



WONDER WOMAN

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WONDER
WOMAN
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THIS IS CASSIE ARNOLD, EYEWITNESS NEWS... SPEAKING TO YOU, LIVE, FROM ONE OF THE GREATEST DISASTERS IN BOSTON'S HISTORY.

TWO HOURS AGO, AN ENORMOUS EXPLOSION RIPPED THROUGH THIS QUIET WAREHOUSE DISTRICT. SO POWERFUL WAS THE BLAST THAT AUTHORITIES HAVE NO CLUE AS TO WHAT MIGHT HAVE CAUSED IT.

THERE IS NO TRACE OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE IN THE WAREHOUSE THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN AT THE HEART OF THIS CATASTROPHE, NOR THE OWNER OF THAT WAREHOUSE, A MAN OF SOME MYSTERY CALLED ARES BUCHANAN...

Ares Rising Amazon Songs

LOEBS WRITER
MASSENGIL PENCILLER
PARKS MCCLELLAN GARZON INKERS
COSTANZA LETTERER
MULVIGHILL COLORIST
DIAZ ASST. ED.
AUGUSTYN EDITOR
WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON CREATOR

And when the battle's o'er,
And every bird has flew,
We shall sing to ourselves
The Amazon Songs,
The songs our Grandmothers
knew..."
Bell Rae Jokins,
AMAZON SONGS AND STORIES



"THEY'RE BURIED SO DEEP.
NOT EVEN A POLITICIAN
SCRAMBLING FOR COVER
COULD FIND THEM!"

DIANA...
ARE WE
DEAD?

NO... BUT I SINCERELY HOPE
ARES BUCHANAN IS.

I COULD NOT
WITHSTAND ANOTHER
ATTACK JUST NOW...

I THINK... HE WAS SUCKED
DOWN TO HELL WITH HIS
OWN BLACK HOLE. WE MUST'VE...
BEEN THROWN CLEAR
SOMEHOW...

DIANA...
I'M
SORRY.

FOR WHAT?
SAVING MY
LIFE?

I... I BETRAYED
YOU INTO BUCHANAN'S
HANDS. I'VE... KILLED
PEOPLE FOR HIM... FOR
MYSELF TOO. BUT I
COULDN'T LET HIM KILL
YOU... YOU'RE MY
ONLY...



A LITTLE, BUT JUST
ROCK WALLS. WE'RE EITHER
IN THE TUNNELS BUCHANAN
USED FOR SMUGGLING...

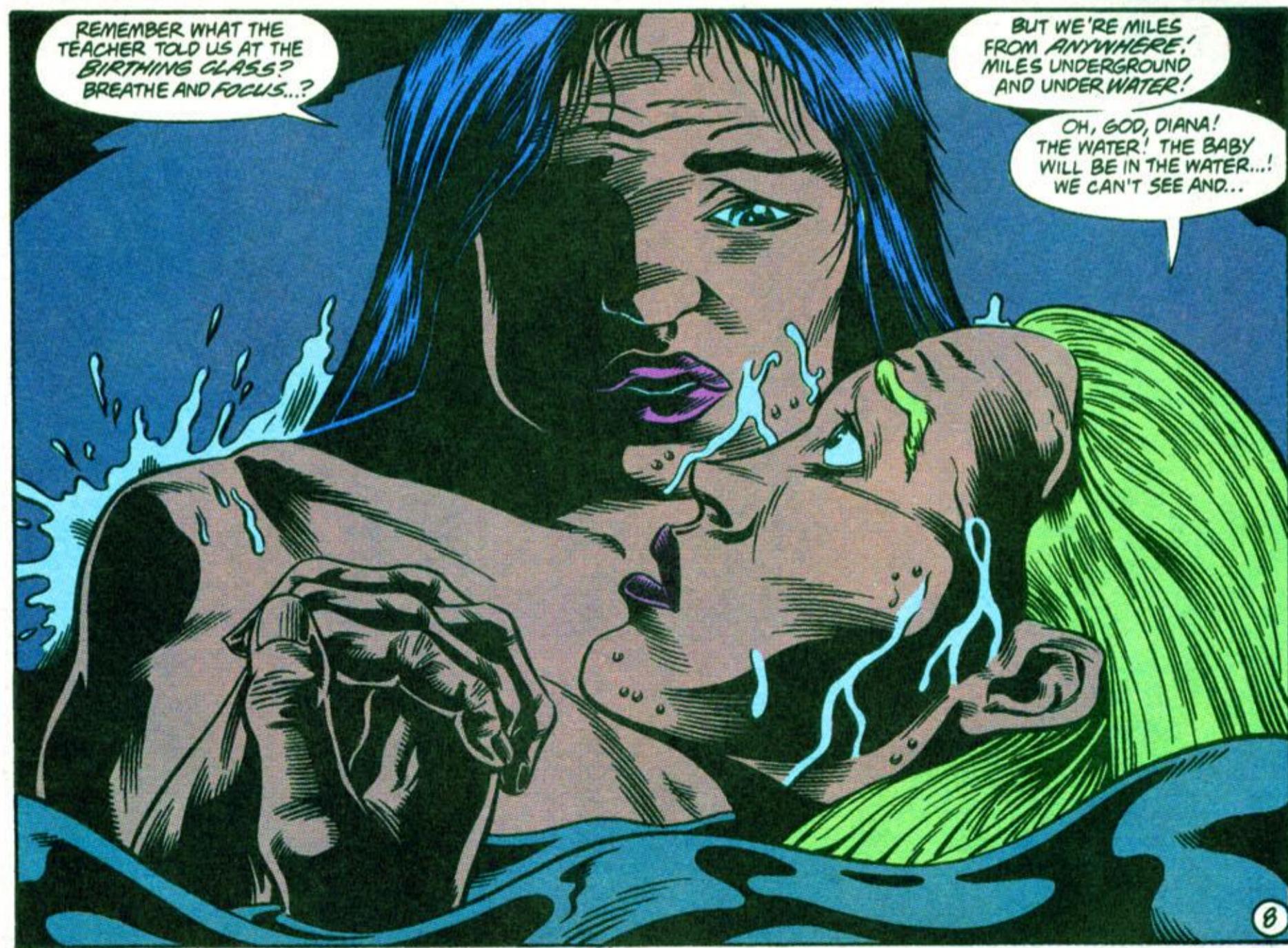
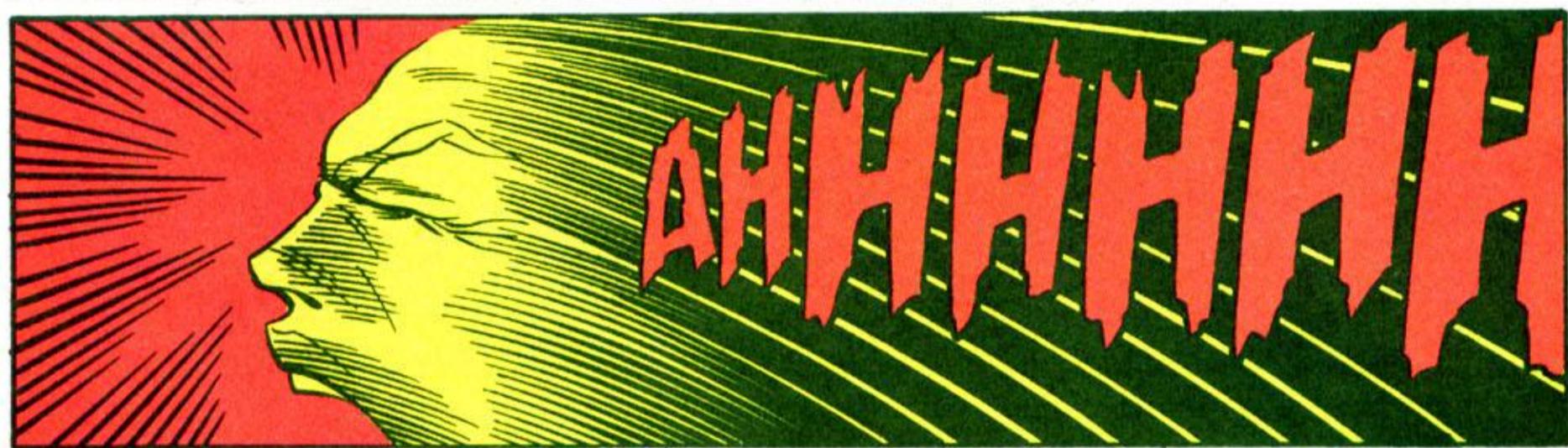
WHERE ARE
WE DIANA?
IT'S SO DARK.
CAN YOU SEE
AT ALL?

