



APPROVED  
BY THE  
COMICS  
CODE  
AUTHORITY

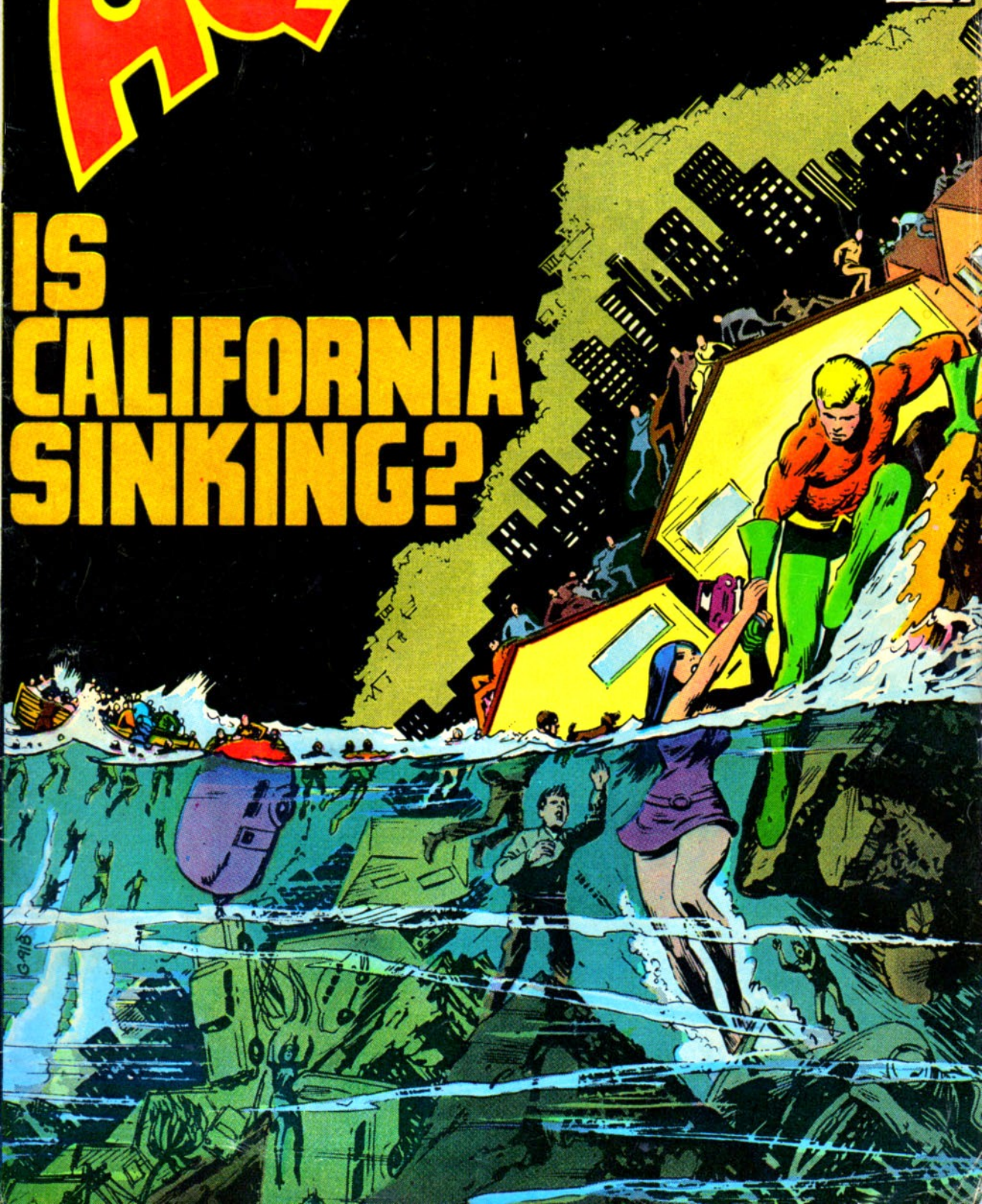
OCT.

NO. 53

15¢

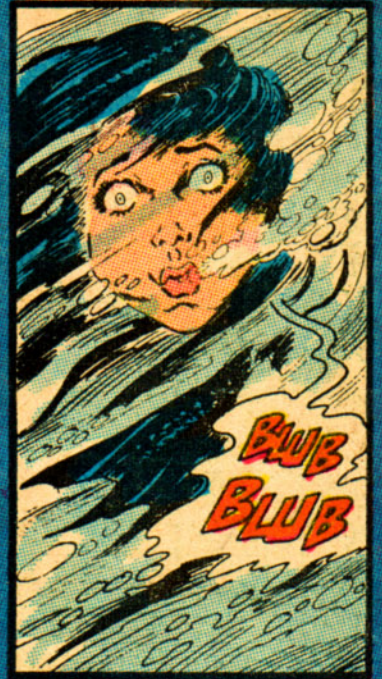
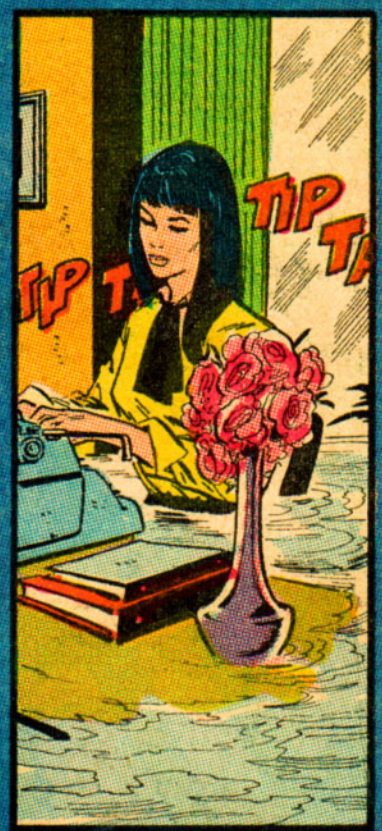
# AQUAMAN

## IS CALIFORNIA SINKING?





# AQUAMAN



6-647

AQUAMAN, No. 53, Sept.-Oct., 1970. Published bi-monthly by NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC., 2nd & Dickey Sts., Sparta, Ill. 62286. EDITORIAL, EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 909 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Dick Giordano, Editor. Carmine Infantino, Editorial Director. Second Class Postage Paid at New York and other mailing offices. No subscriptions. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 41 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Copyright © National Periodical Publications, Inc., 1970. All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No actual persons, living or dead, are intended or should be inferred.

"This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition, nor affixed to, nor as part of any advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever." Printed in U.S.A.





PRODUCED BY  
S.A.G.



OUR STORY BEGINS  
HERE... IN THE HOME  
OF CALIFORNIA  
MILLIONAIRE, ELIOT  
HARLANSON--

--AND THAT'S WHAT WILL  
HAPPEN--ALL OVER CALIFORNIA!  
THE **WHOLE STATE**--INCLUDING  
YOUR FANTASTIC, SPACIOUS  
HOME HERE-- WILL SINK  
TO THE OCEAN FLOOR!

MY  
HOME ??

NO! NO! THIS MUSTN'T  
HAPPEN! NOT TO MY HOME!  
I'VE SPENT MILLIONS  
ON THIS PLACE!

ELIOT, DEAR--  
DON'T GET **EXCITED**!  
REMEMBER YOUR **ULCER**!

WHY? WHY IS THIS  
GOING TO HAPPEN ??

I-- I'VE ALREADY  
**TOLD YOU--**

THE GREATEST MYSTICS OF  
OUR AGE HAVE PREDICTED  
THAT SOON ATLANTIS WILL  
RISE! AND WHEN IT DOES,  
CALIFORNIA WILL SINK TO  
THE OCEAN FLOOR!

IT'S NATURE'S  
WAY OF KEEPING  
THINGS IN THEIR  
PROPER BALANCE!

BUT--BUT  
WHAT CAN  
I DO ??

YOU CAN BUY AN  
**A-BOMB**! AND  
USE IT TO MAKE  
**SURE** THAT  
ATLANTIS  
DOESN'T RISE!

AN  
**A-BOMB**  
??

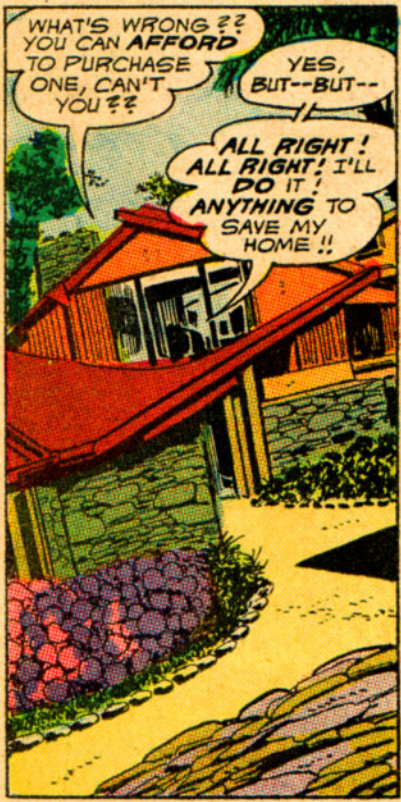




YES! AS YOU KNOW I'M A SCIENTIST! AND I'M CERTAIN OF ONE THING-- IF AN ATOMIC MISSILE IS DROPPED ON ATLANTIS, IT WILL NOT RISE!

AND THEREBY, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT CALIFORNIA WILL NOT SINK!

BUT--AN A-BOMB!? I--I DON'T KNOW--



WHAT'S WRONG ?? YOU CAN AFFORD TO PURCHASE ONE, CAN'T YOU ??

YES, BUT--BUT--

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL DO IT! ANYTHING TO SAVE MY HOME !!



SHORTLY... NOT FAR FROM THE MILLIONAIRE'S HOME...

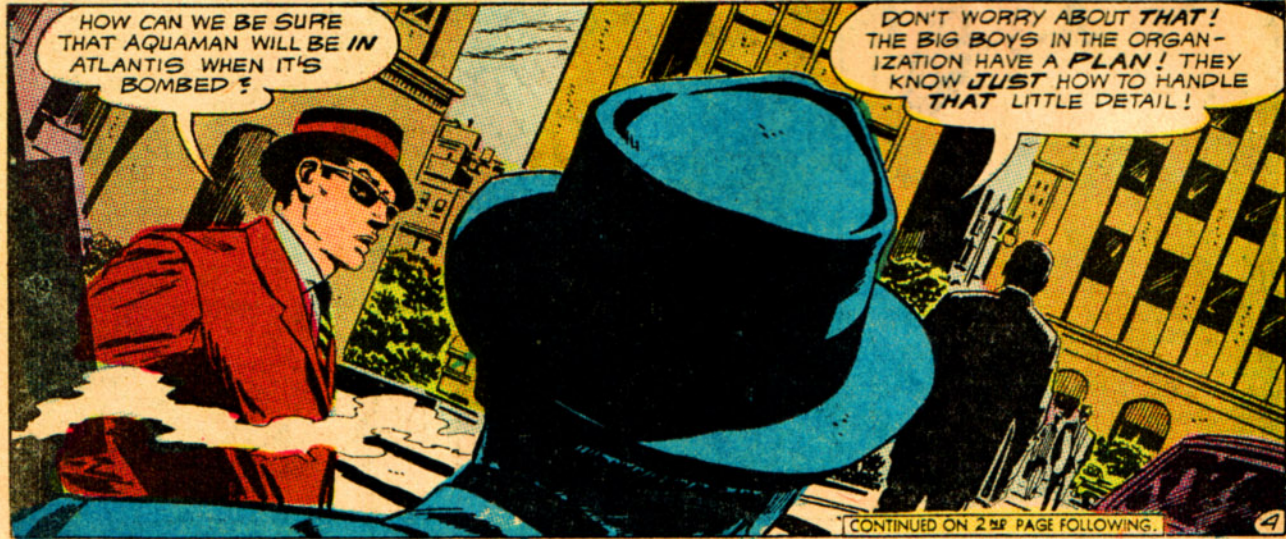
HOW'D IT GO, MAN?

