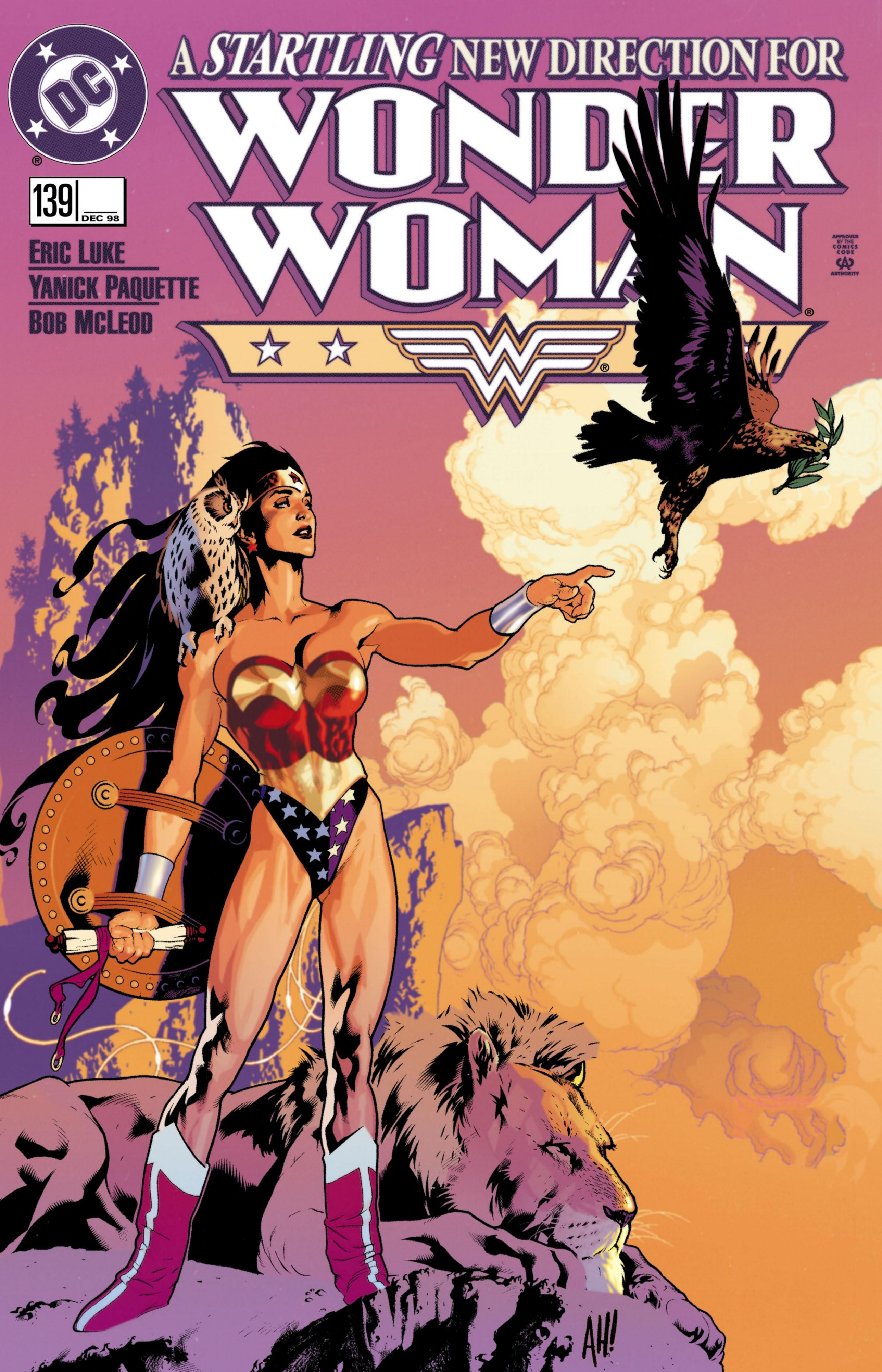
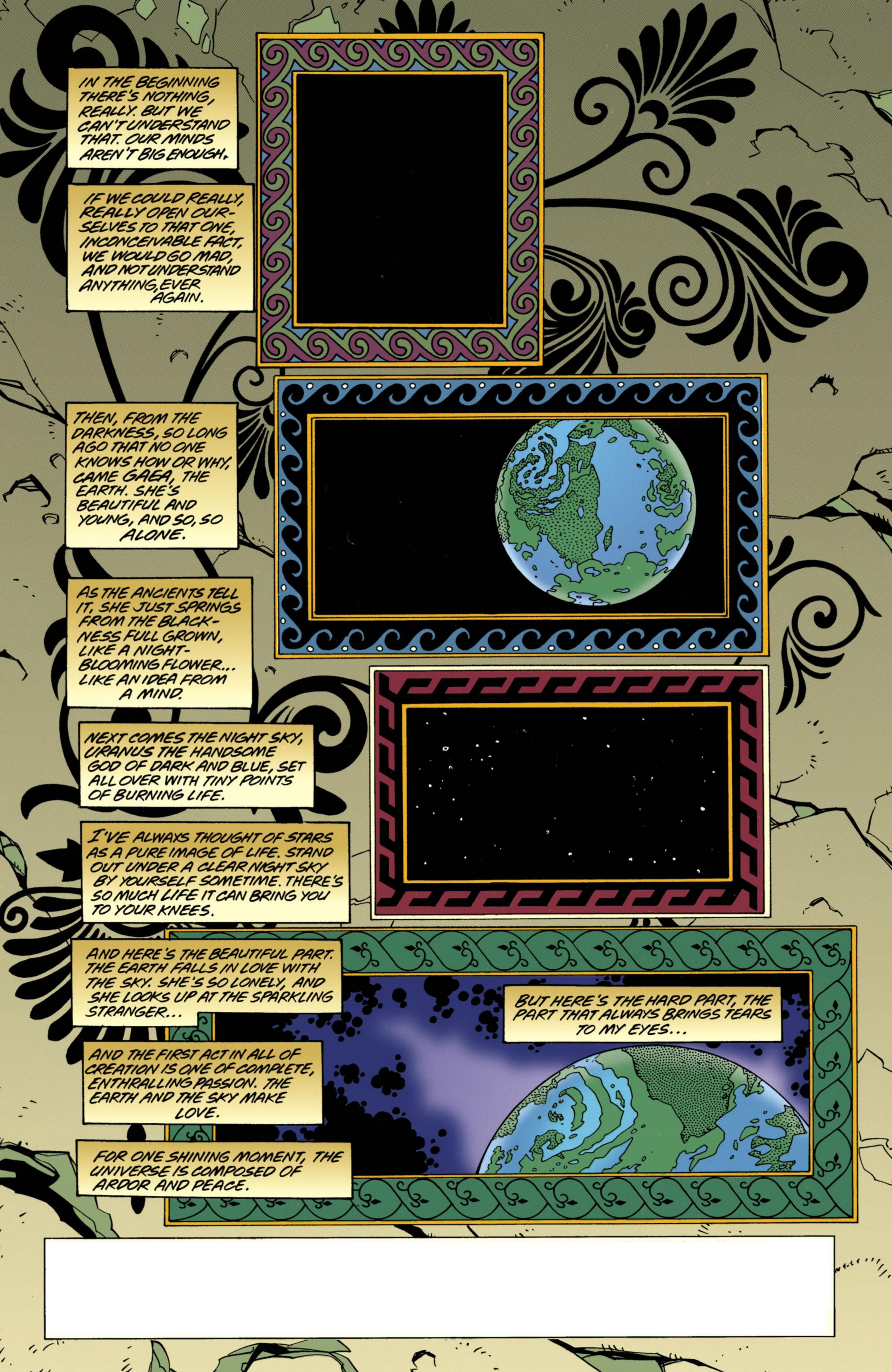
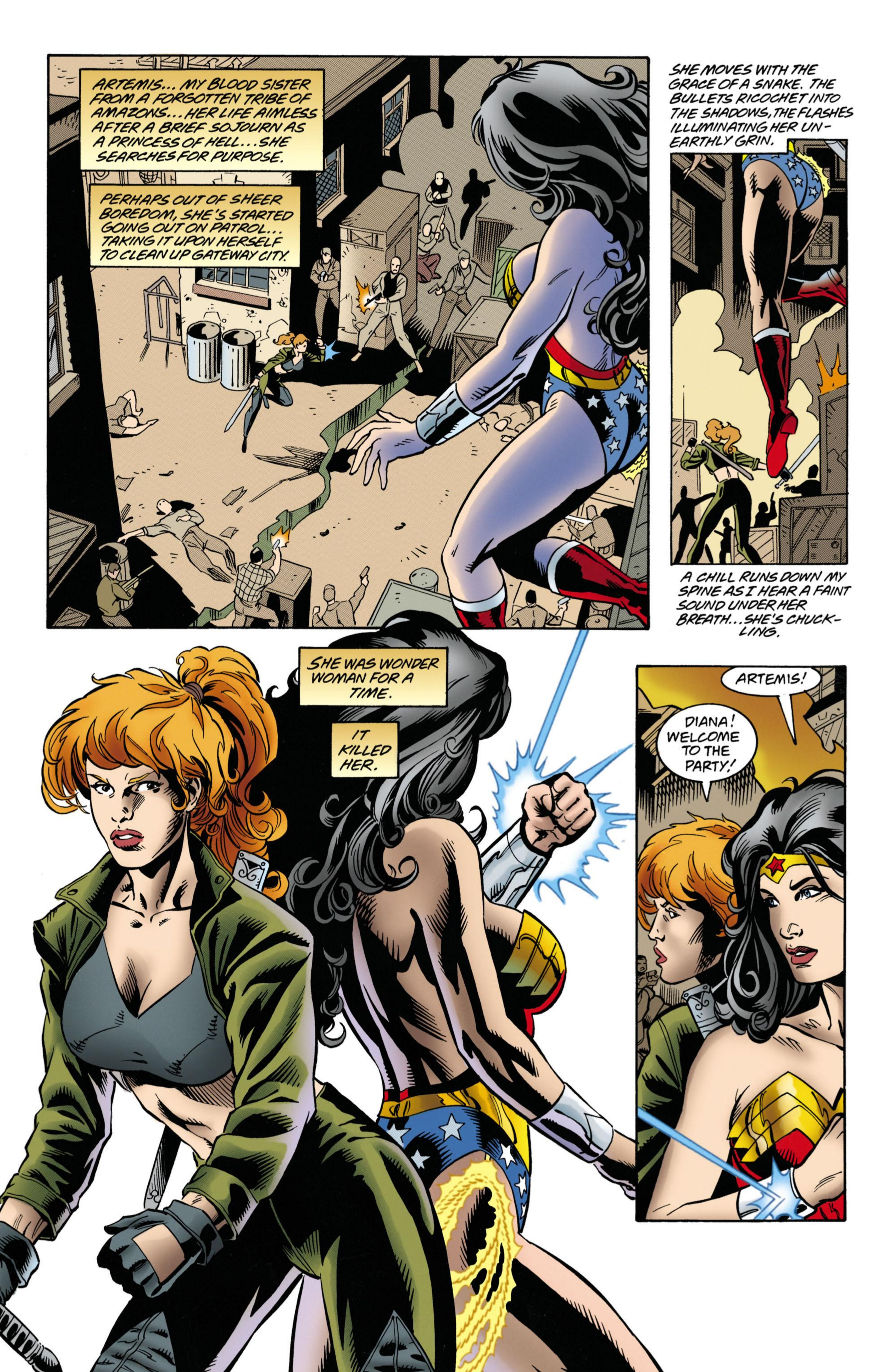

A STARTLING NEW DIRECTION FOR
WONDER WOMAN
139
DEC 98
ERIC LUKE
YANICK PAQUETTE
BOB MCLEOD
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
AH!

