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WONDER WOMAN

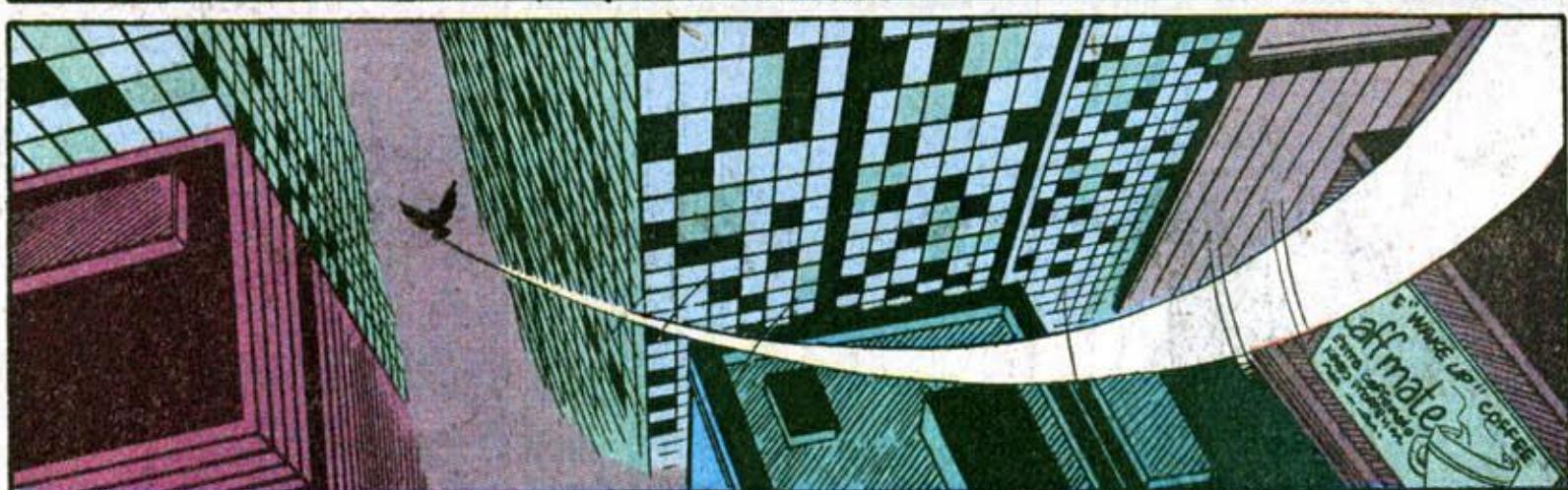


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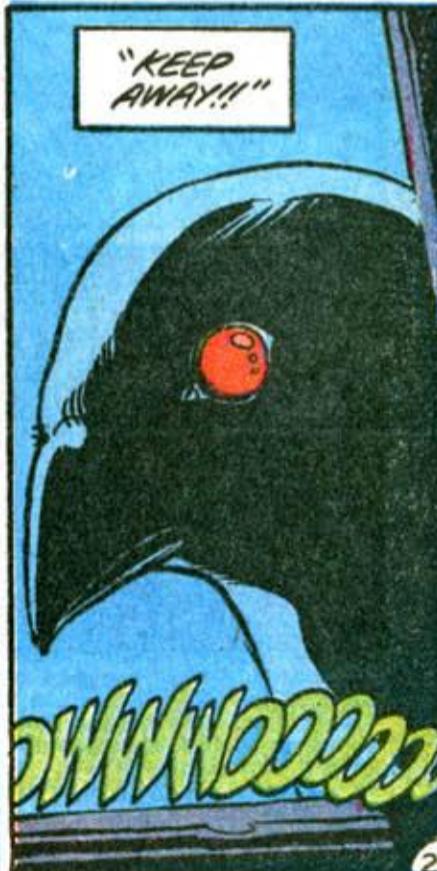
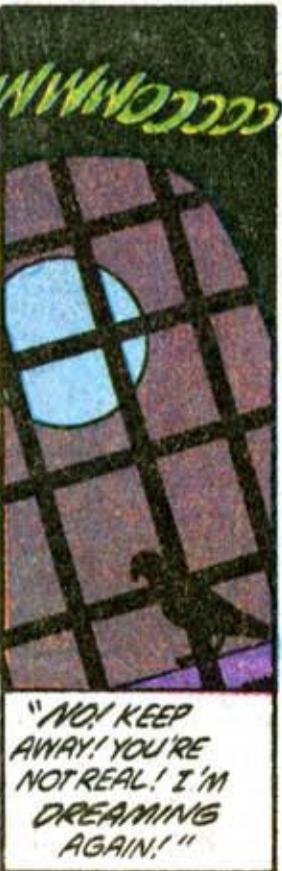
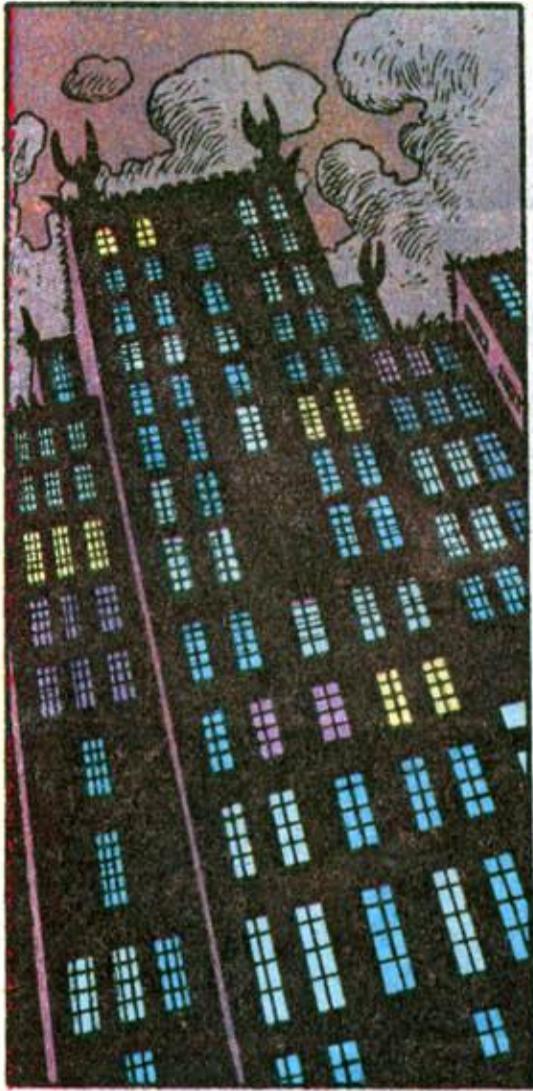
THE GOD MUST
BE CRAZY
by Perez, Thompson & Tenghai