OR WE'VE BROKEN
THROUGH TO AN UNDER-
GROUND WATER
SOURCE. WE COULD BE
MILES UNDERGROUND.

I'M GOING TO TRY
TO FLY US OUT OF HERE.
IF I CONCENTRATE...

AND IF MY
WOUNDS HAVE
HEALED ENOUGH,
I CAN...





YOU LET ME WORRY ABOUT THAT. THE BABY HAS BEEN IN WATER FOR NINE MONTHS! IN FACT, HOPPY TELLS ME THAT IT IS VERY TRENDY FOR WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA TO GIVE BIRTH IN SWIMMING POOLS.

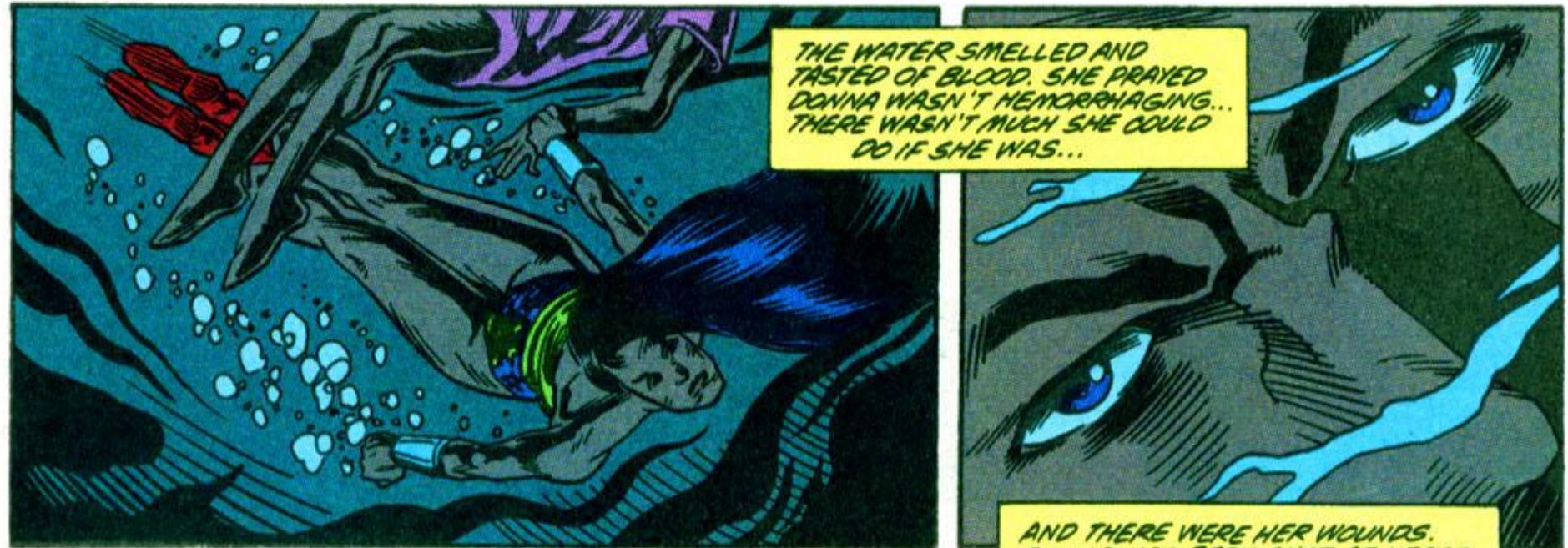
YOU ARE DONNA MILTON... YOU FOOLED ME... YOU FOOLED EVERYONE! NO ONE GETS THE BETTER OF YOU! YOU EVEN DESTROYED ARES BUCHANAN! THIS IS EASY...

