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AUTHORITY

AQUAMAN

AND **AQUALAD**

**"The CREATURES
from ATLANTIS!"**

A 3-PART NOVEL, INCLUDING

**The ORIGIN
of AQUAMAN!**



NO, NO, AQUAMAN!
YOU CAN'T ATTACK
THOSE WEIRD
CREATURES
SINGLE-HANDED!

I MUST! THE FATE
OF ATLANTIS AND
THE FATE OF OUR
WORLD IS AT STAKE!

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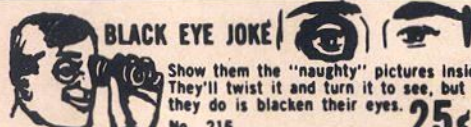
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ADDRESS

AQUAMAN

AND AQUALAD

FANTASTIC
SEA CREATURES
HAVE SEIZED ME! CAN
THIS BE A TRAP BY MY OWN
MOTHER'S PEOPLE-- THE
ATLANTEANS?

Chapter
1



THE WORLD LITTLE SUSPECTS THAT AQUAMAN,
KING OF THE SEVEN SEAS, IS DESCENDED
FROM A WOMAN OF ATLANTIS, THE
CONTINENT WHICH SANK TO THE OCEAN
FLOOR, EONS AGO! NOW, A STRANGE
SUMMONS BRINGS HIS MARITIME
MAJESTY SPEEDING TO THE
'SLINKEN LAND, ONLY TO
BE CAPTURED BY...

the CREATURES from ATLANTIS

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SHOWCASE



DAWN... AND A STORM-TOSSED CARGO SHIP STRUGGLES AGAINST MOUNTAINOUS WAVES, WHEN SUDDENLY...

SIR!...LIGHTNING HAS STRUCK THE FORWARD AREA--CAUSING A FIRE!

WHAT??



I KNOW THAT, SIR--BUT ALL PASSAGES TO THAT AREA ARE ABLAZE! WE CAN'T GET THROUGH!



SHORTLY, AS THE KING OF THE SEA AND HIS YOUNG ASSISTANT HEAR THE GRIM NEWS...

GREAT GUPIES!...IF THIS AREA IS CONTAMINATED BY SPILLED POISON, THOUSANDS OF OUR FINNY FRIENDS WILL DIE, AQUAMAN! WE MUST DO SOMETHING!

DON'T WORRY, AQUALAD... WE WILL!



WE'VE GOT TO KEEP IT FROM REACHING THE HOLDS--THEY'RE FILLED WITH A NEW RARE POISON! IF THE CARTONS BURN OPEN, AND THE POISON SPILLS OUT, THIS ENTIRE AREA WILL BE CONTAMINATED!



BUT LUCKILY, NOT FAR AWAY, WHERE TWO FAMILIAR FIGURES PATROL THE WAVES ON A PAIR OF SPEEDY PORPOISES...

AQUAMAN, LOOK! A CARGO SHIP'S AFIRE!

I SEE IT, AQUALAD... THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!



BY THE STARS, FATE'S ON OUR SIDE, AFTER ALL!

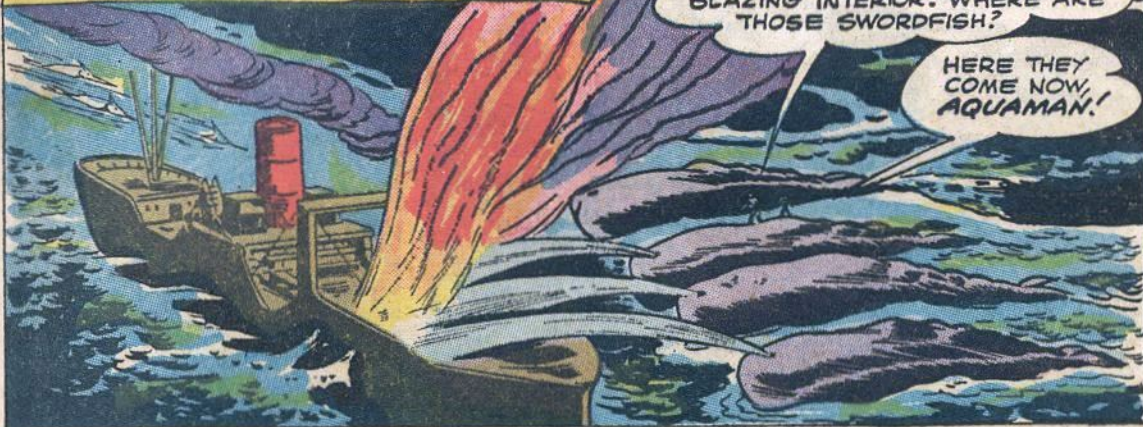
DON'T BE TOO SURE, MATE! I WONDER IF EVEN AQUAMAN CAN GET US OUT OF THIS JAM!



USING HIS FANTASTIC POWER TO COMMUNICATE TELEPATHICALLY WITH FISH, AQUAMAN AND HIS FINNY FRIENDS MOVE INTO ACTION...

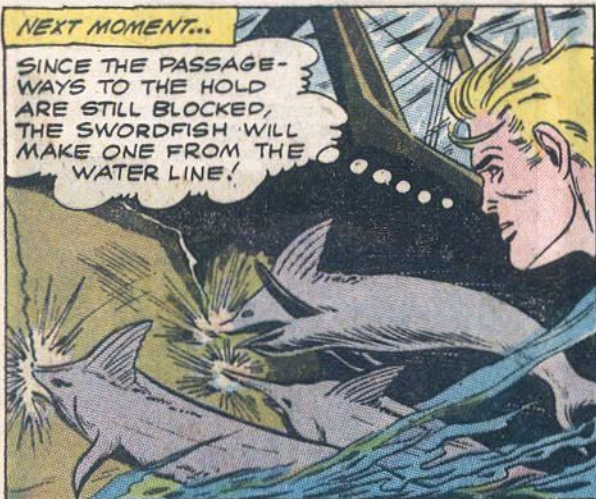
THE WHALE SPOUTS SHOULD KEEP THE FIRE FROM SPREADING... BUT THEY CAN'T REACH THE BLAZING INTERIOR! WHERE ARE THOSE SWORDFISH?

HERE THEY COME NOW, AQUAMAN!



NEXT MOMENT...

SINCE THE PASSAGEWAYS TO THE HOLD ARE STILL BLOCKED, THE SWORDFISH WILL MAKE ONE FROM THE WATER LINE!



WHEN THE SWORDFISH COMPLETE THEIR TASK, A SCHOOL OF OCTOPI HURTTLES INTO THE HULL OPENING, AND...