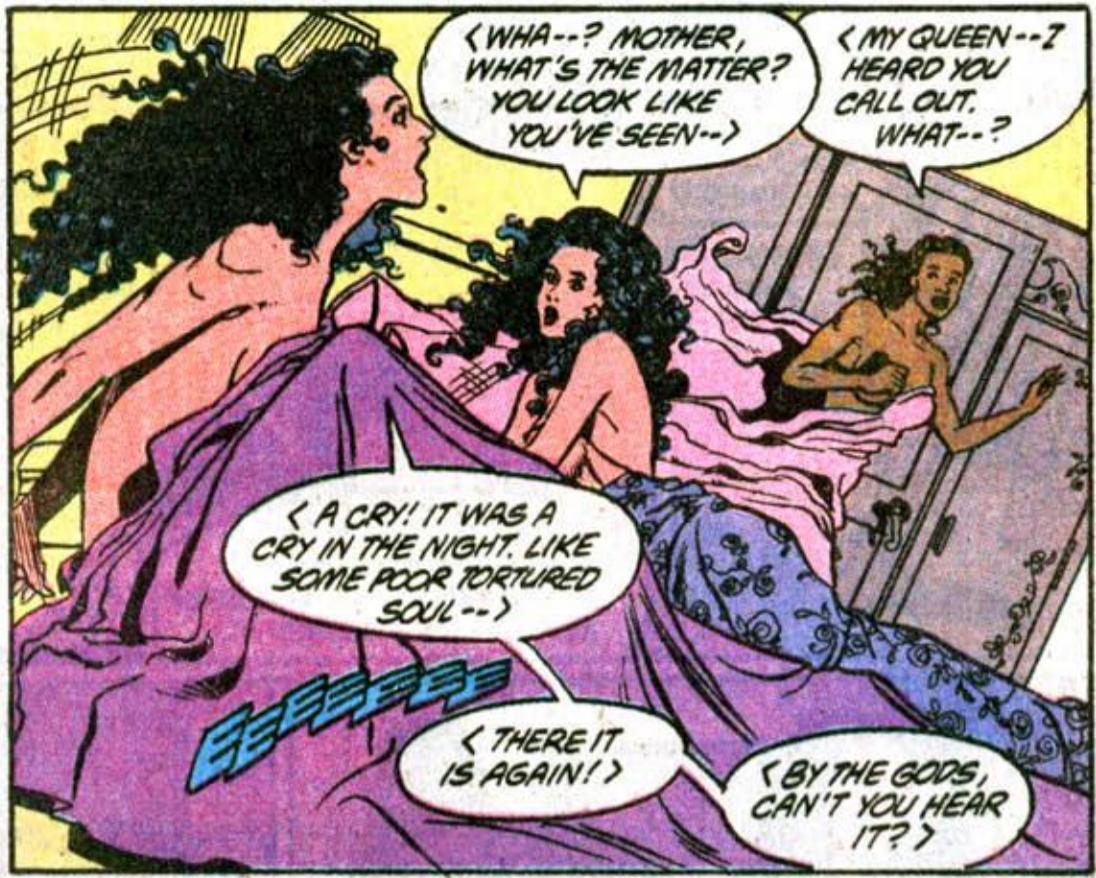


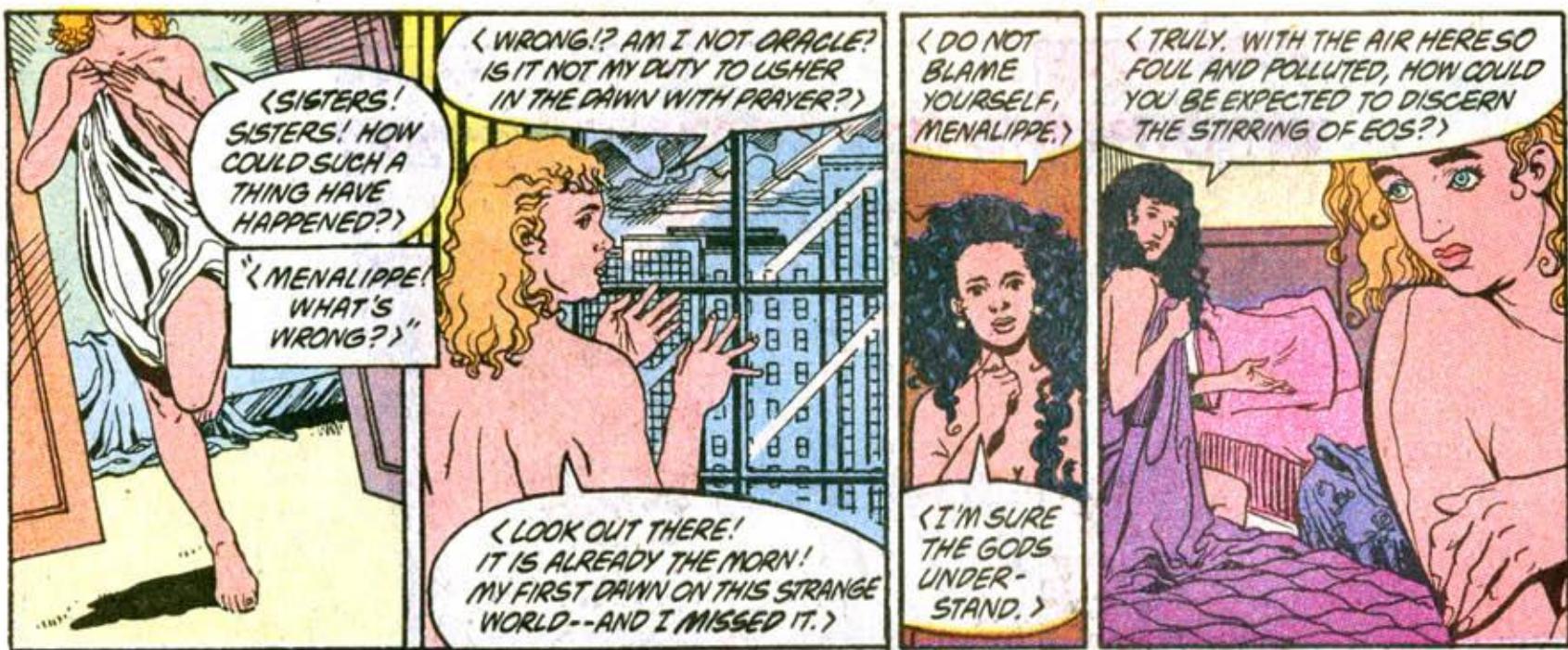


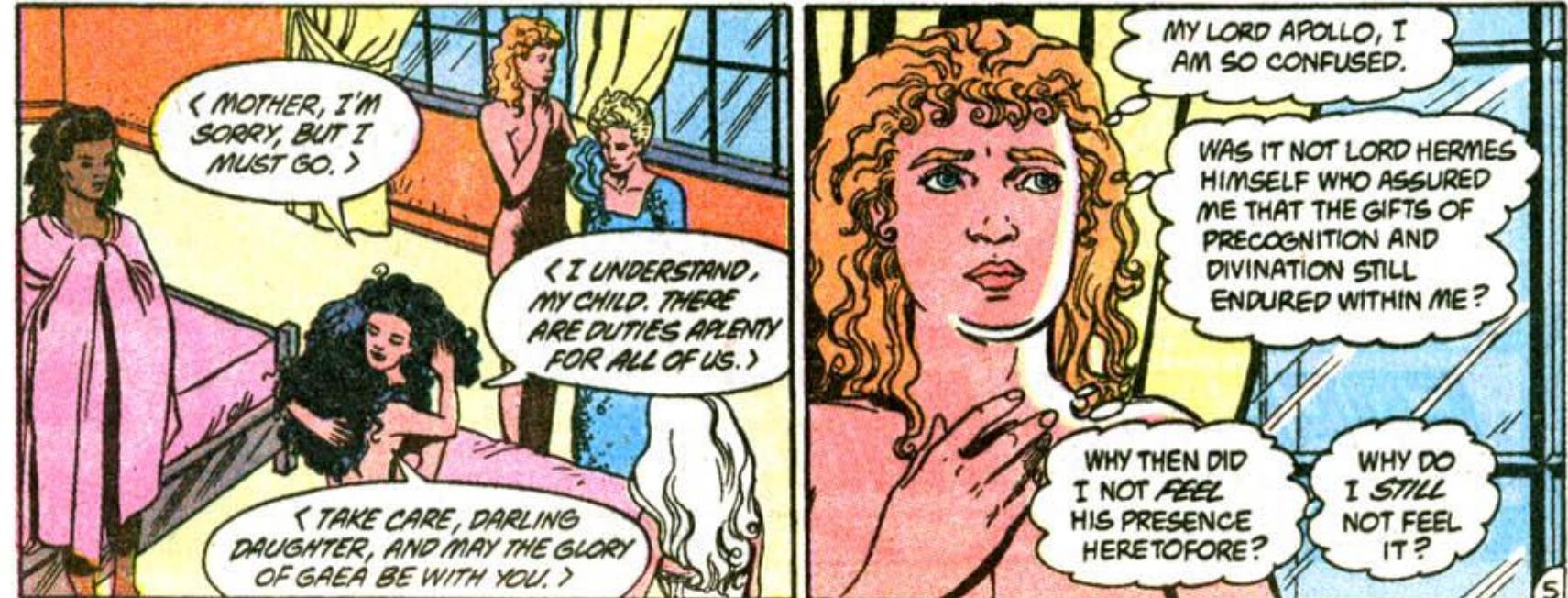
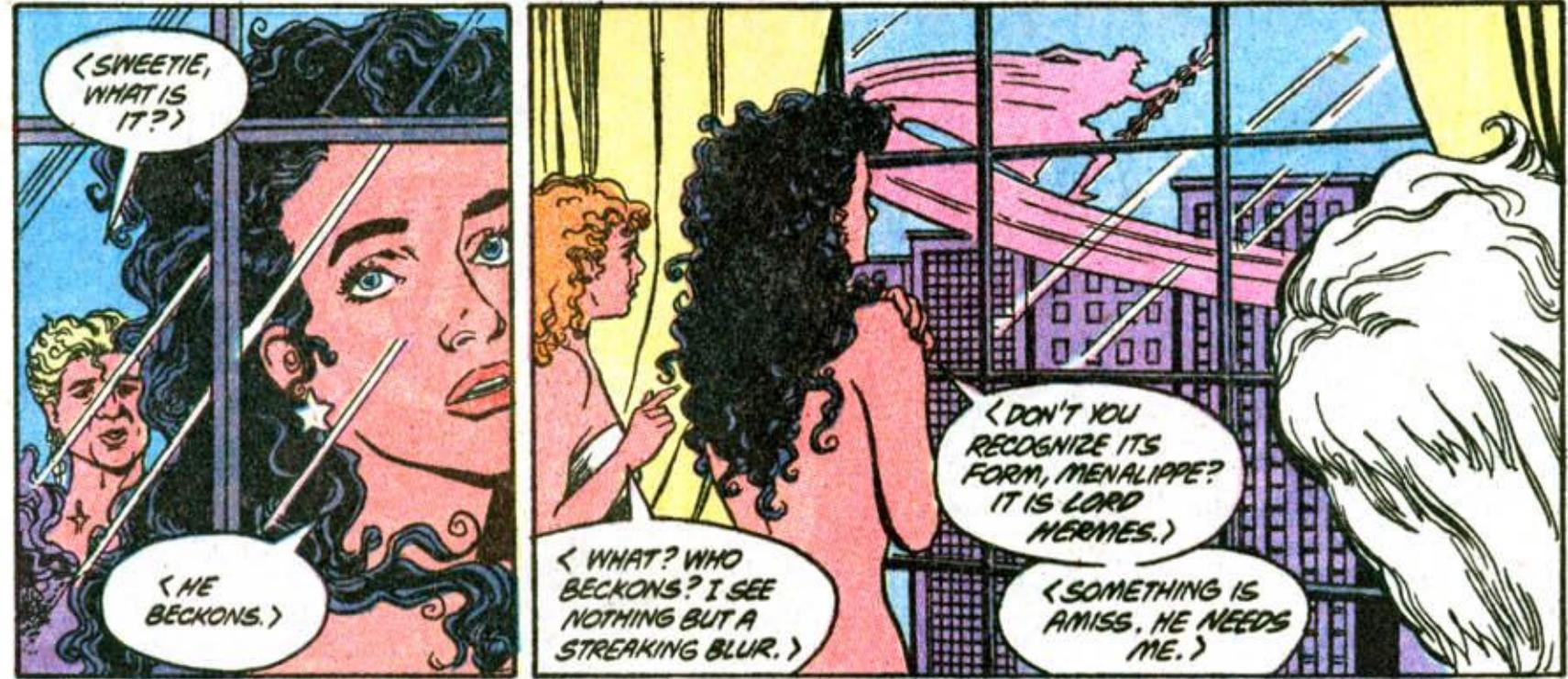
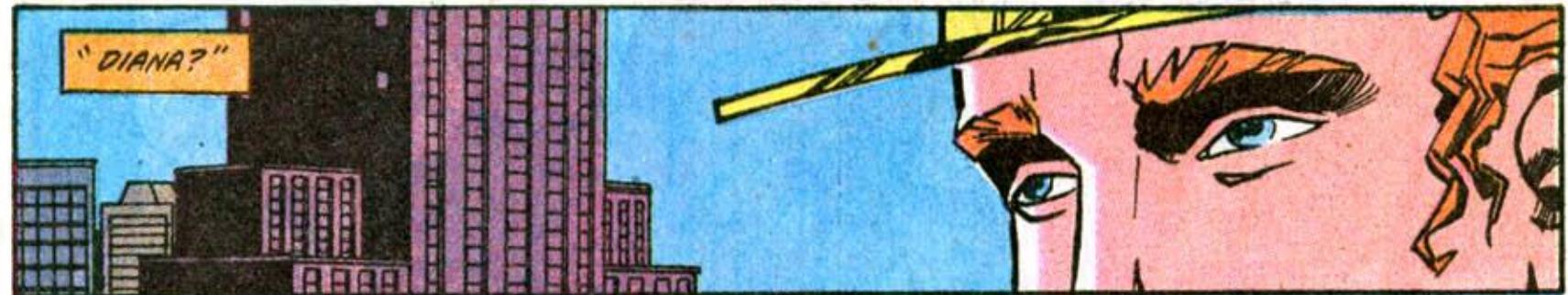
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MEANWHILE, AMID THE RICH WOODLANDS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, THE PRESENCE OF LORD HERMES, OLYMPIC GOD OF MESSENGERS, IS MOST DEFINITELY BEING FELT.