YAAAAAAA

FOCUS ON YOUR SELFISHNESS... YOUR RUTHLESSNESS... FOCUS! PUSH...

CAN'T... CAN'T... TOO COLD... TIRED...

DIANA... IT HAPPENED... THE BABY... SAVE THE BABY...



THE WATER SMELLED AND TASTED OF BLOOD. SHE PRAYED DONNA WASN'T HEMORRHAGING... THERE WASN'T MUCH SHE COULD DO IF SHE WAS...



AND THERE WERE HER WOUNDS. DONNA HAD BEEN SHOT AT LEAST TWICE. DIANA HAD TRIED NOT TO THINK ABOUT HOW MUCH DAMAGE THAT MIGHT HAVE DONE.

SHE HAD TO FIND THE BABY, AND EVEN TO HER SIGHT, THIS WATER WAS NEARLY PITCH BLACK...

THERE.



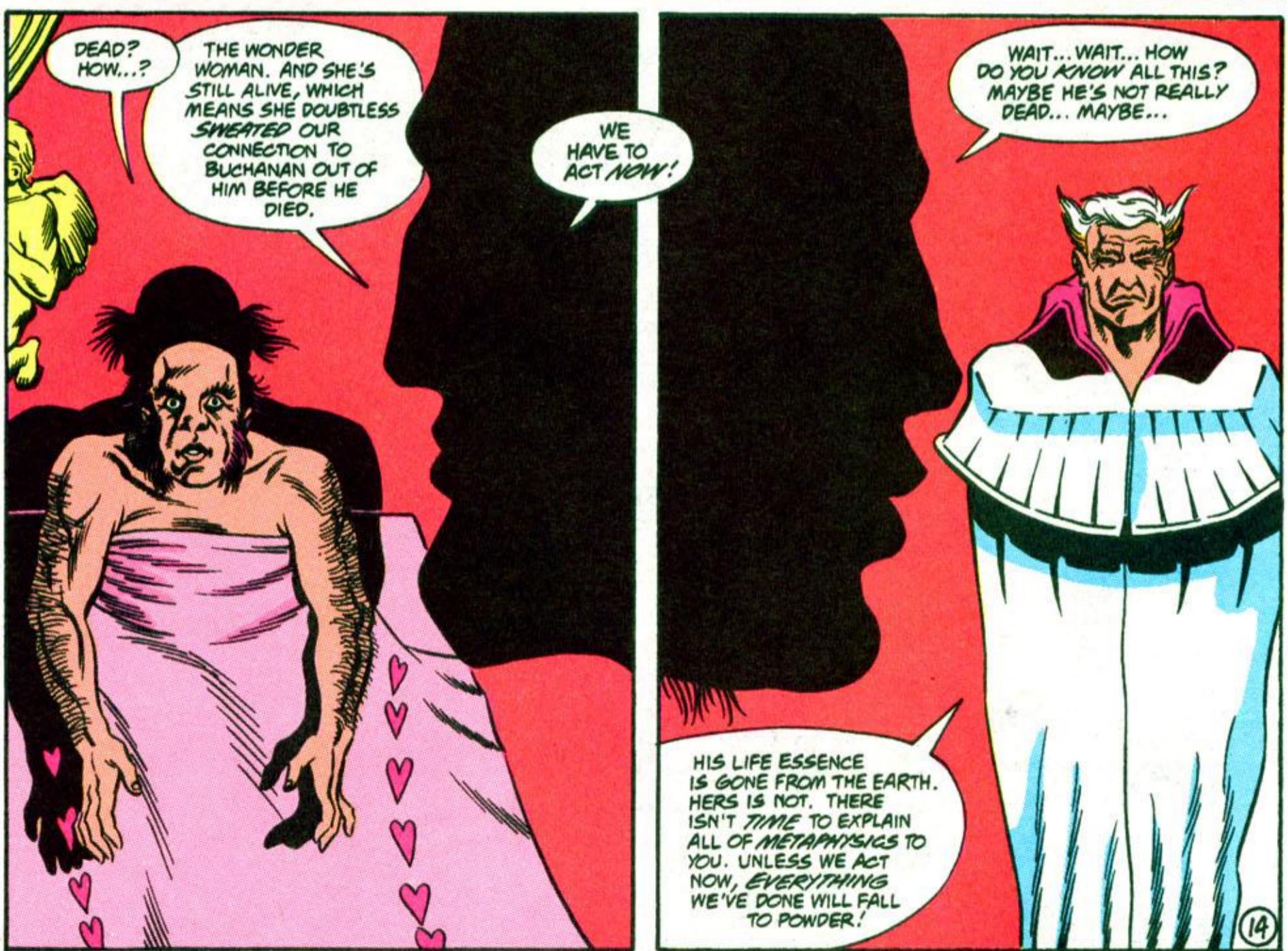
STILL
WITH US,
DONNA?