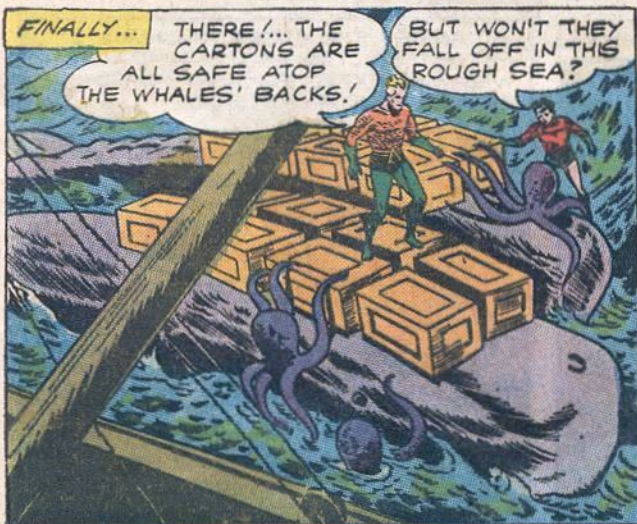
THAT'S IT... KEEP PASSING THE CARTONS OUT, TENTACLE OVER TENTACLE --AND MAKE SURE THAT NONE OF THEM BREAK OPEN!



FINALLY...

THERE!... THE CARTONS ARE ALL SAFE ATOP THE WHALES' BACKS!

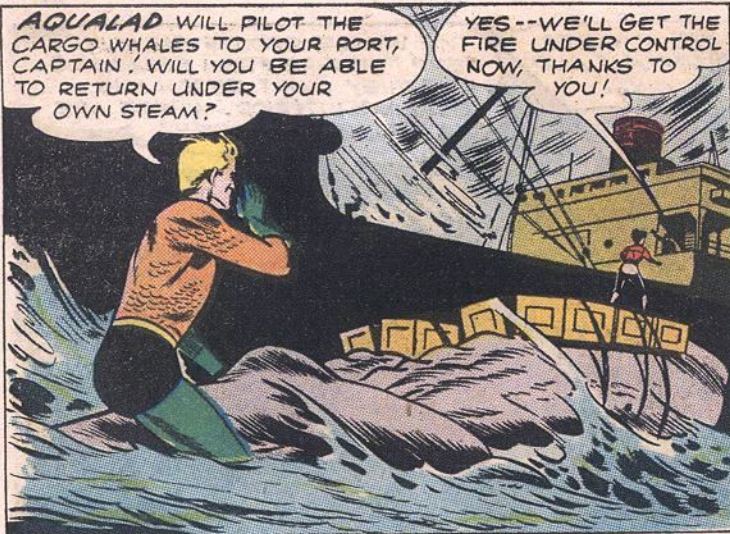
BUT WON'T THEY FALL OFF IN THIS ROUGH SEA?



NOT AFTER THE ELECTRIC EELS FORM THEMSELVES INTO A LONG ROPE--AND LASH THE CARTONS SECURELY!

HOW ABOUT THAT?





AQUALAD WILL PILOT THE CARGO WHALES TO YOUR PORT, CAPTAIN. WILL YOU BE ABLE TO RETURN UNDER YOUR OWN STEAM?

YES--WE'LL GET THE FIRE UNDER CONTROL NOW, THANKS TO YOU!

HIS MISSION SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED, **AQUAMAN** DIVES INTO THE SEA...



...DOWN, DOWN, DOWN--DEEPER THAN ANY HUMAN HAS EVER DESCENDED!



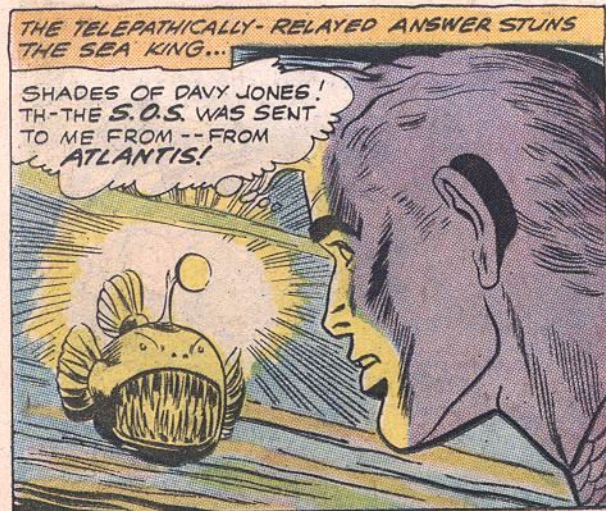
PRESENTLY...

GUESS I'LL PREPARE SOME LUNCH IN THE **AQUA-CAVE**... SO IT'LL BE READY WHEN **AQUALAD** RETURNS!



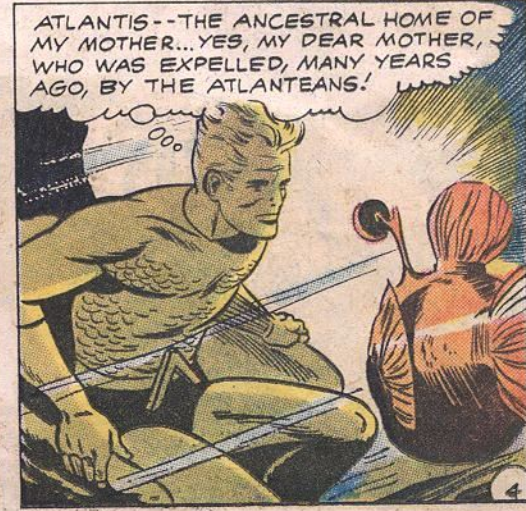
BUT JUST THEN...

OH-OH...THAT LANTERN FISH, JUST ARRIVING, IS BLINKING AN **S.O.S. WARNING!** THAT CAN ONLY MEAN MORE TROUBLE SOMEWHERE. WONDER WHERE IT IS THIS TIME?



THE TELEPATHICALLY-RELATED ANSWER STUNS THE SEA KING...

SHADES OF DAVY JONES! TH-THE **S.O.S.** WAS SENT TO ME FROM--FROM **ATLANTIS!**



ATLANTIS--THE ANCESTRAL HOME OF MY MOTHER...YES, MY DEAR MOTHER, WHO WAS EXPELLED, MANY YEARS AGO, BY THE **ATLANTEANS!**

AND AQUAMAN'S MIND RECALLS THE STORY TOLD HIM BY HIS FATHER, TOM CURRY, A LIGHT-HOUSE-KEEPER, WHO SPOTTED ONE STORMY NIGHT...

A GIRL ON A RAFT! HOW COULD SHE POSSIBLY SURVIVE THOSE POUNDING WAVES?



CURRY BRAVED THE STORMY SEA TO RESCUE THE HELPLESS GIRL...

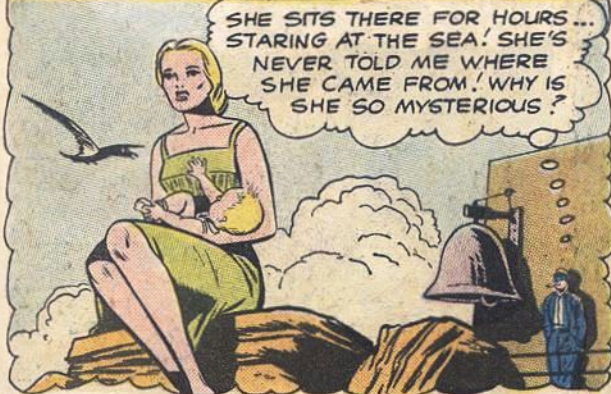
WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU LIVE THROUGH THIS HURRICANE?

MY NAME IS... ATLANNA... I COME FROM FAR AWAY... I--I CAN NOT TELL YOU MORE NOW!