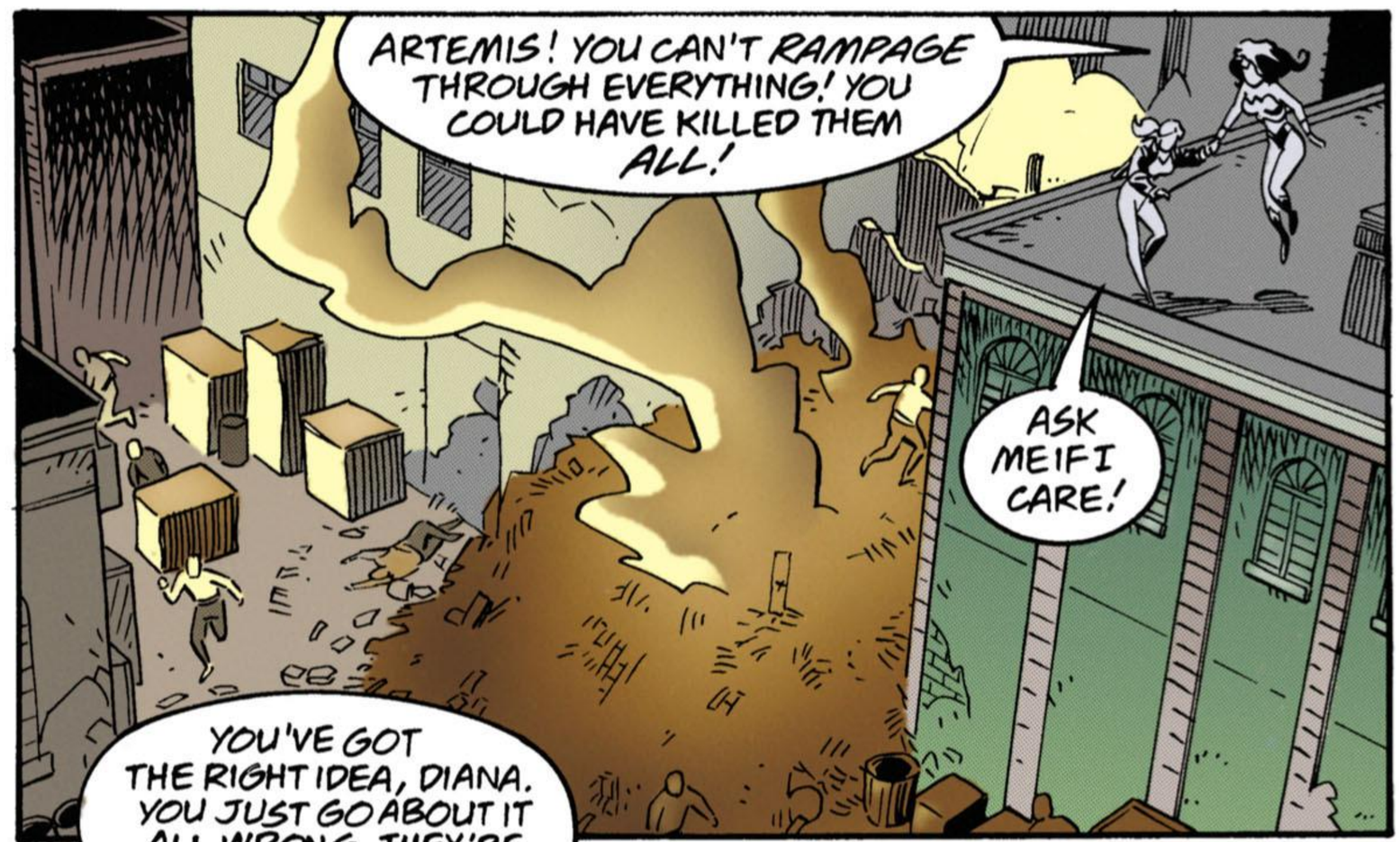

IN THE BEGINNING THERE'S NOTHING, REALLY. BUT WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND THAT. OUR MINDS AREN'T BIG ENOUGH.
IF WE COULD REALLY, REALLY OPEN OURSELVES TO THAT ONE, INCONCEIVABLE FACT, WE WOULD GO MAD, AND NOT UNDERSTAND ANYTHING, EVER AGAIN.
THEN, FROM THE DARKNESS, SO LONG AGO THAT NO ONE KNOWS HOW OR WHY, CAME GAEA, THE EARTH. SHE'S BEAUTIFUL AND YOUNG, AND SO, SO ALONE.
AS THE ANCIENTS TELL IT, SHE JUST SPRINGS FROM THE BLACKNESS FULL GROWN, LIKE A NIGHT-BLOOMING FLOWER... LIKE AN IDEA FROM A MIND.
NEXT COMES THE NIGHT SKY, URANUS THE HANDSOME GOD OF DARK AND BLUE, SET ALL OVER WITH TINY POINTS OF BURNING LIFE.
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF STARS AS A PURE IMAGE OF LIFE. STAND OUT UNDER A CLEAR NIGHT SKY BY YOURSELF SOMETIME. THERE'S SO MUCH LIFE IT CAN BRING YOU TO YOUR KNEES.
AND HERE'S THE BEAUTIFUL PART. THE EARTH FALLS IN LOVE WITH THE SKY. SHE'S SO LONELY, AND SHE LOOKS UP AT THE SPARKLING STRANGER...
AND THE FIRST ACT IN ALL OF CREATION IS ONE OF COMPLETE, ENTHRALLING PASSION. THE EARTH AND THE SKY MAKE LOVE.
FOR ONE SHINING MOMENT, THE UNIVERSE IS COMPOSED OF ARDOR AND PEACE.
BUT HERE'S THE HARD PART, THE PART THAT ALWAYS BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES...

THEY GIVE BIRTH TO MONSTERS.
BLAM!
THIS IS THE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT OF GATEWAY CITY. DOWN BY THE DOCKS. SINCE I'VE BEEN BACK, THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE SEEN MORE BLOOD-SHED THAN THE PAST TWO YEARS COMBINED.
THE CITY IS UNEASY. THERE'S SOMETHING EATING AT IT FROM THE INSIDE. SOMETHING SICK STRUGGLING TO GET OUT.
FORGAS TAURUS MADE IN BRAZIL
BLAM! BLAM!
THERE ARE THOSE WHO PROTECT THE CITY. BUT WHAT CAN ONE WOMAN DO... WHEN THE GODS HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO MONSTERS?
GODS and MONSTERS
INTRODUCING THE AMAZING AMAZON'S NEW CREATIVE TEAM
ERIC LUKE • WRITER
YANICK PAQUETTE • PENCILLER
BOB McLEOD • INKER
JOHN COSTANZA • LETTERER
PATRICIA MULVIHILL • COLORIST
L.A. WILLIAMS • ASSISTANT EDITOR
PAUL KUPPERBERG • EDITOR
Wonder Woman
CREATED BY
WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON


ARTEMIS... MY BLOOD SISTER FROM A FORGOTTEN TRIBE OF AMAZONS... HER LIFE AIMLESS AFTER A BRIEF SOJOURN AS A PRINCESS OF HELL... SHE SEARCHES FOR PURPOSE.
PERHAPS OUT OF SHEER BOREDOM, SHE'S STARTED GOING OUT ON PATROL... TAKING IT UPON HERSELF TO CLEAN UP GATEWAY CITY.
SHE MOVES WITH THE GRACE OF A SNAKE. THE BULLETS RICOCHET INTO THE SHADOWS, THE FLASHES ILLUMINATING HER UN-EARTHLY GRIN.
A CHILL RUNS DOWN MY SPINE AS I HEAR A FAINT SOUND UNDER HER BREATH... SHE'S CHUCK-LING.
SHE WAS WONDER WOMAN FOR A TIME.
IT KILLED HER.
ARTEMIS!
DIANA! WELCOME TO THE PARTY!

STOP THIS BLOODSHED NOW!
THEY WON'T LISTEN.
YOU'RE HISTORY, WHELAN! YOU'RE A BLOODY SMEAR ON THE SIDEWALK!
THEIR FACES, LIKE DOGS, CRAVING TO DEVOUR THEIR ENEMIES.
AND YOU'RE DEAD, CONNOLY! I'M PUTTING A BULLET IN YOUR EYE!
IF THE CHILDREN WON'T PLAY NICE...
WHAM! C-C-CRACK!
...TAKE AWAY THEIR TOYS!