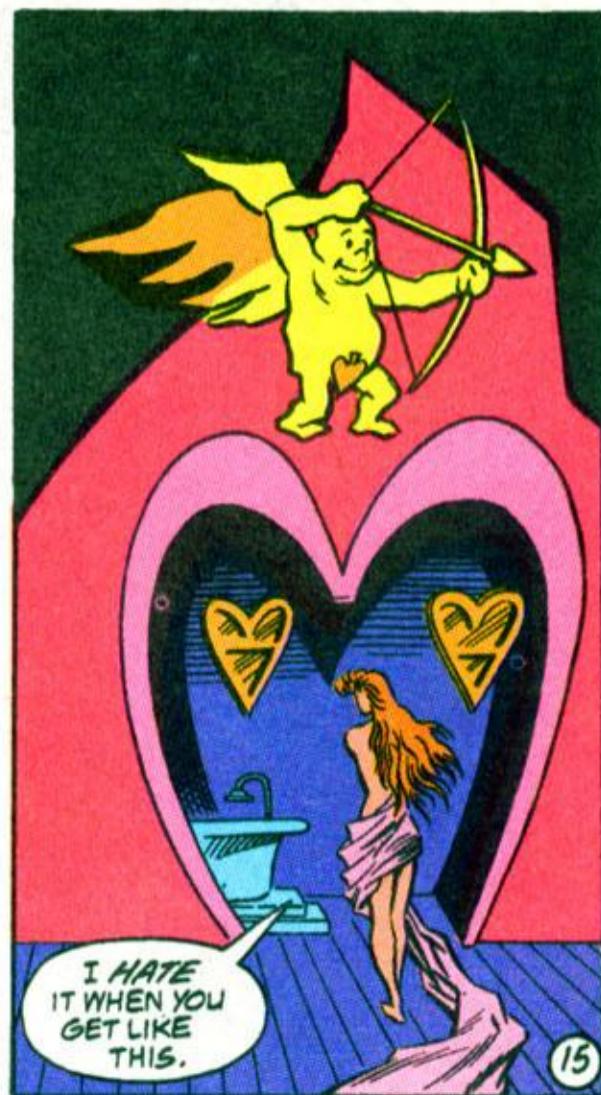
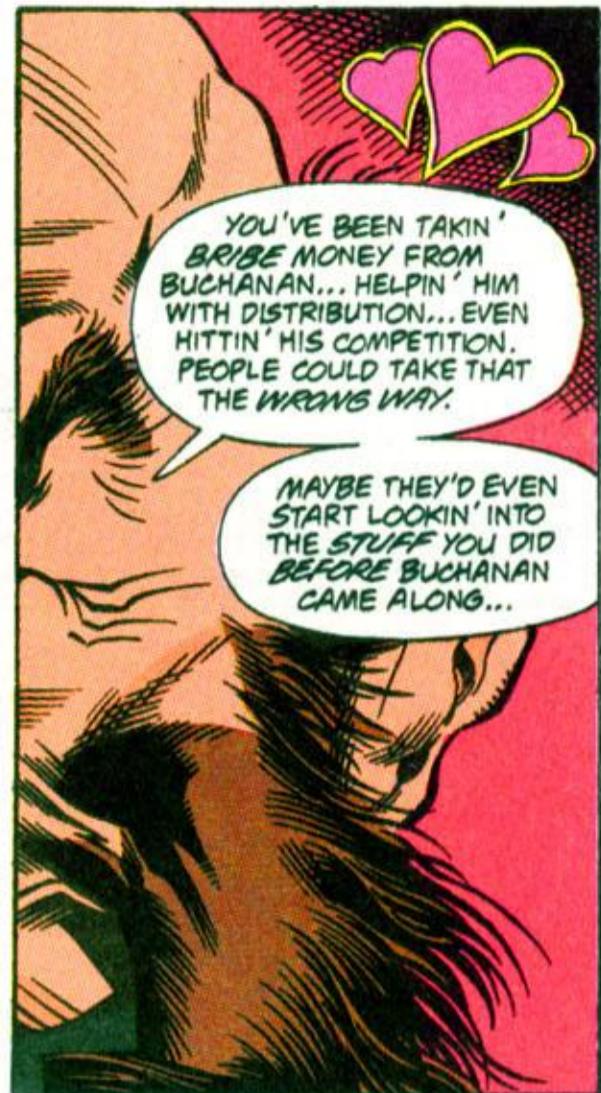
STILL
HERE...