GROOVY! HARLANSON BOUGHT THE STORY! HE ACTUALLY THINKS I'M FROM SOME SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE! HE'S GOING TO BUY THE BOMB!



AH, THAT'S BEAUTIFUL, BABY! O.G.R.E. DOESN'T HAVE THE RESOURCES, NOR THE CONNECTIONS, TO BUY AN A-BOMB! BUT WITH HARLANSON'S HELP, WE CAN BLOW ATLANTIS TO KINGDOM COME!

AND WITH AQUAMAN OUT OF THE WAY, O.G.R.E. WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE AT ALL IN TAKING OVER AND CONTROLLING THE WHOLE OCEAN FLOOR!



HOW CAN WE BE SURE THAT AQUAMAN WILL BE IN ATLANTIS WHEN IT'S BOMBED?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! THE BIG BOYS IN THE ORGANIZATION HAVE A PLAN! THEY KNOW JUST HOW TO HANDLE THAT LITTLE DETAIL!

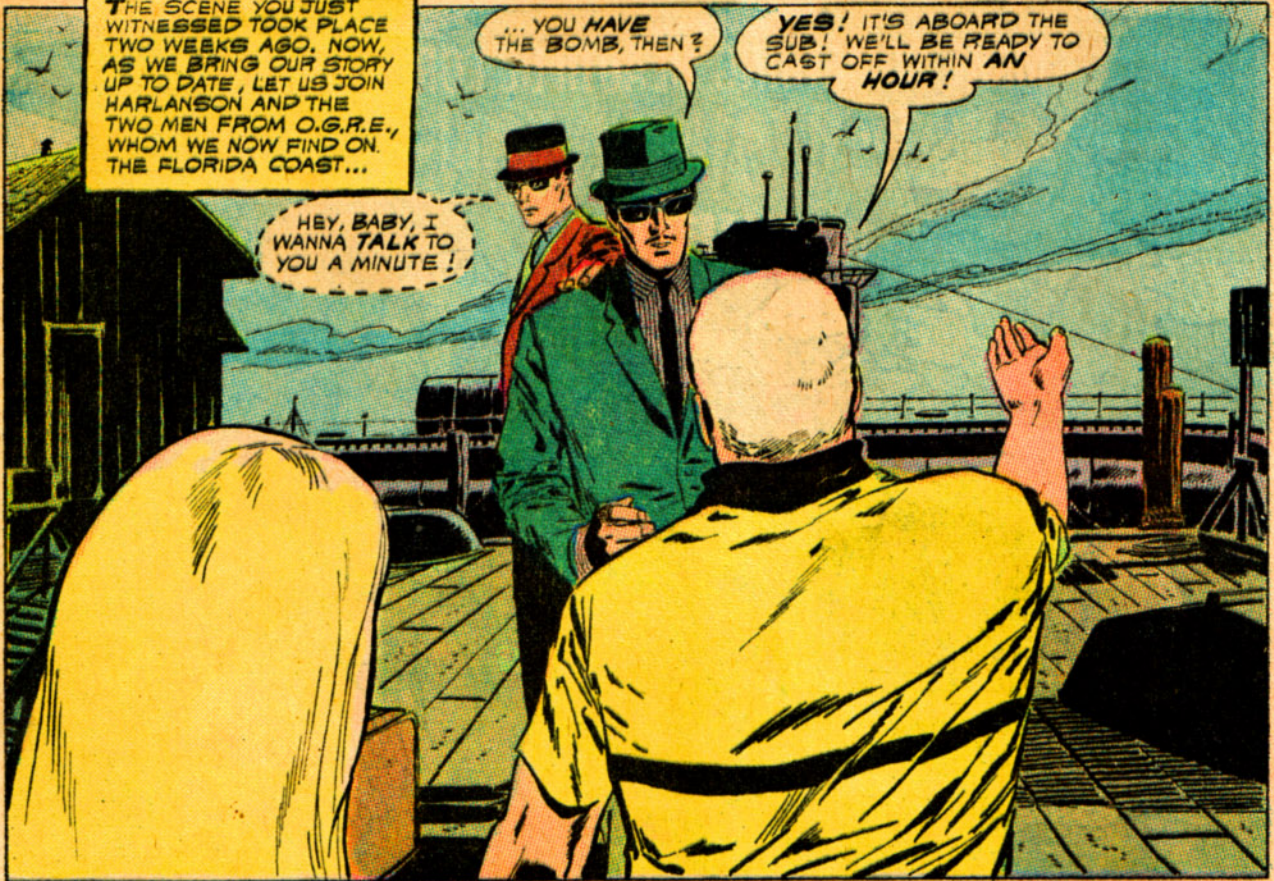


THE SCENE YOU JUST WITNESSED TOOK PLACE TWO WEEKS AGO. NOW, AS WE BRING OUR STORY UP TO DATE, LET US JOIN HARLANSON AND THE TWO MEN FROM O.G.R.E., WHOM WE NOW FIND ON THE FLORIDA COAST...

... YOU HAVE THE BOMB, THEN ?

YES ! IT'S ABOARD THE SUB ! WE'LL BE READY TO CAST OFF WITHIN AN HOUR !

HEY, BABY, I WANNA TALK TO YOU A MINUTE !



SAY-- ABOUT MAKING SURE AQUAMAN WILL BE IN ATLANTIS...

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU NOT TO GET UPSET ABOUT THAT...



BUT IF YOU **MUST** KNOW-- THE BIG BOYS CONTACTED ONE OF AQUAMAN'S OLD FOES, **BLACK MANTA**...

THEY DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT **THE BOMB**, BUT THEY DID SUPPLY HIM WITH A CERTAIN WEAPON, WITH WHICH THE FOOL THINKS HE CAN DEFEAT **AQUAMAN** !



RIGHT NOW, MANTA IS PROBABLY ATTACKING AQUAMAN ! AQUAMAN WILL BE **ENGAGED IN BATTLE** WHEN THE BOMB IS DROPPED !

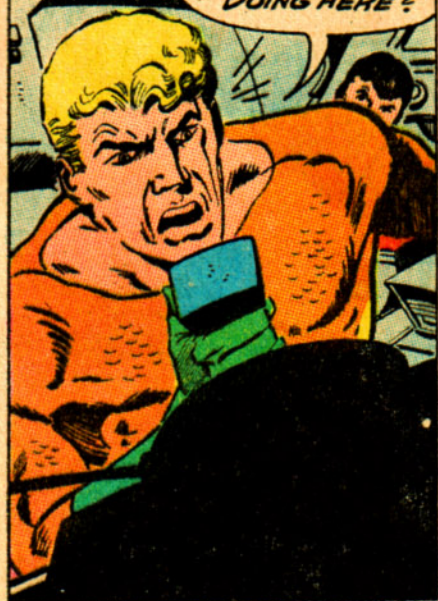
HE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT HIM--



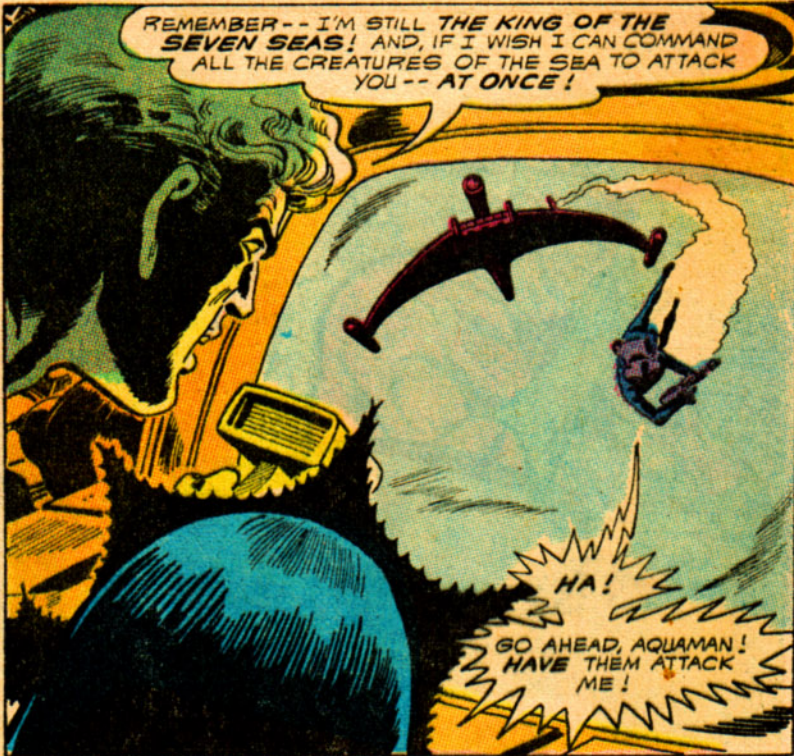


MEANTIME -- FAR BELOW ON THE OCEAN'S FLOOR...

ALL RIGHT, MANTA! TALK AND TALK NOW! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



REMEMBER -- I'M STILL THE KING OF THE SEVEN SEAS! AND, IF I WISH I CAN COMMAND ALL THE CREATURES OF THE SEA TO ATTACK YOU -- AT ONCE!



I'LL BE ABLE TO FEND THEM OFF QUITE EASILY - WITH THIS!

THAT?? A SINGLE WEAPON ... AGAINST A WHOLE ARMY OF FISH?



... DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, MANTA!

OKAY, AQUAMAN! TRY ME!



HE'S TRYING TO BAIT ME! HE WANTS ME TO HAVE THE FISH ATTACK HIM!

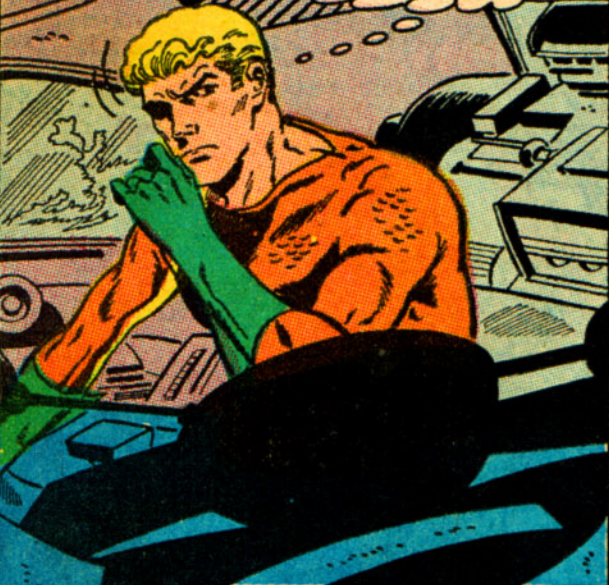
WHAT'S HE UP TO??





OH WELL... I GUESS THERE'S ONLY **ONE** WAY TO FIND OUT! I'LL PLAY ALONG WITH HIS SILLY GAME!