WONDER WOMAN



AS ONCE I DID BIRTH YOU WITH MY ESSENCE, SO DO I NOW BECKON YOU BACK INTO MY WOMB!

FOR THAT WHICH I HAVE GIVEN, I HEREBY REVOKE. HEED, FOR I CALL YOU BACK!

IN THE NAME OF OLYMPUS, I COMMAND YOU BACK!

GEORGE PEREZ · Writer
JILL THOMPSON · Penciler
ROMEO TANGHAL · Inker
JOHN COSTANZA · Letterer
TOM ZIUKO · Colorist
TOM PEYER · Asst. Editor
KAREN BERGER · Editor

SPEEDING IMAGE

Featuring characters created by WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON

BONE AND SINEW GRIND FROM EXERTION, FEVERISH SKIN TINGLES WITH COOLING BEADS OF SWEAT--IT WAS ALL SO MUCH EASIER ON MT. OLYMPUS.

LIFE AMONG THE HUMANS WAS NOT WHAT HERMES HAD HOPED IT TO BE. IT HAS LEFT HIM WEAKENED, DEPLETED. MORE THAN HUMAN, BUT LESS THAN GOD.

DIANA'S WORDS ECHO MOCKINGLY IN HIS EARS: "PERHAPS IT'S TIME YOU WERE A GOD AGAIN AND REGAINED YOUR RIGHTFUL STATUS."

UNFORTUNATELY, THAT IS EASIER SAID THAN DONE.

DAMN YOU ALL! HOW LONG MUST I ENDURE THIS HUMILIATION?

WHAT PENANCE MUST I PERFORM BEFORE THIS COSMIC JOKE IS ENDED?

O, APOLLO, HOW YOU MUST RELISH THIS! THE GREAT LORD HERMES REDUCED SO!

WELL, CEASE YOUR LAUGHTER, OLYMPIAN. HERMES IS NO JESTER FOR THE HOLY COURT. I WILL NOT BE YOUR SPORT!

EVEN AS THE CHORUS OF CRASHING STONE TUMBLES INTO SILENCE--THE LAUGHTER PERSISTS, NOT LAUGHTER BORN OF DELIRIUM...

...HERMES CAN STILL TELL THE DIFFERENCE. IT IS REAL.

DIANA?

STOP LAUGHING!!

THE LAUGHTER DOES NOT ANSWER;
IT SIMPLY SWELLS.

FROM A CHORTLE INTO A
GUFWA. A GUFWA INTO A
BELLOW. A BELLOW INTO
A ROAR--

--A THUNDEROUS,
EARTH-SHATTERING
ROAR!

BY MY
BLOOD, CAN
THIS BE A
SIGN?

ZOUNDS! WHAT
IS HAPPENING
HERE?! MY TEMPLE--
IT DANCES AS IF
ALIVE AGAIN.

IT IS
RECONSTRUCTING
ITSELF?

YES, VERILY, IT
MUST BE! I
CAN FEEL IT!

I CAN FEEL THE
POWER OF OLYMPUS
ENVELOPING ME
ONCE AGAIN.

APOLLO, YOU
WONDERFUL, CONNIVING
RASCAL. THANK YOU,
MY BROTHER! THANK
YOU!

HERMES RAISES HIS
CADUCEUS INTO THE
SEA OF ENERGY--

--A HEATSTRUCK
MAN LOST IN
THE DESERT
CASTING HIS
DIVINING ROD
TOWARD AN
OASIS.

WITHOUT THOUGHT,
HE DRINKS DEEPLY
AND DESPERATELY
FROM THE WELL...

...BARELY NOTICING ITS
UNUSUAL TASTE.

MEANWHILE, ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY, BUT CLOSING IN FAST...

WHY HADN'T SHE FELT HIS PRESENCE IN NEW YORK?

LORD HERMES MUST HAVE HAD SOME REASON...

I PRAY THAT LORD HERMES IS NOT OFFENDED BY MY WEARING MY BATTLE ARMOR TO ANSWER HIS SUMMONS.

BUT, THERE WAS SOMETHING DISTURBING IN MENALIPPE'S TONE.

GREAT GREA!

THAT TORNADO... BLISTERING WITH UNCANNY FORCE.

THE LAST TIME I BEHELD SUCH A SIGHT WAS WHEN LORD HERMES DISCHARGED HIS POWER TO RE-BUILD BOSTON.

CAN IT BE THAT HE--?

DIANA...

I'M WAITING.

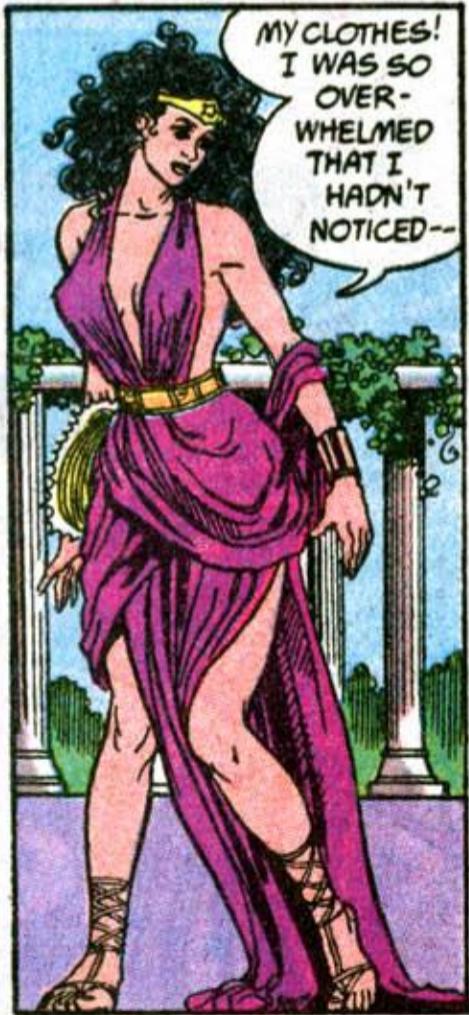
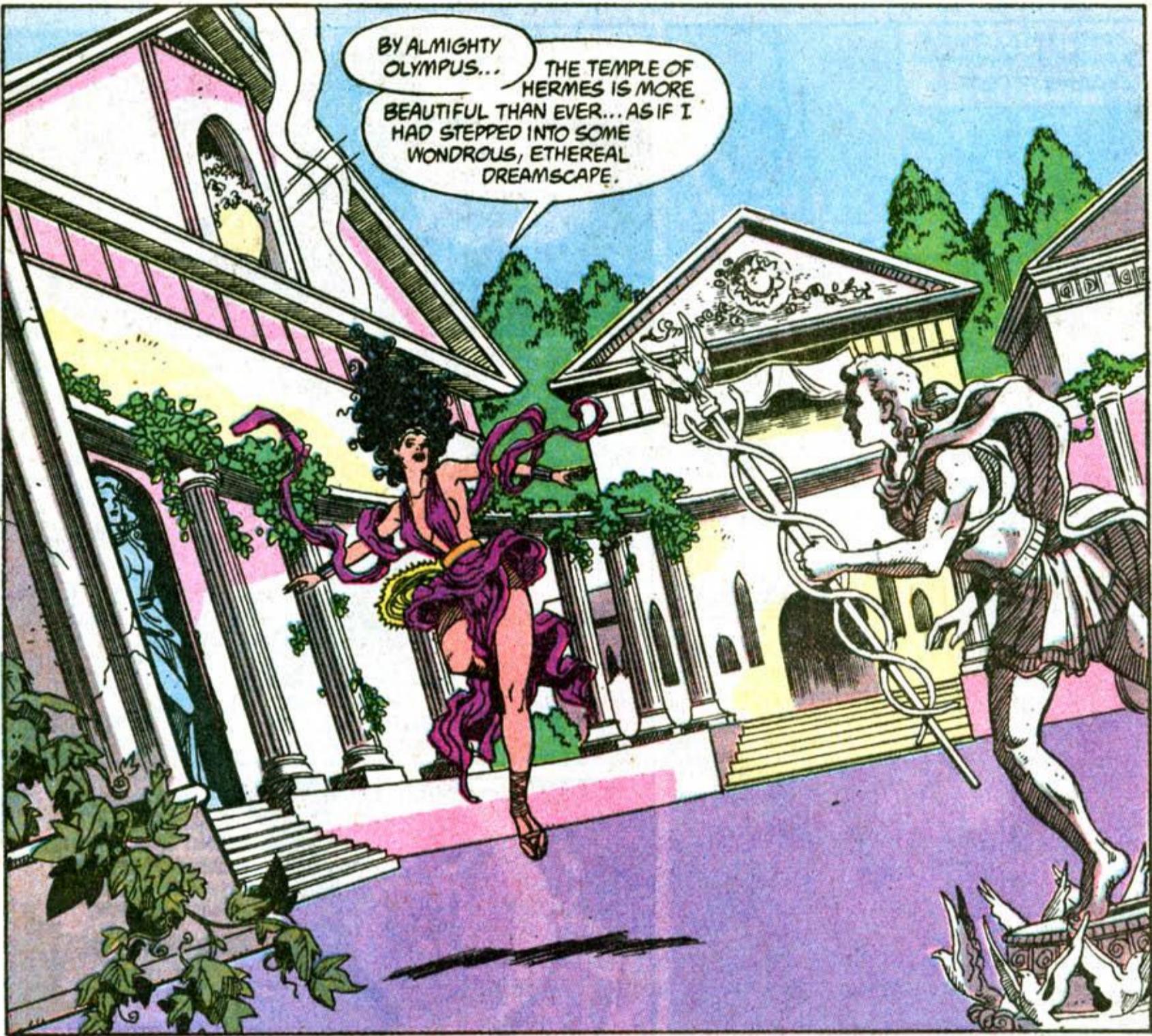
I HEAR YOU, O MIGHTY HERMES, AND I OBEY, GLADLY.

FOR IF THESE MYSTIC GALES INDICATE WHAT I PRAY... THEN TRULY, THIS IS A DAY FOR REJOICING.