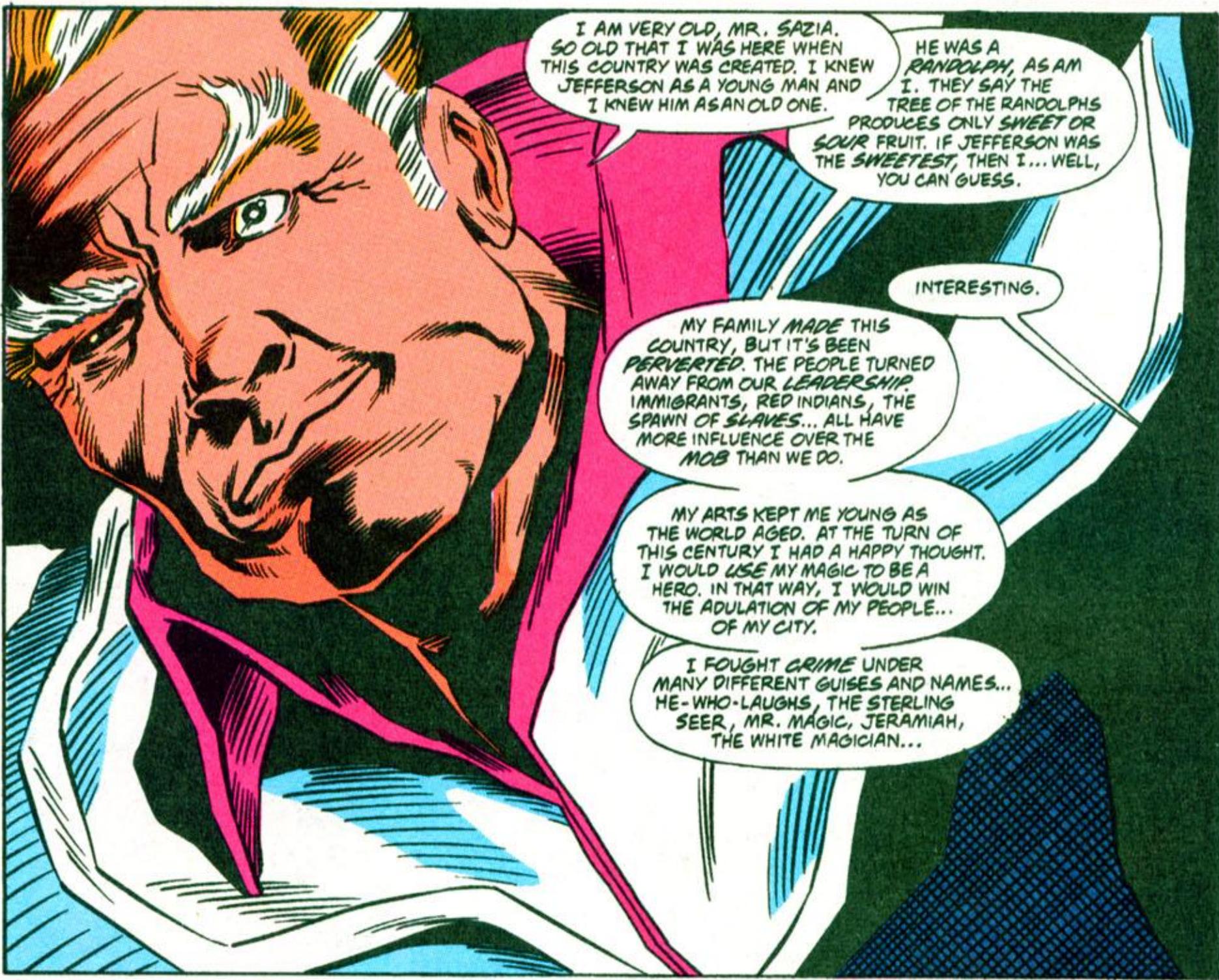
ELSEWHERE...

AWAKE,
SAZIA!

HAVE A
NICE DAY
Managers







I EVEN ALLOWED
MYSELF TO BE USED
BY THAT LOW PIG,
ARES BUCHANAN.

BUT NO LONGER.
I WILL DIRECTLY CONTROL
THIS CITY, TAKE THE
OBEDIENCE I NEED AND
TEACH THE MOILING
FLOCK JUST WHO IS
THEIR MASTER!

BECAUSE I
SCRUPLED ONLY TO
USE WHITE MAGIC,
I'VE BUT SCRATCHED
THE SURFACE OF
MYSTIC POWER!

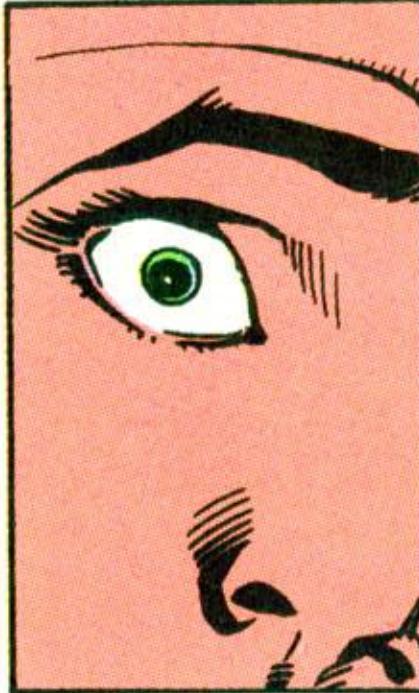
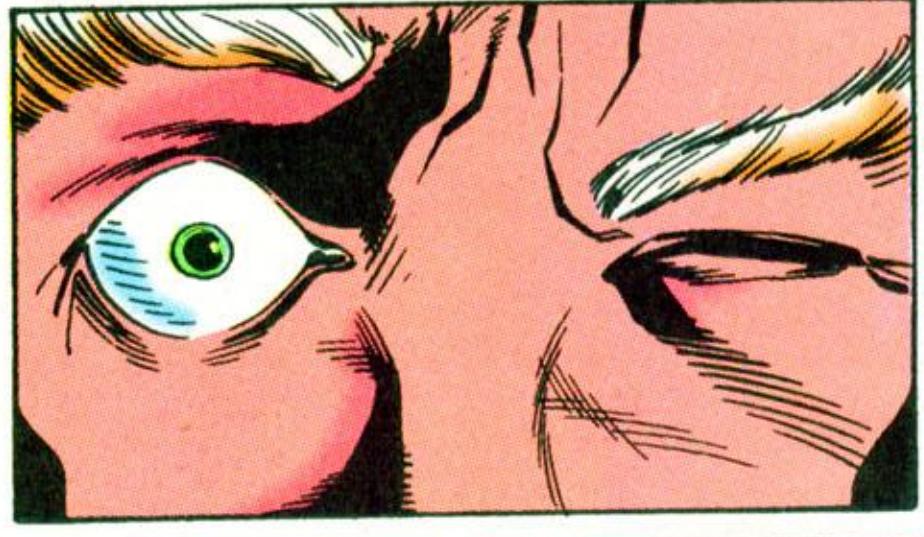
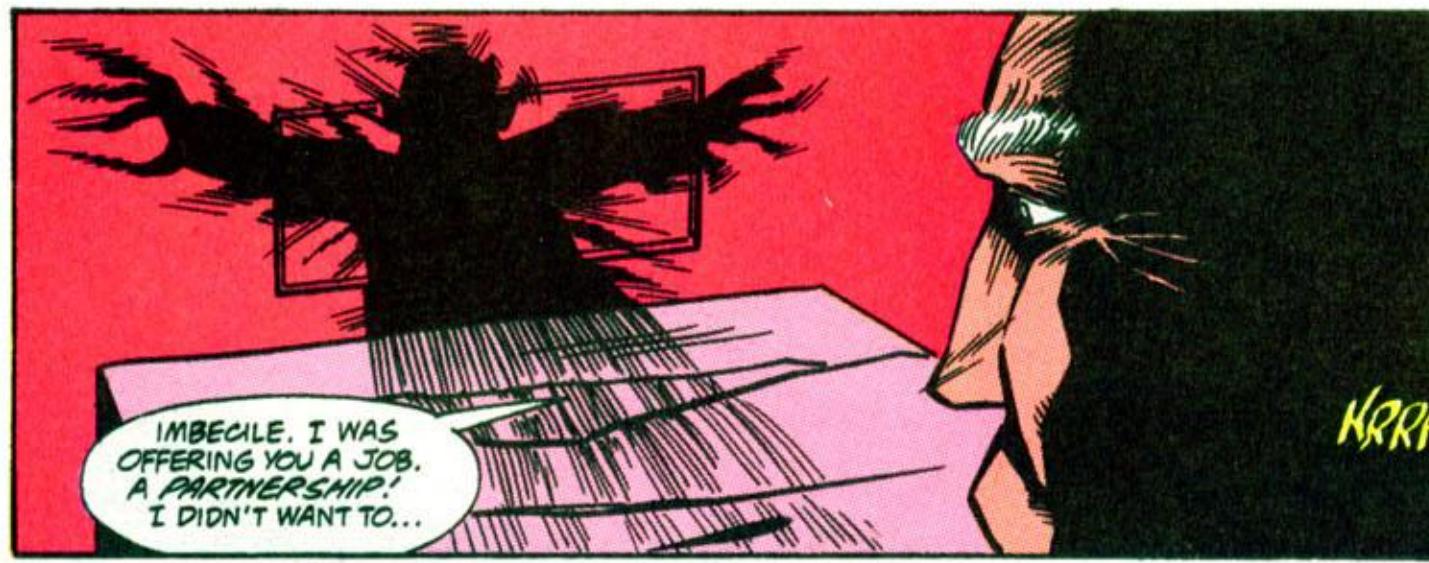
THERE ARE ENTITIES I CAN APPEAL
TO, DARK AND TWISTED GODS WHO CAN
GRANT ME THE POWER TO SEND ALL OF
BOSTON SCREAMING INTO THE SUN, OR TO
CREATE FOR YOU AN ARMY OF
GARGOYLES!

