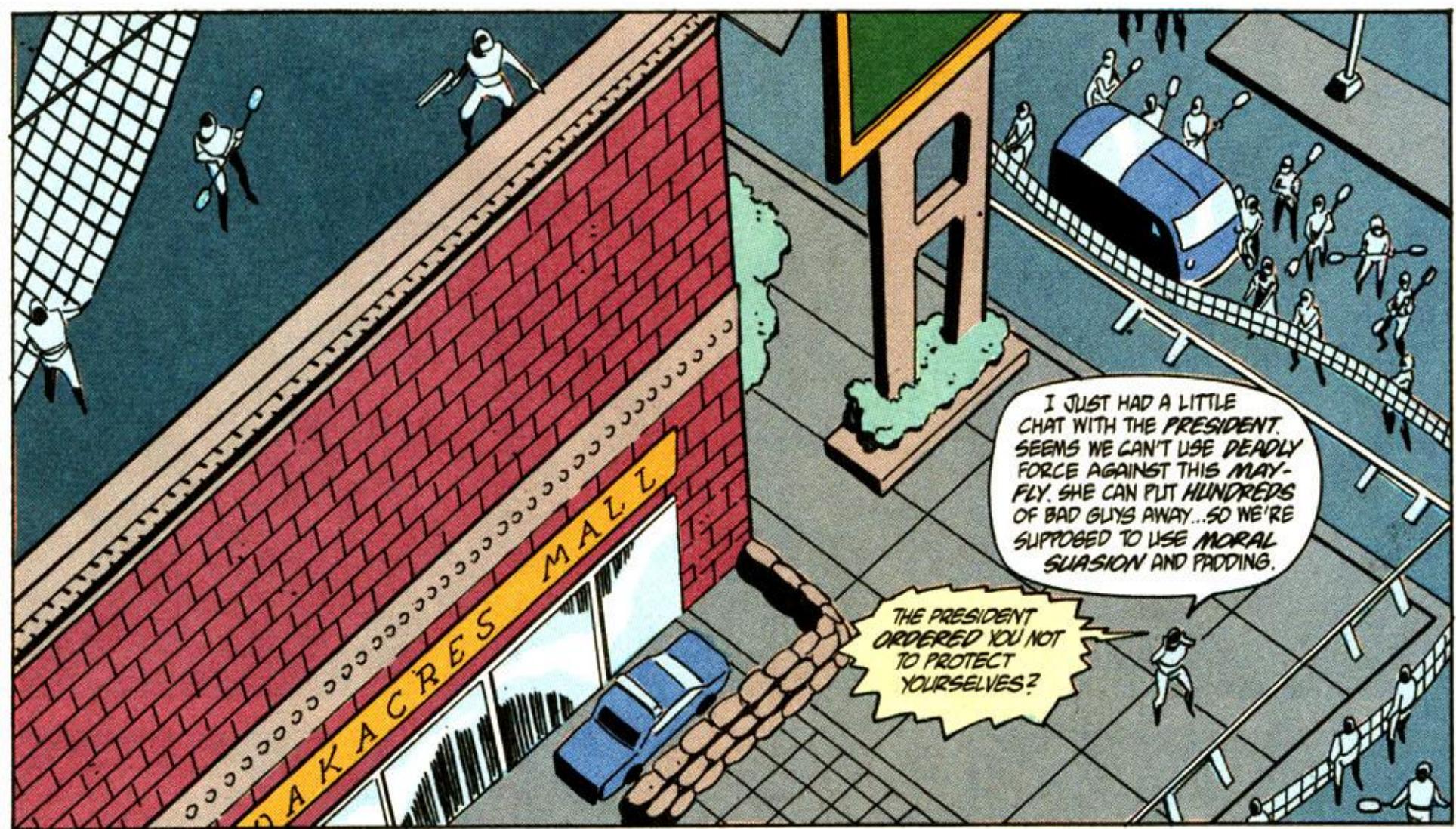
"THE AMAZONS WOULD ALLOW THEIR SHIELDS TO DROP SLIGHTLY, PROVOKING A THRUST TO THE SHOULDER OR LEG OR ALONG THE RIBS..."