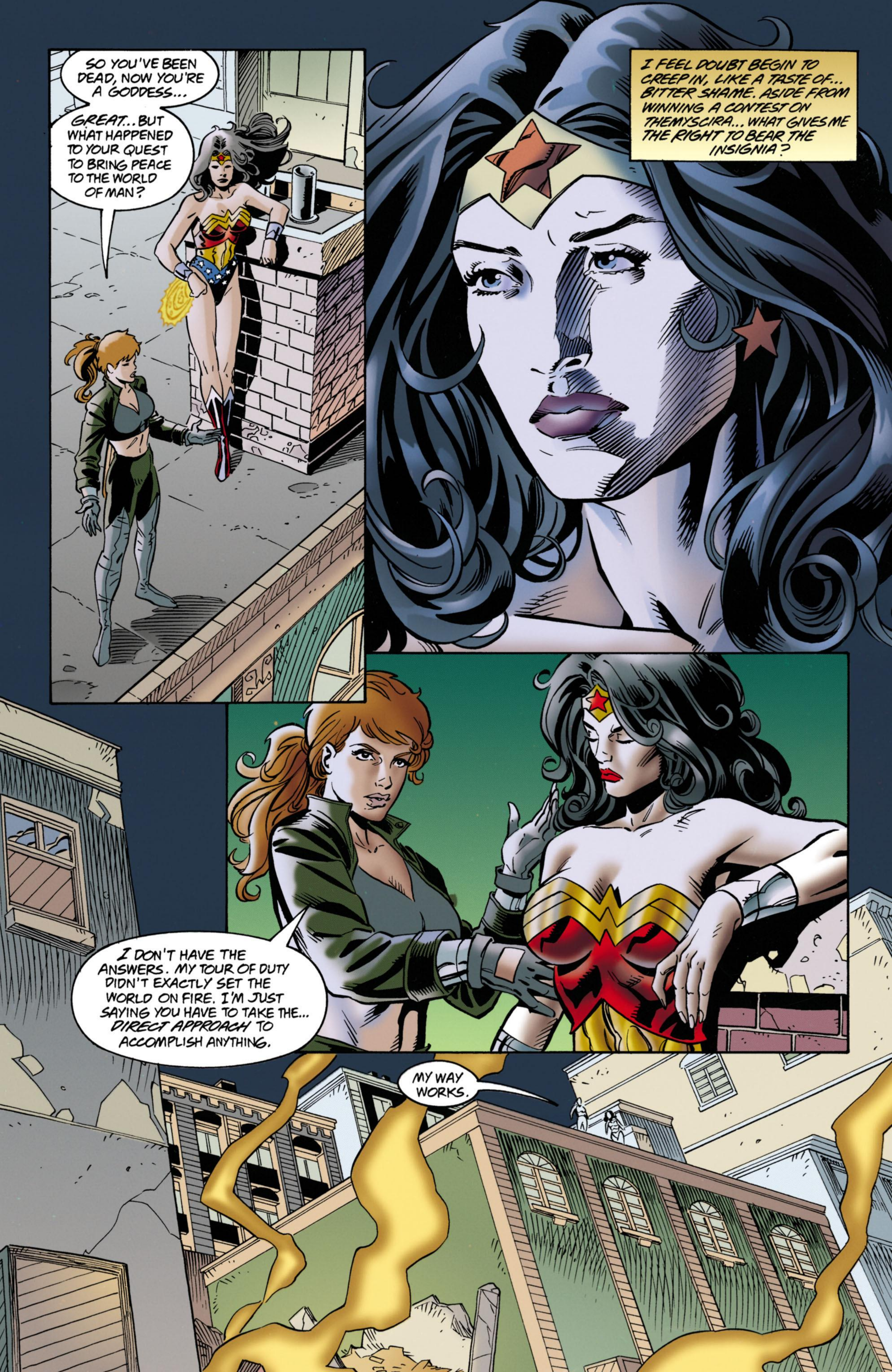
KA-WHUMP


ARTEMIS! YOU CAN'T RAMPAGE THROUGH EVERYTHING! YOU COULD HAVE KILLED THEM ALL!
ASK ME IF I CARE!

YOU'VE GOT THE RIGHT IDEA, DIANA. YOU JUST GO ABOUT IT ALL WRONG. THEY'RE NOT LISTENING TO YOU.
YOU'RE NOT MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

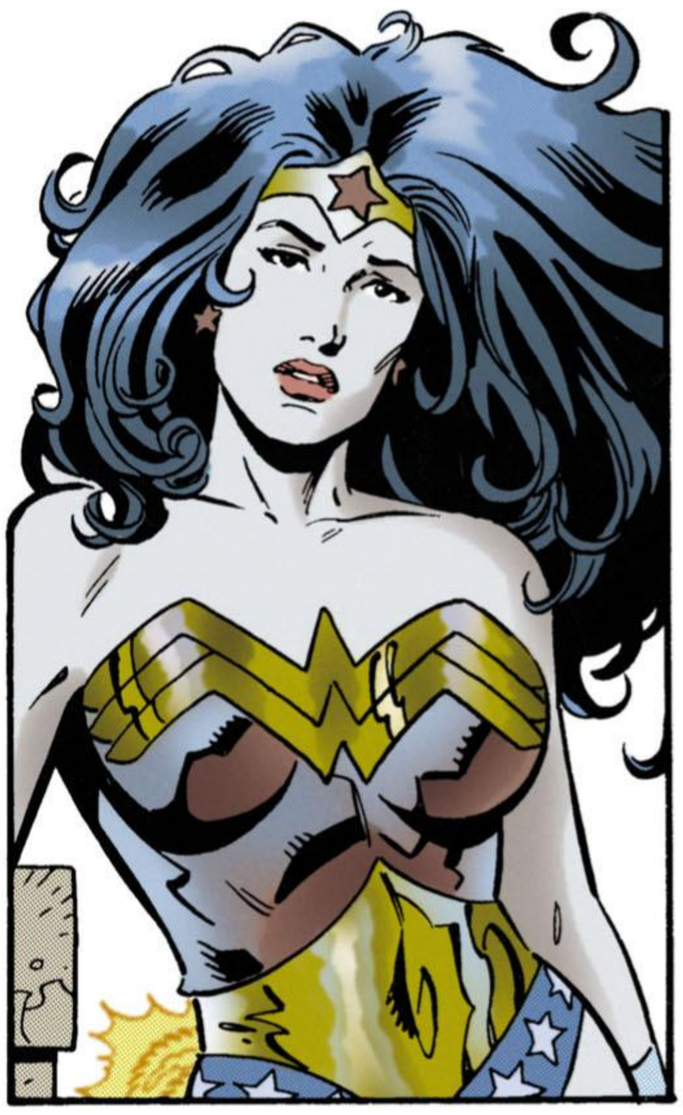
BUT YOUR SOLUTION IS UNTHINKABLE! YOU CAN'T GO AROUND KILLING PEOPLE!

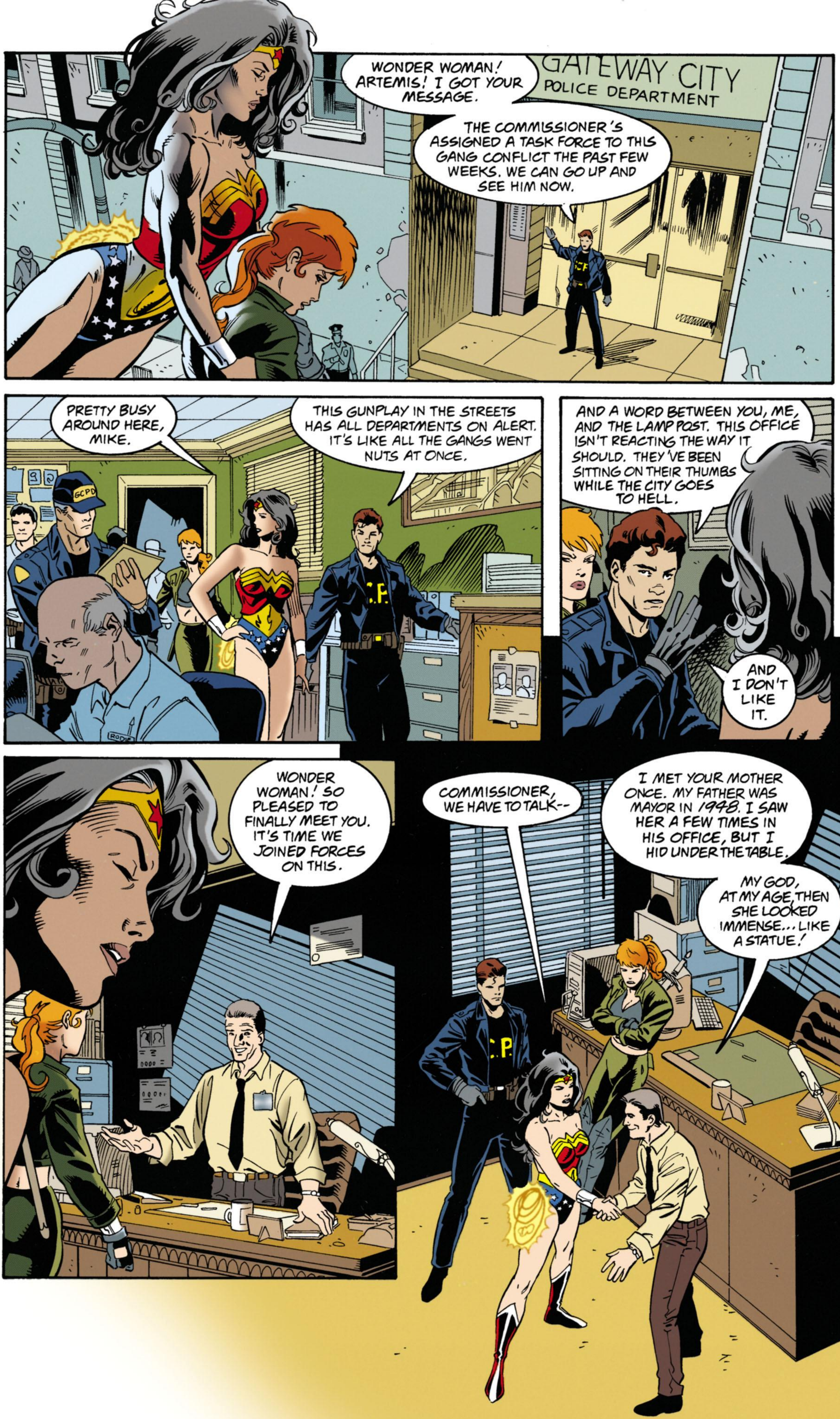
OKAY, LET'S LOOK AT THE RESULTS. NAME ME ONE THING THAT'S CHANGED SINCE YOU'VE COME TO PATRIARCH'S WORLD... ONE WAY IN WHICH THE WORLD IS A BETTER PLACE.