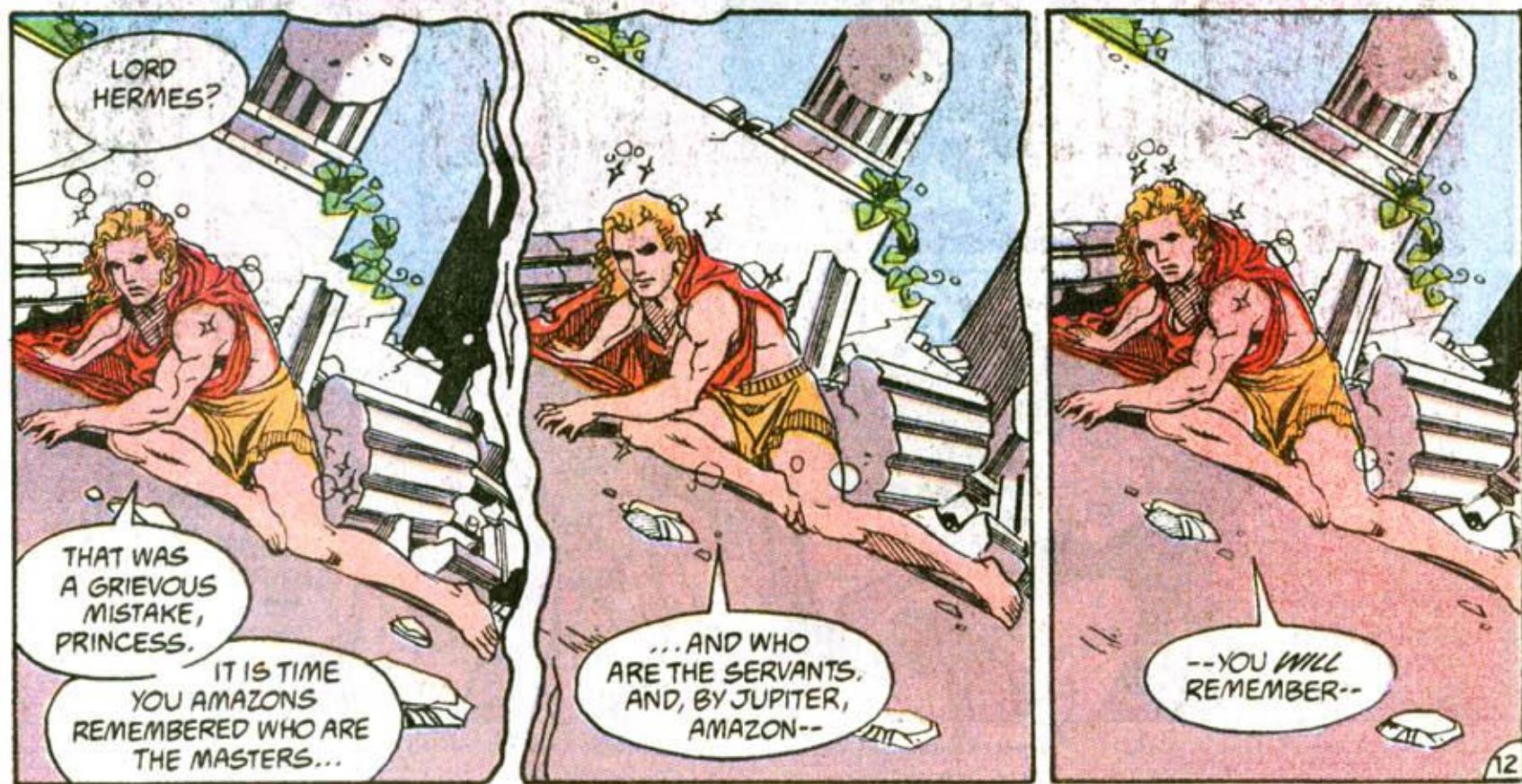
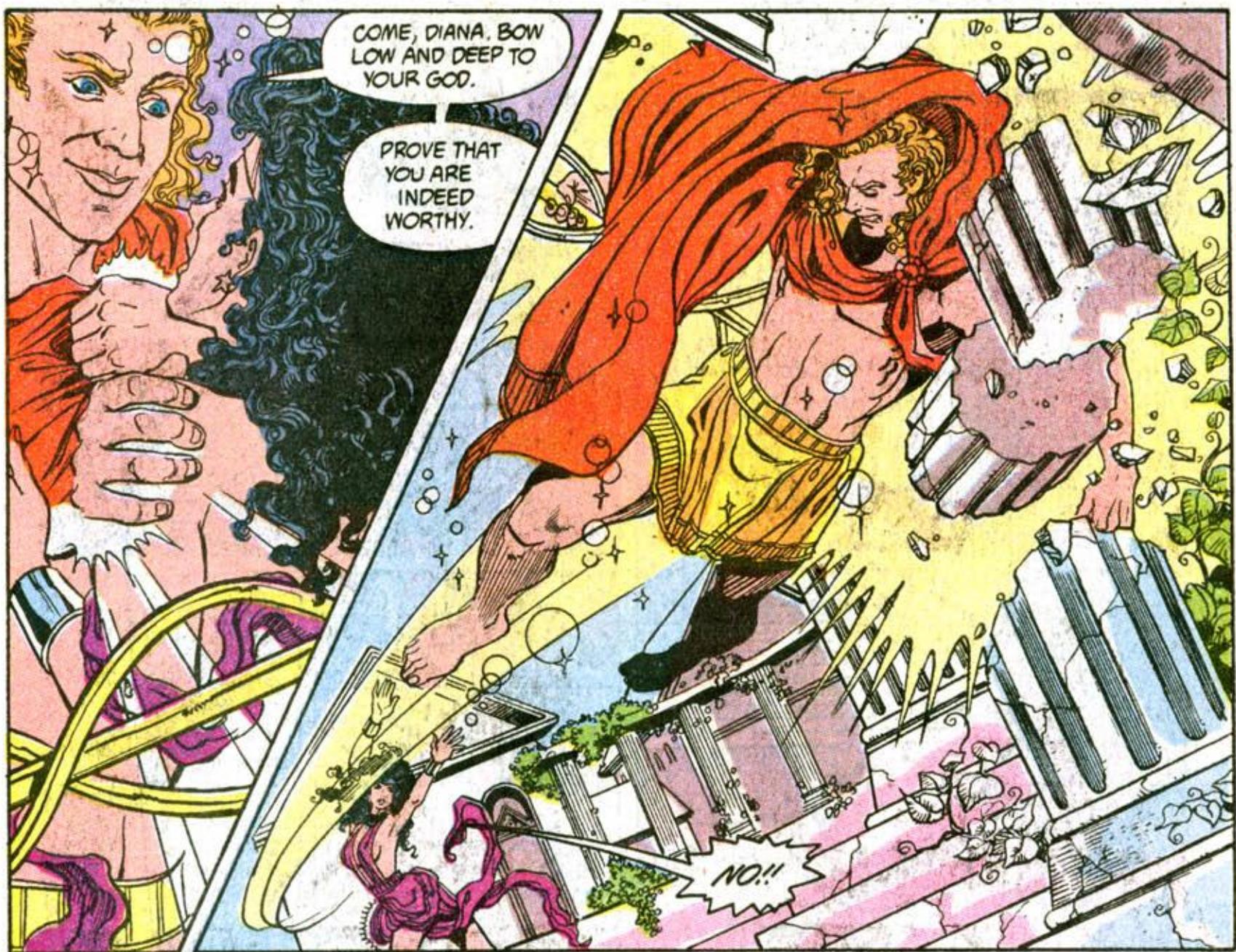
YES... REJOICING...

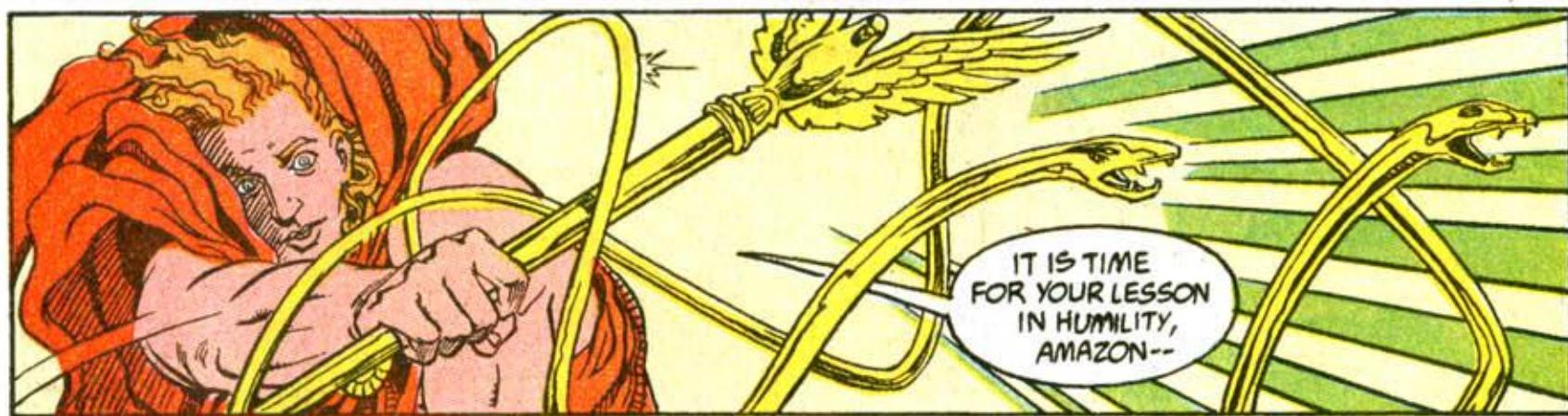
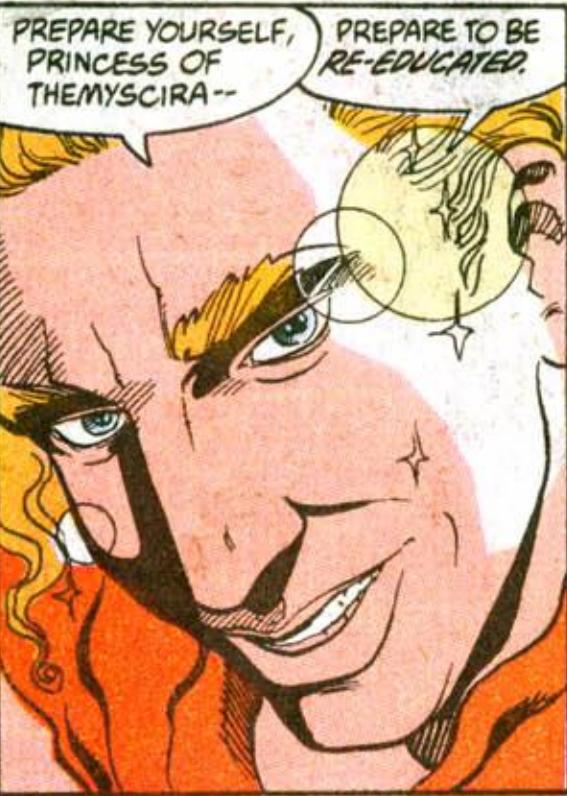
COME, DIANA... COME AND REJOICE...