WE'VE GOT
SOMETHING OF
A... SITUATION
HERE.

LINE DO NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT



"WORSE. HE ASKED US. IT'S OUR DECISION, AND THE WORST OF IT IS, HE'S RIGHT. WE HAVE TO TAKE HER ALIVE, WHATEVER THE COST."

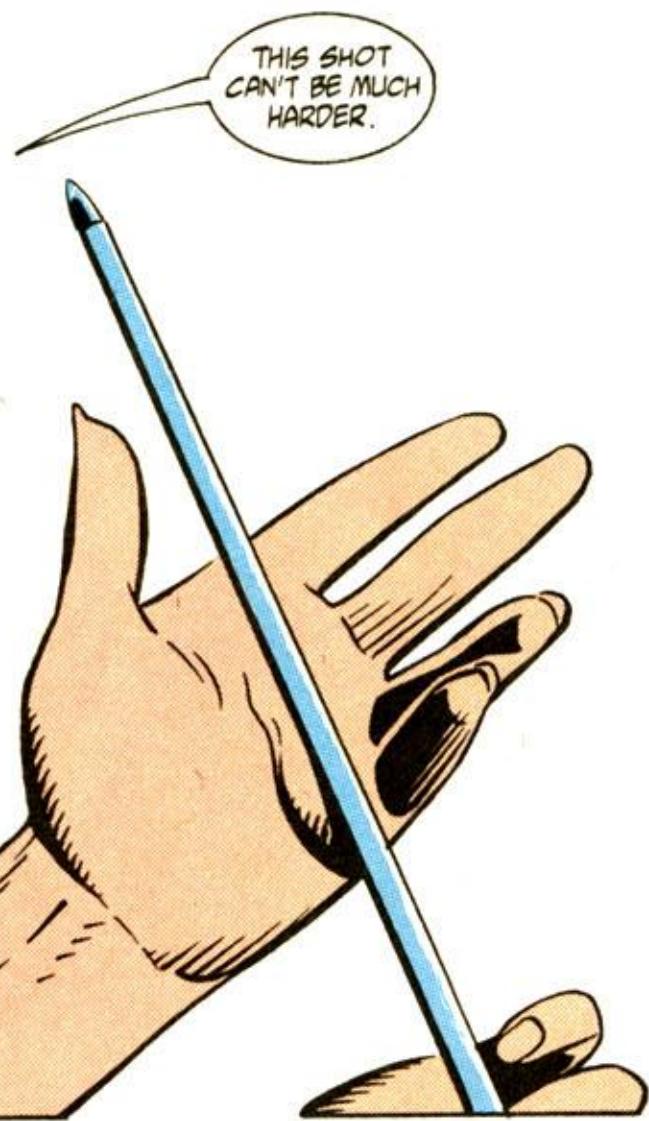
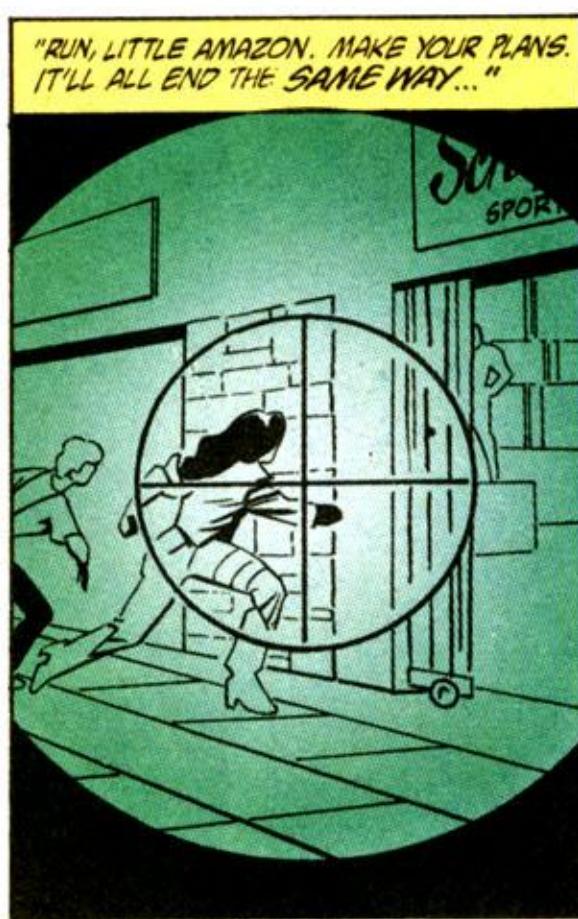