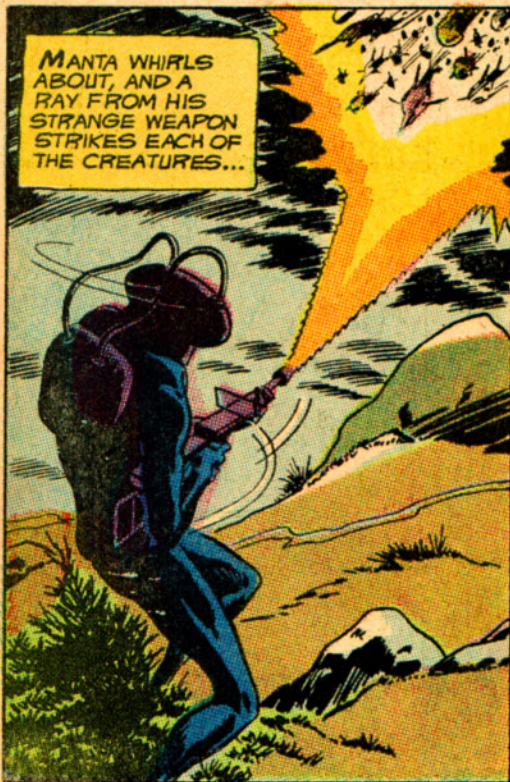
AND SO, THE SEA KING CONCENTRATES... AND TELEPATHIC EMANATIONS BEGIN TO RADIATE FROM HIS BRAIN...



THEN, CREATURES FROM ALL OVER THE SEA BEGIN TO CHARGE AQUAMAN'S SUPREMELY CONFIDENT FOE...



MANTA WHIRLS ABOUT, AND A RAY FROM HIS STRANGE WEAPON STRIKES EACH OF THE CREATURES...

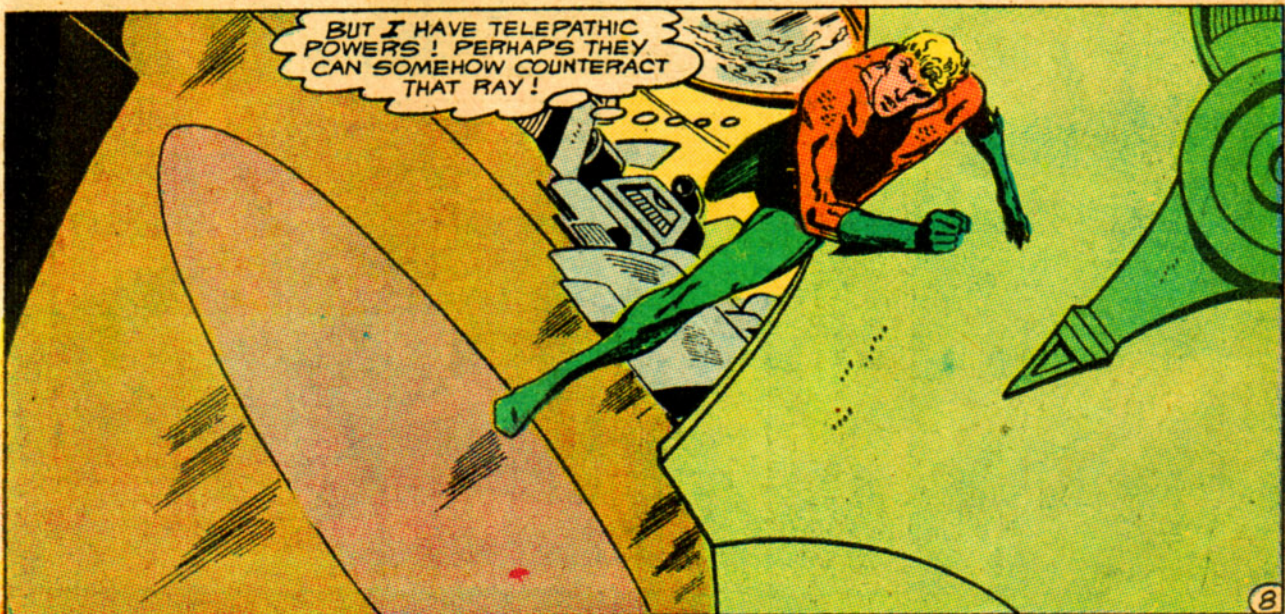
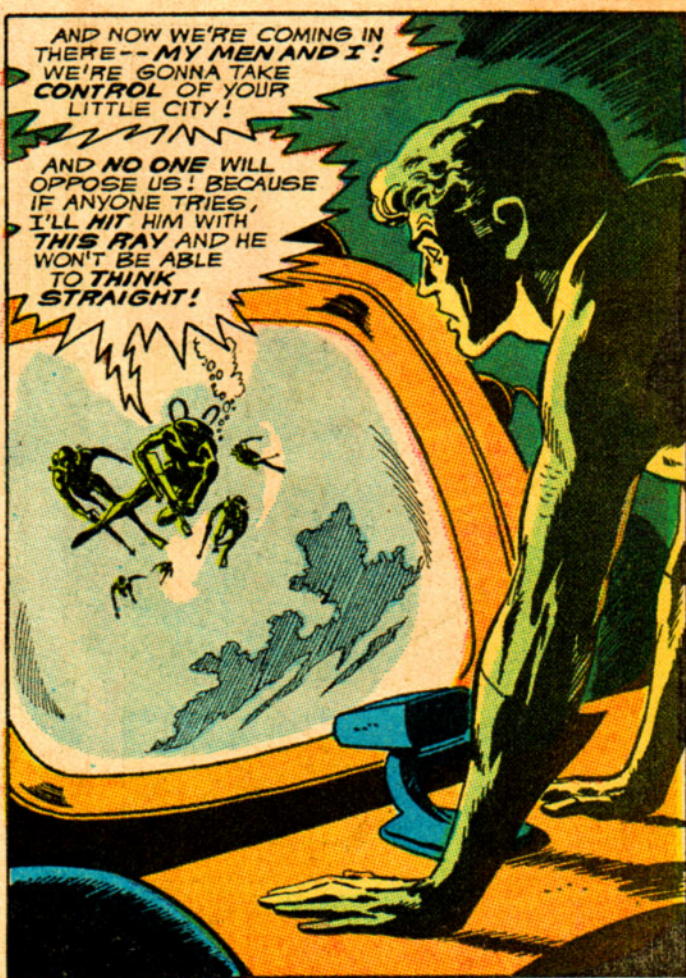
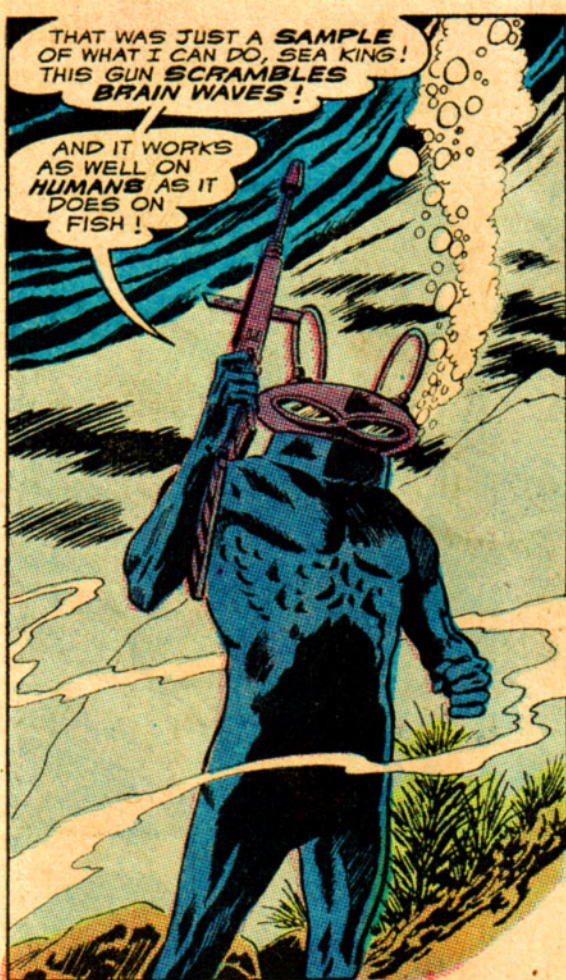


THEN-- **CONFUSION!**

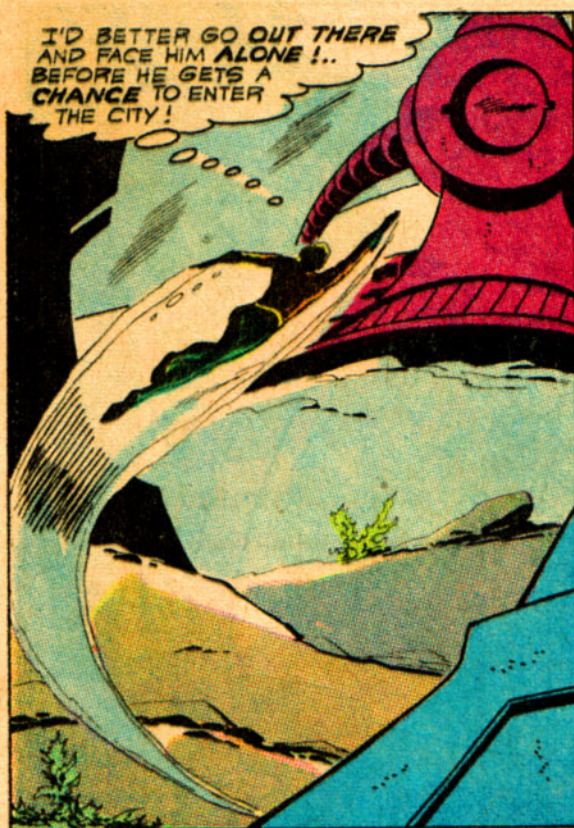


HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO THE SEA CREATURES! THEY'RE NO LONGER ATTACKING! THEY'RE SWIMMING IN ALL DIRECTIONS!!