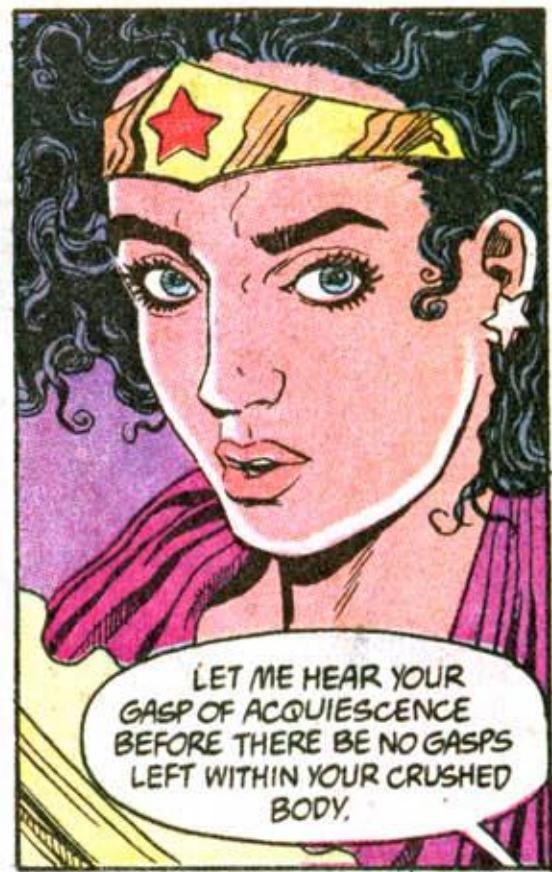
BY ALMIGHTY OLYMPUS...
THE TEMPLE OF HERMES IS MORE
BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER... AS IF I
HAD STEPPED INTO SOME
WONDROUS, ETHEREAL
DREAMSCAPE.











NO, WOMAN. I
AM BETTER!

I AM
MERCURY!

TO HAVE TILLED
A FALLOW FIELD
ALL THESE
CENTURIES?

ALTHOUGH WEAKENED, THE AMAZON
DEFLECTS THE SEARING BOLT--

THAT FOOL HERMES
DOES NOT DESERVE EVEN
TO BE MENTIONED IN THE
SAME BREATH. HE IS BUT A
MOTE IN THE EYES OF A
TRUE OLIMPION OF ROME!

DON'T YOU FEEL THE
SHAME, AMAZON?
TO WORSHIP SUCH
A DULLARD?

-- AND EVEN MERCURY
CANNOT HIDE HIS LOOK OF
GRUDGING ADMIRATION...

NOR CAN HE FAIL TO READ
THE UNSPOKEN QUESTION
IN DIANA'S EYES:

"WHERE'S
HERMES?"

AND IN THAT GLARE
DIANA SEES THAT HIS
ADMIRATION HAS
FADED TO CONTEMPT--

-- THE CONTEMPT
ONE RESERVES
FOR FOOLS--

IT IS A QUESTION
THAT MERCURY DECIDES
NOT TO ANSWER.

A SECOND ELDRITCH
PROJECTILE THROWS
MARSH SHADOWS
OVER HIS CLASSIC
FEATURES.

-- AND THAT MAKES
DIANA VERY, VERY
ANGRY.

AN INTERMINABLE SECOND OF BREATHLESS SILENCE, A GASP OF TIME. NO SOUND EXCEPT FOR DIANA'S OWN ANXIOUS HEART.

THEN, FROM OUT OF THE NOTHINGNESS--A FAMILIAR VOICE IN HER HEAD.

LORD HERMES?

BY GAEA, IT REALLY IS YOU THIS TIME.

WHERE ARE YOU?

CAN'T MAKE HIM OUT CLEARLY. AS IF HIS VOICE WERE MUFFLED BY A PILLOW...

...OR BURIED IN STONE.

YES...

I UNDERSTAND...

WHETHER BECAUSE OF THAT MUZZLED VOICE IN HER HEAD OR HER OWN INSTINCTS, DIANA KNOWS WHAT IS NEEDED...

THE BLAZING LASSO OF HESTIA, GODDESS OF THE HEARTH, WITHIN WHOSE FIRE NO LIE CAN SURVIVE.

NO MERE FAÇADE CAN STAND UP TO ITS PURIFYING FLAMES--NEITHER OF MAN...

...OR GOD.

SUCH IS THE WILL OF OLYMPUS.

CHARLATAN! YOU SHALL PAY
DEARLY FOR THIS IGNOMINY!

BY THE TIME I'VE DONE
WITH YOU, YOU SHALL BE
BEGGING FOR THE MERCY
OF TARTARUS!

OH, PLEASE, LITTLE
MAN, SPARE ME SUCH
FARCE. WAS NOT ONE
LESSON ENOUGH?

LOOK AT YOURSELF. A GOD'S
SHADOW WIELDS MORE MIGHT THAN YOU.
SURRENDER NOW, PRETENDER, AND SPARE
YOURSELF FURTHER EMBARRASSMENT.

IF YOU DO, I WILL
SEE YOU DIE PAINLESSLY.

NOT UNLESS YOU CAN DEFEAT
ME AS WELL, POMPOLIS ONE.

GOD
ORNO,
I WILL
NOT--

NO! STAY BACK!
NO HUMAN SHALL
FIGHT MY BATTLES!

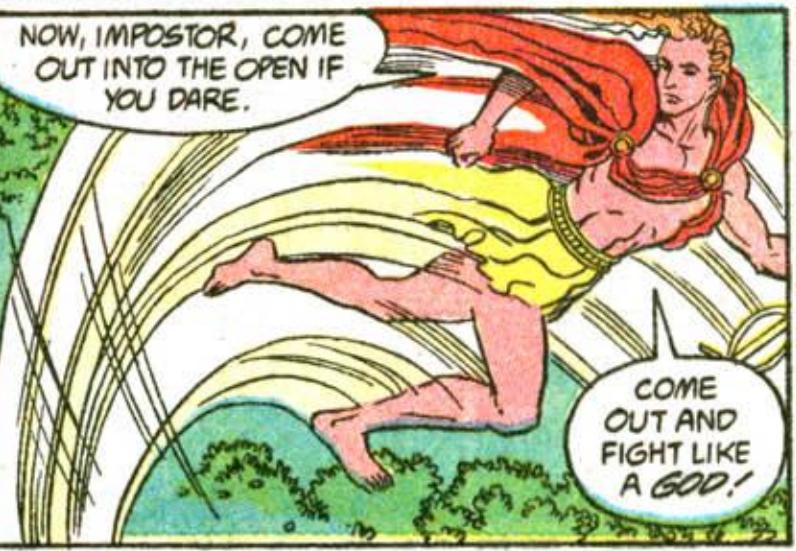
BEFORE, THIS FAKIR
BENEFITED FROM
THE ELEMENT OF
SURPRISE --

THIS TIME,
THE ADVANTAGE
WILL BE MINE!

