

THE GREEK ISLES.

ON HER SIXTH BIRTHDAY, DIANA WAS GENTLY SHAKEN AWAKE BY HER MOTHER.

HIPPOLYTA PUT A FINGER TO HER LIPS, AS IF TO SAY "WE MUST BE QUIET." THERE WAS A TOUCH OF MISCHIEF IN HER EYES WHICH DIANA RARELY SAW. IT EXCITED HER.

THE AMAZON QUEEN AND PRINCESS TROD CAREFULLY TOWARD THE PALACE GARDEN, WHERE THREE INCANDESCENT PEGASI BATHED IN THE FOUNTAIN. A RESPITE FROM THEIR LONG MIGRATION.

SURELY **THIS** WAS MAGIC, DIANA THOUGHT.

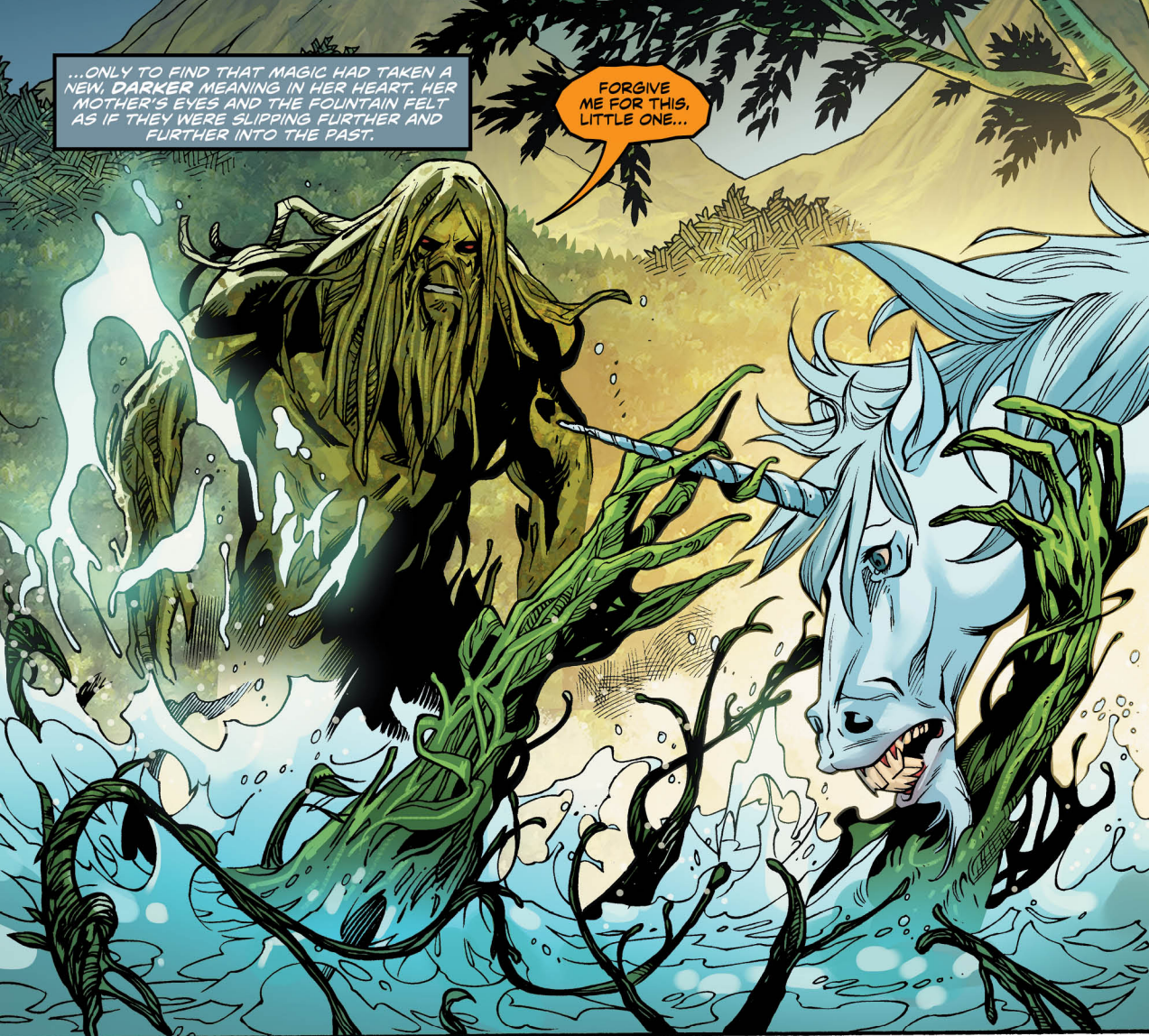
IT WAS WONDER, MYSTERY, AND ADVENTURE. IT SPOKE OF THE STRANGE UNSPEAKABLE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD.