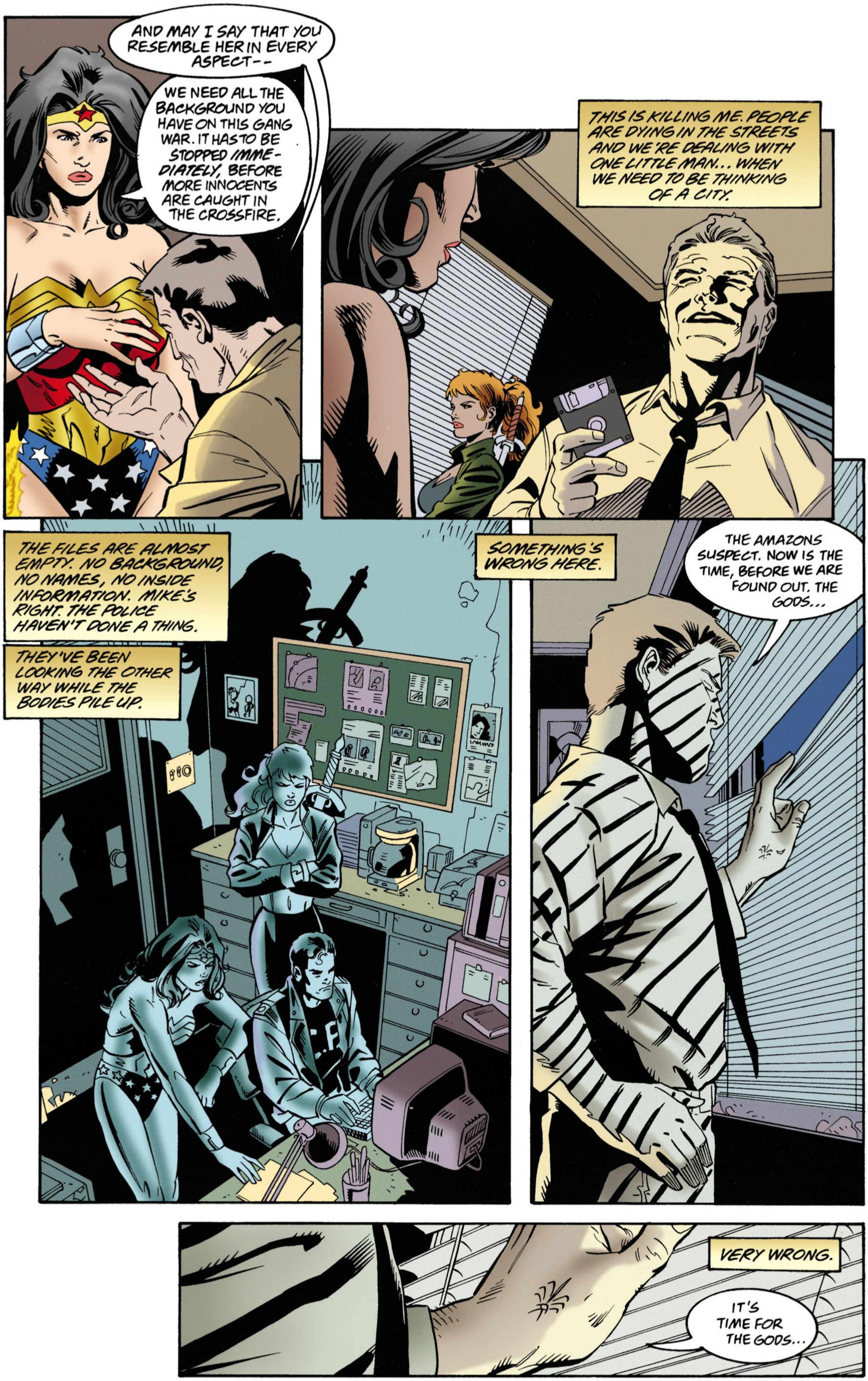

SO YOU'VE BEEN DEAD, NOW YOU'RE A GODDESS...
GREAT... BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR QUEST TO BRING PEACE TO THE WORLD OF MAN?
I FEEL DOUBT BEGIN TO CREEP IN, LIKE A TASTE OF... BITTER SHAME. ASIDE FROM WINNING A CONTEST ON THEMYSCIRA... WHAT GIVES ME THE RIGHT TO BEAR THE INSIGNIA?
I DON'T HAVE THE ANSWERS. MY TOUR OF DUTY DIDN'T EXACTLY SET THE WORLD ON FIRE. I'M JUST SAYING YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE... DIRECT APPROACH TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.
MY WAY WORKS.

COME ON! WE'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY TO STOP THESE IDIOTS FROM KILLING INNOCENT PEOPLE!

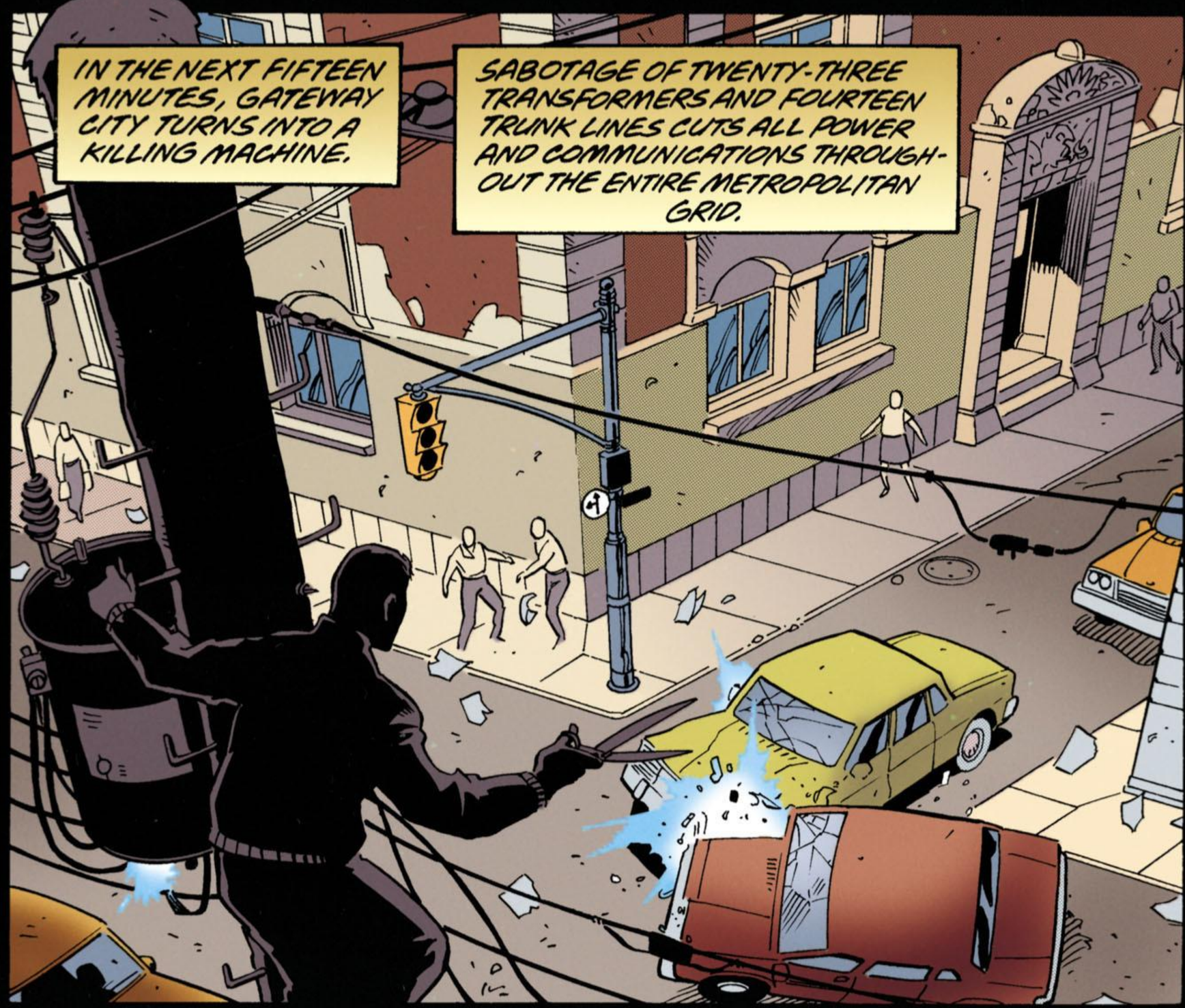
WHEN I WAS LITTLE AND FELT LOST... THE ONLY CHILD ON AN ISLAND OF GROWN-UPS... I ALWAYS RAN TO MY MOTHER FOR COMFORT.




WONDER WOMAN! ARTEMIS! I GOT YOUR MESSAGE.
GATEWAY CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
THE COMMISSIONER'S ASSIGNED A TASK FORCE TO THIS GANG CONFLICT THE PAST FEW WEEKS. WE CAN GO UP AND SEE HIM NOW.
PRETTY BUSY AROUND HERE, MIKE.
THIS GUNPLAY IN THE STREETS HAS ALL DEPARTMENTS ON ALERT. IT'S LIKE ALL THE GANGS WENT NUTS AT ONCE.
AND A WORD BETWEEN YOU, ME, AND THE LAMP POST. THIS OFFICE ISN'T REACTING THE WAY IT SHOULD. THEY'VE BEEN SITTING ON THEIR THUMBS WHILE THE CITY GOES TO HELL.
AND I DON'T LIKE IT.
WONDER WOMAN! SO PLEASED TO FINALLY MEET YOU. IT'S TIME WE JOINED FORCES ON THIS.
COMMISSIONER, WE HAVE TO TALK--
I MET YOUR MOTHER ONCE. MY FATHER WAS MAYOR IN 1948. I SAW HER A FEW TIMES IN HIS OFFICE, BUT I HID UNDER THE TABLE.
MY GOD, AT MY AGE, THEN SHE LOOKED IMMENSE... LIKE A STATUE!


AND MAY I SAY THAT YOU RESEMBLE HER IN EVERY ASPECT--
WE NEED ALL THE BACKGROUND YOU HAVE ON THIS GANG WAR. IT HAS TO BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY, BEFORE MORE INNOCENTS ARE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.
THIS IS KILLING ME. PEOPLE ARE DYING IN THE STREETS AND WE'RE DEALING WITH ONE LITTLE MAN... WHEN WE NEED TO BE THINKING OF A CITY.
THE FILES ARE ALMOST EMPTY. NO BACKGROUND, NO NAMES, NO INSIDE INFORMATION. MIKE'S RIGHT. THE POLICE HAVEN'T DONE A THING.
THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING THE OTHER WAY WHILE THE BODIES PILE UP.
SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE.
THE AMAZONS SUSPECT. NOW IS THE TIME, BEFORE WE ARE FOUND OUT. THE GODS...
VERY WRONG.
IT'S TIME FOR THE GODS...

