



MURMUR speaks out against

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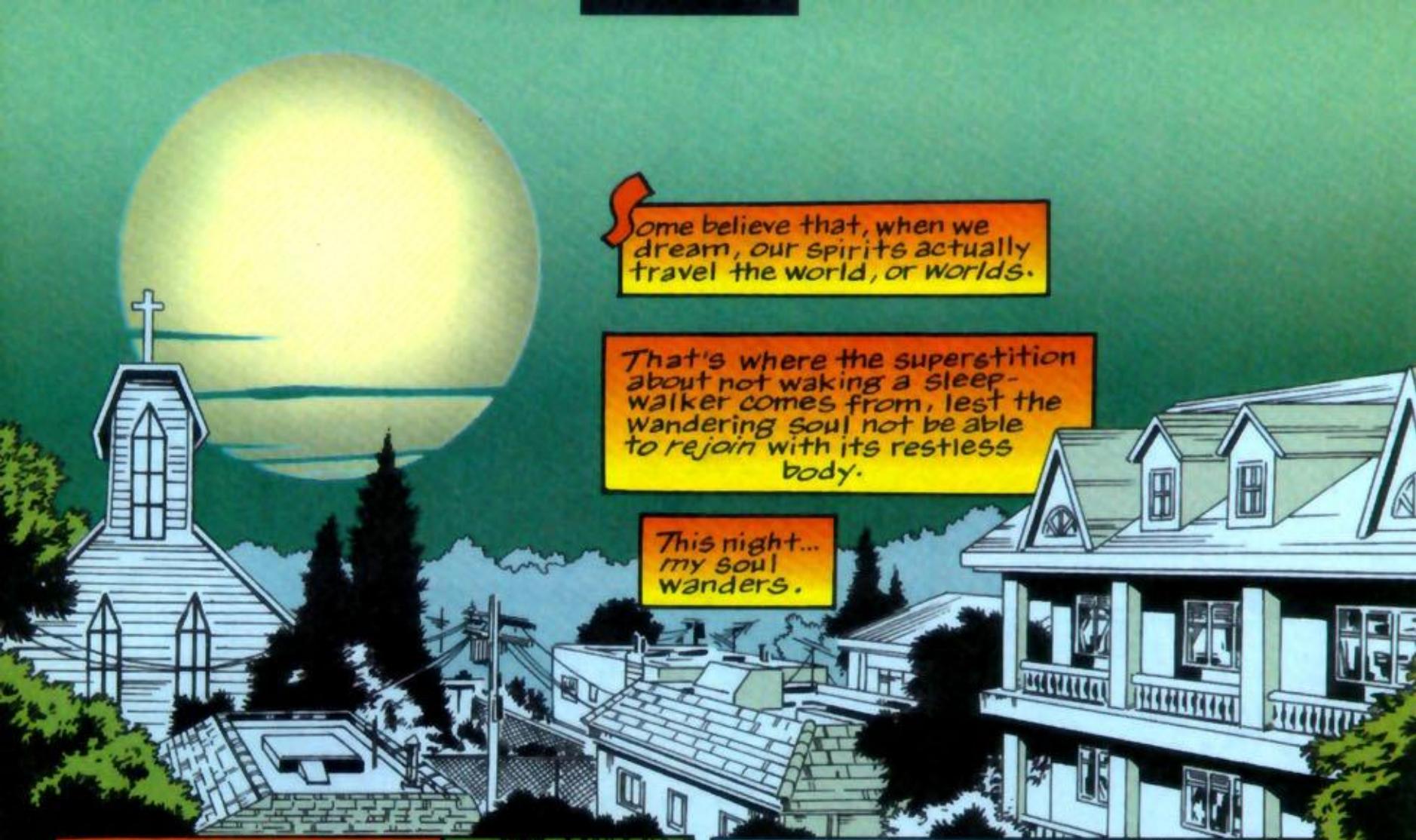


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Some believe that, when we dream, our spirits actually travel the world, or worlds.

That's where the superstition about not waking a sleep-walker comes from, lest the wandering soul not be able to rejoin with its restless body.

This night... my soul wanders.

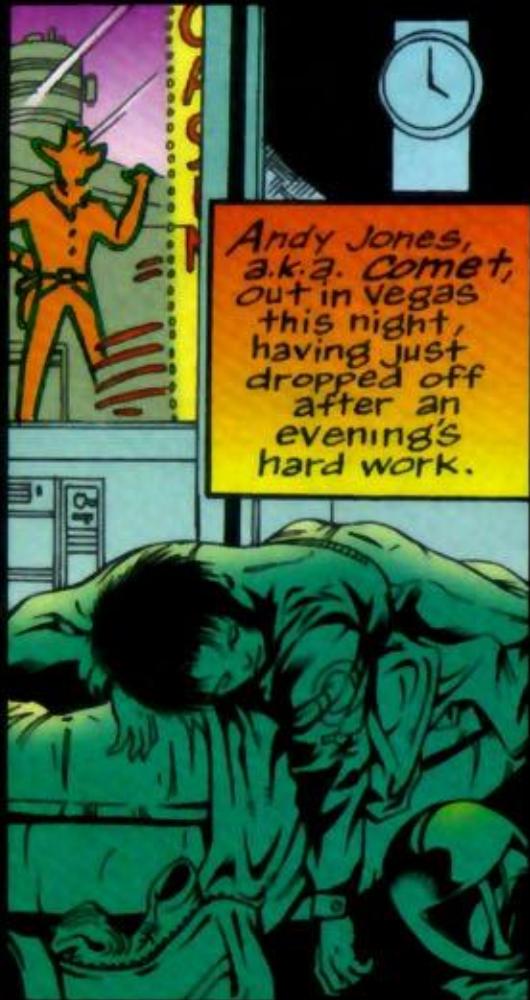
I see my parents, Fred and Sylvia Danvers, peaceful after so much angst.