MUTUAL LOVE UNITED THEM SHORTLY IN MARRIAGE... AND A YEAR LATER, A SON WAS BORN WHOM THEY NAMED ARTHUR! YET, AMID THEIR HAPPINESS, A STRANGE BARRIER SEPARATED THEM...

SHE SITS THERE FOR HOURS... STARING AT THE SEA! SHE'S NEVER TOLD ME WHERE SHE CAME FROM! WHY IS SHE SO MYSTERIOUS?



NOR WAS THIS THE ONLY MYSTERY--FOR ONE DAY, WHEN LITTLE ARTHUR WAS JUST TWO YEARS OLD...

GREAT SCOTT! THE BABY FELL INTO THE OCEAN!

DON'T WORRY, DEAR-- HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT!



ARE YOU MAD?... HE'S GONE UNDER! I--I MUST SAVE HIM!



BUT WHEN THE FRANTIC FATHER DIED IN...

OH, NO!... NOT A SIGN OF MY LITTLE BOY ANYWHERE! I--I'LL HAVE TO COME UP FOR AIR AND DIVE DEEPER!



AFTER SEVERAL DESPERATE DIVES, AN ASTONISHING SIGHT GREETED THE FRANTIC MAN...

GREAT THUNDER!...HE--HE'S ALIVE!...HE'S PLAYING WITH A TURTLE AND SEA SHELLS! BUT HOW COULD HE STAY DOWN SO LONG? WHY DIDN'T HE DROWN?

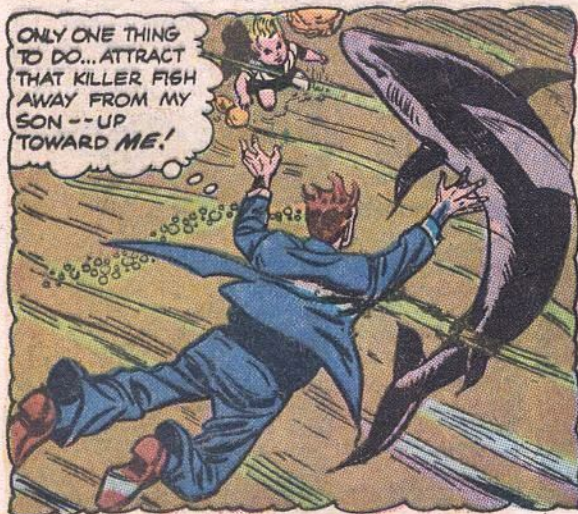


AT THAT MOMENT...

A SHARK-- COMING STRAIGHT AT ARTHUR! I HAVEN'T A WEAPON TO FIGHT IT OFF-- AND I CAN'T STAY DOWN HERE MUCH LONGER!



ONLY ONE THING TO DO...ATTRACT THAT KILLER FISH AWAY FROM MY SON --UP TOWARD ME!



BUT IN THE NEXT SPLIT SECOND, TOM CURRY GOT THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE...

W-WHY...ARTHUR AND THE SHARK ARE PLAYING TOGETHER--LIKE TWO LITTLE FRIENDS! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?



A LITTLE LATER, THE PERPLEXED FATHER RETURNED TO THE LIGHTHOUSE ISLAND, WHERE...

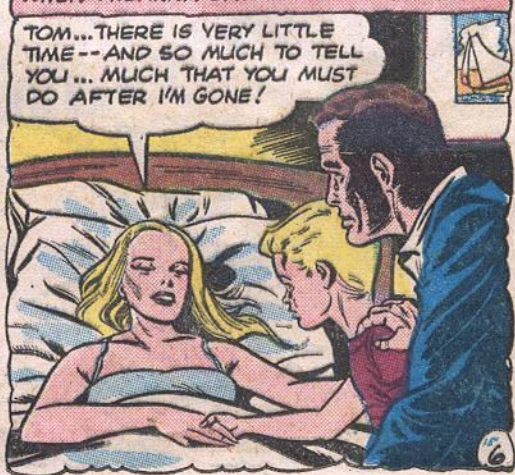
TELL ME THE TRUTH, ATLANNA--WHAT IS IT? WHY DOES OUR BOY POSSESS THIS STRANGE LINK WITH THE SEA AND ITS CREATURES?

SOME DAY I'LL TELL YOU, TOM... SOME DAY!



THAT SAD DAY CAME SOME YEARS LATER WHEN ATLANNA LAY ON HER DEATHBED...

TOM...THERE IS VERY LITTLE TIME--AND SO MUCH TO TELL YOU...MUCH THAT YOU MUST DO AFTER I'M GONE!

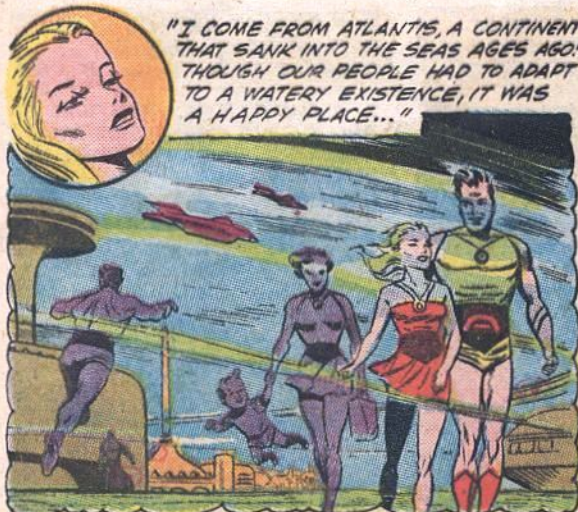




SHOWCASE

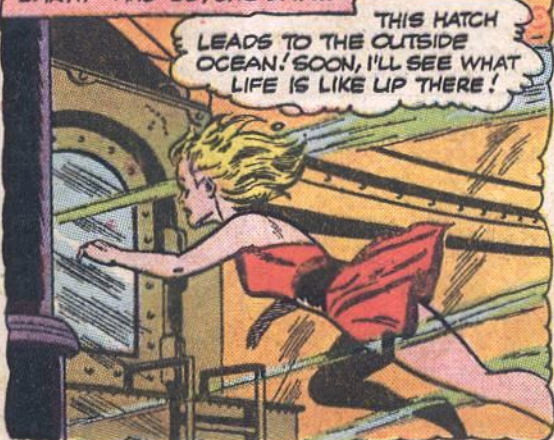


"I COME FROM ATLANTIS, A CONTINENT THAT SANK INTO THE SEAS AGES AGO! THOUGH OUR PEOPLE HAD TO ADAPT TO A WATERY EXISTENCE, IT WAS A HAPPY PLACE..."



"YES, I WAS HAPPY THERE, BUT I HAD AN UNQUENCHABLE CURIOSITY TO VISIT THE UPPER EARTH--AND SO, ONE DAY..."

THIS HATCH LEADS TO THE OUTSIDE OCEAN! SOON, I'LL SEE WHAT LIFE IS LIKE UP THERE!



"BUT BEFORE I COULD SLIP OUT..."

THERE IS A SEVERE PENALTY FOR TRYING TO LEAVE ATLANTIS. TAKE HER BEFORE THE GRAND ATLANTEAN TRIBUNAL AT ONCE!