NOW, STARING AT AN EQUALLY MAGNIFICENT CREATURE IN THE GRECIAN HILLS, DIANA TRIED WITH ALL HER MIGHT TO REACH OUT AND FEEL THAT RADIANT JOY AGAIN...

HEY! DID YOU GRAB **WONDER WOMAN/JUSTICE LEAGUE DARK: THE WITCHING HOUR #1** LAST WEEK? IF NOT--YOU SHOULD READ THAT FIRST! --CHRIS

...ONLY TO FIND THAT MAGIC HAD TAKEN A NEW, DARKER MEANING IN HER HEART. HER MOTHER'S EYES AND THE FOUNTAIN FELT AS IF THEY WERE SLIPPING FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO THE PAST.

FORGIVE ME FOR THIS, LITTLE ONE...

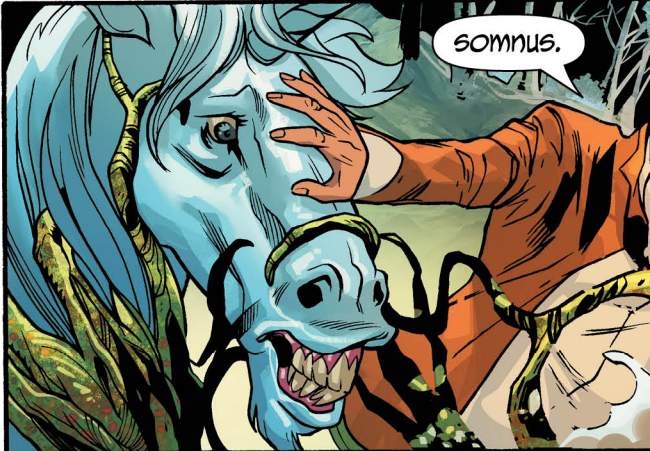


NO, KIRK! UNICORN BLOOD IS PHENOMENALLY POWERFUL. IT'S GOING TO BURN THROUGH ANY SEDATIVE YOU'VE GOT, NO MATTER HOW MANY GRUNDYS IT CAN KNOCK OUT. JOHN, CAN YOU--

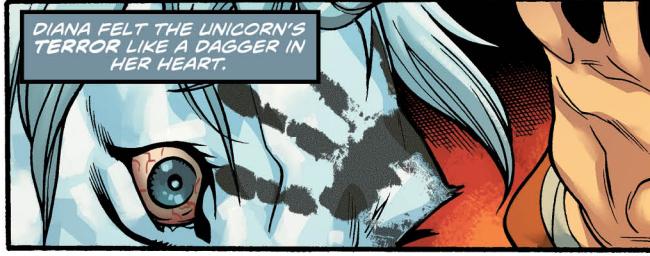
YEAH, YEAH. I'VE GOT JUST THE HEX FOR THE OCCASION.



SOMNUS.



DIANA FELT THE UNICORN'S TERROR LIKE A DAGGER IN HER HEART.





HOLD THE CREATURE STEADY NOW, DOCTOR HOLLAND. I THINK I CAN BRING IT DOWN WITH AN OLD FORMULA OF MINE...

I BELIEVE BATMAN ONCE USED IT TO KNOCK OUT SOLOMON GRUNDY.



MAGIC HAD KEPT IT SAFE FOR SO MANY YEARS, BUT NOW, WITHOUT WARNING, IT HAD TURNED ON THE POOR CREATURE.



IT HAD THOUGHT IT UNDERSTOOD THE RULES OF ITS WORLD, BUT NOW MAGIC WAS PULLING IT INEXORABLY TOWARD HORROR.