The Reverend Larry Varvel. I wonder if God speaks to him in his sleep.



Andy Jones, a.k.a. Comet, out in Vegas this night, having just dropped off after an evening's hard work.



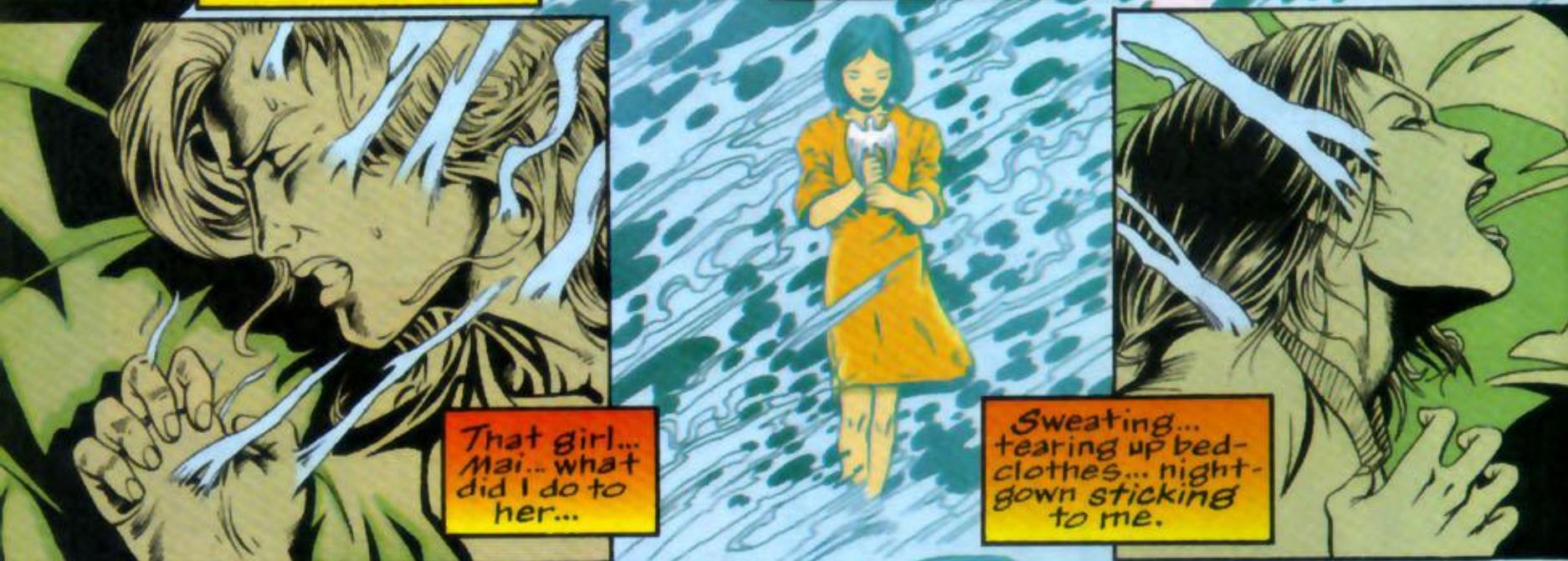
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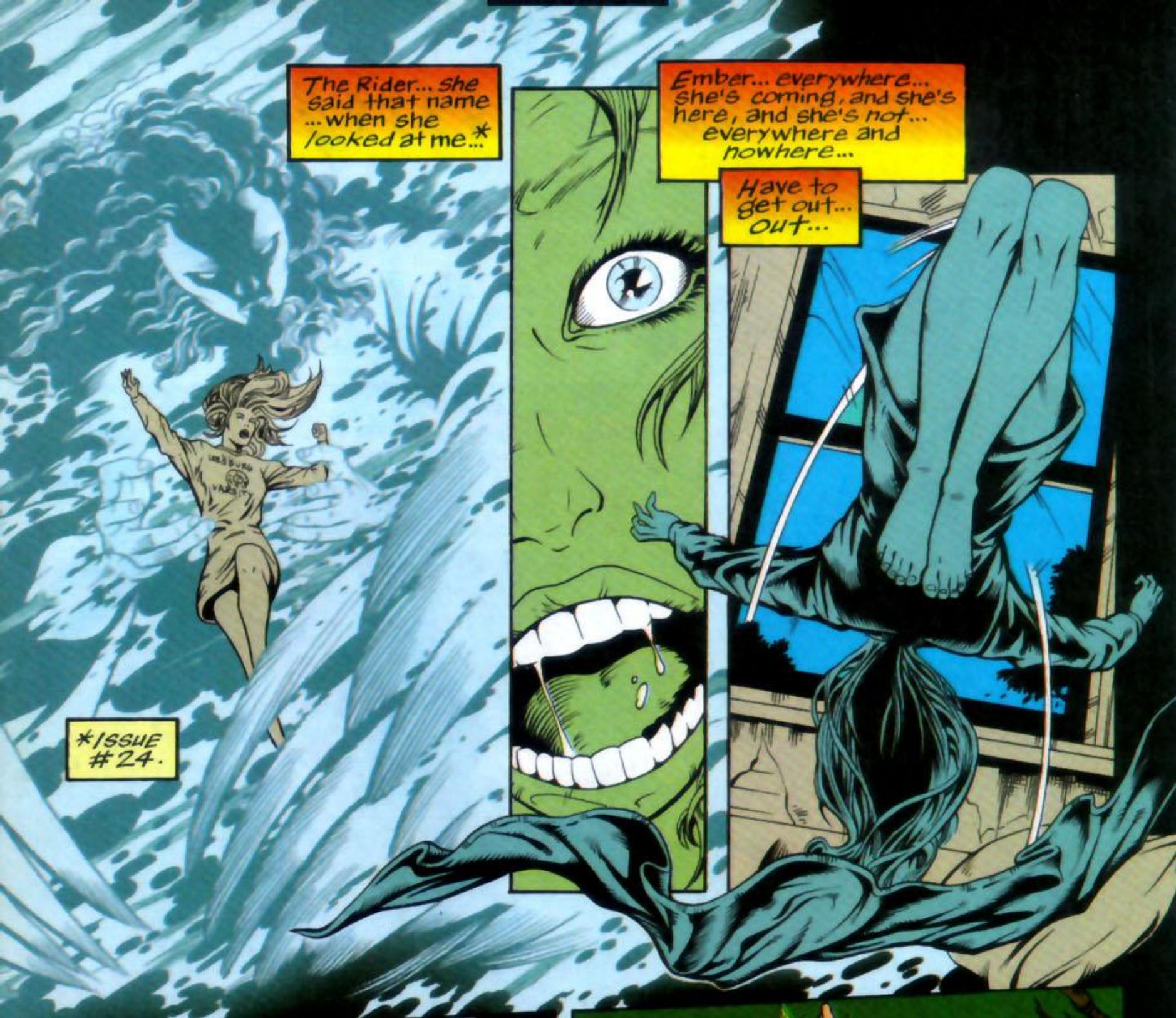