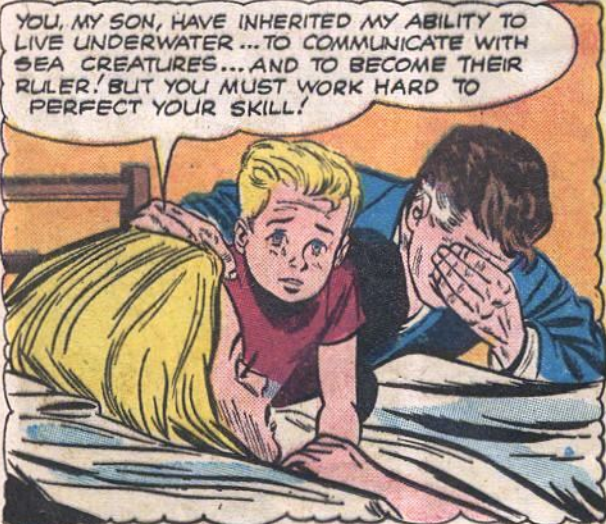


"THE JUDGMENT AGAINST ME WAS SWIFT AND FINAL..."



OUR SENTENCE IS-- **PERMANENT EXILE!** NOW, ATLANTA, YOU MAY LIVE FOREVER IN THE WORLD YOU WERE SO ANXIOUS TO VISIT!

YOU, MY SON, HAVE INHERITED MY ABILITY TO LIVE UNDERWATER...TO COMMUNICATE WITH SEA CREATURES...AND TO BECOME THEIR RULER. BUT YOU MUST WORK HARD TO PERFECT YOUR SKILL!



MOTHER WAS RIGHT.. IT WASN'T EASY! HOW TERRIFIED I WAS AT THE BEGINNING!



ONCE AGAIN, AQUAMAN'S THOUGHTS RACE BACK TO THE YEARS OF TRAINING HE HAD UNDERGONE, BEFORE HE COULD CLAIM MAJESTY OVER THE CREATURES OF THE DEEP...

YOU MUST SHOW THEM YOU'RE THE MASTER, SON!

BUT HOW, FATHER? I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

FILLED WITH DOUBTS, UNSURE OF HIMSELF, THE YOUNG PRINCE OF THE SEA GAPED AT A SCHOOL OF DEADLY MANTA RAYS HE HAD DISTURBED...

THEY'RE COMING STRAIGHT AT ME! I'M DONE FOR!

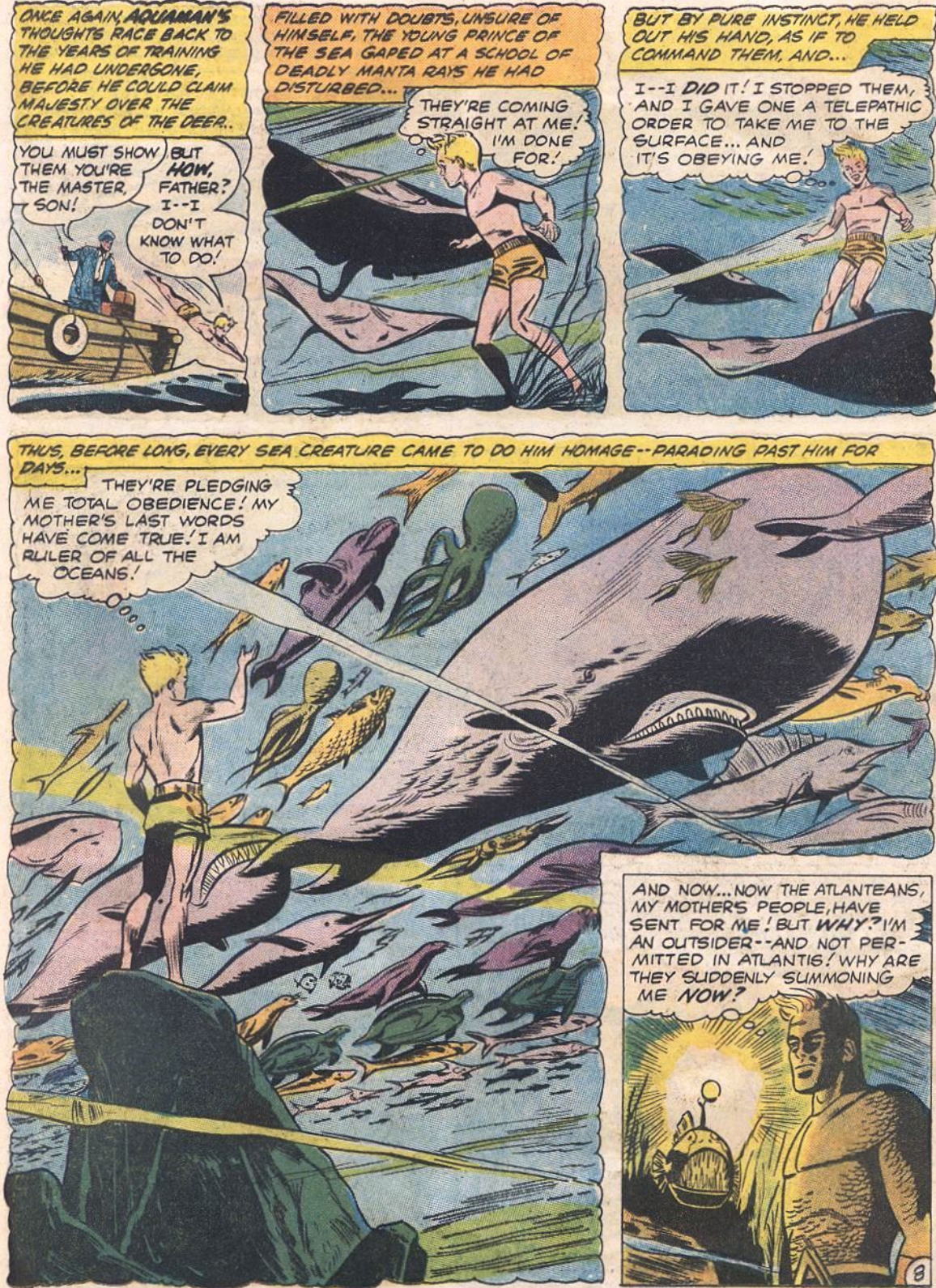
BUT BY PURE INSTINCT, HE HELD OUT HIS HAND, AS IF TO COMMAND THEM, AND...

I--I DID IT! I STOPPED THEM, AND I GAVE ONE A TELEPATHIC ORDER TO TAKE ME TO THE SURFACE... AND IT'S OBEYING ME!

THUS, BEFORE LONG, EVERY SEA CREATURE CAME TO DO HIM HOMAGE--PARADING PAST HIM FOR DAYS...

THEY'RE PLEDGING ME TOTAL OBEDIENCE! MY MOTHER'S LAST WORDS HAVE COME TRUE! I AM RULER OF ALL THE OCEANS!

AND NOW...NOW THE ATLANTEANS, MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE, HAVE SENT FOR ME! BUT WHY? I'M AN OUTSIDER--AND NOT PERMITTED IN ATLANTIS! WHY ARE THEY SUDDENLY SUMMONING ME NOW?