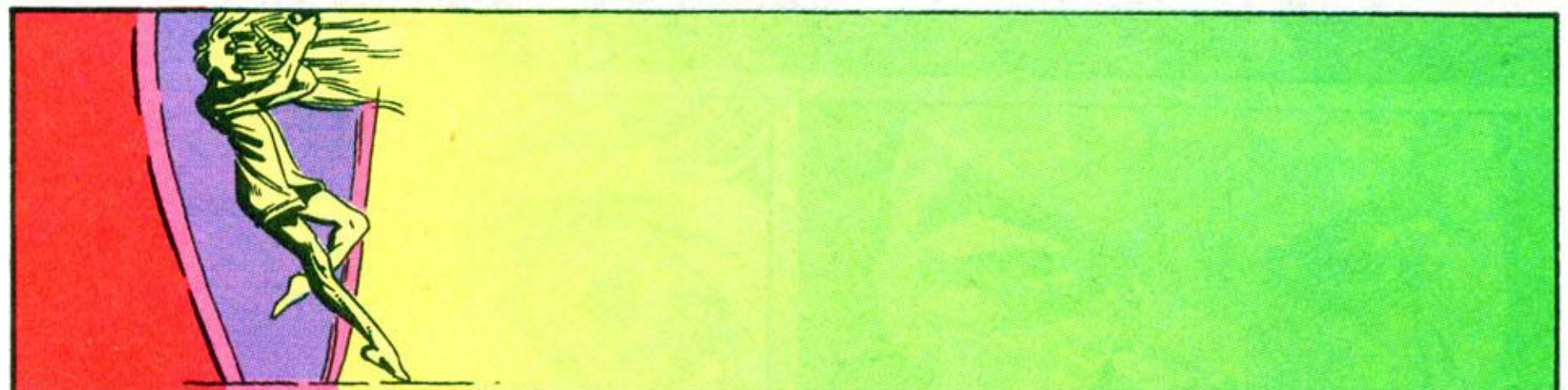
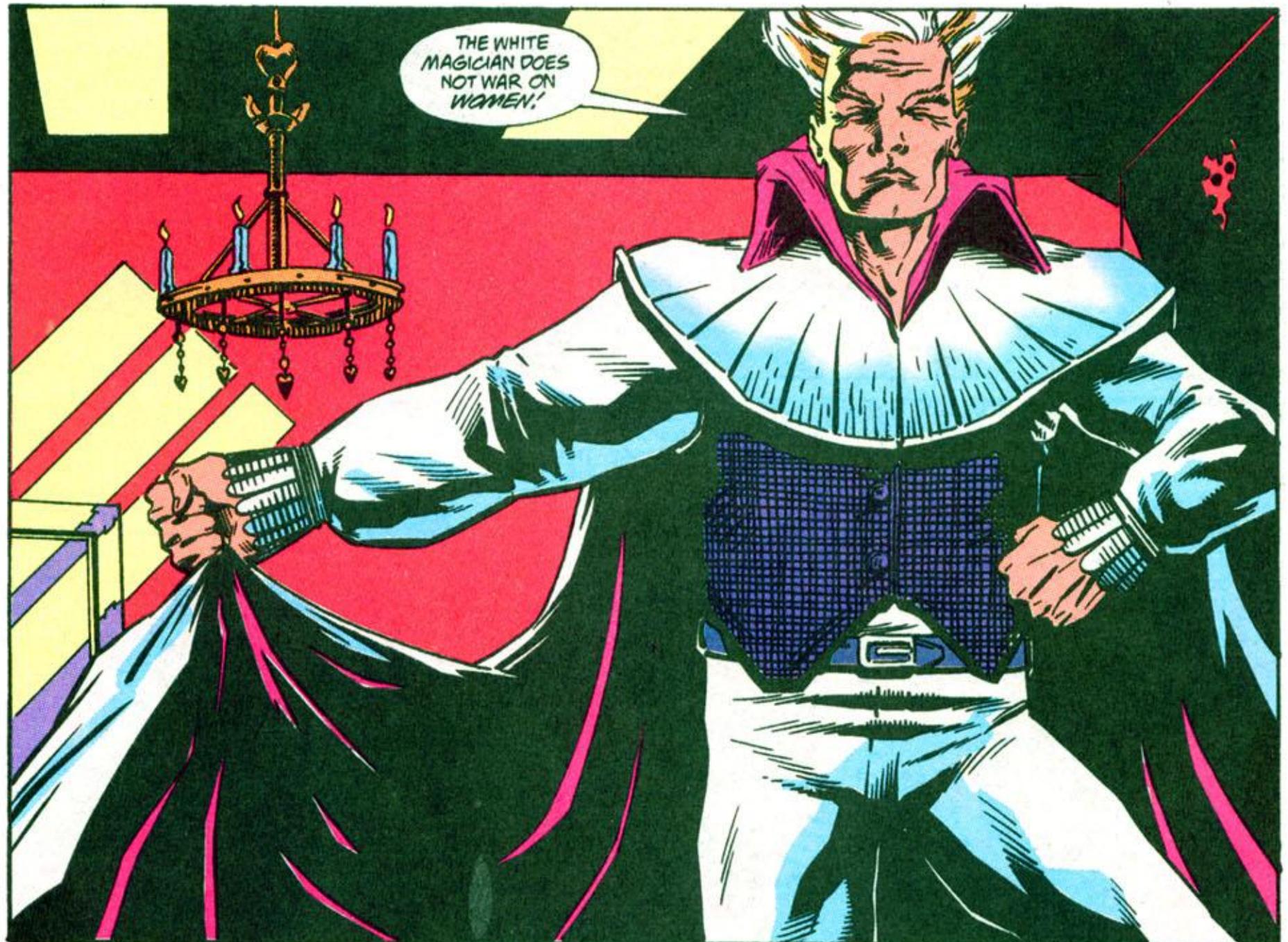
IMAGINE IF YOUR ENFORCERS
WERE DAEMONS, IF I COULD
MAKE THE SKY BLACK WITH
DRAGONS UNTIL YOU
WERE MADE KING OF
BOSTON...