"WE'VE SEALED OFF ALL THE OTHER ENTRANCES AND RIGGED THEM WITH MINES. WE'LL FLOOD THE PLACE WITH TEAR GAS AND DRIVE HER OUT THE FRONT."

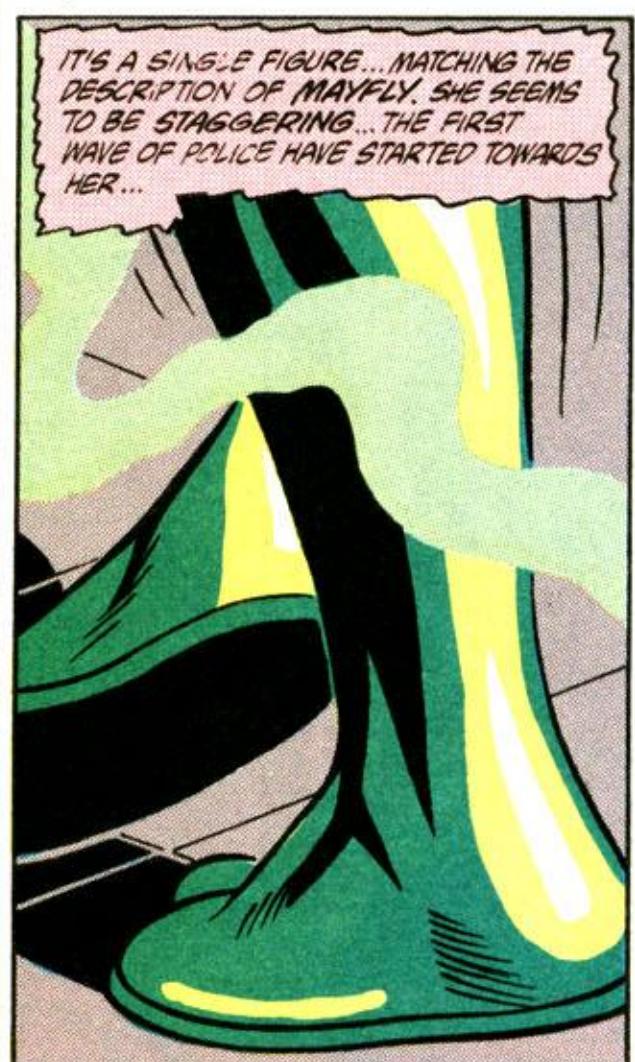


"DON'T WORRY, PRINCESS. YOU STICK TIGHT AND STAY LOW. WE'LL GET HER."