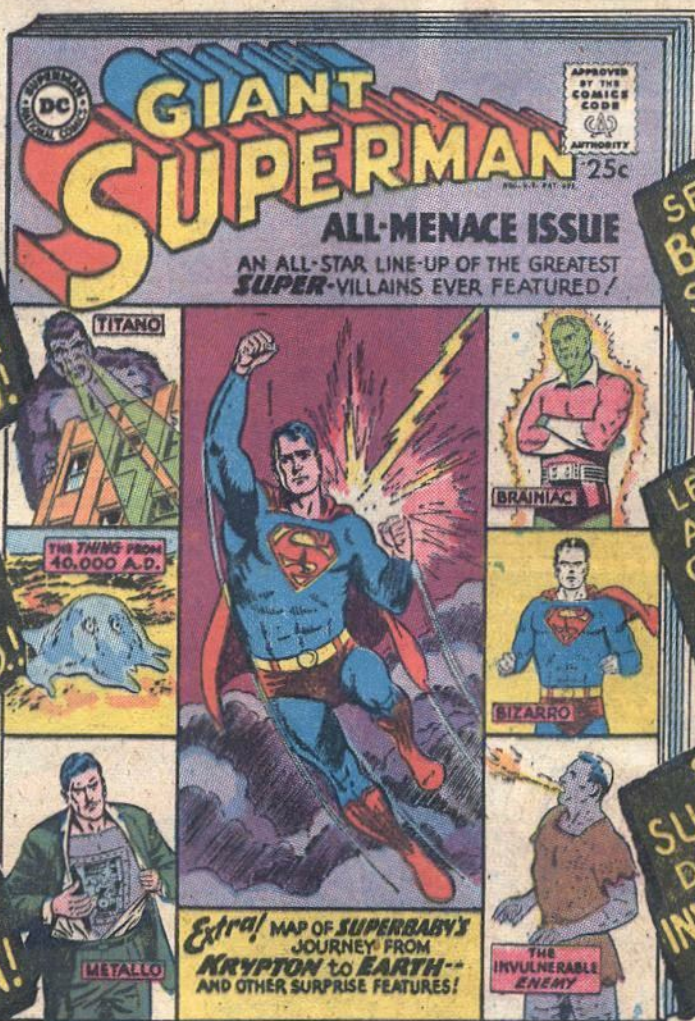


CONTINUED IN CHAPTER 2

ON SALE
EVERYWHERE!

Watch for the **SECOND** **SUPERMAN** ANNUAL!

FEATURING THE *GREATEST FOES*
EVER TO CHALLENGE THE *MAN OF STEEL!*



SEE
SUPERMAN'S
FIRST
BATTLE WITH
TITANO!

MEET
THE THING
FROM
40,000 A.D.!

WATCH
METALLO
PLOT TO
DESTROY
SUPERMAN!

SEE HOW
BRAINIAC
SHRUNK THE
CITY OF
KANDOR!

LEARN THE
AMAZING
ORIGIN OF
THE **FIRST**
BIZARRO!

SEE
SUPERMAN
DUEL THE
INVULNERABLE
ENEMY!

ON SALE EVERYWHERE...





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AQUAMAN AND AQUALAD

CURIOSITY, AND LONGING TO SEE THE HOMETLAND OF HIS MOTHER, HAD SPED AQUAMAN'S JOURNEY TO THE SUNKEN CONTINENT. BUT GREATER PERILS THAN THE SEA KING HAS EVER FACED NOW THREATEN HIS VERY LIFE, AS HE BECOMES A...

PRISONER OF ATLANTIS

Chapter
2

AND IF I DON'T
ESCAPE, EARTH
ITSELF WILL BE
DOOMED!

YOU HAVE LEARNED
THE SECRET OF OUR
MISSION! IF YOU TRY
TO ESCAPE-- YOU
WILL DIE!



STRUGGLING VAINLY, AQUAMAN IS CARRIED INTO ATLANTIS, WHERE A SHOCKING SCENE GREET'S HIM...



GREAT NEPTUNE!
ATLANTIS HAS BEEN TURNED
INTO A VAST PRISON CAMP
BY THESE STRANGE
CREATURES! WHAT'S IT
ALL MEAN?



I'M BEING BROUGHT BEFORE THE
ONE WHO SEEMS TO BE THEIR
LEADER! MAYBE I'LL FIND OUT
WHAT'S GOING ON NOW!



WE DISCOVERED
THIS ONE OUT-
SIDE THE DOME,
TRINO!

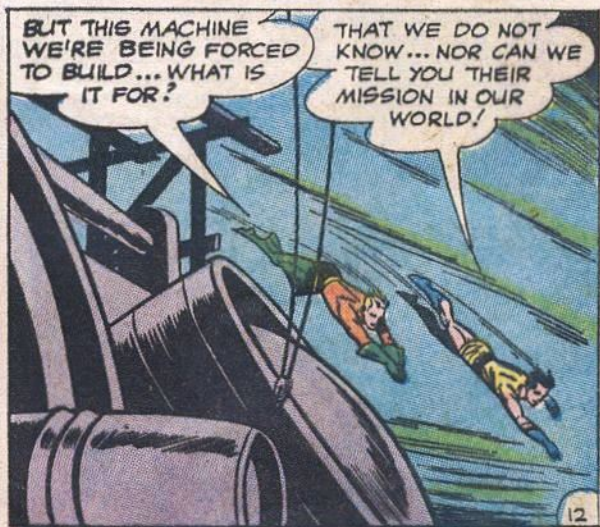
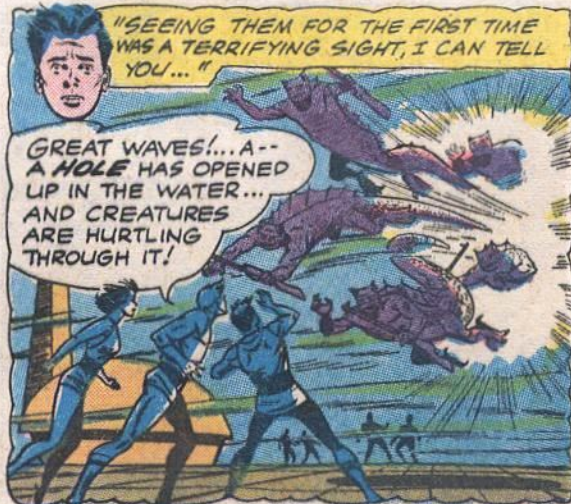
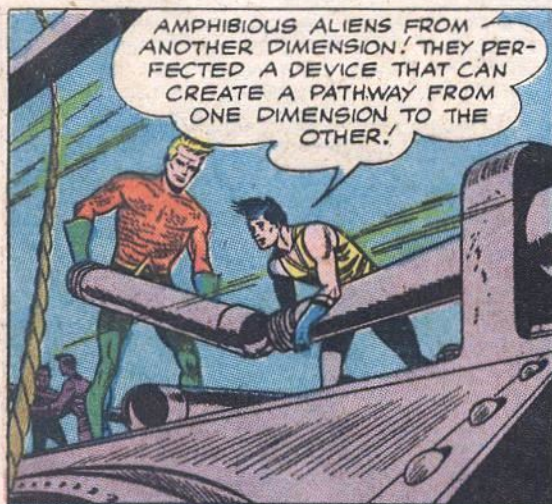
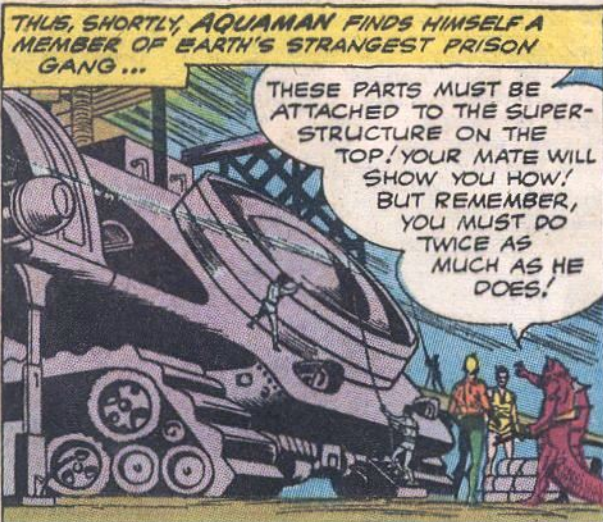
EXCELLENT! WE CAN USE
MORE HANDS ON THE
MACHINE! PUT HIM TO
WORK AT ONCE!