THIS IS WRONG.

LOOK, DI... IF WE DON'T SUCCEED AT THIS, THERE AREN'T GOING TO BE ANY MORE UNICORNS...

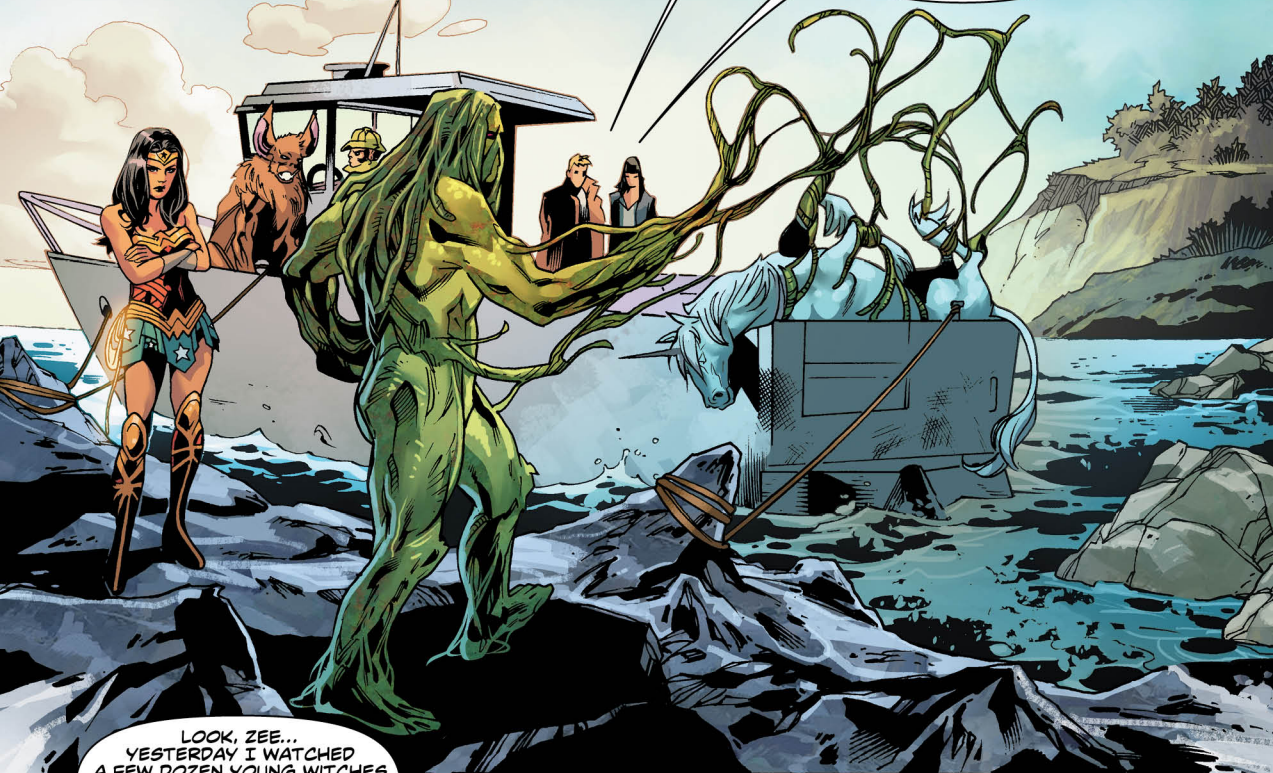
I KNOW, BOBO. BUT STILL... LOOK HOW FRIGHTENED IT IS. THIS IS ALL WRONG.

THEY REALLY ARE QUITE BEAUTIFUL, AREN'T THEY?

I THINK I'M JUST ABOUT COMING AROUND ON THE WORK OF LISA FRANK. HONEST.

JOHN.
I KNOW.
I KNOW.

I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE. WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND THE ELYSIAN HERD WITHOUT YOUR NETWORK OF UNDERWORLD CONTACTS IN EUROPE, BUT IF YOU WANT TO GET OFF NOW, I WON'T HOLD IT AGAINST YOU.