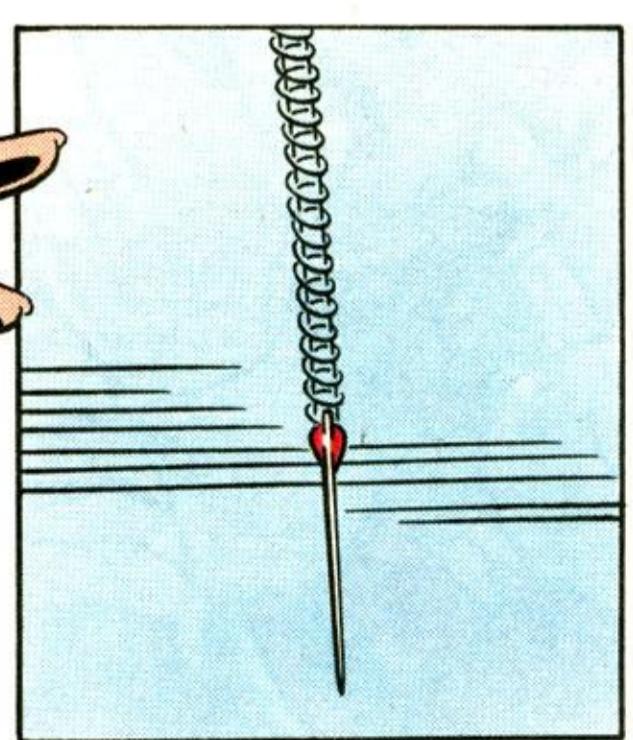
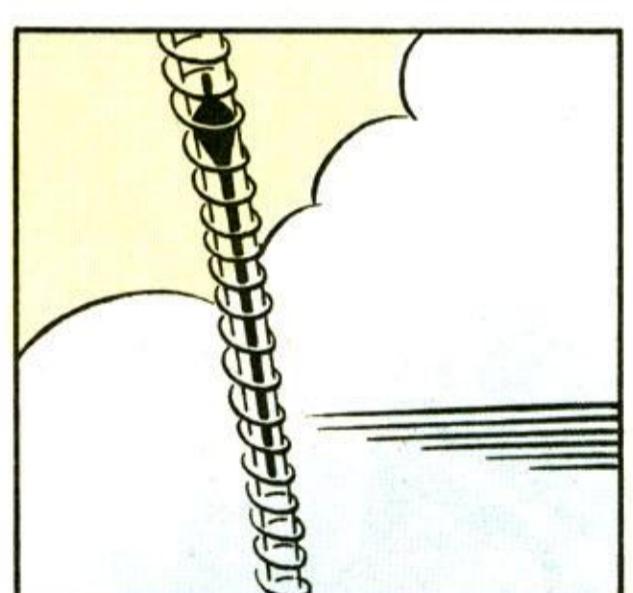
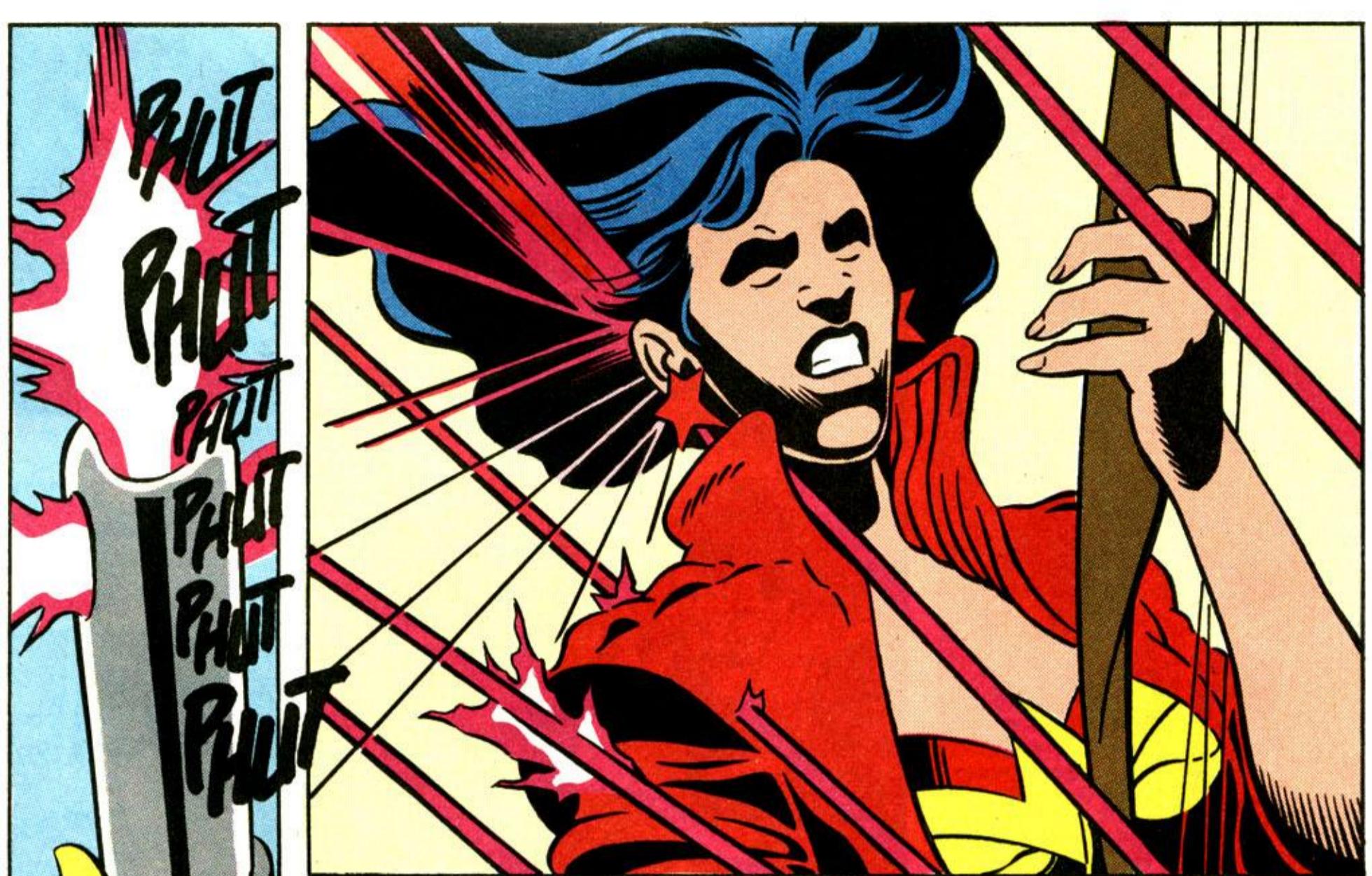