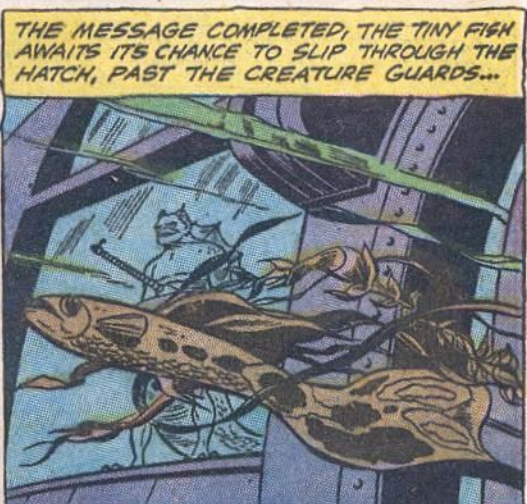
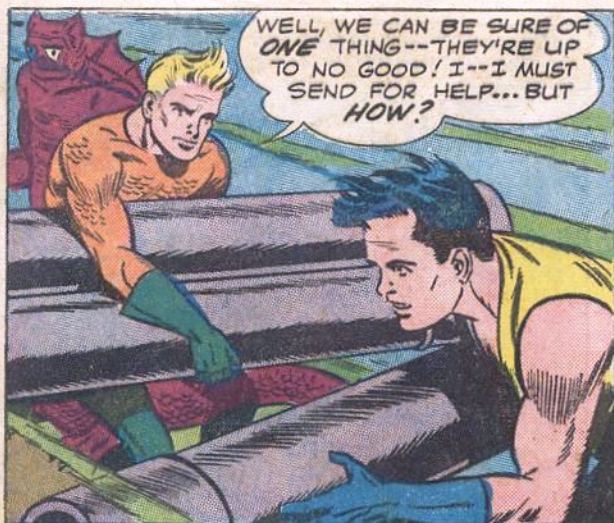


WAIT! WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE DO YOU COME
FROM? AND WHY HAVE
YOU ENSLAVED THE
ATLANTEANS?



INSOLENT ONE! FOR DARING TO ADDRESS
ME, YOU WILL DO **TWICE** THE WORK OF
ANY OTHER! OFF WITH
HIM!





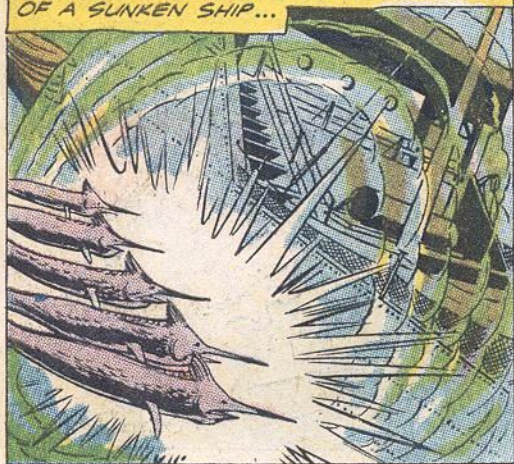
SWIFTLY, IT RELAYS AQUAMAN'S ORDERS-- AND A FANTASTIC UNDERSEA SIGNAL SERVICE SWINGS INTO ACTION...



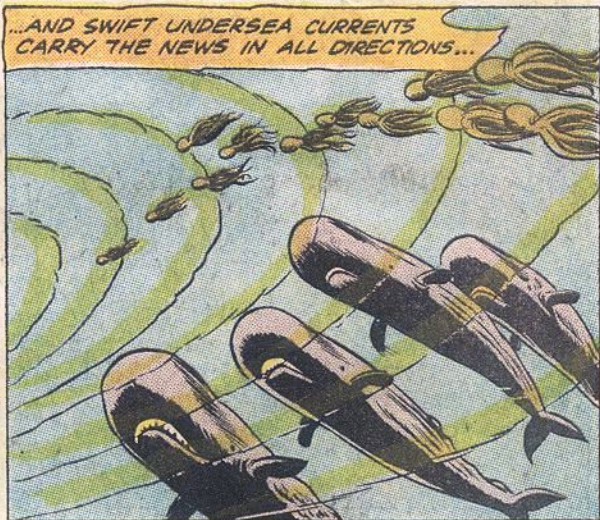
...AS A BLINKING LANTERN FISH FLASHES THE GRIM NEWS TO A COLONY OF MANTAS...



...A SCHOOL OF SWORDFISH TAPS OUT THE
AWESOME MESSAGE ON THE STEEL HULL
OF A SUNKEN SHIP...



...AND SWIFT UNDERSEA CURRENTS
CARRY THE NEWS IN ALL DIRECTIONS...



...SO THAT, BEFORE LONG, A MIGHTY
UNDERSEA ARMADA STORMS
SOUTHWARD!



BUT AS THEY APPROACH THE DOMED
WALL OF THE SUNKEN CONTINENT...



NOTIFY TRINO AT ONCE!
WE ARE BEING
ATTACKED BY AN
ARMY OF FISH!

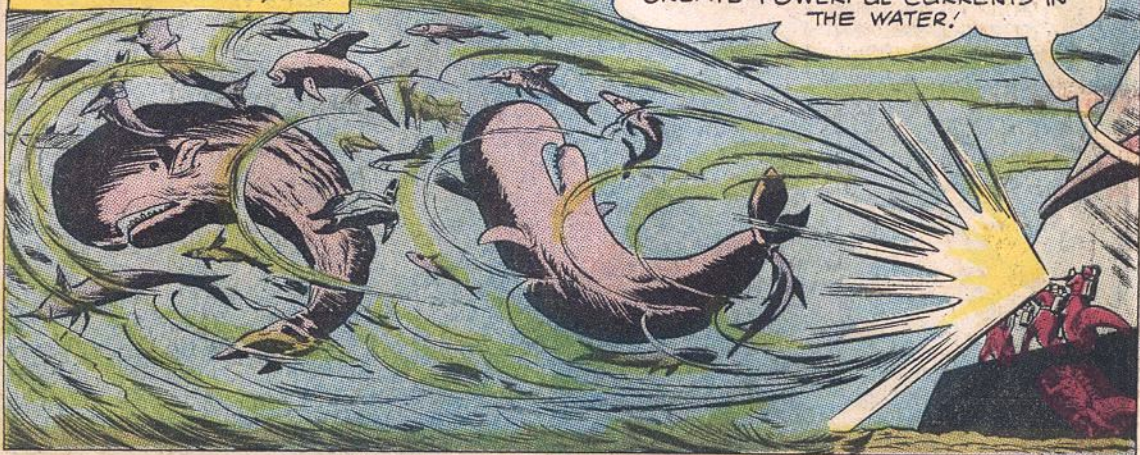
INSTANTLY CREATURE MARKSMEN, ARMED WITH
STRANGE WEAPONS, RUSH TO THE SCENE...