IT'S TIME FOR THE GODS TO--
--STARVE! TIME FOR THEM TO--
MAYOR
EVILLE JENKINS
--DIE OF THIRST! TO KNOW THE TRUE PURE EMPTINESS--
--OF THE FINAL DEATH! THE DEATH THAT COMES--
--FROM THE LOSS OF PRAYER. THE LOSS OF--
--ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THEM! THE DEATH--
Bubble Rules
--DEATH OF THE GODS!
--HEAVEN! THE DEATH OF HUMANITY IS THE--
--OF WORSHIPERS IS STARVATION FOR--

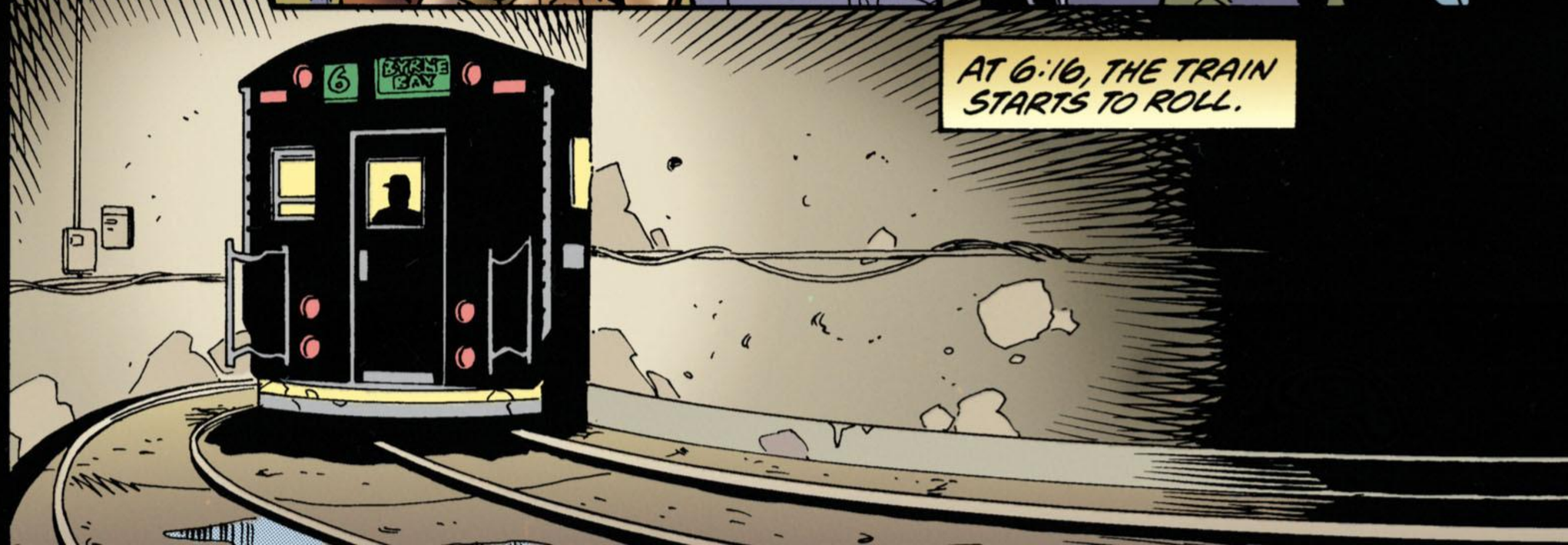

IN THE NEXT FIFTEEN MINUTES, GATEWAY CITY TURNS INTO A KILLING MACHINE.
SABOTAGE OF TWENTY-THREE TRANSFORMERS AND FOURTEEN TRUNK LINES CUTS ALL POWER AND COMMUNICATIONS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE METROPOLITAN GRID.

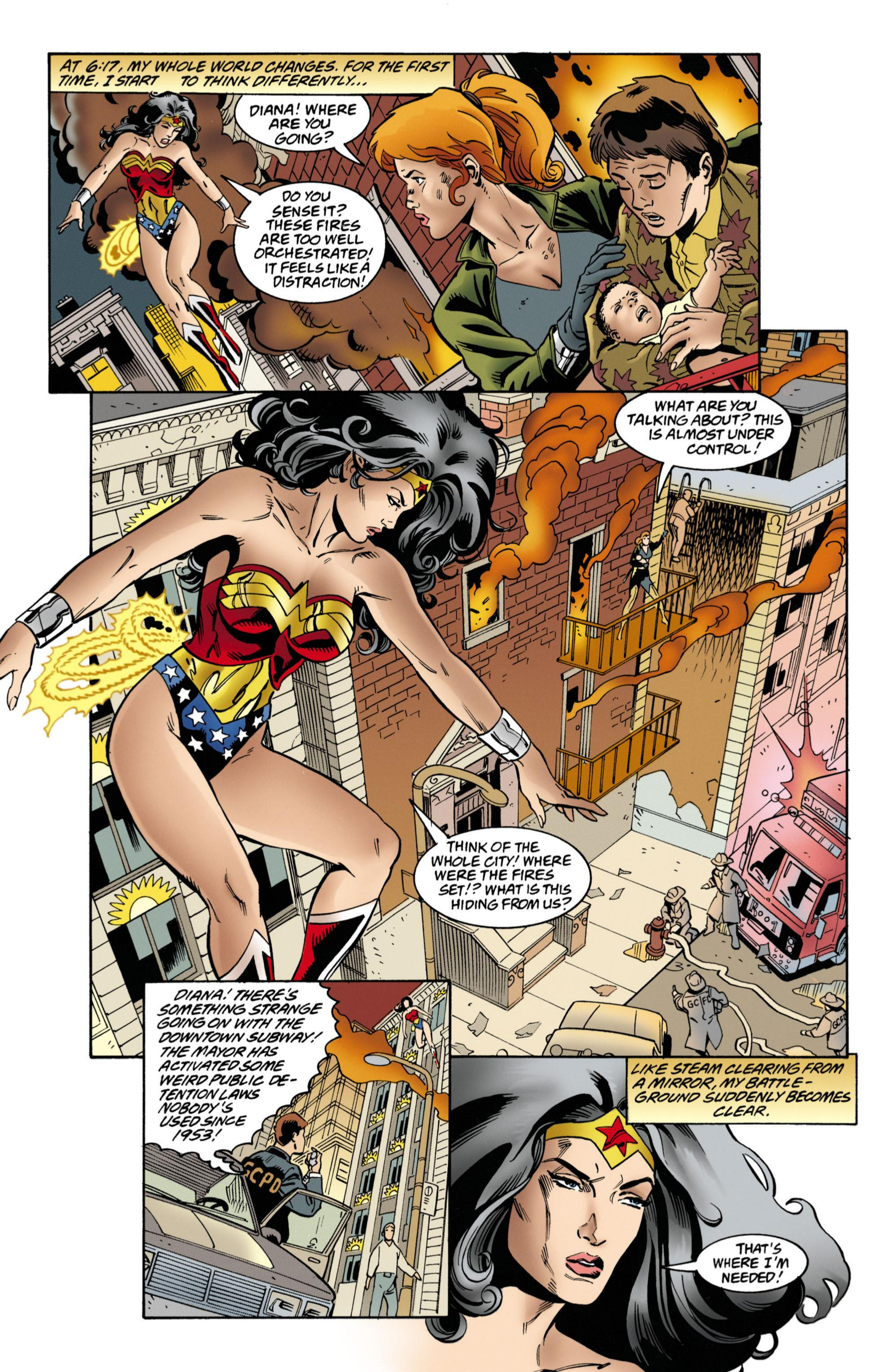
FIRES ARE SET SIMULTANEOUSLY IN FIFTEEN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS.

THE ALMOST-FORGOTTEN CIVIL DEFENSE SYSTEM IS ACTIVATED, ITS SIRENS WAILING WITH THE ANTIQUE NUCLEAR PARANOIA OF THE 1950'S

IN RESPONSE, THE COMMISSIONER ORDERS THE POLICE TO HERD EARLY-MORNING COMMUTERS INTO THE SUBWAY SYSTEM AND CONFINE THEM UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.
SUBWAY
F G
BY SIX A.M. THE STATIONS ARE JAMMED WITH OVER FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE.

BYRNE BAY
AT 6:15 A PARTICULARLY VIRULENT VIRUS STOLEN BY AN EMPLOYEE OF A BIOCHEMICAL RESEARCH LAB IS HANDED TO THE DRIVER OF THE DOWNTOWN SUBWAY LINE.