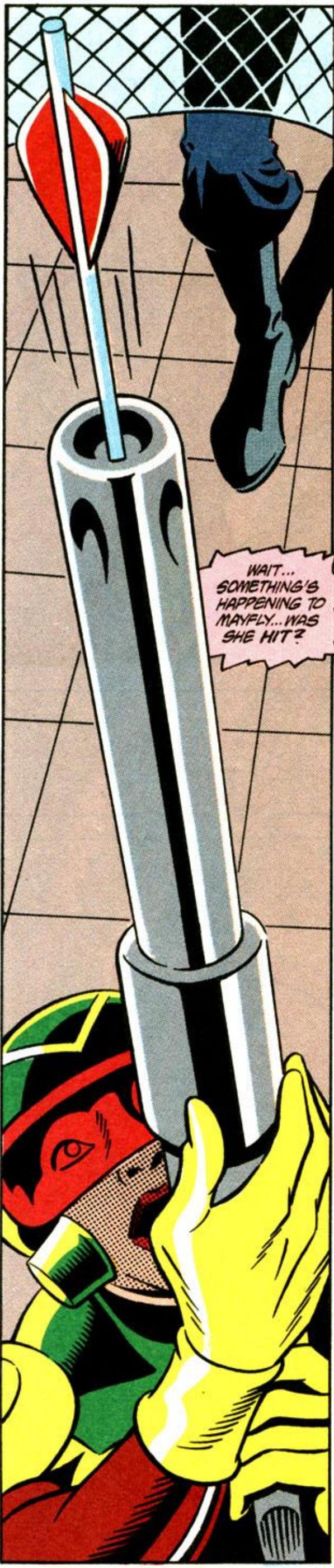












WONDER WOMAN



OPENING SHOTS

Boy, oh boy...I leave Ruben alone here in the letter column and before you know it, he sets off a real firestorm with his "Pérez Complex" rant. Mind you, I support him and even agree with most of what he said, but, wow, neither one of us expected the flood of response he generated. I was sure he was going to get me in big trouble—especially since some of you thought I wrote the piece—but it turned out just fine.

Of course, Ruben **did** want people to write, so that much worked—and how! We were very pleasantly surprised to find that most of you folks seemed to understand what he was really asking for—an open mind and a fair shake for our new creative talents.

It seems that in his passion, Ruben still came across as sincerely interested in the fate of our characters, as are we all. Thanks for your interest and passion as well.