Richard Malverne, steadfast and patient. My would-be boyfriend.

...Mattie? Can't be. I must be dreaming.







# ABOVE A MURMUR

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HAVING  
TROUBLE  
SLEEPING?

Cassandra?! Or at least the young woman who says she's the reincarnation of Cassandra, the mythological seer.

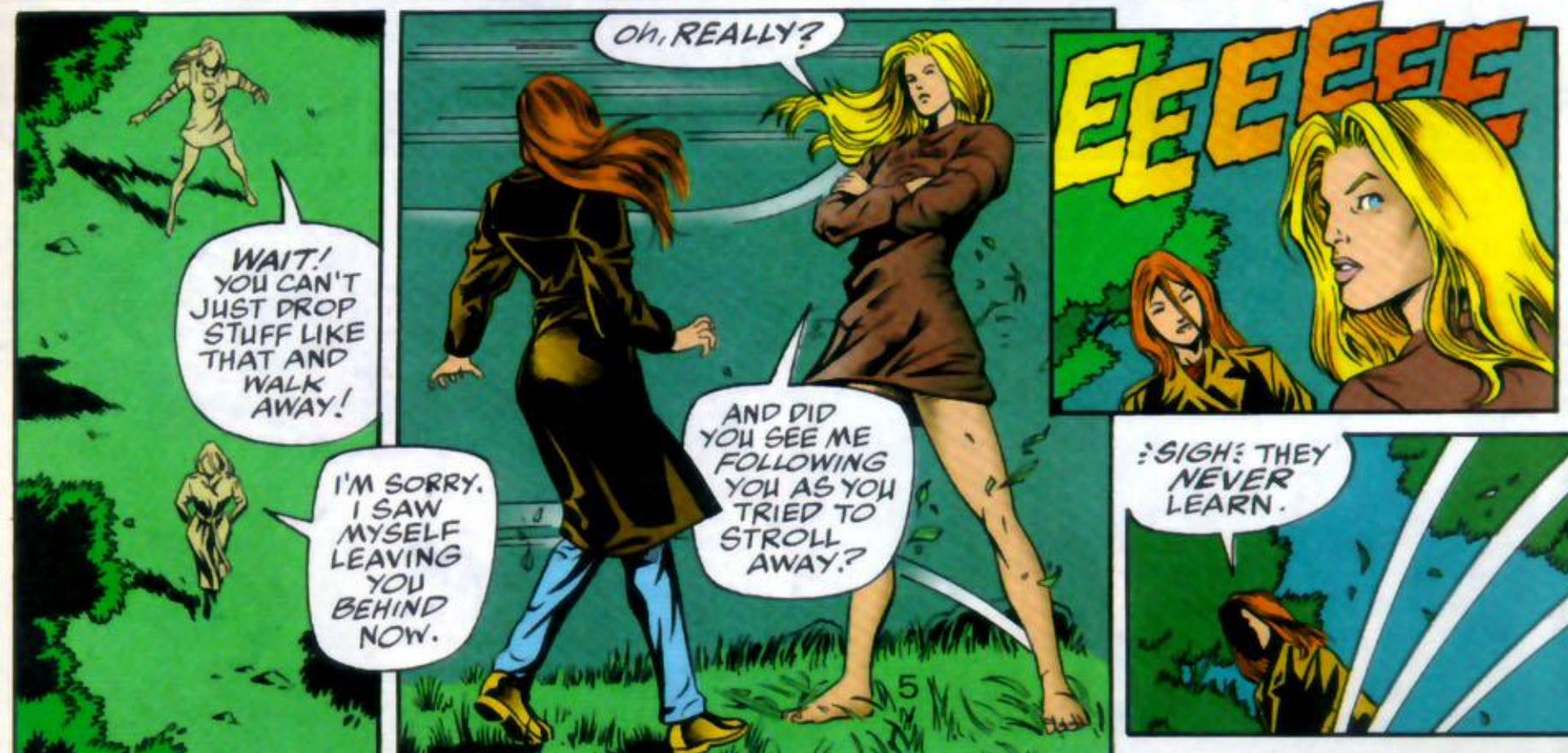
I ran into her during the whole Millennium Giants thing.\* But that was out in the middle of the ocean! What's she doing here, in Leesburg?

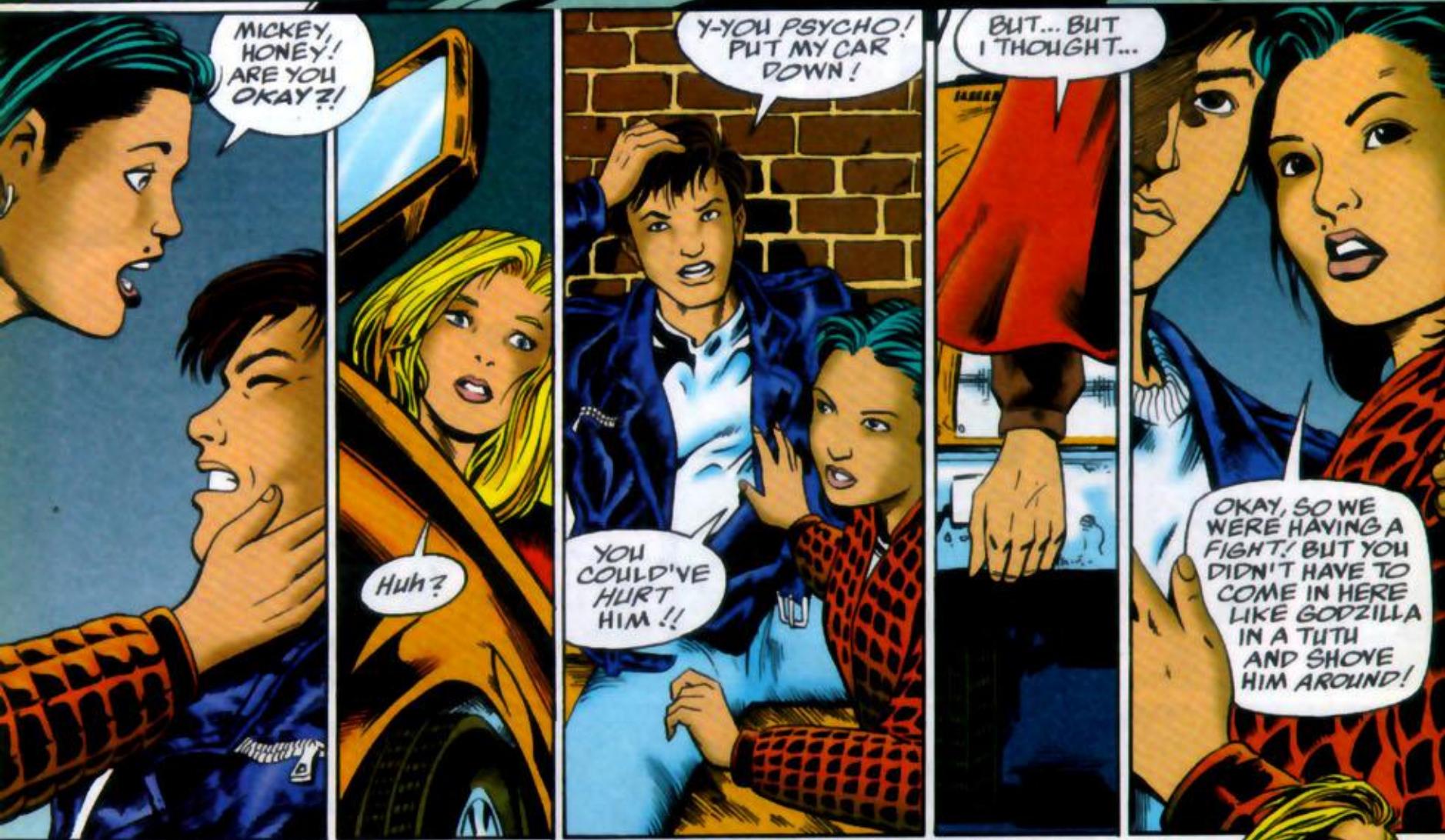
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Well, Cassandra was true to her word. She's vamoosed.