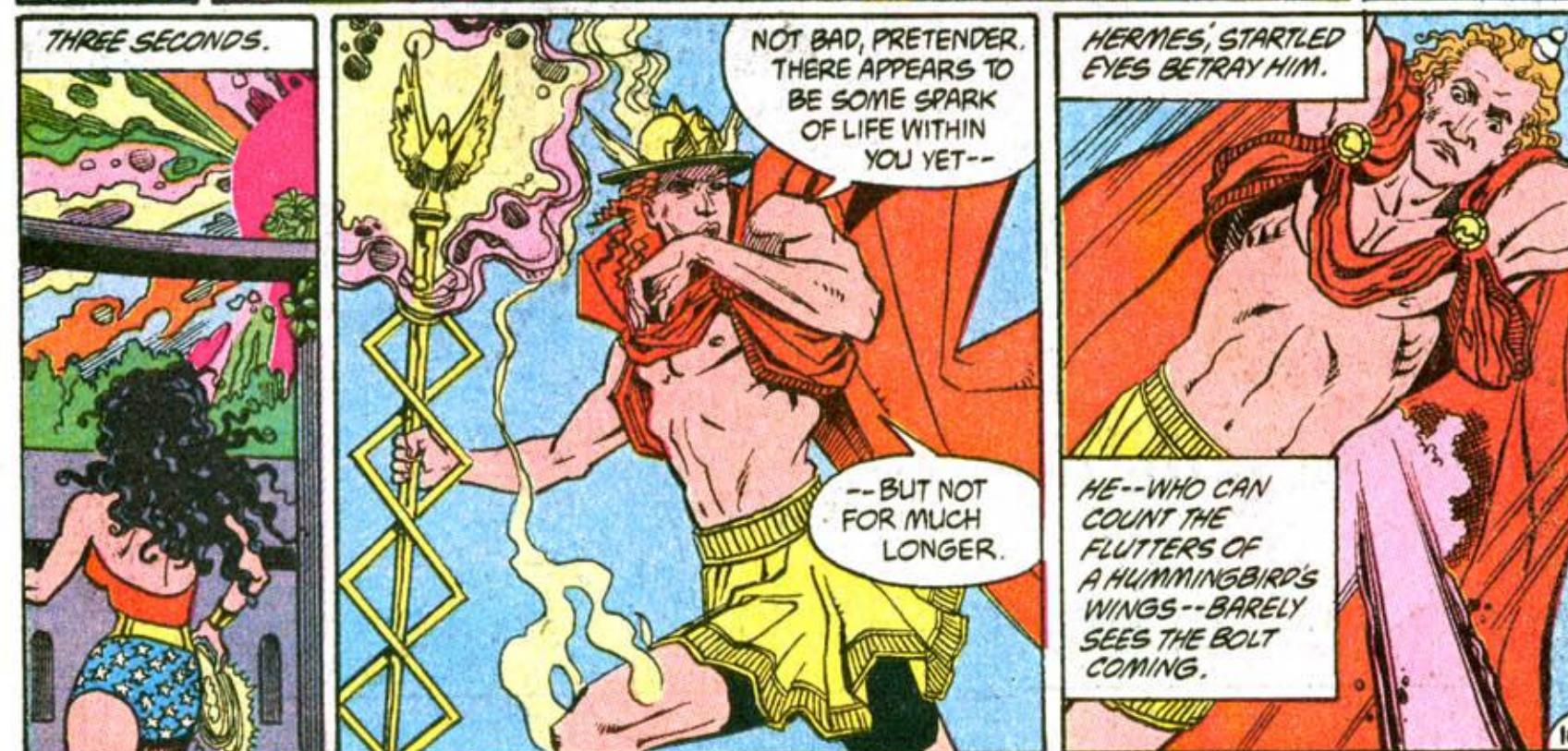
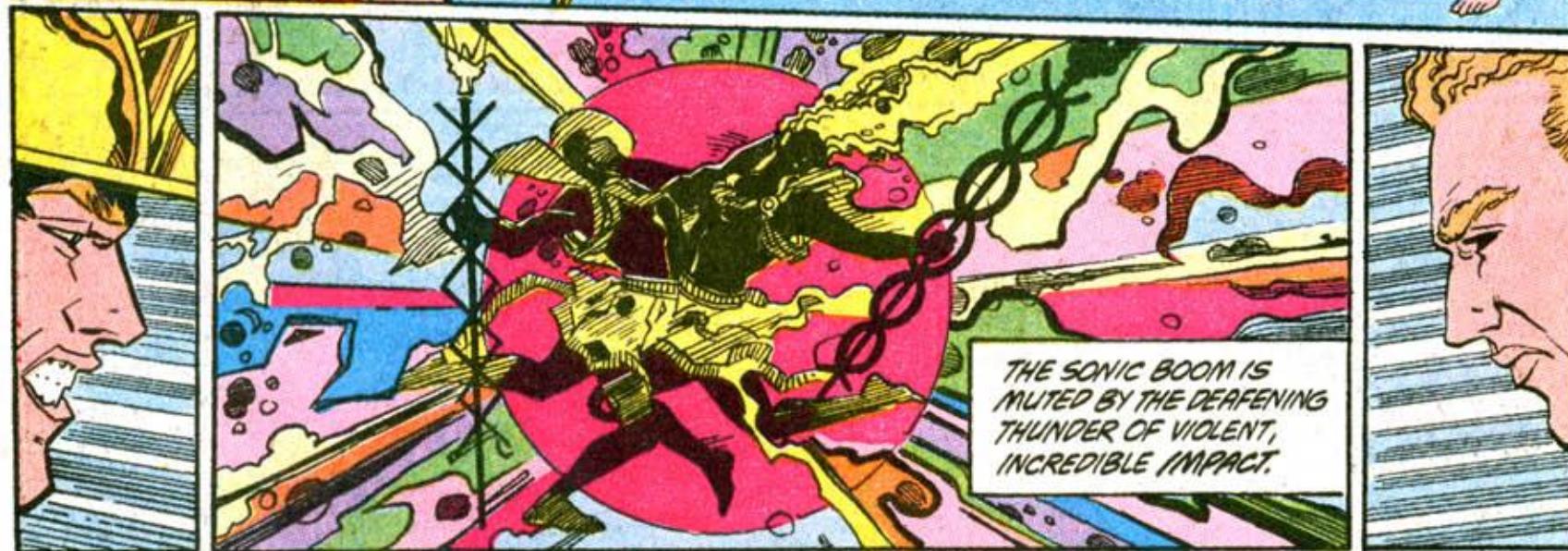
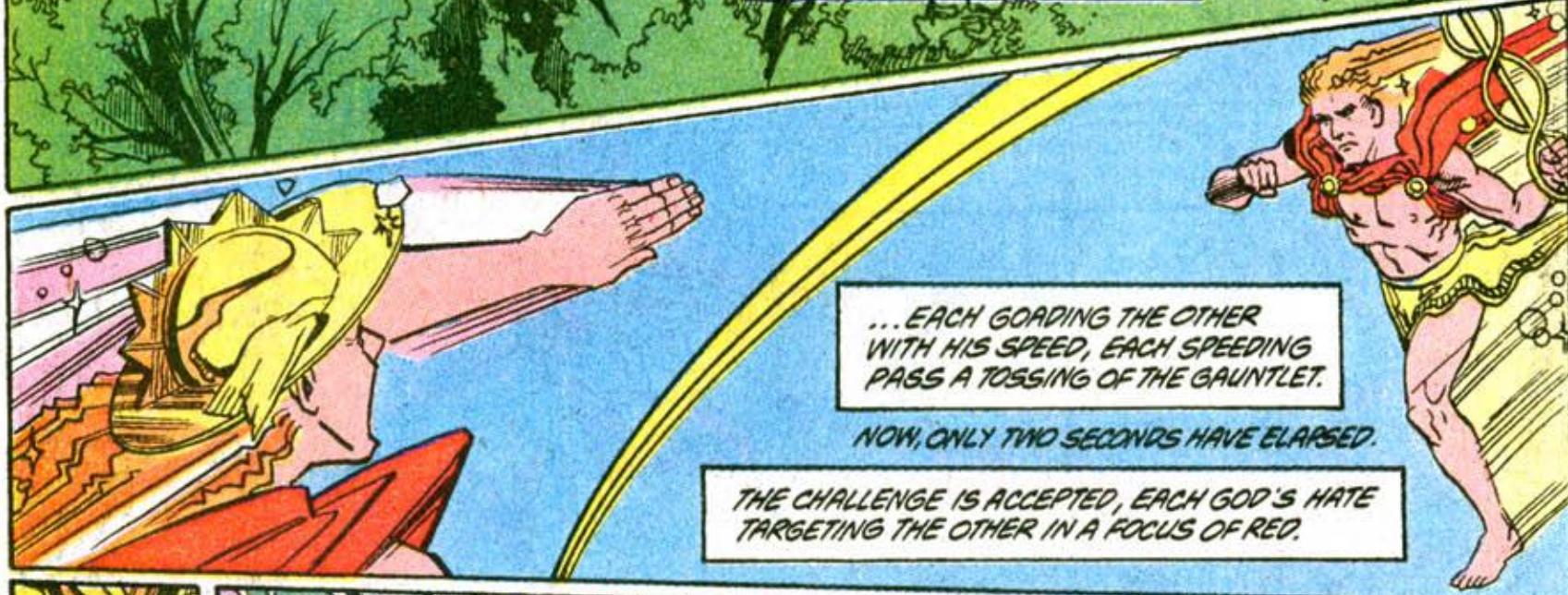


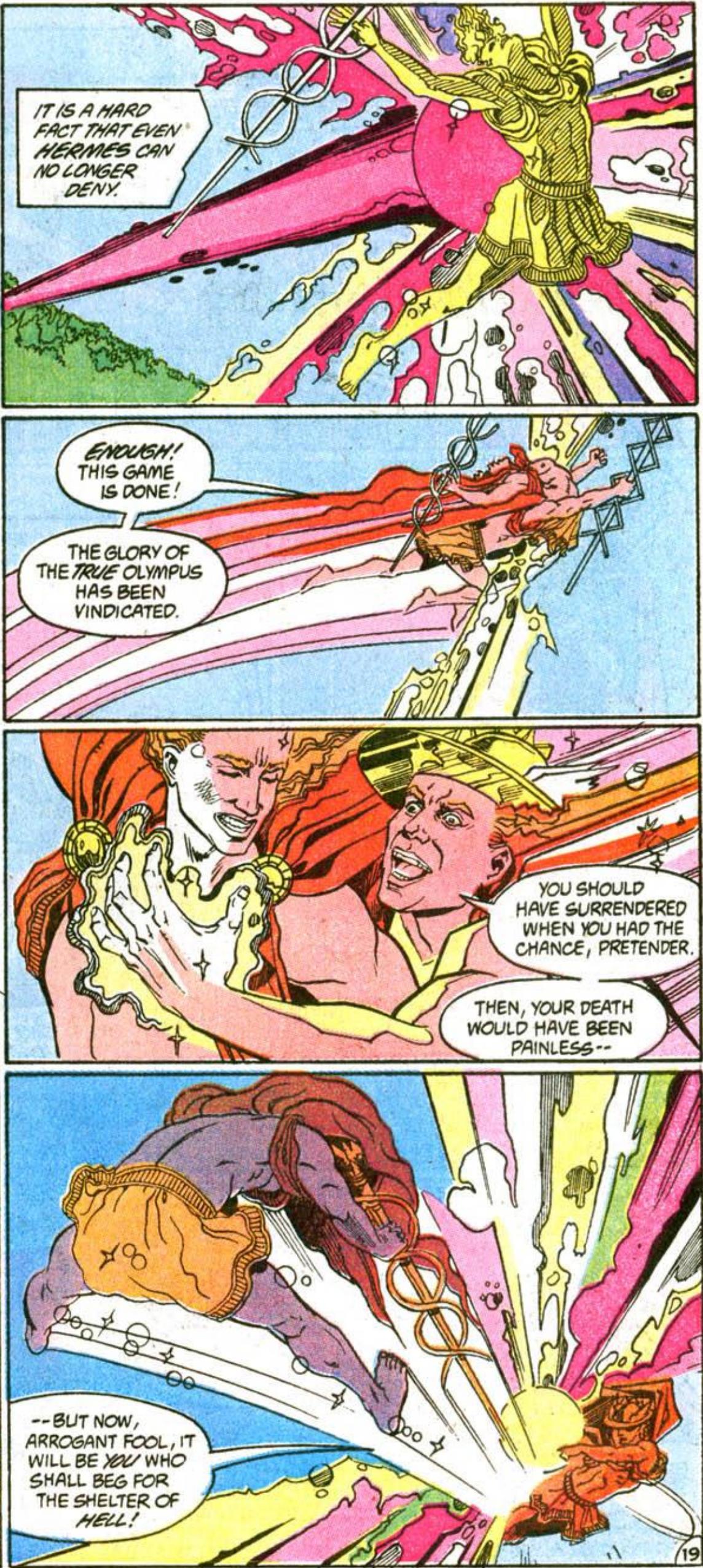
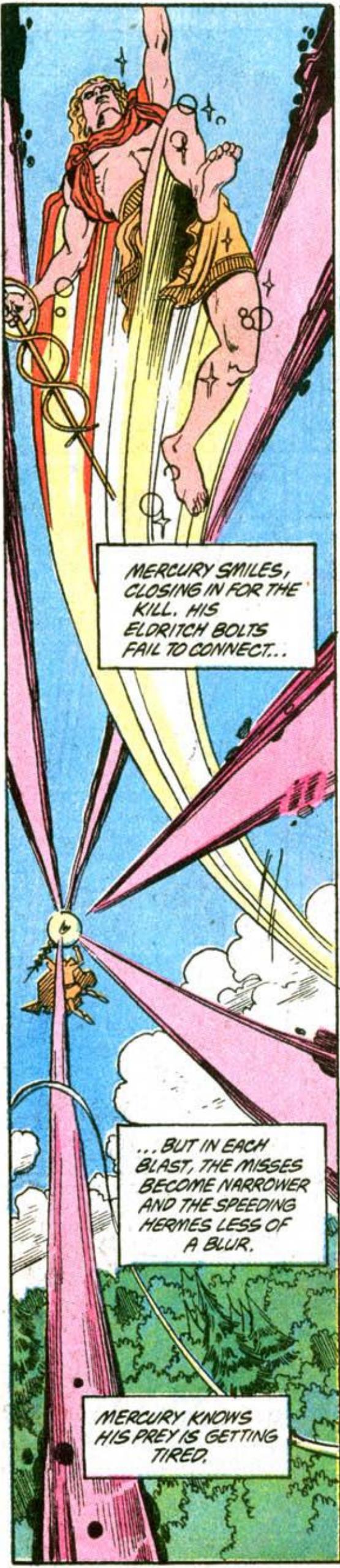
NOW, IMPOSTOR, COME
OUT INTO THE OPEN IF
YOU DARE.