Now let's get to these letters of yours...

out, our own lives change. We meet new friends, we go to new hangouts, we adopt new philosophies, but we also leave old ones behind. Sometimes we are worse off for the exchange.

Diana's current concerns are no more valid than her previous ones under Mr. Pérez. They are not superior, they are different—in so many ways that it is impossible to even begin. The entire tone of the book has gone from "high-flying mythic Greece" to "mundane in-depth." I like it and I respect it—but it's oranges to Pérez's apples. Guys, you have one of the most famous characters in history, and you work with her every month. You're doing fine. Don't get paranoid on us.

Since I'm here, I feel I should comment on the rest of the issue. After all, there were quite a few other pages besides the letter column.

The social commentary from Taco Whiz is both witty and accurate, the best kind. Doctor Fate was a nice surprise. I have enjoyed this version since his/her creation years ago and only protested when the silliness got too strong. Fortunately, the *really* silly stuff doesn't fit in WW and you folks did a fine job.

As for the main plot, I felt that you have brilliantly executed an idea that is, well, obviously contrived. The new guard has taken over at WONDER WOMAN and now all the old plot elements have to be blown up, blown away or blown over. Of course Diana can't get to her JLI paychecks, because if she could it would ruin the story you folks are trying to tell. I know that most of the readers do too, I suspect. But the character development that you are working into it all is worth it and intriguing. I know we've only started to get into this mess and I'm curious (not anxious yet, but it may come) to see what will happen next month. Perhaps you could find a way to introduce new plot elements without necessarily blowing up the old ones? Can you bring mundanity to Diana by choice, instead of necessity? Even if it turns out mom isn't dead, and Themyscira isn't destroyed forever, I can see Diana choosing not to quit Taco Whiz. As I think Mr. Messner-Loebs is doing a fine job pointing out, wisdom and joy can be found anywhere, not just in the marble halls of Amazonia.

Well, that's plenty for one issue. By the way, kudos to Mr. Bolland and everyone else who worked on Diana's new poster. I was very pleased with it, and it is proudly displayed on my wall opposite the Vigilante. Two women who perhaps aren't as different as they seem. Happy to hear about the plans for Diana's TV show (!) and can't wait for more specifics. Live action or animated?

You've stated that you have plans for plots that will "change Diana's life forever." With these words, we must trust you. WONDER WOMAN is On The Rise.

Till Later,
Jason Vester
Las Vegas, NV

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Actually, for someone so on the mark about so much of what we're up to, you missed the mark on one really important point. Ruben (who really wrote the piece, by the way) not only didn't try to compare our stuff to George's, he was asking everybody else to stop comparing us to George and judge us on our merits—which you most definitely did. Thanks.

Thanks for the eloquent appreciation, Jason...and your trust.



Dear Ruben,

After reading your commentary in #76, I decided it was time for me to join the fray.

The earth-shattering changes that you promised Diana would face have been earth-shattering indeed—in some cases, in the extreme. I'm referring to the death of Hippolyte and the Amazons. In no way did I expect the Amazons would NOT undergo some sort of change during Diana's absence. That would be unrealistic...even for a comic book. But to kill off an entire race, especially by a woman (Circe) whom we saw reduced to ashes in WAR OF THE GODS #4! Some real-life examples of such genocide are the massacre of the Native Americans or the mass murders of the Jews during the Holocaust. But Paradise Island (Hippolyte and the Amazons) have always been a permanent fixture in Wonder Woman's life in any incarnation...as Ma and Pa Kent to Clark, or Alfred to Bruce Wayne. Hippolyte's death is truly a tragic loss. (Could this possibly be a subplot leading up to #100?)

Now on to bigger and better things.

Despite my feelings about the destruction of Themyscira, I still believe Bill is doing a fantastic job in guiding the direction of this book, and I'm sorry that some of my fellow readers are having trouble recovering from Pérez withdrawal. When you get right down to it, this book needed changes. Aside from the suicide of Lucy Spears, Diana's meeting with Troia, and WAR OF THE GODS, things started to get a little commonplace after #40. In no way am I putting these stories down because I care for them as much as any fan. We needed a new outlook on the life of DC's greatest heroine. Now, I have no idea what will happen from one issue to the next AND I LIKE IT!