At least I had time to grab my cape so I could have something to wrap around my nightshirt. Maintain some small measure of dignity.

Man, did I pick the wrong night to wash my uniform.

I could try to dry it off fast by flying with it at high speed, but then it gets all stiff and rides up, and... uucchh.

Best to let it drip dry, even if it doesn't leave me ready for little emergencies.

Maybe I should make a spare... Maybe I should... Should...

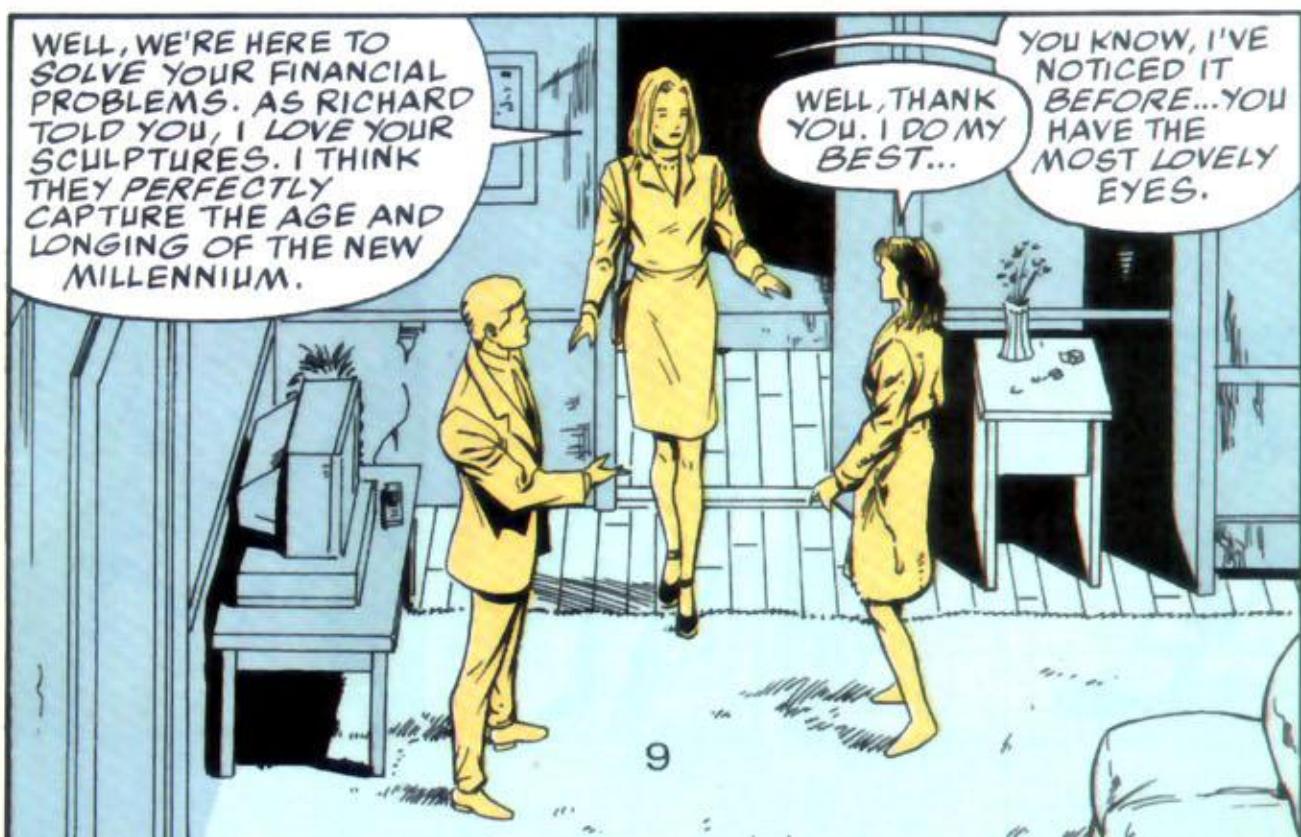
...get some sleep... finally...