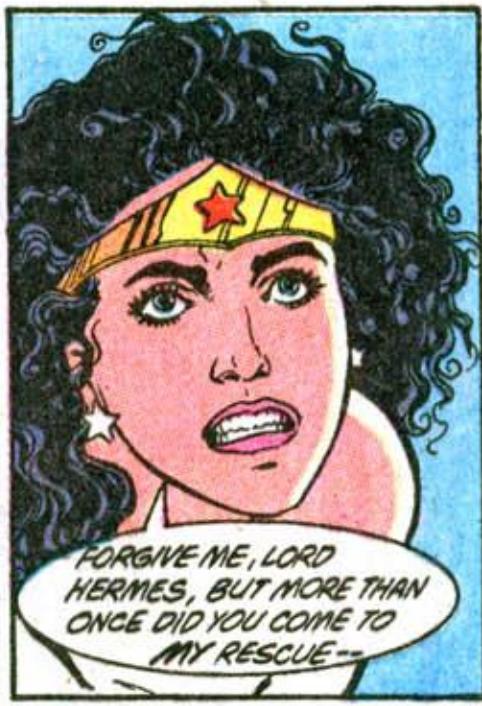
COME
OUT AND
FIGHT LIKE
A GOD!

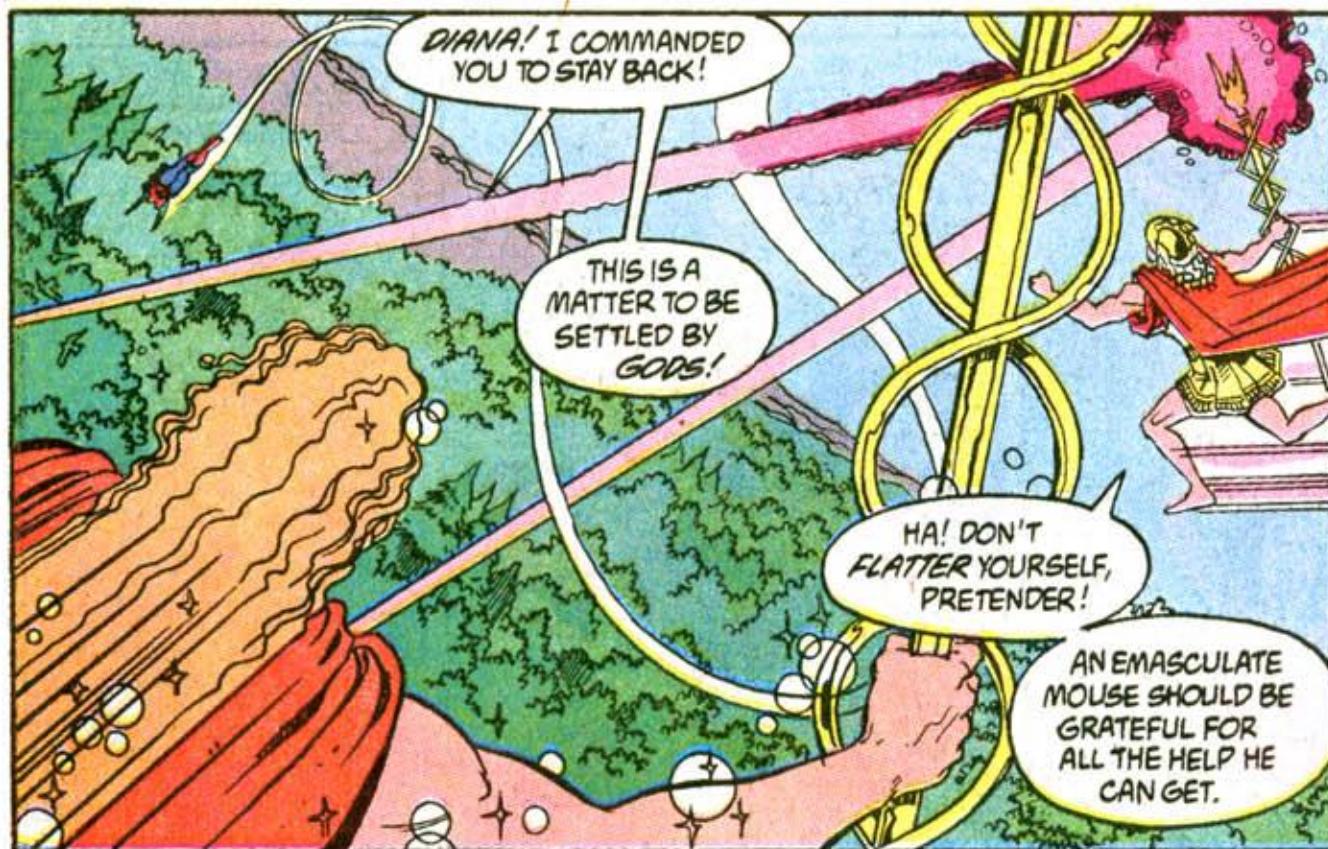


A MERE SECOND PASSES. NEW HAMPSHIRE'S PROUD WOODLAND SPIRES ARE TORN FROM THEIR ROOTS...



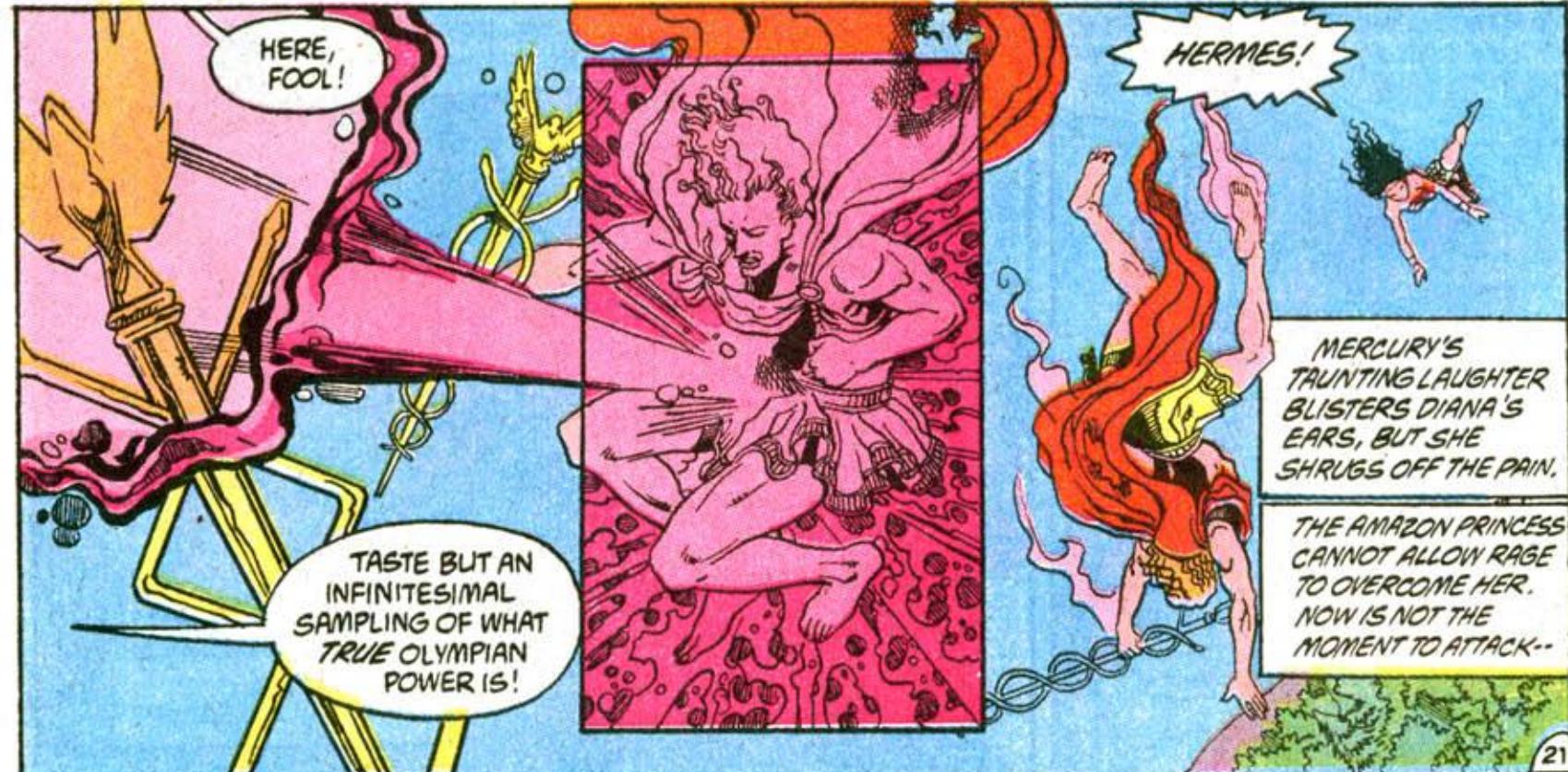






"EVEN IF SUCH AID IS SPURRED BY MIS-DIRECTED FAITH--

--OR PERHAPS MERELY PITY?"





POSTSCRIPTS TO PARADISE



Dear Karen,

Diana and Troia together again for the first time!! Amazing! Mr. Pérez has done an absolutely brilliant job in answering one of the most pressing questions about the post-Crisis DC Universe, that of Princess Diana's relationship with (to?) Donna (Troy) Long. Wonderful! And to think that issue #47 is just the first part of the story.

Last year, Mr. Pérez visited JC's Comic Stop in Toledo, Ohio (my home town) and while he was there, he gave the public its first look at the revamped Donna Long-Troia. Mr. Pérez also alluded to Donna's becoming very close to Diana, and I awaited this event with bated breath, anticipating yet another great renovation of the DC Universe. Mr. Pérez has very graciously answered all of my hopes and wishes for a successful "reunion" between two of DC's strongest characters.

Of course, Mr. Pérez had help from the very talented Jill Thompson. When Mr. Pérez ceased illustrating this title, I was skeptical that any other artist (short of Arthur Adams) could keep this title looking great. Chris Marrinan certainly gave 100% effort, but he's no George Pérez. When I learned that Mr. Marrinan was leaving this title, I feared that it would be tossed into turmoil as a frantic search was conducted for a new artist, but I was wrong, as Jill Thompson stepped in and delivered stunning artwork on the Pandora story in issue #45. Now this. I thank you for producing such a grand title.