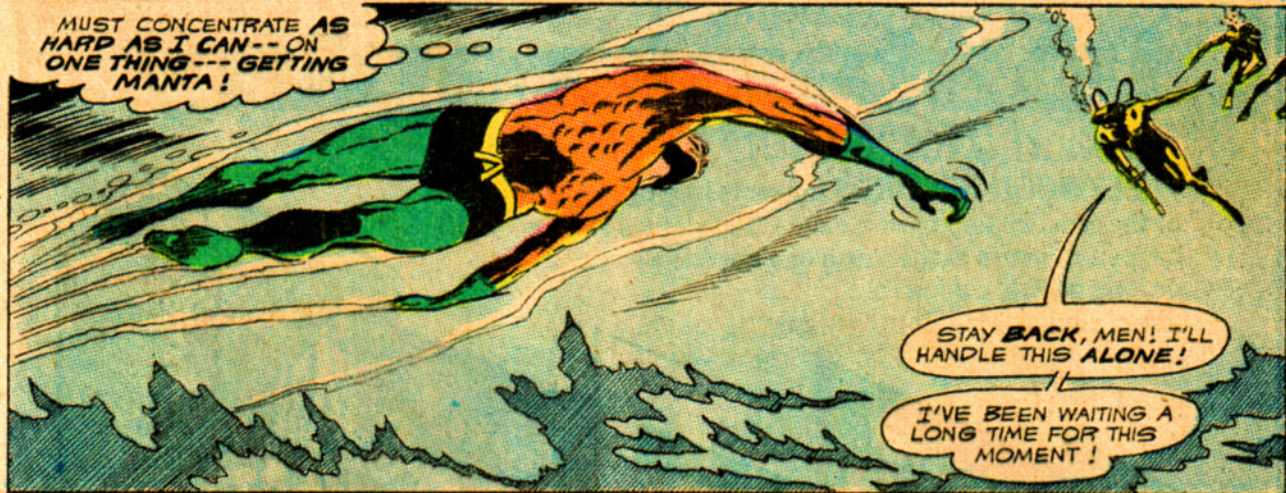






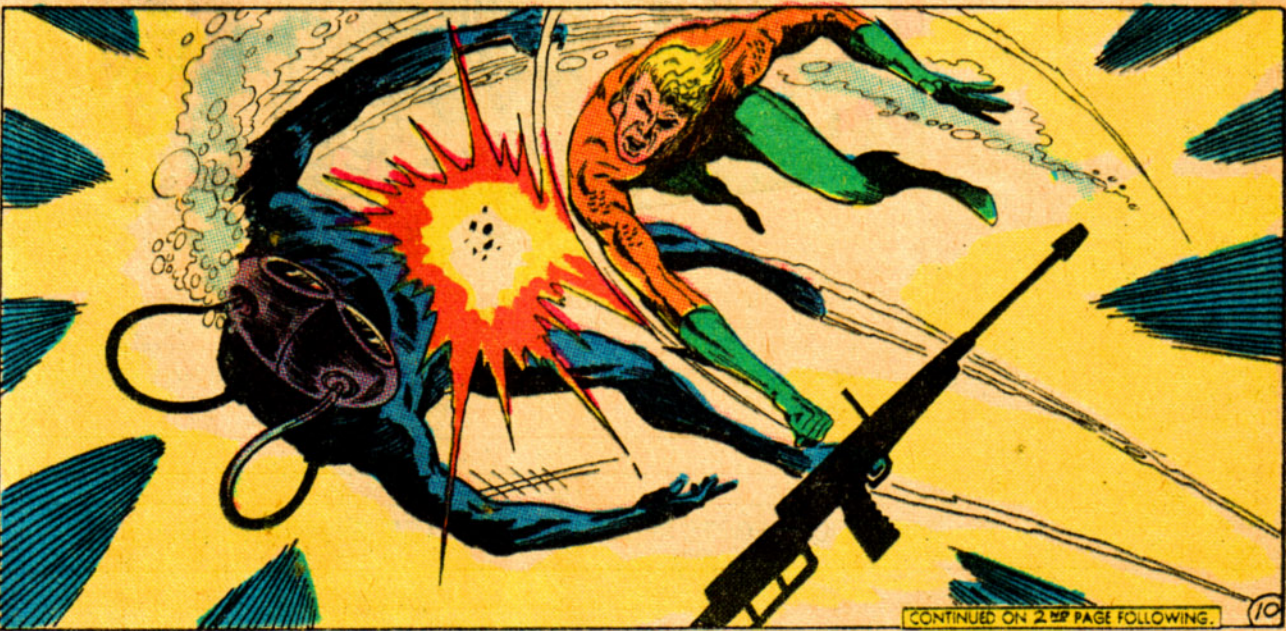
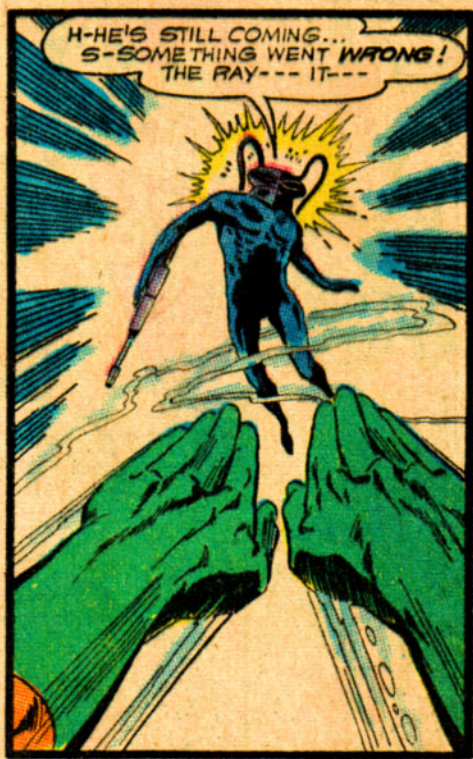




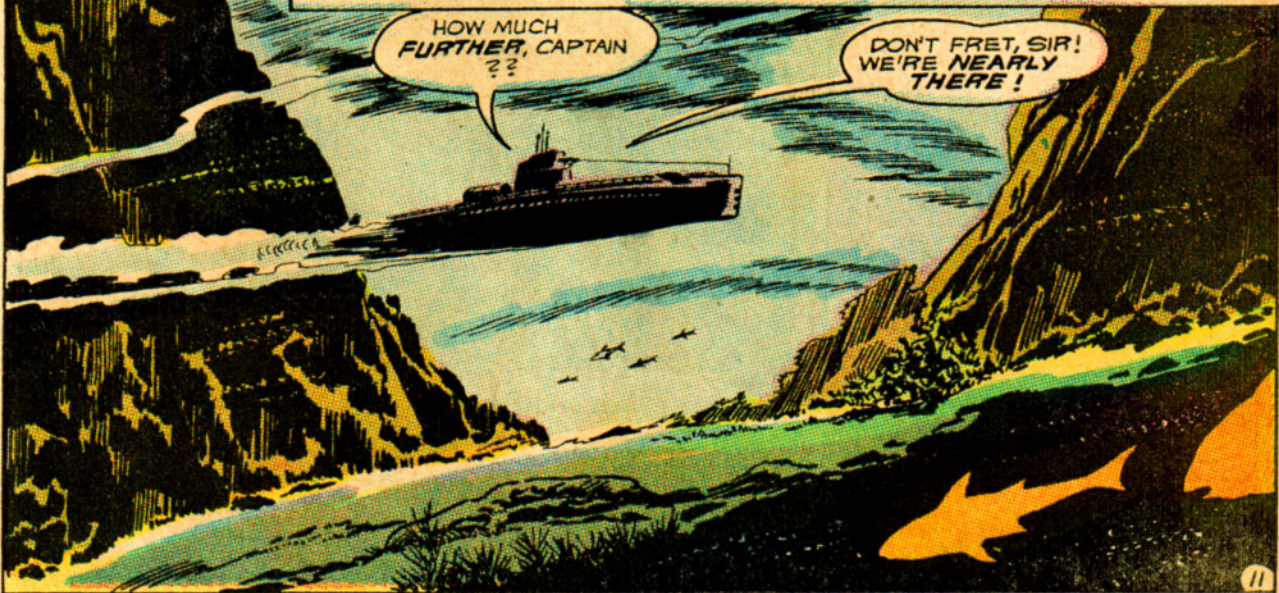
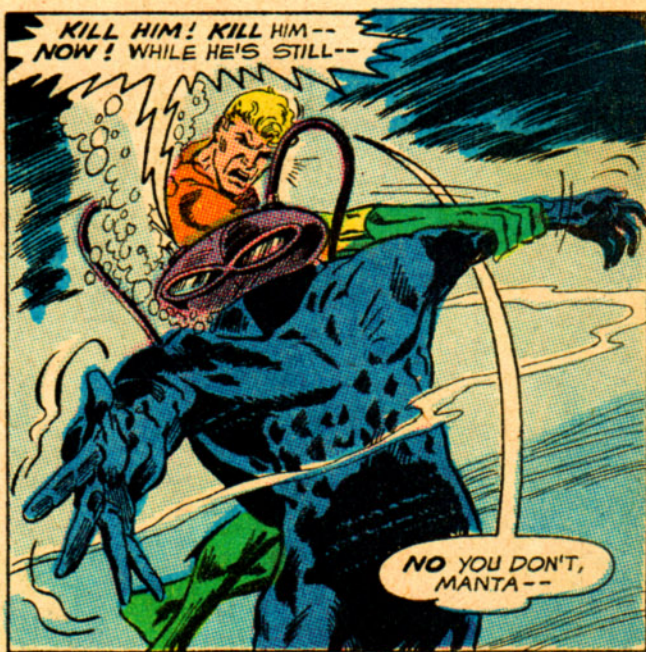


STAY **BACK**, MEN! I'LL HANDLE THIS **ALONE**!

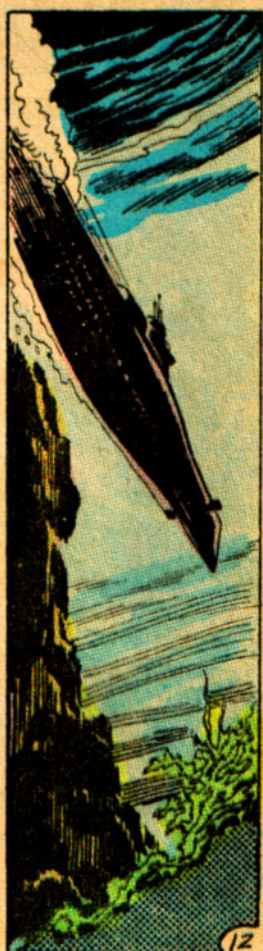
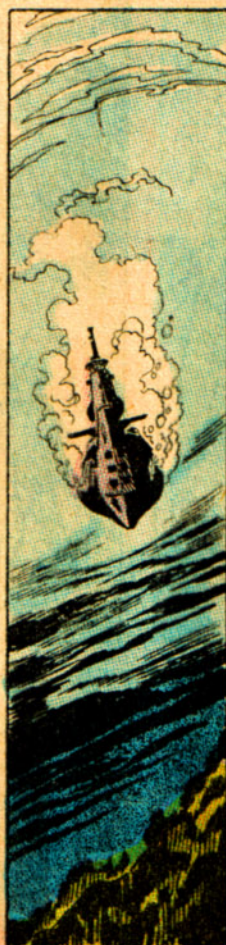
I'VE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME FOR THIS MOMENT!















O.G.R.E.?? YOU'RE PUTTING ME ON, MANTA! THEY WOULDN'T BE MIXED UP IN SOMETHING AS PETTY AS THIS!

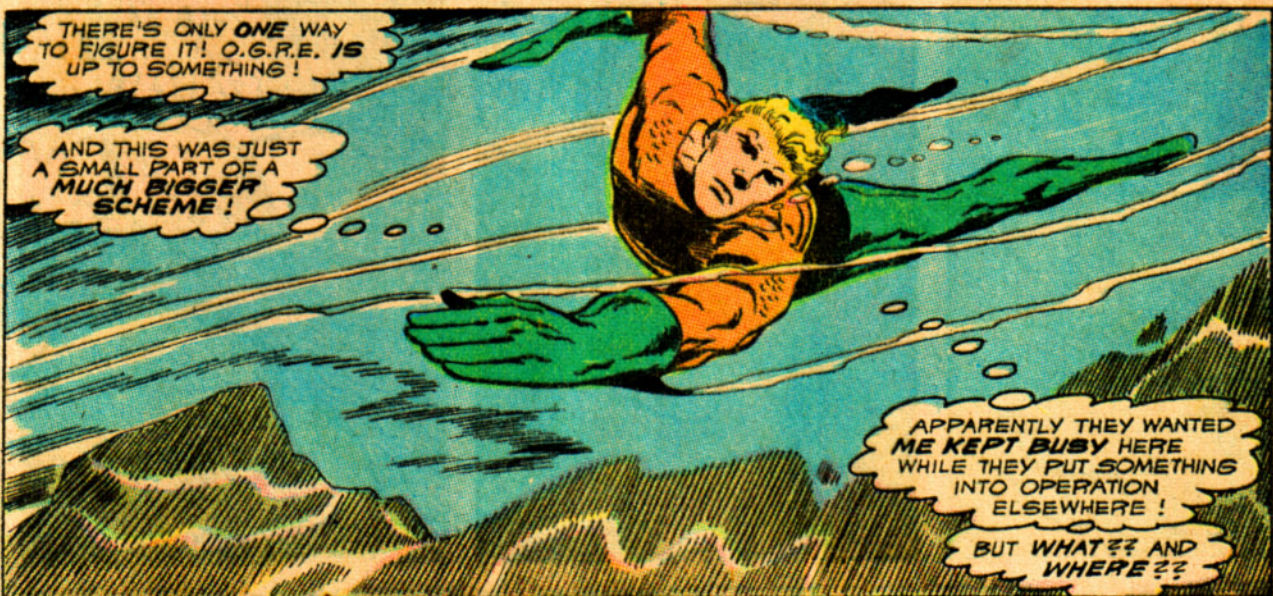
...UNLESS...