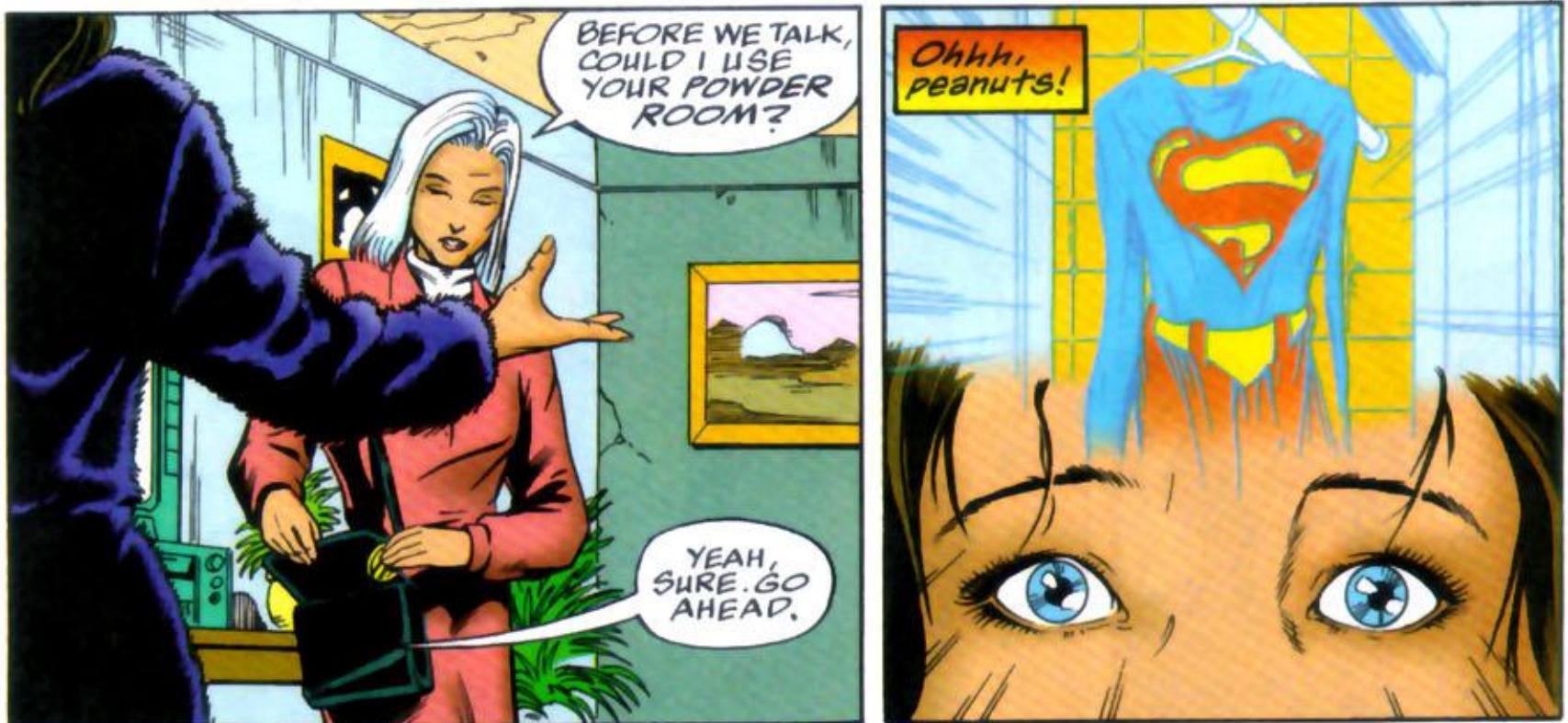
Geez... first I get Wally, the cryptic kid who thinks he's God... and now I get Cassandra, the cryptic woman who thinks she sees the future.

Doesn't anyone just say what's on their mind?













Whoever--whatever  
he is--I feel like,  
even from here, I can  
feel power just  
rippling off him,  
like a spray from  
a tidal wave.

That thing he's  
riding... I know  
that creature.  
It's a Gryphon.  
But... that's a  
creature out  
of myth.

Then again, to  
some people, so  
are angels.





You need a new strategy. And I wouldn't be there when he hits if I were you.

What in the--?

That voice...  
in my head...  
I...!

I've heard it  
before...I...



Beyond  
that,  
how-  
ever...

WAHWAH

ARRGHH!!

My God...he barely  
tagged me with that  
axe of his...but it  
cut through my  
invulnerability as  
if it wasn't there.