Just two questions before I close: Is the Cheetah somehow connected to Scourge and Circe? And what about the Hyena from the now classic Firestorm series?

Gaea be with you,
Douglas Zawisza
7627 Bingham
Dearborn, MI 48126

The Cheetah isn't obviously connected to Scourge and Circe, Douglas, though they do have something in common that will be revealed in a major future storyline. No plans for Hyena, though.

Dear Karen,

It's interesting to note how much comics have changed within the past 10-20 years. In WONDER WOMAN #47 we saw Diana and Donna finally meet and refreshingly they don't battle each other, they sit down and have a cup of tea. No knockdown fights or slugfests even though each woman knows of the other. Nor any of the other clichés that occur in today's gritty and "realistic" comics.

Of course the peace and quiet doesn't last. Hey, if there's to be a story told, some form of conflict has to exist. It's just nice that this time we don't see the good guys (?) gals going for each

other's throat. There is enough throat-clawing action coming from Circe's band of beasts.

The art by Jill Thompson and Romeo Tanghal was well done, with all of the elements of the story cooking. They allowed the reader to see how a common ground existed for Diana and Donna's meeting, while carefully pacing the story. One good point worth mentioning is that though the two first meet while in uniform, when they are seen talking on page 20 they're wearing more ordinary looking clothes. It reinforced the feeling that we had two *people* meeting, not two *characters*.

Considering the high number of text boxes used in the first three pages (and in many of the flashback scenes), John Costanza did a wonderful job of getting the words across to the reader and not in the way of the art. Also Julianna Ferriter shaded the dreams and flashbacks just right to give them a different look from the real-time story.

Gleeps! Four years of this version of Wonder Woman already? Four years of consistent goodness and direction. I can't wait to see what George Pérez has planned for his fifth year with the Amazin' Amazon, not to mention what DC must have planned for Wonder Woman's 50th issue. Any hints, Karen?

Sincerely yours,
Hurricane Heeran
15908 Sherman Way #5
Van Nuys, CA 91406

It's still a little too early to reveal our plans, Hurricane, but we guarantee that you won't be disappointed by them.

Dear Wonder-People:

Believe it or not, WONDER WOMAN #47 was the first issue I've read of the new Wonder Woman. In fact, the last time I'd read Wonder Woman solo was long before the CRISIS—in the issues that reintroduced Animal Man. I bought this issue exclusively for the appearance of Troia.

Well, guess what. I was impressed. Impressed enough to stay with WW after the crossover is over.

To me, the old Wonder Woman was, for the most part, a militant feminist. While there's nothing wrong with fighting for what you believe in, I felt like she took it to extremes.

Not so with the new version. She seems like an ambassador from another nation. While her views are different from ours, she would rather debate them intelligently than beat you over the head with them.

I'm probably missing a lot due to not having read what came before. In fact, I know I didn't understand some of the subplots. But seeing as there's a convention in town this weekend, I think I can

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remedy that rather quickly.

So congratulations! You've done what I thought nobody could do—you've made me a Wonder Woman fan! Keep up the great work!

Julio Diaz
8713 Linda Court
Tampa, FL 33604

Dear Karen:

Issue #47 was so good that I just had to write, but as I sat down just now to do so, I was stunned to realize that this is the first letter I have written to WW, despite the amount of pleasure the title has given me over the past few years. I guess that I, like many others, do not often enough express my appreciation. Let me remedy that now: Thank you, George, Chris, Mindy, Karen, and company for so many great issues.

I'm sure that I am not going to be the only one to thank you for finally bringing together Diana and Donna, or to encourage you to keep having the characters meet. Diana and Diana share so many bonds that it is only natural they should be friends. Please, let's see both characters in each other's titles, both as guest stars and just being social. Diana might show up at a Titans party as Donna's invited guest (I'm sure she and Starfire could find things to talk about), or might take in a movie with Donna and Terry, or whatever. For that matter, given the commonalities between the Themyscians (heirs of the Greek gods) and Donna (heir to the power of the Titans) and Terry (a scholar of the classical world), a visit to Paradise Island might be in order in NEW TITANS. Please consider.

This story was a good choice for bringing Troia and Princess Diana together, as it flowed naturally from both characters' past adventures. Somehow, it escaped me at the time that the beastmen fought by the Titans might be related to Circe's minions, but the possibility that Circe's magic might be involved goes a long way toward explaining how the "Terminator plague" could be so resistant to Raven's powers. This story has the potential to be good as Circe's last appearance. Even if Circe does not herself show up this time, please bring her back soon; she's an awesome foe, worthy of Diana.

Regarding the upcoming #50, I (like most other readers, I'm sure) have an idea to offer. It seems that whenever a Batman or Superman anniversary comes around, we are treated to pinups or other art from the greats in the field. I think that Wonder Woman deserves the same honors, and the very idea of a WW pinup section, or separate portfolio, by the likes of John Bolton, Steve Bissette, Howard Chaykin, Frank Miller, Bill Sienkiewicz, Dave Gibbons, Walt Simonson, Joe Kubert, Barry Windsor-Smith, Gil Kane, and Tim Truman

takes my breath away. It's one way of properly honoring a character of Wonder Woman's importance. Please think about it.

While on the topic of art, let me express my love for Jill Thompson's pencils. Chris Marrinan seemed to be trying hard, but I never felt that his style fit the book. It seemed to me that he carried the action scenes much better than he did the quiet, subtle interpersonal scenes that didn't involve fighting and blowing things up; that can be a problem in this comic, where so much of what happens is human drama, not super-heroics. Jill's style is more balanced; she can draw both exciting fight scenes and revealing scenes with characters talking like real people. She has a particular gift for panel layout and facial expression (page 17 worked especially well for me). I want to wish Jill a long, happy stay on this title, and hope to see her work elsewhere in the future.

As a final note, let me join the ranks of those who want to see at least some of the older WW villains return. I could live forever without a new Angle Man, but a redone Dr. Cyber has possibilities, and a new Dr. Psycho is a must. Your handling of Silver Swan convinces me that you could do justice to the psychological ramifications of Dr. Psycho's personality and body-changing. I think that the readers really want to see both of the diabolical Doctors to return. Again, think about it.

Thanks again to everyone involved for doing such a good comic and for making Wonder Woman the character she has always deserved to be.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Wayne Kramer
3804 N. Ann Arbor, #8
Oklahoma City, OK 73122

Our portfolio section in WONDER WOMAN #50 featured a different line-up than you suggested, Jeffrey. In celebration of Diana's 50th issue we decided to ask primarily women artists, and artists who don't usually contribute to portfolio collections. We were really happy with everyone's illustrations, and we hope you were, too.

Dear Karen,

I feel moved enough by "Common Ground" in WONDER WOMAN #47 to write and welcome George Pérez back to the book full-time. His storytelling ability has vastly improved since the last time I wrote to WONDER WOMAN.

Although I don't want to discount Mindy Newell's involvement in the book, and I have really enjoyed her dialogue, there has been something missing from WONDER WOMAN since she's been writing it. There was something *too low-key* and undramatic about her writing in an ongoing title. Her writing is too much like real life for every single issue of a super-hero comic, although occasionally plots have fit her style. With Mindy writing, Julia and Vanessa have been more like real people, and if they got their own DC title, Mindy would be perfect for it. (Actually, Julia and Vanessa getting their own comic isn't a bad idea. Why hasn't Vanessa's therapist thought of that? If Wonder Woman left Vanessa's life, we wouldn't see Julia and Vanessa again, because it's Wonder Woman's title. But if they had their own magazine...okay, you're right. There *is* a fourth wall there.).

George just does a better job of handling super-heroics. That's about it.

Another thing that has improved is the

art. I had a lot of trouble with Chris Marrinan's style, directly after George stopped pencilling the interior. George was just too hard an act to follow. His way of drawing Paradise Island and Olympus was too grand, too epic. He's done CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS and HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE with no apparent problems. Compared to that, Chris' style was too low-key. It wasn't formal enough. The only artist who could have readily filled George's shoes would have been somebody like Esteban Maroto.

Jill Thompson isn't George Pérez, either, but her pencilling fits the grand mythology of WONDER WOMAN more.

Along with the changes in storytellers and artists, there has to be a change in the title as a whole as well. WONDER WOMAN has been in a holding pattern for too long. Except for the appearance of Troia and the personal changes in the characters, it seems "Common Ground" could have taken place any time in the history of Wonder Woman. WONDER WOMAN is in need of some very dramatic changes to get it out of the rut it's in. Forty-six months ago it was a fresh and exciting comic, but it has remained in the same surroundings for too long. I like the mythology very much, but WONDER WOMAN needs to break from Paradise Island and Olympus, and put Diana through changes and growth in the real world. Or at least say something new about Paradise Island (having the delegation visit Paradise Island some issues ago didn't really offer a newer perspective). With #47 change is in the air. Troia has finally met Diana. But there needs to be something beyond this, some sense of direction in the plotting—as if WONDER WOMAN has a destination.

Within the last three months, you have retold some mythology—and that I had hoped for since issue #1; had some dramatic effects on the characters—dealing realistically with death and how it affects adolescents; and now you are changing Diana's personal life with the introduction of Troia. I've probably

enjoyed these three more than the last 20 issues together.

I am wondering what the solution to Julia, Vanessa, and Diana's dilemma will be. Once of the solutions I've considered, while I'm not advocating the return of regular super-villains (which seems to be a common subject), is giving Diana a secret identity. I'm not sure how realistically that could be dealt with—but that's your job and not mine. A different, more immediate idea for Julia would be switching to a woman therapist. Not that men are any worse, for *men*, that is. For at the same time there is gender equality, there are definitely cultural differences that the other sex cannot assume through training or education—or even cross-dressing, for that matter.

I hope that you would consider a comic book possibly for women, but especially about women and by women—and without an overtly cartoonish style, so that it's still attractive to the mainstream. You could start with "Superman's Woman Friend, Lois Lane." There are two reasons this occurs to me, other than the parenthetical thought earlier in this letter: I can see a need for Mindy Newell to continue writing in the style that she uses well, and, personally, I have always been curious about a gender that can't understand the humor of the Three Stooges (that's probably sexist, 'cause there probably are women who do understand and like the Three Stooges. But I've never met them. Besides, I really don't think that's an insult).

And Dave Sim has already proven that a critically successful, valid comics story can have a non-superheroic woman as a main character. Just look at the results of the CBG poll.

Sincerely,
Thom Lake
2410 Colusa Street
Pinole, CA 94584

NEXT: "Shards"—the personal troubles of those close to Diana. But is there anything she can even do to help? See you then—Karen

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