AQUALAD! GUARD MANTA TILL I GET BACK!

THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST ATTEND TO... IMMEDIATELY!!

CHECK!

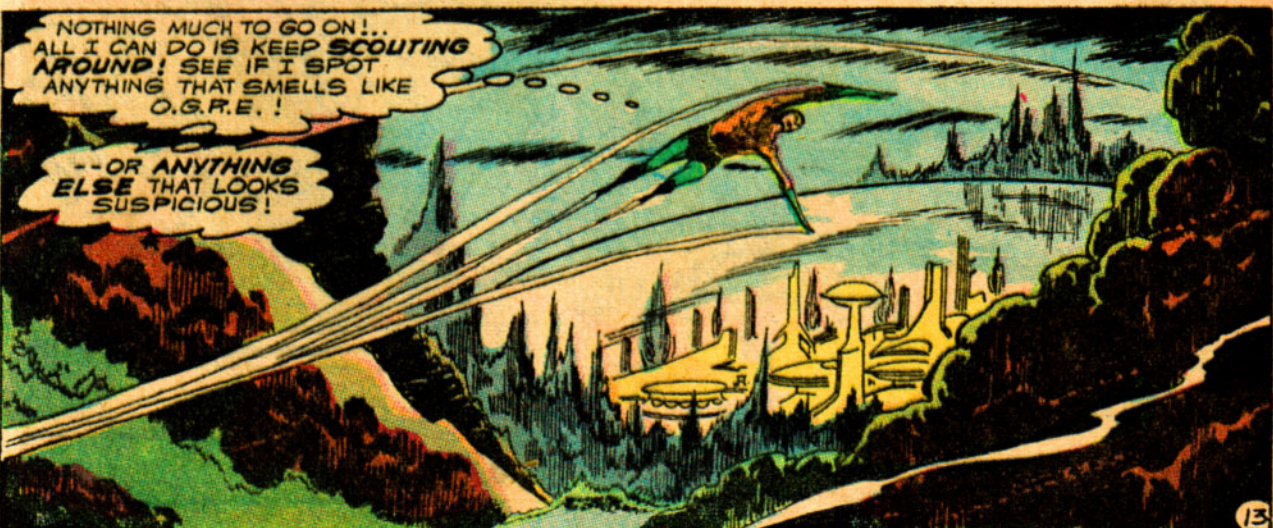


THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIGURE IT! O.G.R.E. IS UP TO SOMETHING!

AND THIS WAS JUST A SMALL PART OF A MUCH BIGGER SCHEME!

APPARENTLY THEY WANTED ME KEPT BUSY HERE WHILE THEY PUT SOMETHING INTO OPERATION ELSEWHERE!

BUT WHAT?? AND WHERE??



NOTHING MUCH TO GO ON!... ALL I CAN DO IS KEEP SCOUTING AROUND! SEE IF I SPOT ANYTHING THAT SMELLS LIKE O.G.R.E.!

--OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT LOOKS SUSPICIOUS!



AND, AT THAT SAME MOMENT, ALONG THE FLORIDA COAST...

HEY, MAN-- WHY ARE WE JUST STANDING AROUND? WHY DON'T WE GET BACK TO THE "OFFICE"?

THE BIG BOYS WANT US TO STAY HERE... JUST TO MAKE SURE HARLANSON DOESN'T CHICKEN-OUT AND COME BACK WITHOUT US HEARING A BIG EXPLOSION!

AND WHAT EXPLOSION MIGHT THAT BE?

HUNH??

UH-OH! GOVERNMENT AGENTS!

HUNT COVER!

STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, BOYS! DON'T MOVE OR WE'LL SHOOT!

OKAY, YOU ASKED FOR THIS!

BLAM  
BLAM  
BLAM

Whew!! ALMOST GOT ME ON THAT ONE!

HEY! GRAB YOUR GUN, BABY, AND SHOOT BACK!

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO BE TAKEN! WE'RE WANTED FOR EVERYTHING FROM GENOCIDE TO JAY-WALKING!





I'M GONNA BLAST THE-- UNNGH!!



GOT HIM! THAT'S ONE DOWN!

GOOD WORK! THE PRESIDENT'D BE PROUD OF YOU!

ALL RIGHT IN THERE...



...GIVE IT UP! C'MON OUT WITH YOUR HANDS HIGH! YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE-- ALONE!

OKAY, BABY, OKAY! DON'T GET UP-TIGHT! I KNOW WHEN I'M LICKED!



IT'S ALL OVER, PUNK!

WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU TWO FOR SOME TIME NOW! BUT THIS IS THE FIRST CHANCE WE'VE HAD TO MOVE IN ON YOU!

WELL, YOU MADE YOUR MOVE TOO LATE, FUZZ!



YOU MAY HAVE CAUGHT UP TO US! BUT YOU CAN'T STOP THE PLAN! IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT!

ANY SECOND NOW, ALL OF ATLANTIS WILL BE DESTROYED! AND AQUAMAN WILL BE FINISHED TOO!

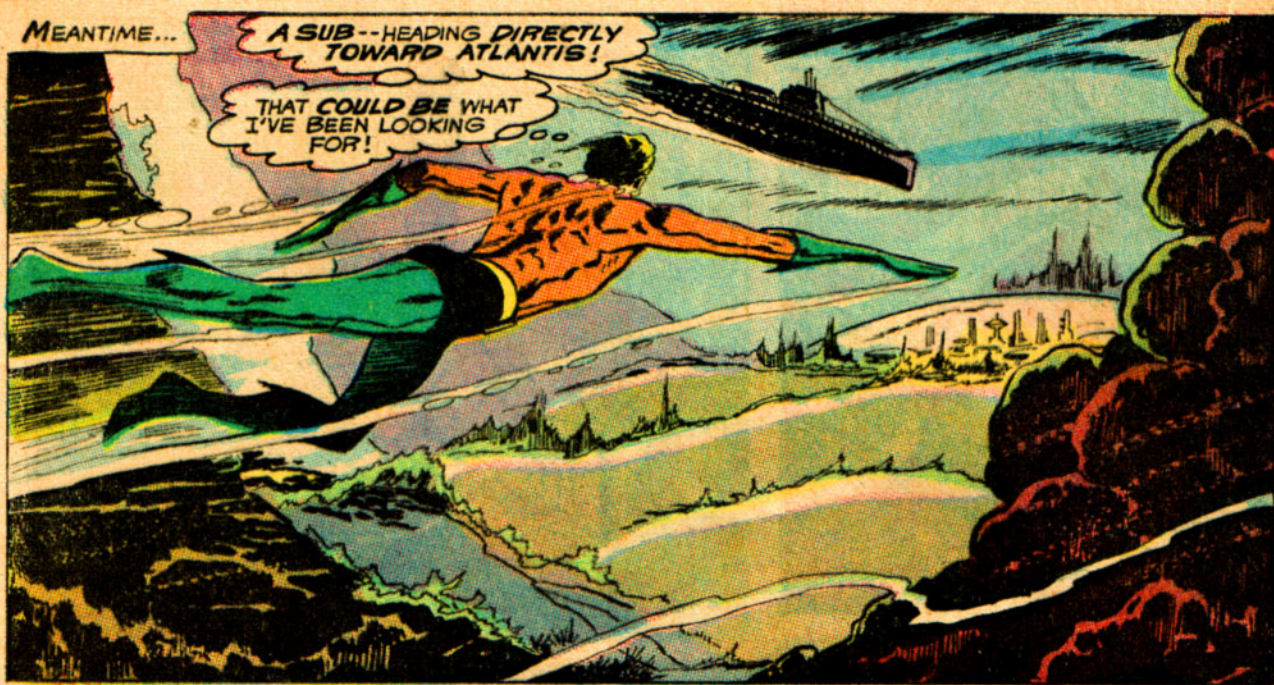
AND, BABY, YOU JUST AIN'T GONNA BE ABLE TO DO A THING ABOUT IT!



MEANTIME...

A SUB--HEADING DIRECTLY  
TOWARD ATLANTIS!

THAT COULD BE WHAT  
I'VE BEEN LOOKING  
FOR!

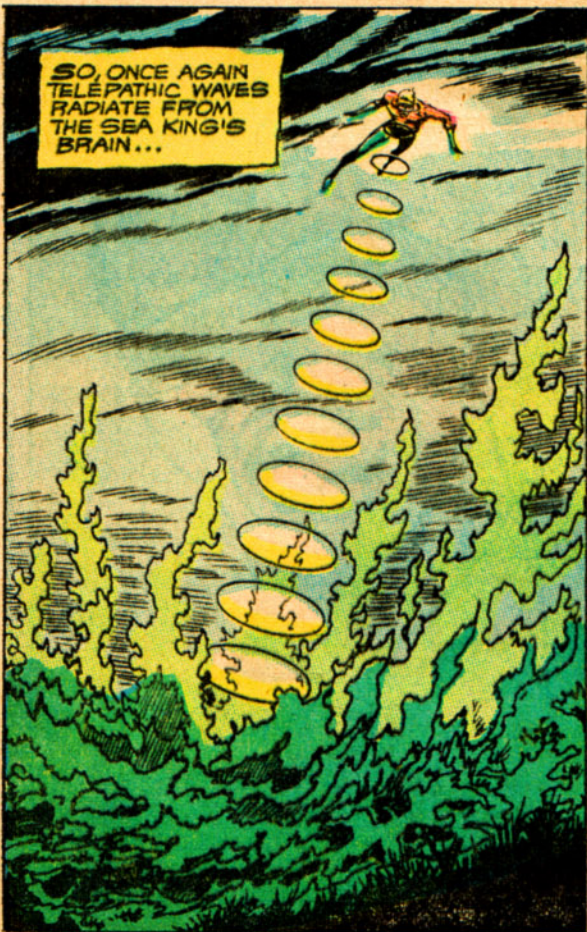


THAT SUB SHOWING UP HERE  
AND NOW COULD BE COINCIDENCE  
BUT I'M NOT TAKING ANY  
CHANCES!

I'M GONNA STOP THE  
SUB AND FIND OUT WHAT  
THEY'RE DOING IN THIS  
PART OF THE OCEAN!