Never let it be said that Bill doesn't keep things interesting around here. Since he began writing this comic, he's tackled such issues as: sexism (at its worst), child abuse, gun control, unemployment...the list goes on. This comic book has heart; it's one of substance, not fluff.

While we're on the subject of the Justice League, make sure the Princess stays in it. I want to see her continue to interact with other heroes. I hope that we don't see her change her mind suddenly in one issue and decide to quit the League altogether. Keep her in there!

I'd like to hear more about this Wonder Woman TV show. Is it live action or animation? I would love to see WW in live action again. But animation would probably allow you more room to maneuver.

As far as the artwork goes, I like Moder's work. It's kind of "cartoony," but not in a negative way. For me, it's kinda hard to explain, but I really appreciate the precision and care with which each panel is drawn.

I know things are pretty rough now, but I'm almost positive that people will open up and give this book another try. Until next time!

A fan forever,
Ryan Waters

You're right about that, Ryan—it does look like everybody's on our side. Now maybe Ruben will relax a bit.

When it comes to questions about a WW TV show, however, I really can't tell you much. There have been options taken out on our favorite Amazon, but no movement lately. Is it live action or animated? I haven't heard definitively one way or the other. Sorry.



Dear Ruben,

Something happened to me after reading WONDER WOMAN #76 that hasn't happened in a long time. I actually read the issue and enjoyed it.

Let me explain. I'm one of those WW fans who has been plagued with "the Pérez Complex." When Bill Loeb took over for George Pérez, I had every intention of keeping an open mind. I was even looking forward to having Bill write Diana's adventures since I loved his work on THE FLASH, but something kept me from enjoying Bill's stories. At first I thought it was because Bill was changing Diana's personality too fast. While that may be partly true, it wasn't the real reason.

The TRUE reason for my dislike of Bill's Diana was my unfamiliarity with it. Because of this, I wasn't willing to really read his stories and look at them for what they were. Instead, I saw them for what they were not. This wasn't George's Diana and thus anything else would be unacceptable. Nothing wrong on my part, right? Wrong!

In WW #69, Paul Girard told other readers to reread issues #1-6 and then the WW special to show how different these Dianas were. I did more than that. I reread issues #1-75 (and the annuals) and something unexpected happened. I expected to hate Bill's Diana when I reached issue #63. Instead I liked it. This may not sound amazing, but it was for me because, for the life of me, I couldn't understand why I liked it this time around. Then, during the "Exodus in Space" saga, it finally hit me: it was because I knew what to expect that I was able to enjoy these stories. It was then I realized I had judged Bill unfairly, and I suspect this holds true for many "unhappy" Wonder Woman fans.

People, it's time to realize what a gem we, as WW fans, have. Isn't this the type of high-quality writing we always wanted for the old Earth-One Wonder Woman? She couldn't even survive as a title without having the more popular Earth-Two Huntress feature to keep it alive. Do you remember those days? We are all a lot better off with this new WW, especially with Bill writing her. And Ruben, go easy on those fans who aren't won over by this new version. It just means they really care about WW and

want to be sure you do too. After all, all WW ever needed is to have someone care about her.

Thanks for listening.
E.J. Viveiros
Swansea, MA



Dear Brian, Ruben and Bill,

Oh. My. God. You killed Themyscira! Of course, you did put page numbers back into the book with this issue, #76, for which I'm very grateful, but, THIS IS NOT AN EVEN TRADE!!!

Let's see: in the past year or so, Diana has: almost wound up as Bride of Frankenstein; been Eclipsed and turned into amorphous goo; been shot into space, enslaved, beaten and starved by a planet full of male bigot/supremacists (and not one bathroom in sight—I don't wanna know); toppled an empire; returned to Earth to find herself penniless, virtually homeless; been made leader of the JLA (unrecompensed by what my husband calls a machine from hell); become a taco jockey; connected ambiguously with a strange private investigator currently displaying more personality wants than he could possibly self-cauterize—and now you've made her an orphan. Bill, do you moonlight designing roller coaster rides?