NO.

IT'S TOO RISKY. I
GOT A GOOD THING HERE. YOU
START WITH DAEMONS, EVERY
FREAKIN' SUPER-COP ON
EARTH'LL BE AFTER US.
BESIDES...









I BIT THROUGH IT. IT'S VERY TRADITIONAL. I FEEL LIKE A FRONTIER DOCTOR.

DIANA... WHEN YOU WERE UNDERWATER... HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO... CUT THE CORD?



SHE FEELS SO WARM. I WISH I COULD SEE HER...



DIANA... YOU HAVE TO LEAVE ME. I... I'M... SO COLD. IF I BLACK OUT... I'LL TAKE THE BABY... UNDER WITH ME...



NOBODY'S BLACKING OUT... AND NOBODY'S LEAVING. I'M HERE AND I'VE GOT YOU. WE JUST HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL SOMEBODY FINDS US.



HOW LONG...? A DAY... TWO DAYS? A WEEK? IT MUST LOOK LIKE THE SURFACE OF THE MOON UP THERE. THE COPS WON'T REALIZE WE COULD BE DOWN HERE FOR DAYS...IF EVER...



OUR FRIENDS KNOW WE CAME HERE, BUT WHO'S GOING TO LISTEN TO THEM? WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO? SCROUNCE UP A BOAT SOMEWHERE, SNEAK AROUND THE POLICE LINES, FIND ANOTHER WAY INTO THESE TUNNELS AND THEN SEARCH THROUGH MILES OF PITCH-BLACK MAZE, ALL JUST ON THE HOPE WE'LL BE HERE?

STRANGER
THINGS HAVE
HAPPENED. WELCOME
ABOARD!

REVENOR'S
WAY

TO BE CONTINUED!

WONDER WOMAN



DC COMICS

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WE INTERRUPT YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED WONDER WOMAN LETTER-COLUMN FOR THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR...

This issue, #84, is my last as editor of *WONDER WOMAN*. Beginning next issue the person you'll be writing to on these pages will be longtime comics scribe Paul Kupperberg, a recent convert to the hallowed ranks of editordom. Paul has written every character at DC many times over, so if you have any doubts or fears that Paul won't understand Wonder Woman and company, relax—this guy knows what he's doing.

The reason for my departure is simple: my editorial schedule is a rather full one. In addition to *WW*, it includes *FLASH* and the *JUSTICE LEAGUE* titles: *AMERICA, INTERNATIONAL, TASK FORCE* and *QUARTERLY*. When the powers that be asked me to develop a new monthly comic starring miniseries sensation the Ray, something had to give. Sadly, that will be *WONDER WOMAN*. Logic says that this book is the easiest to let go of—at least from the standpoint of the rather intricate relationship of the other titles—but it doesn't feel easy to me on any level. I've enjoyed working on this title and I will certainly miss it and all of you (though, of course, I urge you all to check in with me through any of my other books).

For some reason, *WONDER WOMAN* has had many, many editors over the span of her long, illustrious career—perhaps more than any other character of equal status. As I've observed here in the past, all of us have come to the book relatively unsure of what to do with the character, but sure of one fact: ours would be the definitive take on the Amazing Amazon—until the next definitive take, anyway.