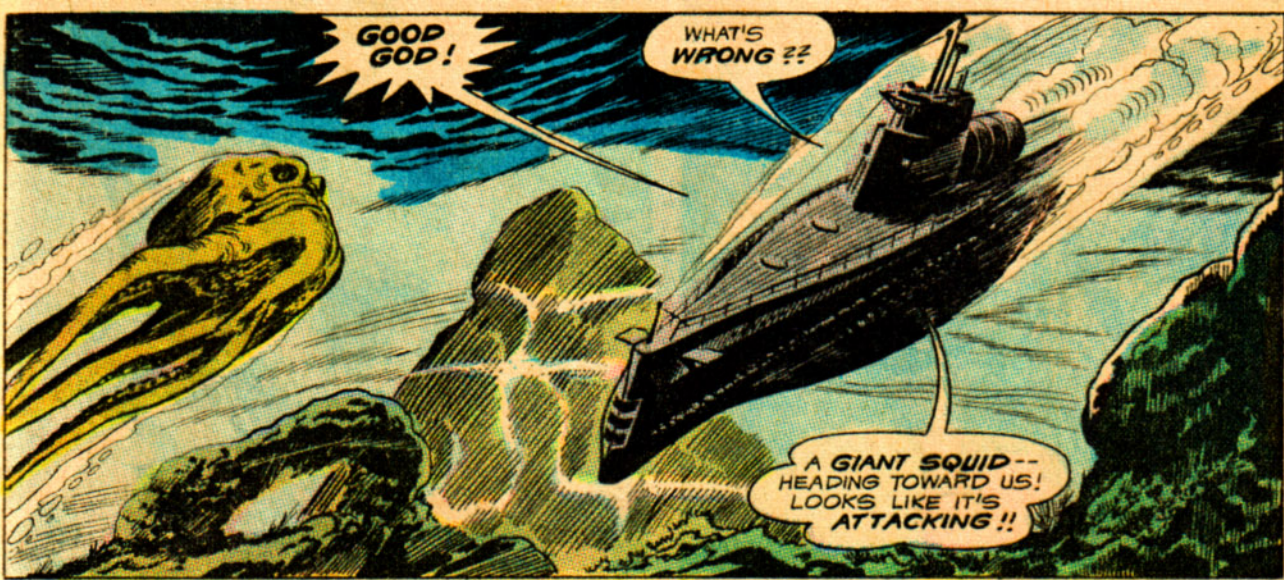
SO, ONCE AGAIN  
TELEPATHIC WAVES  
RADIATE FROM  
THE SEA KING'S  
BRAIN...



AND SHORTLY, FROM  
OUT OF AN OCTOPUS'S  
GARDEN A GIANT SQUID  
STREAKS UPWARD...!











DO SOMETHING, YOU IMBECILE! GET THAT BEAST OFF OF US AND GET THIS TUB MOVING!

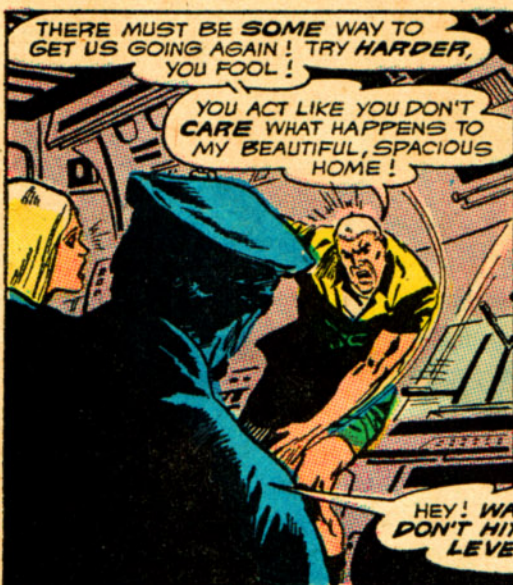
I CAN'T!  
THE SQUID'S HOLDING US TOO TIGHTLY!  
WE'VE BEEN STOPPED!



STOPPED??

BUT WE CAN'T BE STOPPED!  
NOT NOW!

ELIOT, DARLING--  
DON'T GET YOURSELF ALL WORKED UP!



THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO GET US GOING AGAIN! TRY HARDER, YOU FOOL!

YOU ACT LIKE YOU DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO MY BEAUTIFUL, SPACIOUS HOME!

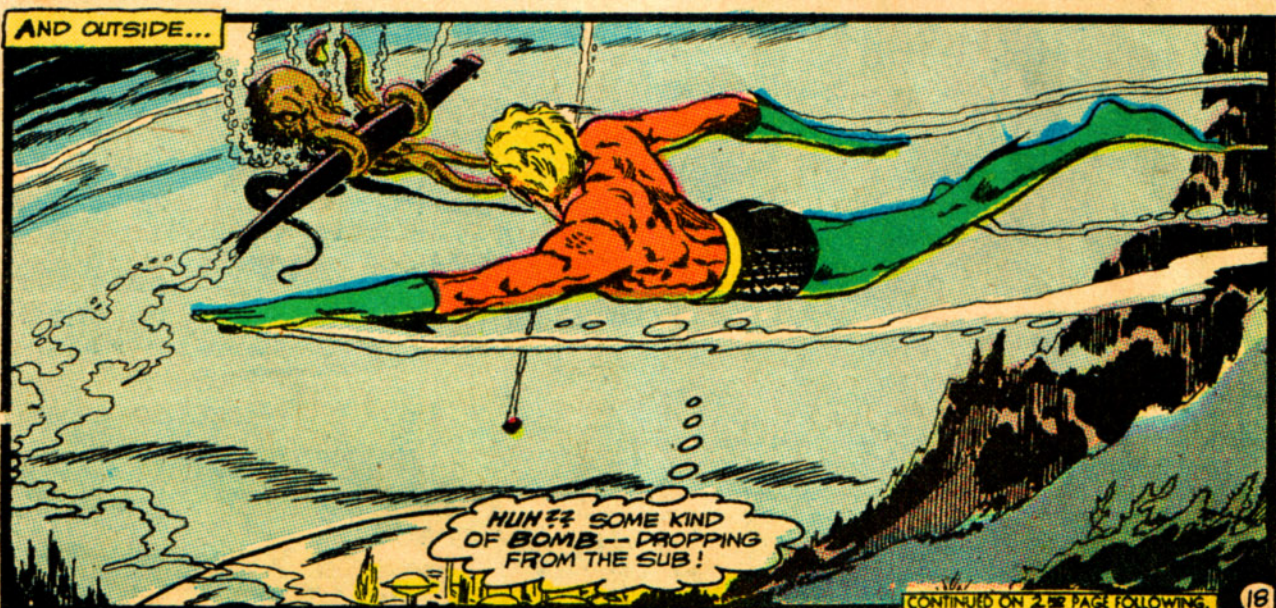
HEY! WATCH IT!  
DON'T HIT THAT LEVER!!



GOOD GOD! YOU PRESSED THE LEVER!

SO WHAT?!

WHAT LEVER IS IT??  
WHAT DOES IT DO??



AND OUTSIDE...

HUNEE SOME KIND OF BOMB--  
DROPPING FROM THE SUB!

CONTINUED ON 232 PAGE FOLLOWING.



# MAJOR LEAGUE OFFER FROM CLARK BARS!

The **OFFICIAL CANDY** of the Major  
League Baseball Players Association.

## NOW...YOUR OWN MAJOR LEAGUE TEE SHIRT!



**+ \$1<sup>00</sup>**

JUST 2 CLARK BAR  
WRAPPERS PLUS \$1.00

### PICK YOUR FAVORITE MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM!

Now you can play ball the big league way . . . with your own team's tee shirt. Your favorite team's insignia is on the front. And you get letters and numerals to iron on your own name and number. So play ball! Shirts are white cotton knit with ribbed crew neck. Sturdy, comfortable and easy to wash after every game. Order yours just as fast as you can eat two delicious Clark Bars. Remember . . . save the wrappers, add a dollar, and send it in with the coupon below. We'll send your special Major League Tee Shirt right away.

### WIN WITH CLARK BARS...

The **OFFICIAL CANDY** of the  
Major League Baseball Players!



THE D. L. CLARK COMPANY  
Pittsburgh, Pa. • Evanston, Ill.

#### CLARK BASEBALL TEE SHIRT OFFER

ALLISON P.O. BOX 179 • Allentown, Pa. 18105

I enclose \$1.00 plus 2 Clark Bar wrappers. (No stamps or coins please). Please send me my Baseball Tee Shirt with full color insignia of the Major League Team I have indicated.

WRITE NUMBER of TEAM  
INSIGNIA IN THIS BOX

CHECK SIZE ☐ SMALL ☐ MEDIUM ☐ LARGE

AGES 4-7 8-11 12-15

NAME

please print

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Offer void where restricted by law. This offer is subject to withdrawal or modification at any time.





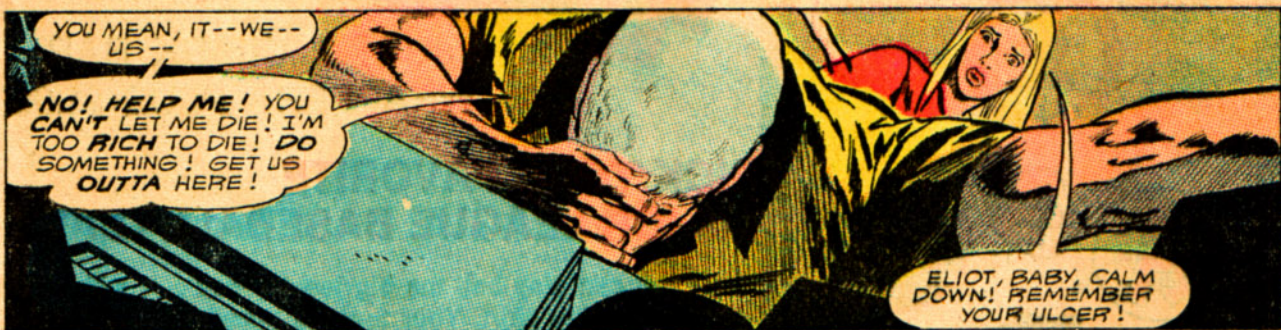
YOU... YOU MEAN I  
LET IT LOOSE ??

Y-YES... AND WE'RE  
T-TOO CLOSE TO THE  
BOTTOM! WHEN THE  
BOMB GOES OFF, W-WE'LL  
BE BLOWN TO  
P-PIECES !!



THEN HEAD FOR THE  
SURFACE -- WHILE THERE'S  
STILL TIME !

I CAN'T, YOU  
IDIOT! I'VE  
ALREADY TOLD  
YOU -- THE SQUID  
IS HOLDING US  
TOO TIGHT!



YOU MEAN, IT--WE--  
US--

NO! HELP ME! YOU  
CAN'T LET ME DIE! I'M  
TOO RICH TO DIE! DO  
SOMETHING! GET US  
OUTTA HERE!