Destroying Themyscira most definitely caught me unawares. No money, no Mom, no sisters, no home save a one-room flat in Boston. (Watch out, Julia, you may be next.) She is a Princess without portfolio and the last of her race, and I still get misty every time I read this story. Now, I realize you can resurrect Themyscira any time you wish, even as you did Circe, but still...you leavened the tragedy with a great deal of humor throughout the issue, but it remains a very sobering milestone in Diana's life.

Hoppy is earthily wonderful, from the etiology of her name to her tongue-lashing and subsequent absolution of Diana who refused the pardon with an almost masochistic request to "force me to clean up after everyone"—uh huh: who's going to force her to do anything? Except Randolph, possibly.

Interesting personality quirk, though. It's rather a nice phenomenon to see a super-hero who really believes she's no better than anyone else and who takes mundane responsibilities very seriously, juxtaposing them with saving lives and roaming the universe.

Which brings me to Dr. Fate. It was great seeing her again. She was my second favorite book. I'm glad I'll get to enjoy her for at least one more issue. Perhaps she can visit often. She and Diana are perfect foils for each other. I still regard their conversation about children and Diana's suggestion that Kent become pregnant, as classic.

Diana's life has become quite a wild journey, with more, no doubt, to come. She apparently has the handy knack of mentally compartmentalizing what happens to her, able to file away that over which she has no control, not allowing it to interfere with a fierce dedication to living life to the fullest. But she's human and humans have limits, no matter how much they think they can bear. Inza realized this, piercing Diana's "grief serves no purpose" little subterfuge with her understanding. Grief does have purpose. It allows us to mourn, purge and cleanse ourselves. Inza's right, Diana's wrong and knew it, contradicting herself immediately by collapsing into Inza's arms. Stoicism is fine and dandy, but it seems to me that the combination of traumas

she's sustained to date, including this final blow of watching her mother and her nation die, combined with whatever future heartaches you have in store and I know you must—convoluted ones—would indicate perhaps an Amazon-sized post traumatic stress syndrome reaction sometime in the future. By destroying her roots, you're forcing her to grow new ones and, while her "Let's get on with life" attitude is healthy, she's got her limits. Everyone needs somebody to love and a shoulder to lean on. Oh! Hey! How about Indelicato (who is looking a bit too old and paunchy, Lee; please young him up a bit)?

Lee and Ande do very nice underwater scenes and metallic textures, and Diana looked a bit leaner and prettier in this issue. Bolland's cover was superlative, as always. Steve Mattsson is doing some very creative things with screens and color. And thank you for printing my full address.

All right. I'm ready for the rest of the ride—got my seat belt on. Proceed on smartly, gentlemen; we're having fun now.

Nancy Champion
Manassas, VA

And it wouldn't be half the fun without you, Nancy. Keep the great thoughts coming...it keeps us honest.



Dear WONDER WOMAN crew,

Love the Brian Bolland covers. It's a shame they seem to pale in comparison to Moder and Parks's interiors (Gaspl Sacrilege! How can this be true? Better'n Bolland? Stone this heathenish letter-hack!). Seriously, Lee Moder is a welcome surprise. Where did this guy come from??? Additionally, I am looking forward to what Mr. Loeb has in store after his shocking explanation (say it ain't true) of the devastation of the Island and Circe (and Moder 'n' Parks's visuals, of course).

This book is better than ever and I am looking forward to much more (any chance of chaining Lee to a desk for a Dr. Fate return, the sexiest and smartest Fate to cross DC pages in years) from the team that brought an excellent #76. Thanks.

William T. Ritter
Fairfax, VA

Where did Lee come from? Pittsburgh, of course. Thank goodness for Pittsburgh, hey?



NEXT ISSUE: Part two in the saga of Diana vs. Mayfly. Things don't look good for our heroine and even worse for Mayfly...count on it, things get weirder. Join Bill, John, Trish, Ruben, me—and our guest artists Steve and Deryl—for all the excitement (and don't worry, Lee comes back in issue #81)!! See you next issue!

—Brian Augustyn
just getting over an "H. G. Peter Complex."