I haven't felt  
a hit that badly  
since Wally  
smacked me  
around with  
that blasted  
bat of his.\*

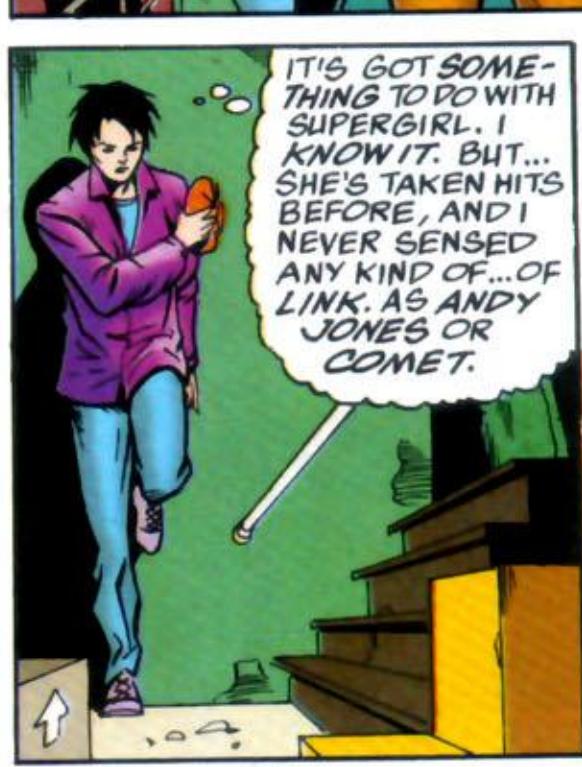
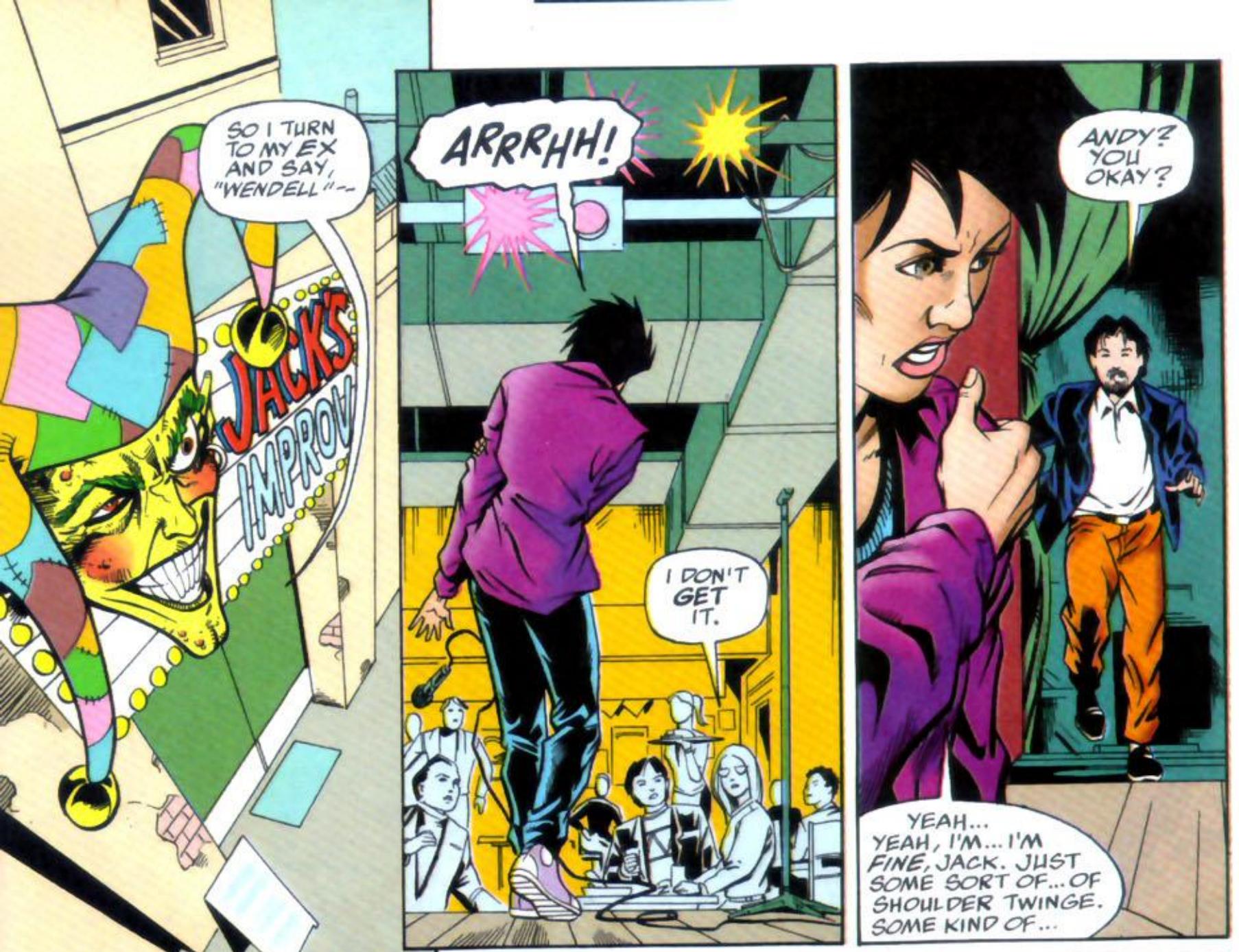
\*ISSUE #25.