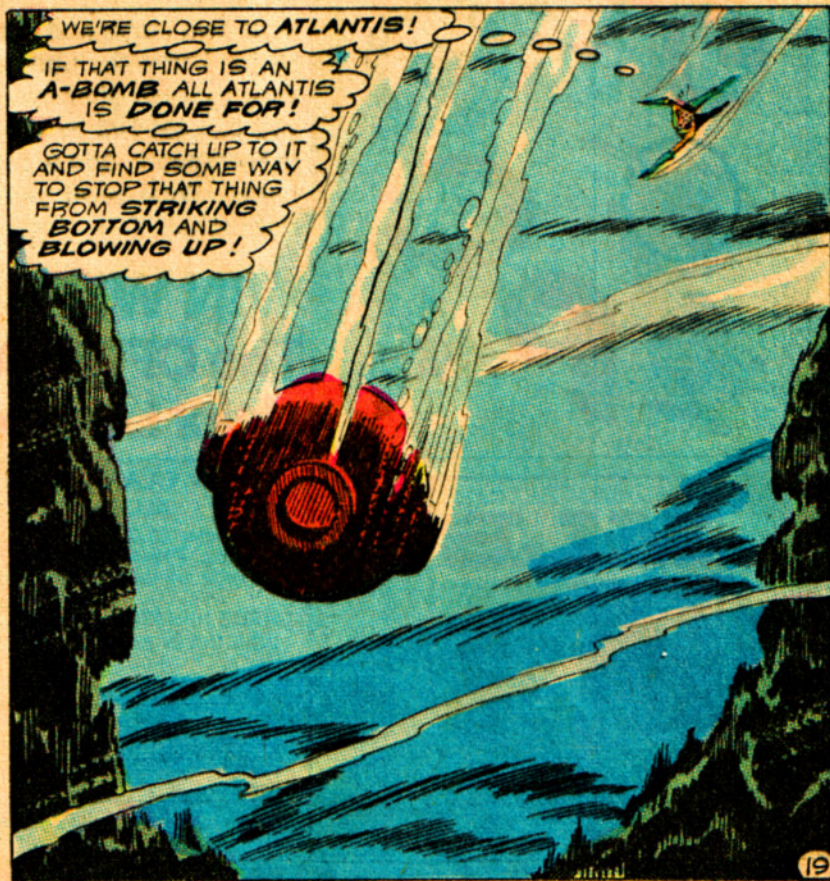
ELIOT, BABY, CALM  
DOWN! REMEMBER  
YOUR ULCER!



MY ULCER !!

YOU PEA-BRAINED IDIOT!  
THIS IS HARDLY THE TIME  
TO WORRY ABOUT MY  
ULCER!

BUT... BUT...



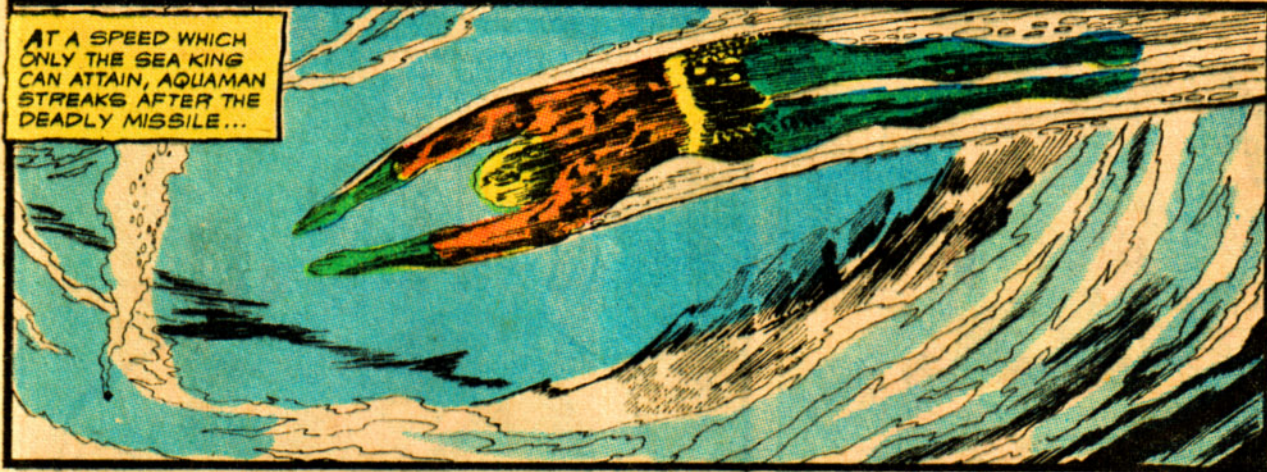
WE'RE CLOSE TO ATLANTIS!

IF THAT THING IS AN  
A-BOMB ALL ATLANTIS  
IS DONE FOR!

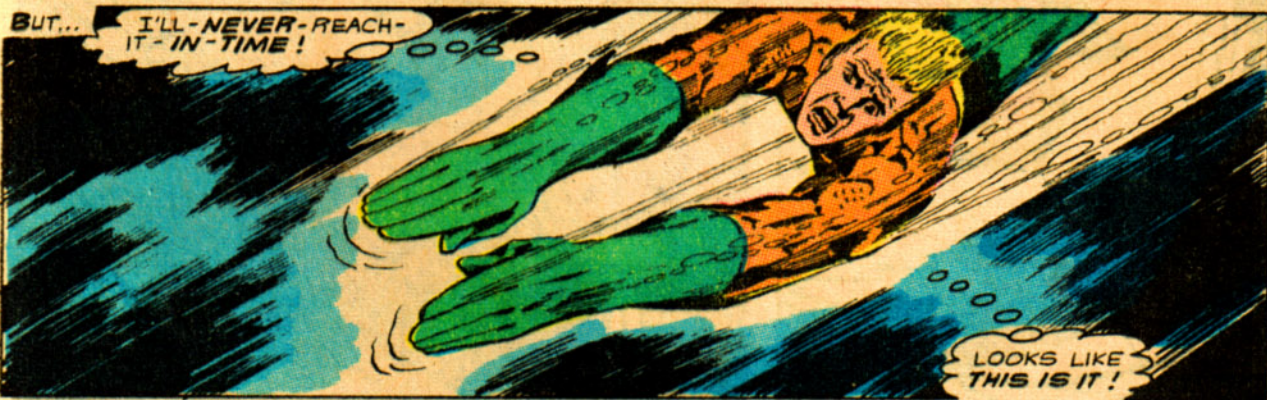
GOTTA CATCH UP TO IT  
AND FIND SOME WAY  
TO STOP THAT THING  
FROM STRIKING  
BOTTOM AND  
BLOWING UP!



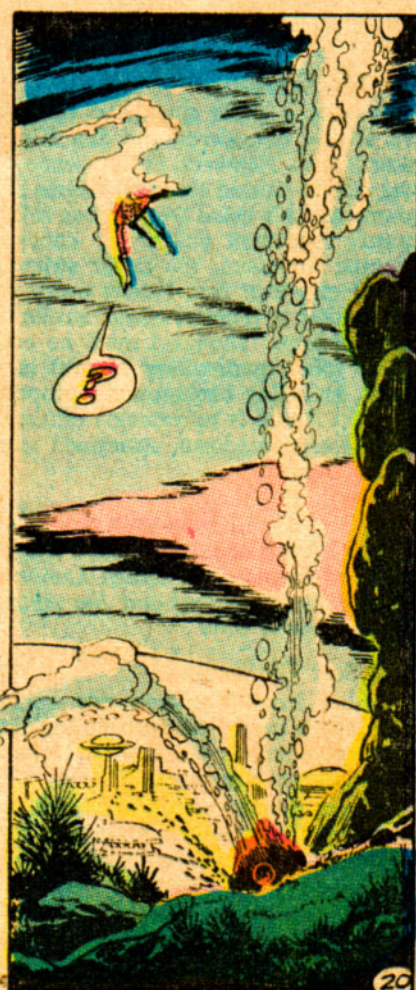
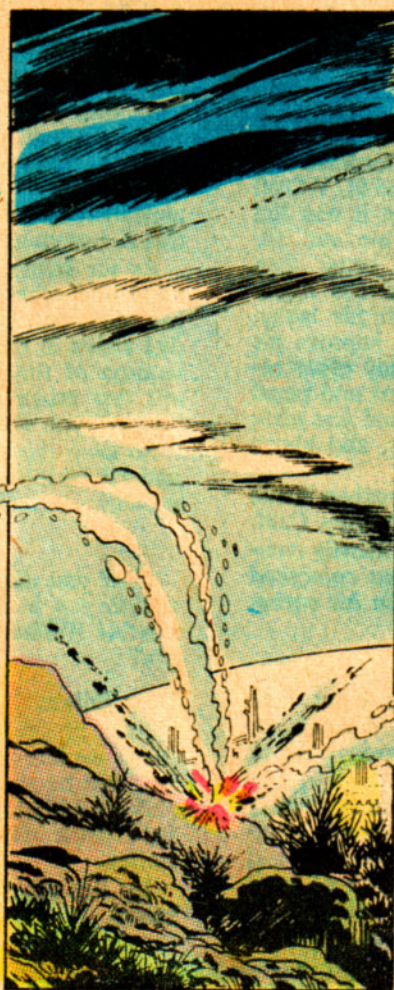
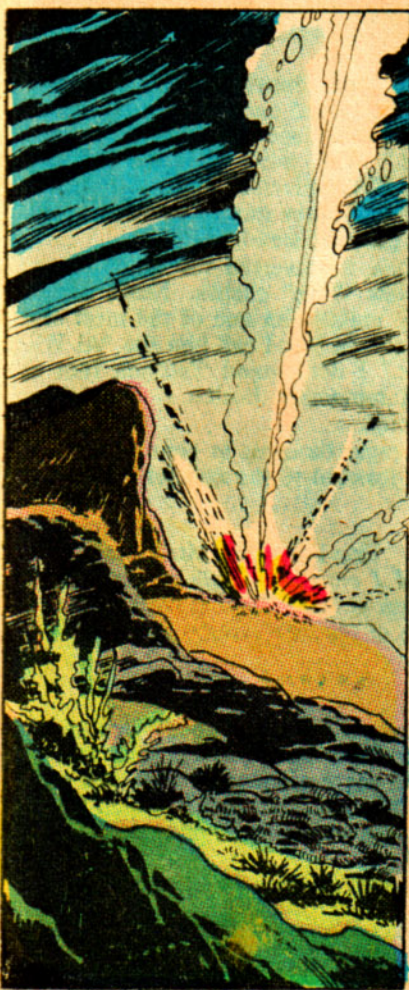
AT A SPEED WHICH  
ONLY THE SEA KING  
CAN ATTAIN, AQUAMAN  
STREAKS AFTER THE  
DEADLY MISSILE...



BUT... I'LL NEVER REACH  
IT - IN TIME!



LOOKS LIKE  
THIS IS IT!







## AQUAMAIL G-954

Dear Mr. Giordano,

It's been a while since I've read *Aquaman*, since I've always considered the Sea King one of D.C.'s lesser efforts. However, the presence of Deadman and Neal Adams caused me to buy issues 50 and 51. WOW! Adams was his usual tremendous self, but it was Jim Aparo's Aquaman that really knocked me out. He captures Aquaman, the super swimmer, better than anyone else ever has. Nearly every panel has Aquaman taking a monster-sized stroke with his lanky, powerful arms. Though I think he could improve his female faces (particularly Mera's) in many other respects, including backgrounds, proportions and panel size, Mr. Aparo is refreshingly different and *just plain good!* Keep Deadman, continued stories, and above all, Jim Aparo!

Jonathan Kuntz

University of Calif., Berkeley, Calif.

*I don't know about Deadman, (Neal is heavily committed to Batman and Green Lantern) but continued stories (in moderation) and Jim Aparo (in his entirety) are here to stay!*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Seer Giordano,

Neither troglodyte man nor ophidian beast hath witnessed a periodical such as the likes of yours. Or as the commoners put it, "That was a groovy ish of Aquaman you just put out!"

Though the storyline was as old as time (a hero is separated from the one he loves), Jim Aparo's illumination and Steve Skeats insights into the customs and communication of "the city" were a breath of fresh air. And Aquaman's tripping through "extra-dimensional" cities is reminiscent of E.R. Burrough's "John Carter of Mars" series (by all means keep it up!).