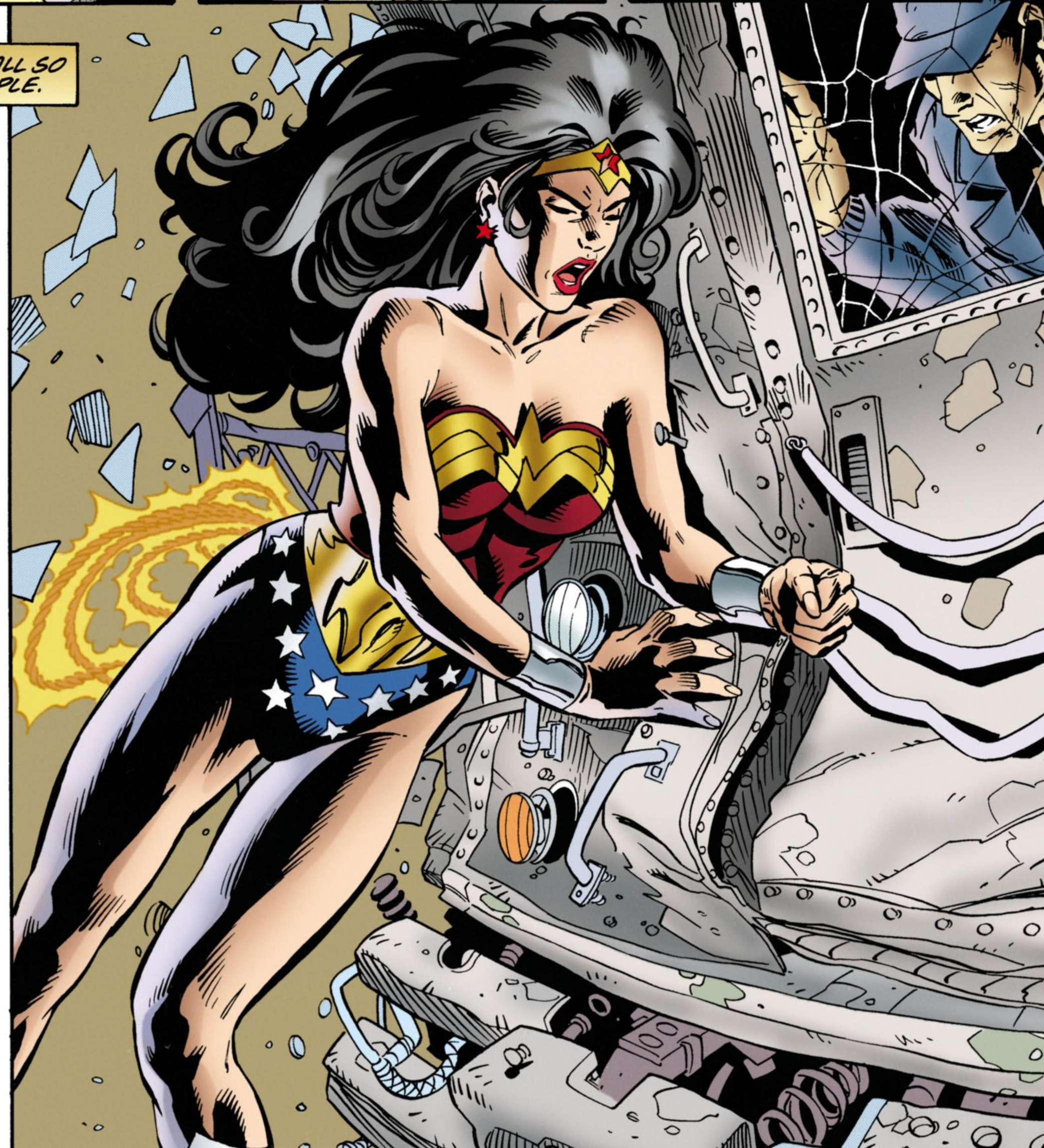

6
BYRNE BAY
AT 6:16, THE TRAIN STARTS TO ROLL.


AT 6:17, MY WHOLE WORLD CHANGES. FOR THE FIRST TIME, I START TO THINK DIFFERENTLY...
DIANA! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
DO YOU SENSE IT? THESE FIRES ARE TOO WELL ORCHESTRATED! IT FEELS LIKE A DISTRACTION!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? THIS IS ALMOST UNDER CONTROL!
THINK OF THE WHOLE CITY! WHERE WERE THE FIRES SET!? WHAT IS THIS HIDING FROM US?
DIANA! THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE GOING ON WITH THE DOWNTOWN SUBWAY! THE MAYOR HAS ACTIVATED SOME WEIRD PUBLIC DE-TENTION LAWS NOBODY'S USED SINCE 1953!
GCPD
LIKE STEAM CLEARING FROM A MIRROR, MY BATTLE-GROUND SUDDENLY BECOMES CLEAR.
THAT'S WHERE I'M NEEDED!

I STOP THINKING. THE WORLD BLURS PAST OF ITS OWN ACCORD.
CLOSED
BWAY
6

THE DOWNTOWN TRAIN IS RUNNING ALL THE STOPS! THE DRIVER WON'T RESPOND!
MAP
BAY

I'M BACK TO SOMETHING I HAVEN'T FELT IN AGES. MY COURSE HAS A DREAM-LIKE CLARITY.
6

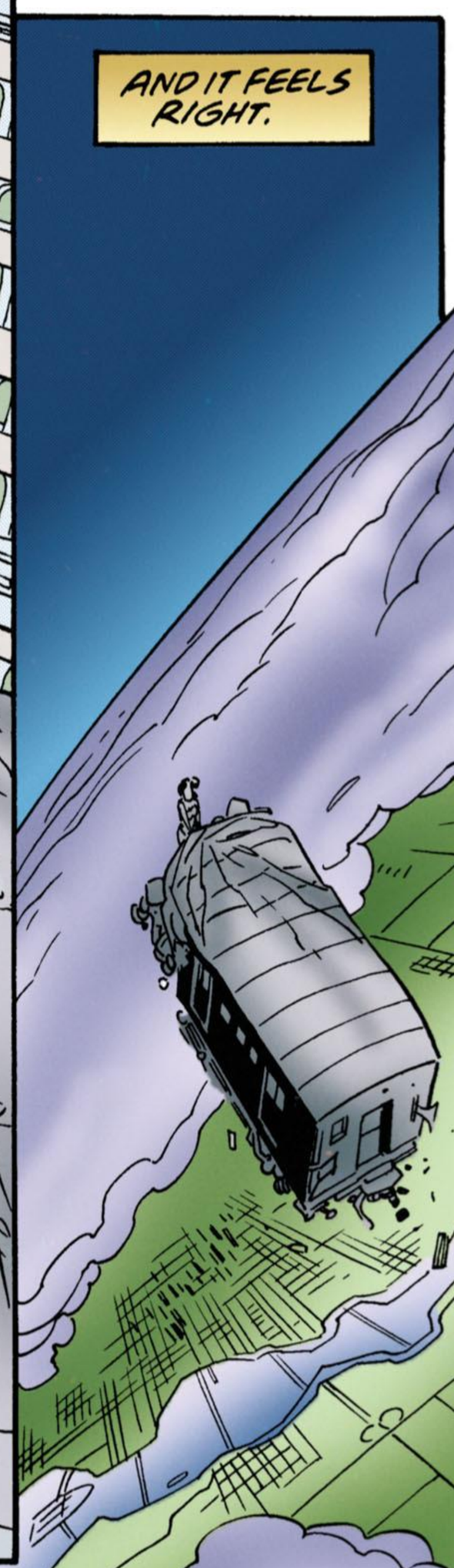

IT'S ALL SO SIMPLE.

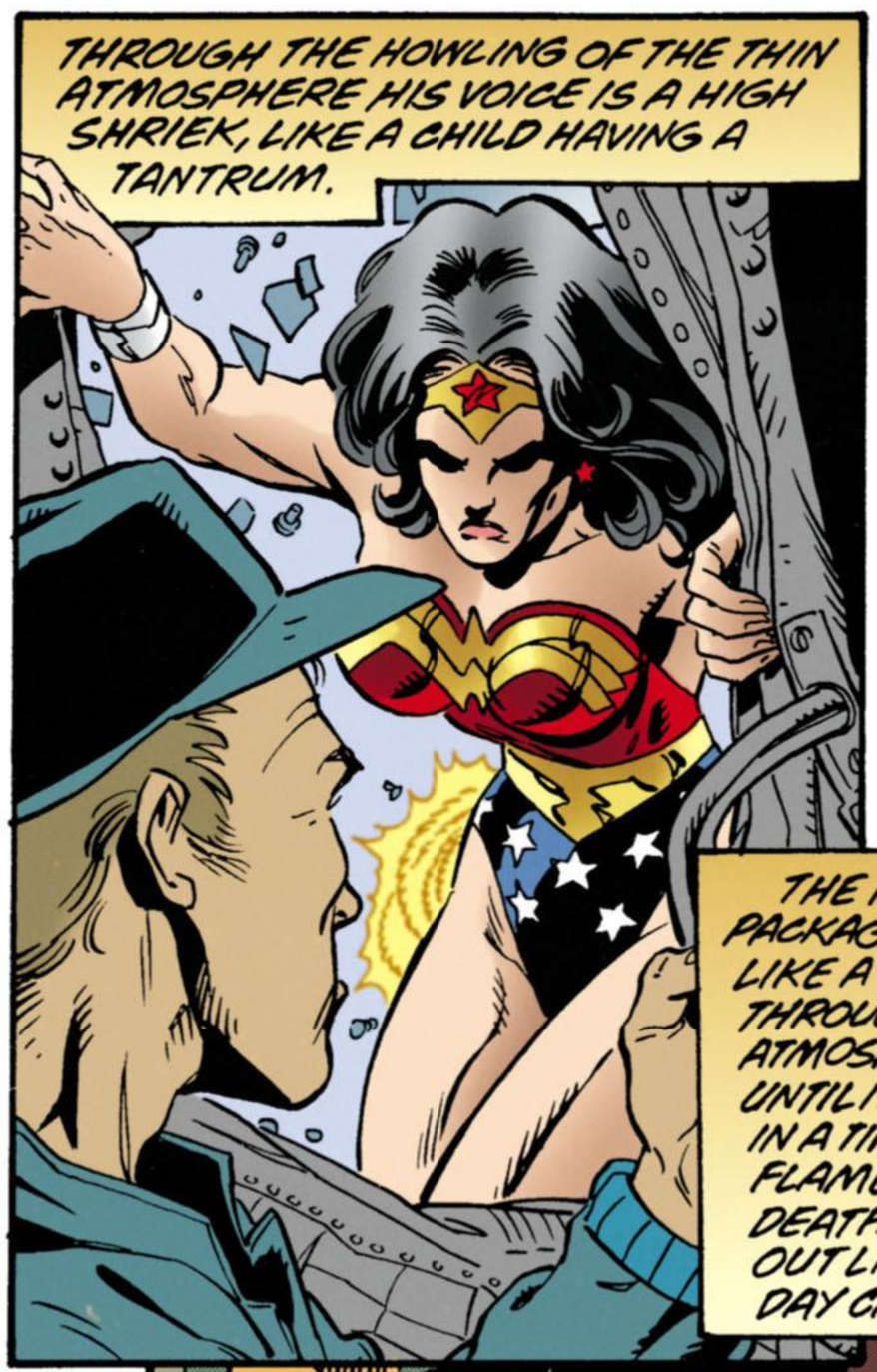
HIS EYES ARE DEAD AND TRIUMPHANT.
KRISSHA
I RECOGNIZE POISON WHEN I SEE IT.