Fortunately for Diana and her fans, there has been remarkable consistency of tone over the terms of the last three editors, a blessing that can be credited to one person, writer Bill Loeb. Therefore, it is my pleasure to give you the good news that Bill Loeb will be staying with the book for the foreseeable future. With all due respect to all of you tried and true fans, I am convinced that no one loves Diana and her mythos more than Bill.

Having worked with Bill on this book, and on *FLASH*, I am convinced that the deep feelings he has for his characters are a big part of what makes Mr. Loeb as good as he is. The other part is that he can just plain craft stories like no one else. A long time ago in a *FLASH* letter column, a reader observed that Bill wrote the best women characters in comics and I agreed with this but added my own observation that Bill himself didn't make the distinction of writing just good women characters per se, but rather wrote the best human beings in comics. Period. Another reason Bill is so good writing *WONDER WOMAN*.

Of course I haven't come to bury Bill, but to praise him (hm, something oddly familiar about that last...), along with the work of all of our creative team.

I'd like to believe that we "discovered" Lee Moder, but that's probably not as accurate as to say that we gave him his first

monthly work. Since then, Lee has evolved into one of the most exciting young artists in the business. A measure of just how far Lee has come is just how much in demand he is. In addition to *WW*, Lee has already drawn the '93 ACTION COMICS ANNUAL, where he co-created (with writer Jeph Loeb) the "New Blood" character Loose Cannon.

In the near future, look for the Moder touch on a very special Batman/Catwoman project—written by novelist Eric Von Lustbader! Entitled *BATMAN: THE LAST ANGEL*, watch for this project coming soon from out of the Batcave. Lee will also be drawing a comic for an upstart Portland, Oregon-based publishing house, but we won't go into that here. All in all, I feel proud of Lee's success and hope he remembers us little folk when he's sitting at the pinnacle.

Ande Parks is not only one of the best and most reliable inkers around, he may be the nicest guy in the comics industry. That may not seem to be a serious requirement (and in fact, may seem a detriment to some), but try working closely with someone—especially someone who winds up carrying the lion's share of the deadline pressure—and then you'll see how important it is. A transplanted Midwesterner and baseball fan, like myself, Ande always hits the long ball. Watch for Ande's inks on several issues of *CATWOMAN* in the upcoming year as well as continuing here on the Wondrous one's title.

Thanks also go to John Costanza, expert letterer; Trish Mulvihill, our ever-able interior colorist; Tatjana Wood, our cover colorist; and of course the incomparable Brian Bolland, cover artist extraordinaire. All of those good folks will be staying on, and Mr. Bolland is also hard at work on contributing to some possible new looks for Diana. What does that mean? Only by staying around can you ever find out. Heh-heh...

I also want to single out the efforts of several very talented folks who've made less regular, but nonetheless important contributions to this book: Aaron McClellan has always stood ready to help out with inks; Steve Carr and Deryl Skelton provided very solid fill-in pencils, as did Shawn Atkinson and Nathan Massengil; Steve Mattsson and Buzz Setzer have contributed greatly to the book's chromatic excellence. Thanks, one and all.

Thanks to all of you readers and correspondents who have made this job a lot easier to do. Reading the incredible amount of really intelligent mail *WONDER WOMAN* gets makes doing this column lots of fun. Our resident assistant editor Ruben Diaz preceded me here on this page and really stirred things up with his lovable "Pérez complex" rants. As with everything I do here, I couldn't have done *WONDER WOMAN* without Ruben.

But while dwelling on a very pleasant past is fun, what does the future hold for Wonder Woman? I talked to Paul K. about his plans and he provides this sneak preview in his own words...Paul?

Well, since you asked...

We're still working on the details, but Bill Loeb and I have some mighty big plans in store for Diana's future. I don't want to give away too many of the aforementioned details, of course (otherwise you wouldn't have any reason to buy *WONDER WOMAN* 'cause you'd know exactly what was going to be happening when and, trust me, you're going to want to keep current with this book with all that's going to be happening), but here are some of the high points we intend to hit in the next half dozen issues or so:

• Diana's friends become the targets of nefarious doings...but instead of taming her heroic impulses, this just serves to send her over the edge to do unto those who would do unto her friends;

• Paradise Island returns. Hey, but wasn't that destroyed? Sort of...but not really. And it's coming back changed, not to mention with some Amazon folks back aboard we haven't seen since, oh, a long while back;

• Remember the Amazon Contest that got Diana the star-spangled bathing suit? It's time for a second Contest, and don't be so cocky thinking you know what the outcome's going to be this time around;

• One word: Artemis;

• Two more words: Super-villains galore;

Like I said, these are just a few of the high points. Superman's gone through changes, Batman through some of his own...now it's Wonder Woman's turn. We kid you not!

Wow! Well, if you miss this stuff, you have only yourselves to blame. From where I sit, Paul, Bill and the gang have lots of genuinely cool stuff coming, and while different, it feels organic. All of this exciting stuff grows from what we've already been up to in the past several issues and amps it up from there!

Well, as the shadows stretch long toward the horizon, and the clock on the wall ticks down the last few seconds of my time on *WONDER WOMAN*, please accept my genuine gratitude for your diehard support and for the chance to have as much fun as we've had. While I look forward to all of the fun I'll have on my new projects, as I've said, I'll miss *WONDER WOMAN* a lot. I take some solace from the fact that I'll still get to be part of her adventures through her appearances in the *JUSTICE LEAGUE* books, but it won't be the same. Sniff... Good-bye, gang.



NEXT ISSUE: In the aftermath of Wonder Woman's confrontation with Ares Buchanan, events are set in motion that involve Diana in swiftly escalating violence as her friends are made pawns in a deadly game! Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art by guest penciller Mike Deodato and Ande Parks, and a cover by Brian Bolland.

—Brian Augustyn
sadder, but no wiser.