FIRE AS SOON
AS THEY ARE
IN RANGE!

SCANT INSTANTS LATER, THE CAPTIVE ATLANTEANS SEE THEIR HOPES FOR FREEDOM DASHED, AS...

'HA, HA,' WE ARE REPELLING THE FISH WITH OUR FANTASTIC BLOWGUNS WHICH CREATE POWERFUL CURRENTS IN THE WATER!



AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE HAPLESS FISH RE-GROUP THEIR FORCES, UNTIL ...

I--I'VE SIGNALLED THE GUPPY TO CALL OFF THE ATTACK! IT'S--HOPELESS!

THEN-- THEN WE ARE DOOMED!



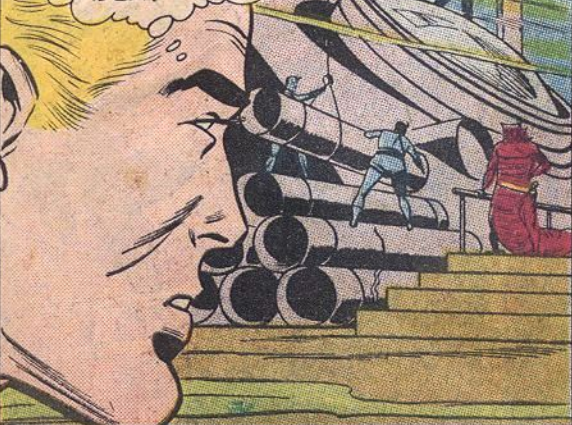
AFTERWARD, AS THE WORK SHIFT CHANGES...

WE ARE GIVEN A LITTLE TIME TO EAT AND REST... THEN, WE MUST RETURN TO OUR LABORS!

IF--IF I COULD ONLY FIND OUT WHAT THAT MACHINE IS FOR!

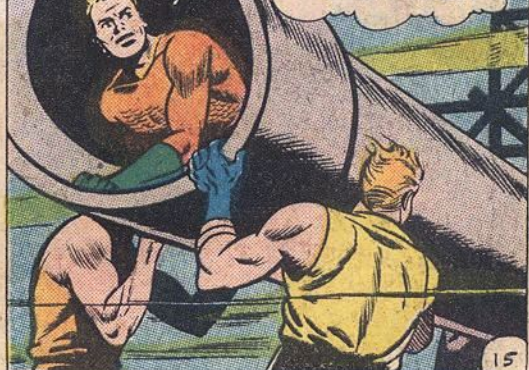


HMM... THOSE LONG TUBES BEING STACKED UP NEAR TRINO... THEY GIVE ME AN IDEA!



MINUTES LATER...

SO FAR, SO GOOD...I'VE ASKED THE ATLANTEANS TO PLACE THE TUBE I'M IN AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THE CREATURES!





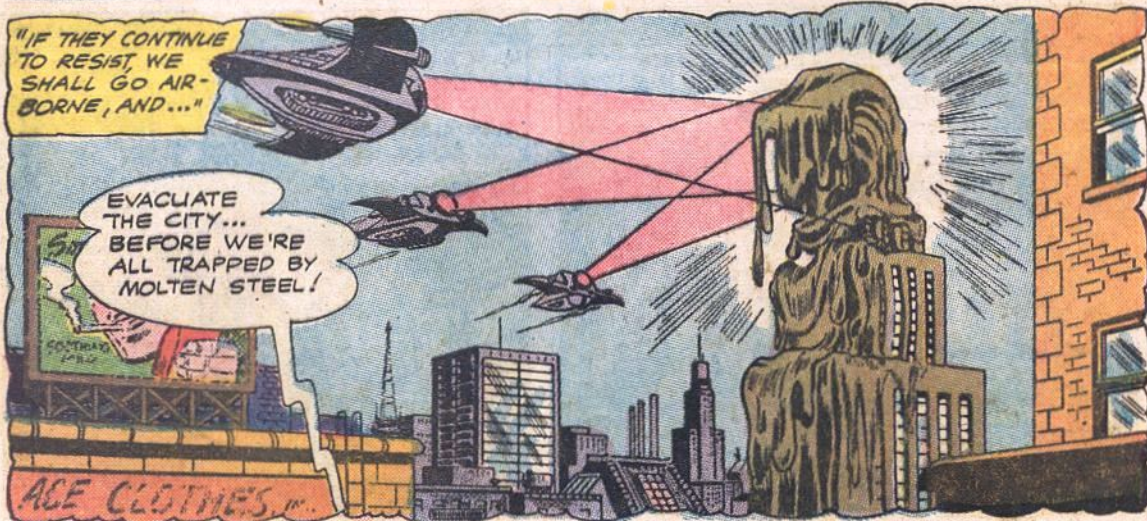
PRESENTLY... THE MASTER WEAPON IS ALMOST READY, TRINO! AND IT RESEMBLES EXACTLY OUR GOVERNMENT'S WEAPON!

OF COURSE...WE FOLLOWED PRECISELY THE STOLEN BLUE-PRINTS! IF IT WORKS, WE WILL FORCE THE ATLANTEANS TO BUILD A WHOLE FLEET OF THEM!



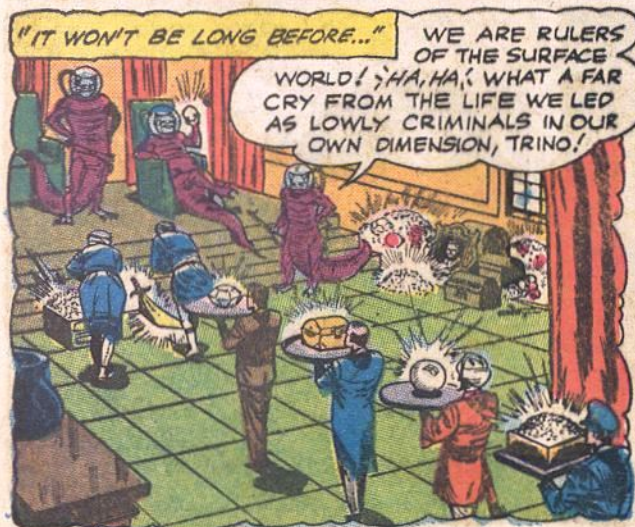
"THEN, WE SHALL RIDE THEM TO THE SURFACE, AND KNOCK THIS WORLD'S WARSHIPS OUT OF EXISTENCE..."