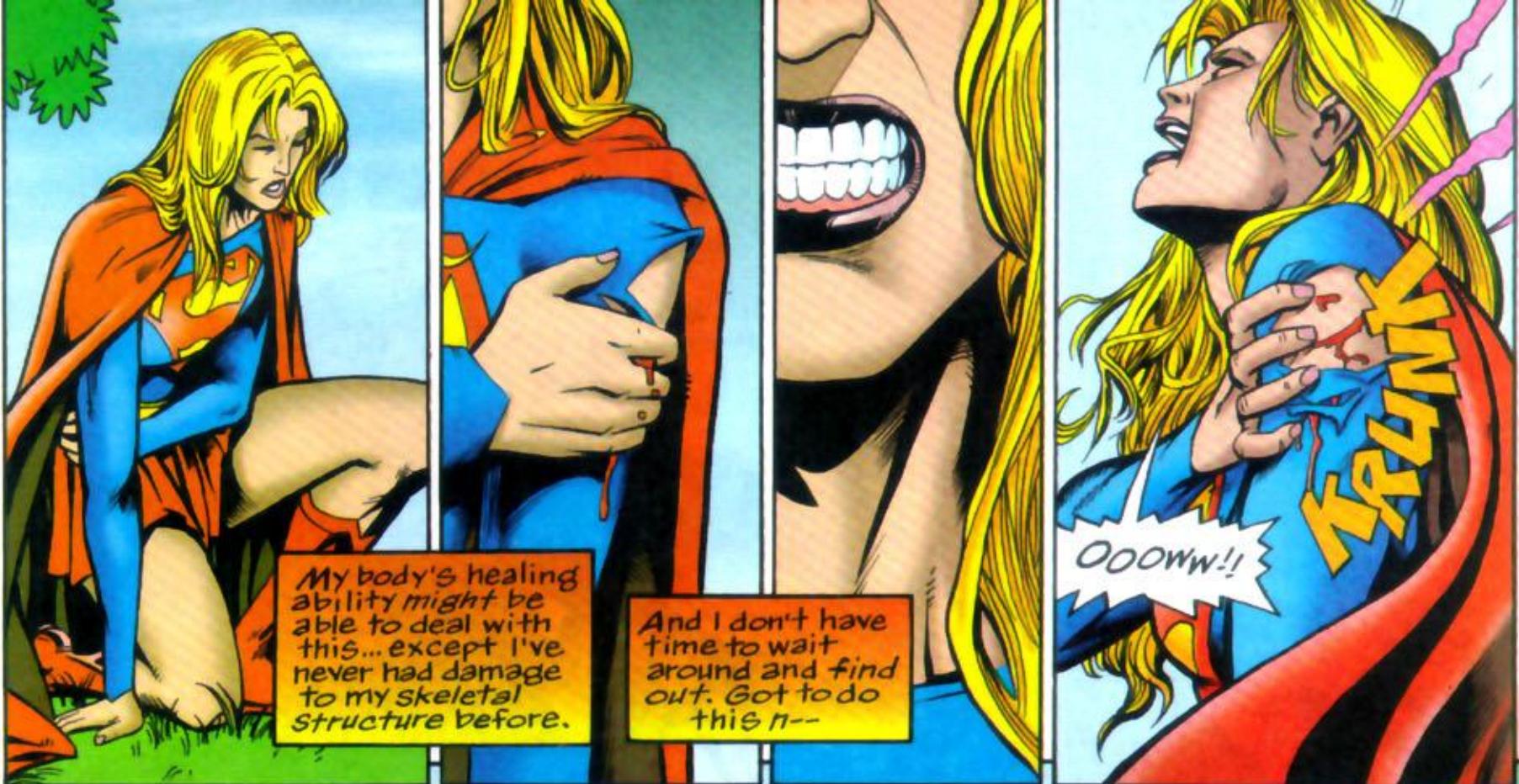
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Shoulder...  
throbbing...  
lord...

...I think  
it's...it's  
dislocated...









I keep thinking about that voice in my head ... speaking to me of the importance of confidence...

...and I think I begin to understand.

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE, MURMUR, OR WHAT YOU ARE ... AND I DON'T CARE.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE CARNIVORE OR HIS PLANS.

WHAT I CARE ABOUT IS RIGHT HERE. IT'S REAL, IT'S MORTAL, AND WHATEVER YOU ARE, YOU WILL GET OUT OF HERE, YOU WILL LEAVE ME THE HELL ALONE, OR I SWEAR BY ALL THAT'S HOLY, I'LL--

YOU'LL WHAT? KILL ME? ARE YOU WILLING TO FALL?

ARE YOU WILLING TO DIE TO FIND OUT?

For a moment... the barest moment... I see his confident expression flicker in confusion...

KRAK!

...And that's when I make my move.



I realize that this contest... that so many of the tough obstacles that I've faced... aren't about physical strength.

It's not about weaponry, or powers.

It's about a test of will. Of who believes more in their cause.

WOOMF

A distillation of winning and losing into a matter of pure conviction.



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