I notice that in the past few issues, Jim is turning

into an avant-garde type illustrator. He's improved 942% over the stuff he turned out at Charlton. By the way, soon you'll have to change the masthead to read "Cameos Unlimited." With #49's prolific Deadman, #50's listing of the "DC universe" and #51's cameo appearance of Jimm and Steev (not to mention Dikk), this is becoming a pleasant trend.

As for Neal's story, it traversed the abyss of my mind and other "New Wave" clichés. Neal's use of half-tones and black makes him one of the most erudite artists in the field. In fact I call him the "Al Williamson of the 70's." I don't mind Tatsinda (not at all) that much but remember Boston is basically a "bogie" type character.

So keep these meager thoughts in your cerebellum and I'll be looking forward to the conclusion of your trilogy...

Yours truly,

Eric F. Knight, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

*Glad you dig us! I enjoy the little cameos too... a little fun is always in style. Hey! if Neal Adams is the "Al Williamson of the 70's"... who is Al Williamson?*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Editor:

Issue 51 of *Aquaman* was very good! One of the things we like most about Steve Skeates story was the fact that he showed the beginning of what will probably be *AQUAMAN'S* next adventure in which he will fight Black Manta. He does this in practically all his stories.

By the way, we are overjoyed with the Deadman series.

Thank you and good afternoon,

Paul and Alan White, Medford, Mass.

*Thank you, Paul...and good afternoon, Alan.*



# EPILOGUE

DAYS LATER, A STRANGE MEETING TAKES PLACE ON SHORE...

HERE! I BELIEVE YOU GOVERNMENT BOYS CAN MAKE BETTER USE OF THIS THAN I CAN!

THANKS!

OH, BY THE WAY, FROM NOW ON YOU WON'T BE HAVING ANY MORE TROUBLE WITH O.G.R.E.---

WE'VE FINALLY LOCATED O.G.R.E.'S **SECRET HEADQUARTERS!** WE'LL BE MOVING IN AND MOPPING UP SHORTLY!

THEY'LL BE HAVING SO MUCH TROUBLE WITH US, THEY SIMPLY WON'T HAVE TIME TO BOTHER YOU!

THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW!

AND WHAT ABOUT MR. HARLANSON?

HE'S GONE BACK TO CALIFORNIA!

AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE, HE WAS COMPLETELY **INNOCENT!** HE WAS **DUPED!** HE ACTUALLY THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO **SAVE CALIFORNIA!** AND HE WAS UN-AWARE THAT ATLANTIS IS **POPULATED!**

I SEE...

... BUT THERE'S STILL ONE THING I **DON'T UNDERSTAND!**

ABOUT THE BOMB TURNING OUT TO BE A **DUD** -- WAS THAT JUST AN ACT OF **FATE** -- OR...

**NO!** IT WASN'T FATE! **WE** WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT...

YOU SEE, WE HAD AN **INSIDE MAN** WORKING WITH US!

... OR FATHER, AN **INSIDE WOMAN!** IT WAS HER JOB TO --

HI, BOYS!

HUH??

CONTINUED ON 2<sup>ND</sup> PAGE FOLLOWING

22





JUST LIKE A WOMAN  
TO SHOW UP FASHIONABLY  
LATE!

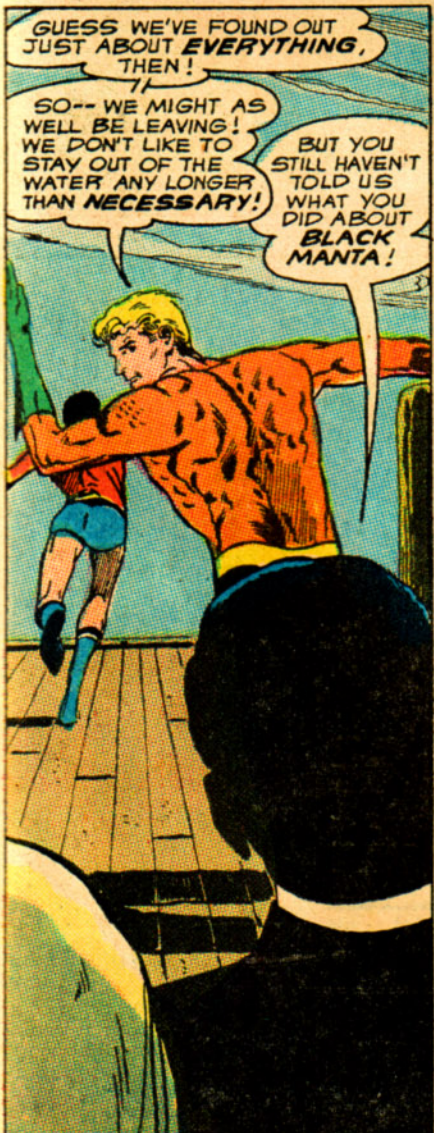
AQUAMAN, THIS IS  
AGENT O3, HONEY JAMES!  
AS SOON AS WE FOUND  
OUT O.G.R.E. AGENTS  
HAD BEEN SEEING ELIOT  
HARLANSON, WE ASSIGN-  
ED HER TO **STICK CLOSE**  
TO MR. HARLANSON!



AS SOON AS SHE FOUND OUT **WHERE**  
HARLANSON WAS BUYING THE BOMB, SHE  
PASSED THE INFORMATION ALONG TO **US**!

THEN, IT WAS AN EASY  
MATTER FOR US TO SEE  
TO IT THAT HARLANSON  
RECEIVED A **FAKE**  
INSTEAD OF A REAL  
BOMB!

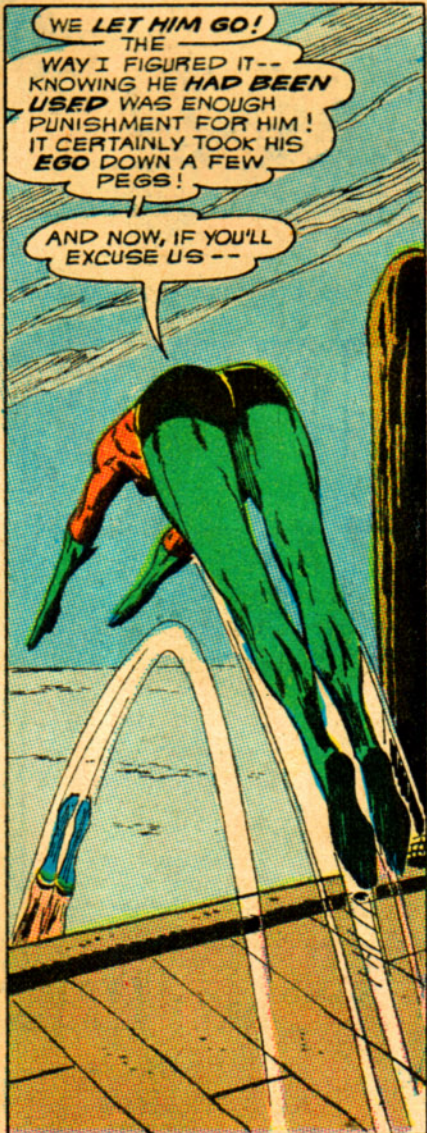
YES...I SEE...



GUESS WE'VE FOUND OUT  
JUST ABOUT **EVERYTHING**,  
THEN!

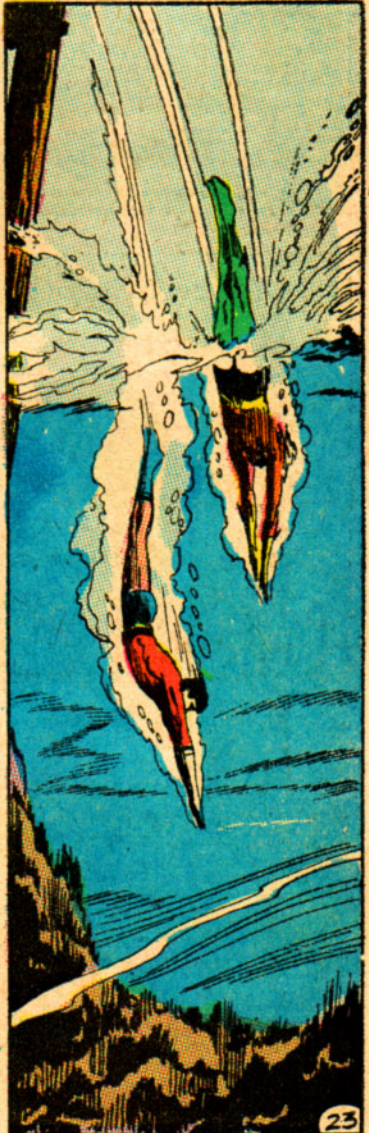
SO-- WE MIGHT AS  
WELL BE LEAVING!  
WE DON'T LIKE TO  
STAY OUT OF THE  
WATER ANY LONGER  
THAN **NECESSARY**!

BUT YOU  
STILL HAVEN'T  
TOLD US  
WHAT YOU  
DID ABOUT  
**BLACK**  
**MANTA**!

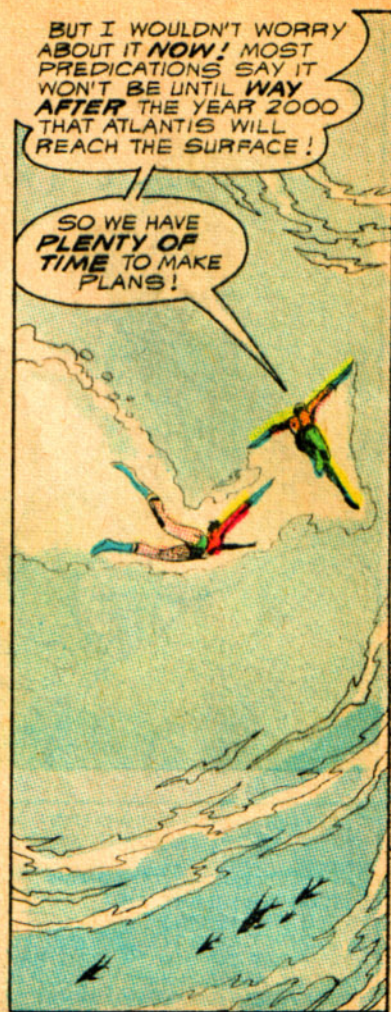


WE LET HIM GO!  
THE  
WAY I FIGURED IT--  
KNOWING HE **HAD BEEN**  
**USED** WAS ENOUGH  
PUNISHMENT FOR HIM!  
IT CERTAINLY TOOK HIS  
**EGO** DOWN A FEW  
PEGS!

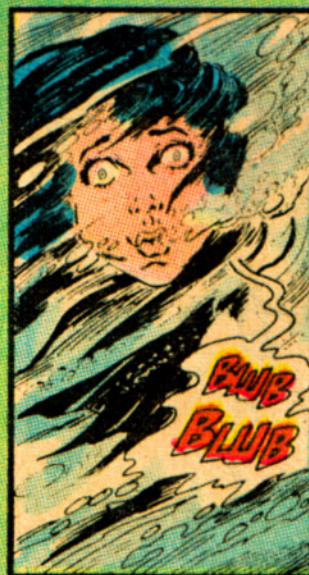
AND NOW, IF YOU'LL  
EXCUSE US --







AND SO, OUR STORY ENDS. YET, ONE QUESTION REMAINS UNANSWERED --



"IS CALIFORNIA SINKING?"



# JIM APARO

## 1932 - 2005

*One of the last TRUE  
comic book professionals*