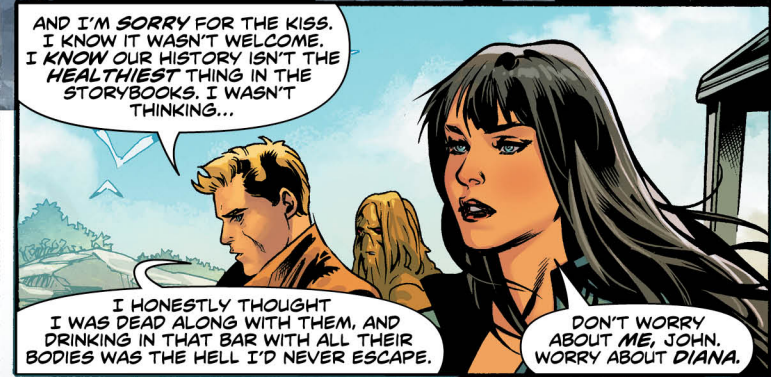
LOOK, ZEE... YESTERDAY I WATCHED A FEW DOZEN YOUNG WITCHES LIGHT UP LIKE A BONFIRE, JUST BECAUSE A TWISTED OLD GOD WANTED TO THROW HER WEIGHT AROUND.

I WAS THERE, AND I SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PROTECT THEM, BUT I COULDN'T... THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY PEOPLE IN MY LIFE I'VE ALMOST SAVED, ZEE. I HAVE TO MAKE IT RIGHT.

AND I'M SORRY FOR THE KISS. I KNOW IT WASN'T WELCOME. I KNOW OUR HISTORY ISN'T THE HEALTHIEST THING IN THE STORYBOOKS. I WASN'T THINKING...

I HONESTLY THOUGHT I WAS DEAD ALONG WITH THEM, AND DRINKING IN THAT BAR WITH ALL THEIR BODIES WAS THE HELL I'D NEVER ESCAPE.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, JOHN. WORRY ABOUT DIANA.



AYE. SHE'S STARTING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE COST OF MAGIC FEELS LIKE. SHE'D BEEN TOLD HOW IT MUDDIES UP YOUR WORLD, BUT SHE NEVER FELT IT BEFORE NOW.

SHE'S GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN FAST...

IF SHE DOESN'T, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HOPE WE HAVE.



IN ALL OF DIANA'S YEARS ON THE ISLAND OF THEMYSKIRA AND ABROAD, SHE HAD NEVER FELT AFRAID OF HERSELF BEFORE.

SHE KNEW THE KIND OF WOMAN SHE WAS, AND HER PLACE IN THE WORLD. HER PASSION AND DRIVE BURNED BRIGHT, A COMPASS ALWAYS POINTING TRUE NORTH.

IT FELT NOW LIKE SOMEONE HAD REWRITTEN HER STORY. THERE WAS A POWER HIDDEN INSIDE HER CAPABLE OF SUCH DESTRUCTION. A POWER SHE COULD BARELY CONTROL.

SHE FELT IT IN HER FOREHEAD, POUNDING AN ARCAINE RHYTHM JUST BEYOND HER COMPREHENSION.

ALL RIGHT, WE'RE COMING UP ON THE ISLAND NOW. BRACE YOURSELVES. THERE'S NO TELLING HOW WEIRD THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET.

SAYS THE TALKING CHIMP DRIVING THE BOAT FULLA MONSTERS...

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE'LL DO WITH THE POOR THING?

I DON'T THINK ANY OF US WANT THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION.

SHE HAD BEEN MARKED AS A YOUNG GIRL. THE MEMORIES WERE CLEARER NOW THAN THEY HAD BEEN IN YEARS...



HECATE HAD FORGED HER INTO A WEAPON FOR AN UNKNOWN AND DANGEROUS PURPOSE. THE POWER INSIDE OF HER THREATENED TO RIP THE WORLD OF MAGIC APART AND END IT.

SHE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THIS. SHE **COULD** NOT. SHE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO CHANGE THE PATH THAT HECATE HAD MADE FOR HER.

EVEN TURN TO A DARK CORNER OF THE WORLD WHOSE SHORES SHE HAD SWORN NEVER TO WALK AGAIN.