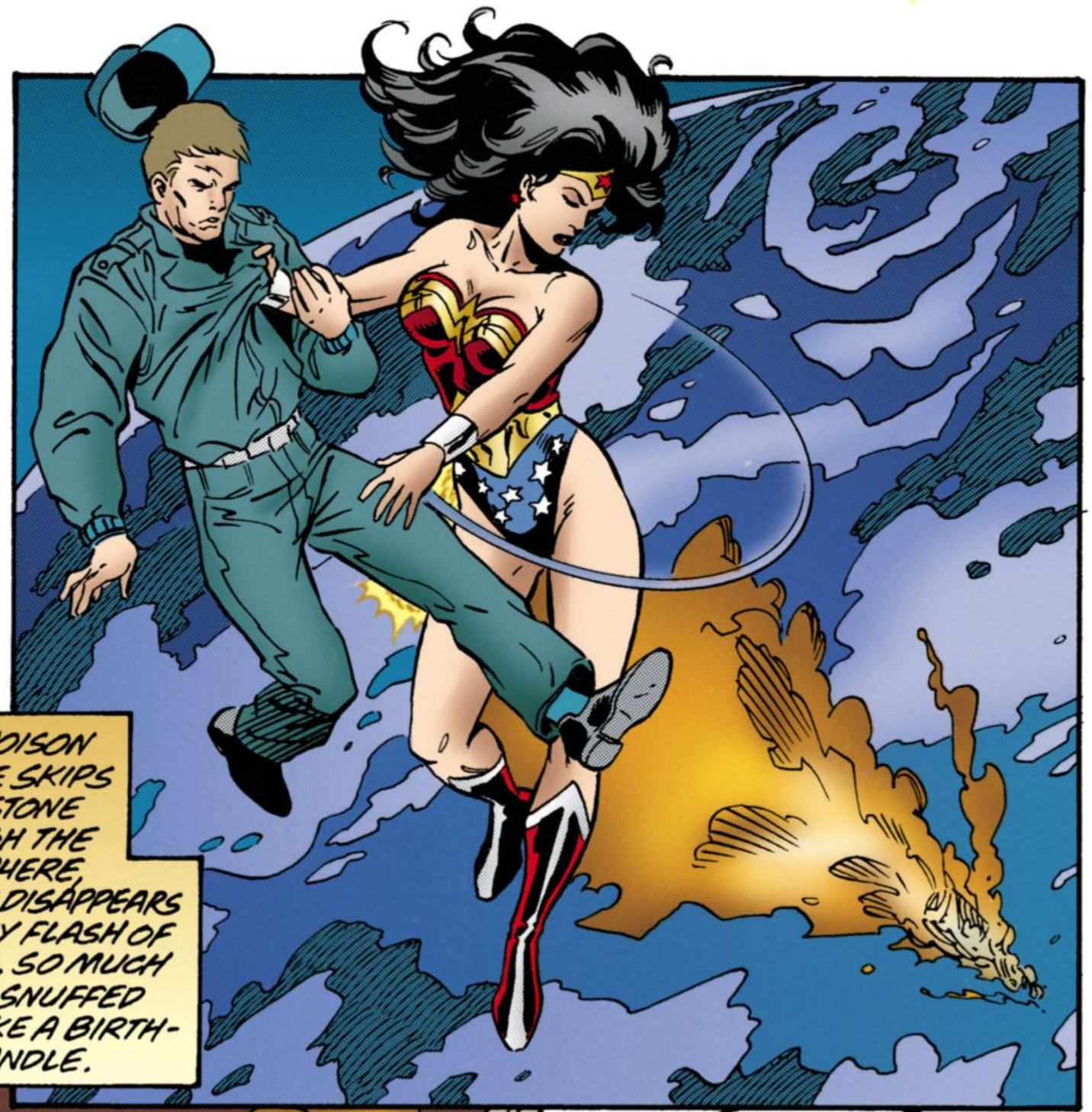
THERE ARE TIMES WHEN EVERYTHING IS CERTAIN. WHEN THERE'S NO SPACE BETWEEN IMPULSE AND ACTION.

I LIVE TO COM-PLETE SOMETHING. TO FULFILL A NEED.

I USE MY GODS-GIVEN GIFTS TO CHANGE THE WORLD AROUND ME...


AND IT FEELS RIGHT.


THROUGH THE HOWLING OF THE THIN ATMOSPHERE HIS VOICE IS A HIGH SHRIEK, LIKE A CHILD HAVING A TANTRUM.


THE POISON PACKAGE SKIPS LIKE A STONE THROUGH THE ATMOSPHERE, UNTIL IT DISAPPEARS IN A TINY FLASH OF FLAME, SO MUCH DEATH SNUFFED OUT LIKE A BIRTH-DAY CANDLE.

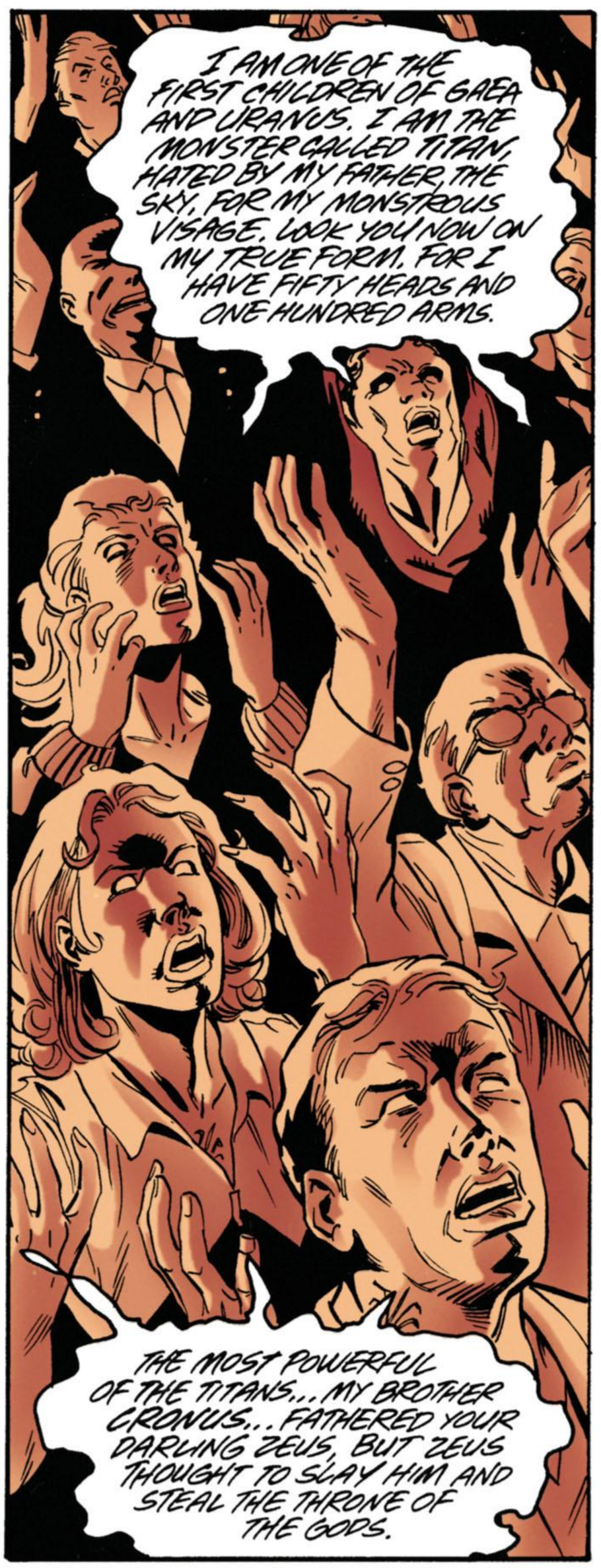
IT'S TIME FOR SOME ANSWERS.
LET'S SEE WHAT THE LASSO GETS OUT OF HIM!

THE TRUTH WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING! I WALK THE EARTH ONCE MORE, AND AS I WALK, I TAKE BACK THAT WHICH WAS MINE. I WALK AS ONE, AND I WALK AS FIFTY!

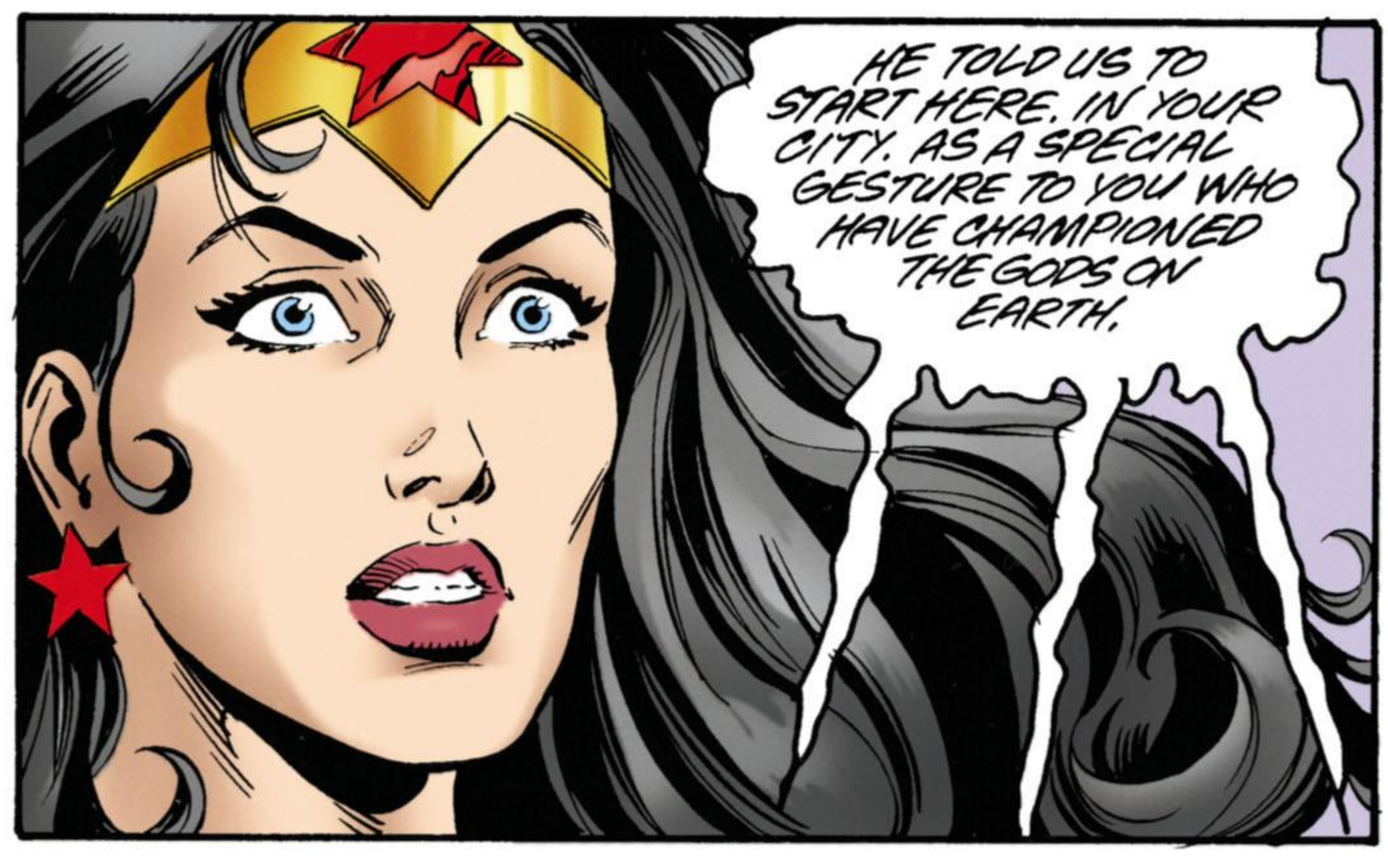
HIS LIPS MOVE, AND THE WORDS COME FROM ALL AROUND US, SOME WHISPERED CLOSE, SOME SHOUTED FROM FAR AWAY.
I TAKE BACK MY PLACE IN THE HEAVENS! IT IS TIME THAT MANKIND DIED! IT IS TIME THE GODS GREW HUNGRY AND STARVED FOR LACK OF WORSHIP! SO SAY THE FIFTY!

AND THEN THE VOICES ARE ALL AROUND US.
IT IS TIME FOR THE GODS TO DIE.

WHAT...WHAT IS THIS? "THE FIFTY"?
THINK BACK TO YOUR HISTORY LESSONS, ARTEMIS.


I AM ONE OF THE FIRST CHILDREN OF GAEA AND URANUS. I AM THE MONSTER CALLED TITAN, HATED BY MY FATHER, THE SKY, FOR MY MONSTROUS VISAGE. LOOK YOU NOW ON MY TRUE FORM. FOR I HAVE FIFTY HEADS AND ONE HUNDRED ARMS.
THE MOST POWERFUL OF THE TITANS... MY BROTHER CRONUS... FATHERED YOUR DARLING ZEUS, BUT ZEUS THOUGHT TO SLAY HIM AND STEAL THE THRONE OF THE GODS.

CRONUS WAS NOT SLAIN. ZEUS'S FATHER IS RETURNING! HE HAS GIVEN TO US THE DESTRUCTION OF MANKIND, FOR WITHOUT MAN AS A WORSHIPER... ALL GODS STARVE AND DIE!
AND CRONUS, A TRUE CHILD OF EARTH AND SKY, WHO LIVED WELL BEFORE MANKIND, SHALL TAKE HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE AT THE CENTER OF ALL CREATION!


HE TOLD US TO START HERE. IN YOUR CITY. AS A SPECIAL GESTURE TO YOU WHO HAVE CHAMPIONED THE GODS ON EARTH.

EVERY LAST DEATH THIS NIGHT IS LAID LOVINGLY AT YOUR FEET.
MONSTER!
WITH A FAINT, MOCKING LAUGH, THE TITAN LEAVES. IT BLOWS AWAY ON A COLD WIND, SMELLING ACID-SHARP AND UNIMAGINABLY... DARKLY ANCIENT.
DIANA...
HOW CAN YOU BE WONDER WOMAN KNOWING THAT PEOPLE DIED SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU WERE HERE? BECAUSE YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE?

ARTEMIS... COME WITH ME.
WHAT...?
THIS. THIS IS HOW YOU HAVE TO THINK. THIS IS THE SCOPE OF THE CHALLENGE.

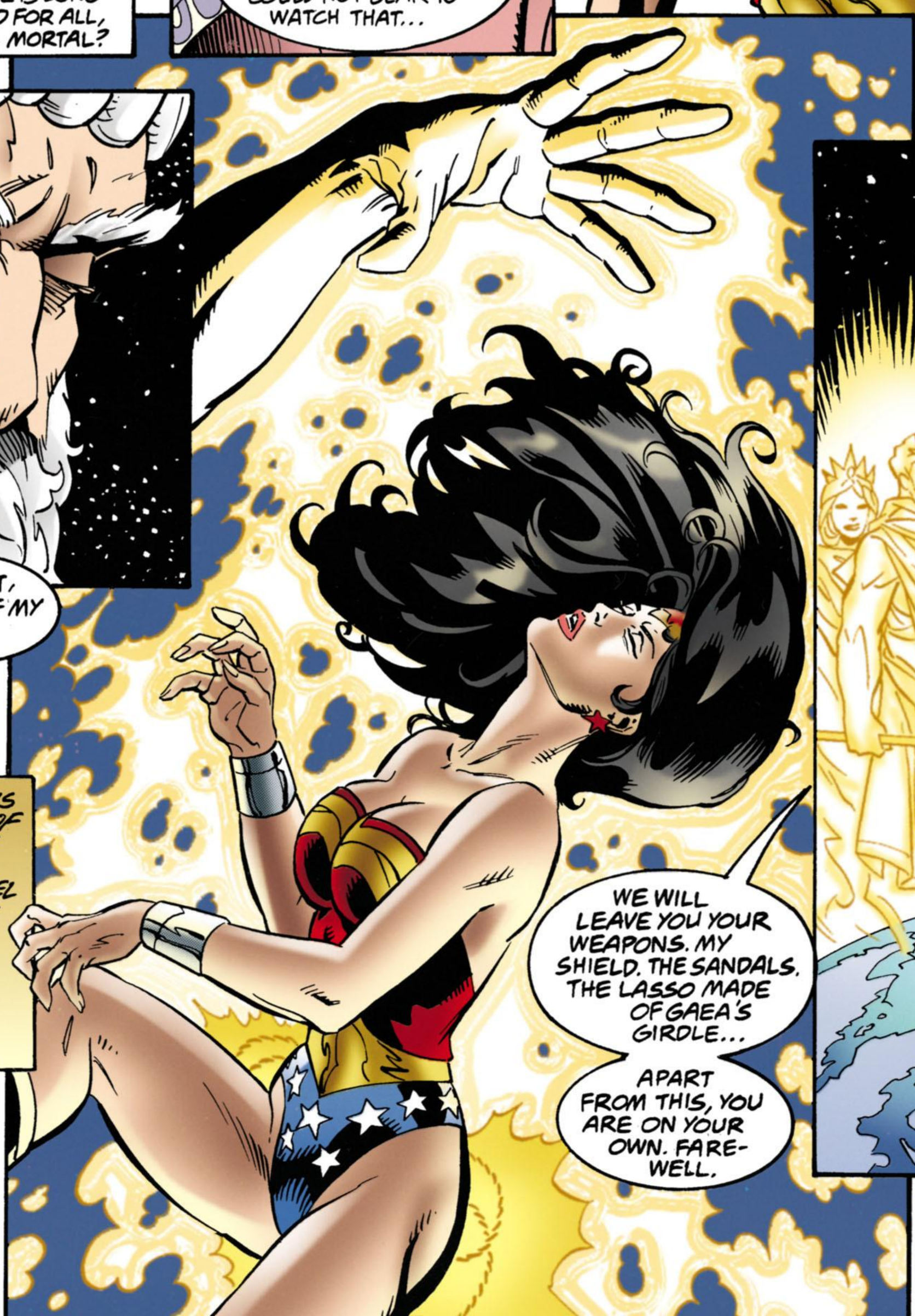
IT'S NOT JUST ARES OR CRONUS BATTLING FOR THEIR SOULS, AS IF THEY WERE A GAME TO BE PLAYED.
THERE IS SOMETHING WITHIN THE VERY SOUL OF MAN. IT IS REFLECTED ACROSS THE ENTIRE PLANET...IN WAR, IN CRUELTY, IN OPPRESSION.
I DON'T PRETEND TO UNDERSTAND, BUT IF PEACE IS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE WORLD OF MAN, IT IS GOING TO TAKE STRONG, DECISIVE ACTION.
FOR TOO LONG I HAVE BEEN REACTIVE, FIGHTING LITTLE VILLAINS AND DEMIGODS. PLAYING OUT PETTY LITTLE DRAMAS, WITHOUT ANY CHANGE.
AND TIME IS RUNNING OUT. IF MANKIND DOES NOT MEND ITS WAYS BEFORE CRONUS ARRIVES, THEN ALL IS LOST.
WHATEVER I'M GOING TO DO, I HAVE TO DO IT NOW. IF I FAIL, BUT I HAVE TO START IMMEDIATELY.
YOU WILL START NOTHING!
GREAT ZEUS!
THIS SOJOURN ON EARTH WAS TO BE A PUNISHMENT, DIANA! I WILL NOT HAVE YOU USING GODLY POWERS FOR MORTAL CONCERNS WHEN THEY WILL NOT PRAY TO US!

DID YOU NOT WITNESS WHAT HAS JUST TRANSPIRED? YOUR OWN FATHER--
MY FATHER IS DEAD! THIS WAS A LIE BY AN ANCIENT, JEALOUS GOD WHOSE TIME IS LONG GONE. NOW ONCE AND FOR ALL, WILL YOU BE GOD OR MORTAL?

IF YOU CHOOSE MORTAL, IT IS A DEATH SENTENCE. YOU WILL GROW OLD AND DIE LIKE ANY HUMAN. SOME GODS... COULD NOT BEAR TO WATCH THAT...

I AM SORRY, HESTIA. I WOULD RATHER BE A MORTAL AND HAVE THE FREEDOM TO FIGHT FOR WHAT I BELIEVE IN... THAN BE A GOD AND BE FORCED TO SIT IDLY BY.

SO BE IT, BLOOD OF MY BLOOD.


THE MAGIC IS RIPPED OUT OF ME, FOR ONE HORRIFYING SECOND, I FEEL MYSELF START TO AGE. I AM AWARE ONCE AGAIN... OF THE CLOCK THAT IS MY BODY.
WE WILL LEAVE YOU YOUR WEAPONS. MY SHIELD. THE SANDALS. THE LASSO MADE OF GAEA'S GIRDLE...
APART FROM THIS, YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN. FAREWELL.

EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED. THE CLOCK IS TICKING. IT'S MORE DANGEROUS NOW.
THE GODS DO NOT BELIEVE THE COMING THREAT.
THE GODS ARE FOOLS!
WHAT WILL YOU DO? WHERE WILL YOU START?
I CAN'T STAY IN GATEWAY ANYMORE. WHERE I'M GOING WILL BE TOO DANGEROUS... TO EVERYONE AROUND ME. I'M WALKING OVER NEW GROUND. ALONE.
"THERE WILL BE TWO FRONTS IN THE COMING WAR... ONE ON GAEA HERSELF, FOR THE VERY SOUL OF MAN, THE OTHER IN THE SKIES, AGAINST CRONUS AND HIS BRETHREN.
"IF WE FAIL ON EITHER ONE, WE ARE LOST ARTEMIS. AND THERE ARE OTHER THINGS I WILL ASK OF YOU. MORE THAN YOU HAVE EVER GIVEN BEFORE."
CASSIE. WE HAVE TO TALK.
THERE'S A WAR COMING... AND WE MUST WATCH THE SKIES.
WHAT'S HAPPENED, ARTEMIS? WHERE'S DIANA?

"SHE'S UP THERE SOMEWHERE... STANDING READY."
HERE'S THE BEAUTIFUL PART... THE EART FALLS IN LOVE WITH THE SKY.
THE FIRST ACT IN ALL OF CREATION IS ONE OF COMPLETE, ENTHRALLING PASSION. THE EARTH AND THE SKY MAKE LOVE.
FOR ONE SHINING MOMENT, THE UNIVERSE IS COMPOSED OF ARDOR AND PEACE.
SO IT'S SIMPLE, REALLY. ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS RETURN... TO WHERE WE'VE ALREADY BEEN.
LONG, LONG AGO.
I'M HERE TO FIND THE WAY BACK.