GREAT STARS! THE RAY FROM THAT STRANGE CRAFT IS MELTING DOWN OUR SHIP! LEAP FOR YOUR LIVES!



"IF THEY CONTINUE TO RESIST, WE SHALL GO AIR-BORNE, AND..."

EVACUATE THE CITY... BEFORE WE'RE ALL TRAPPED BY MOLTEN STEEL!



"IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE..."

WE ARE RULERS OF THE SURFACE WORLD! HA, HA, WHAT A FAR CRY FROM THE LIFE WE LED AS LOWLY CRIMINALS IN OUR OWN DIMENSION, TRINO!

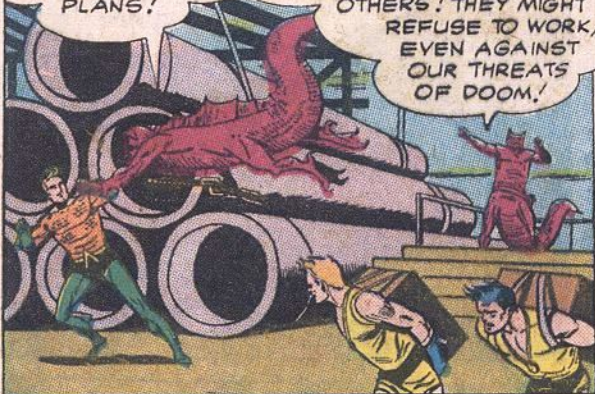


SO THAT'S IT!... THEY INTEND TO CONQUER ALL OF EARTH! I--I MUST FIGURE OUT SOME WAY TO STOP THEM, BEFORE THAT MASTER WEAPON IS COMPLETED!

BUT AS AQUAMAN TRIES TO SLIP AWAY...

HAA! A SPY...
AND HE PROBABLY
OVERHEARD OUR
PLANS!

PLACE HIM IN SOLITARY
CONFINEMENT SO HE
CANNOT INFORM THE
OTHERS! THEY MIGHT
REFUSE TO WORK,
EVEN AGAINST
OUR THREATS
OF DOOM!



WHY NOT
DESTROY
THIS ONE
NOW,
TRINO?

WHY BOTHER?... HE CANNOT
HARM US! WHEN THE
WEAPON IS COMPLETED,
WE WILL DESTROY THE
WHOLE SUNKEN CONTINENT
IF THEY
TRY TO
STOP US!



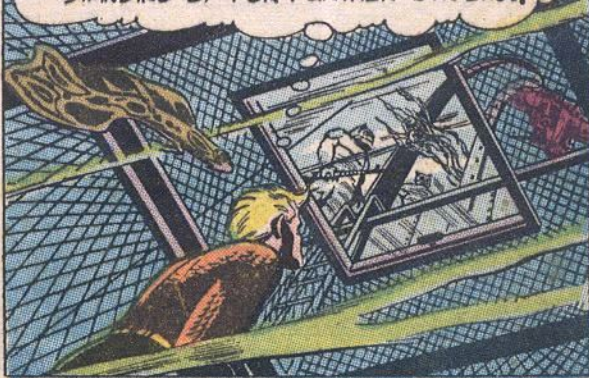
LATER, AS THE HAPLESS SEA KING
DESPERATELY PACES HIS "CELL," IN A
REMOTE CORNER OF ATLANTIS...

IF I DON'T GET OUT OF
HERE, THE ENTIRE EARTH
WILL BE DOOMED!
BUT HOW?... HOW?



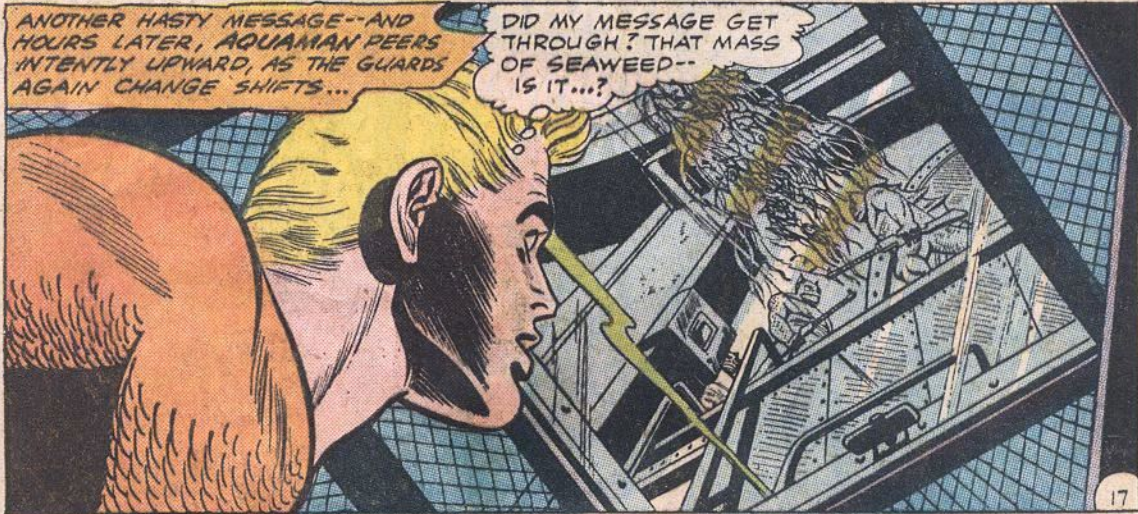
JUST THEN...

WAIT! THOSE ALIENS OPEN
THE HATCH DURING THE CHANGING
OF THE GUARDS... AND THAT MASS OF
SEAWEED IS FLOATING THROUGH! I'M
SURE GLAD THIS FAITHFUL GUPPY KEEPS
STANDING BY FOR FURTHER ORDERS!



ANOTHER HASTY MESSAGE--AND
HOURS LATER, AQUAMAN PEERS
INTENTLY UPWARD, AS THE GUARDS
AGAIN CHANGE SHIFTS...

DID MY MESSAGE GET
THROUGH? THAT MASS
OF SEAWEED--
IS IT...?





SHOWCASE



IT'S YOU--**AQUALAD**-- ON THE SWORDFISH I SENT FOR! YOU GOT THROUGH, CAMOUFLAGED WITH SEA-WEED!

I GOT HERE AS SOON AS THE SUPPY BROUGHT YOUR MESSAGE, **AQUAMAN**!



THE SWORDFISH WILL HAVE YOU OUT OF THERE IN A FEW MINUTES!

IT'D BETTER! I MUST TELL THE ATLANTEANS WHAT I'VE LEARNED-- AND LEAD THEM IN A BATTLE WITH THOSE ALIENS BEFORE THEY CAN FINISH THAT WEAPON!



BUT WHEN THEY REJOIN THE ATLANTEANS...

GREAT NEWS, **AQUAMAN**! THE CREATURES TOOK THEIR COMPLETED MACHINE--AND LEFT OUR CONTINENT!

OH, NO!



WE'RE TOO LATE, **AQUALAD**! THEY'VE GONE TO THE SURFACE-- TO CONQUER THE ENTIRE EARTH WITH THEIR MASTER WEAPON!

G-GOLLY... WHAT'LL WE DO NOW?

CONTINUED IN CHAPTER 3

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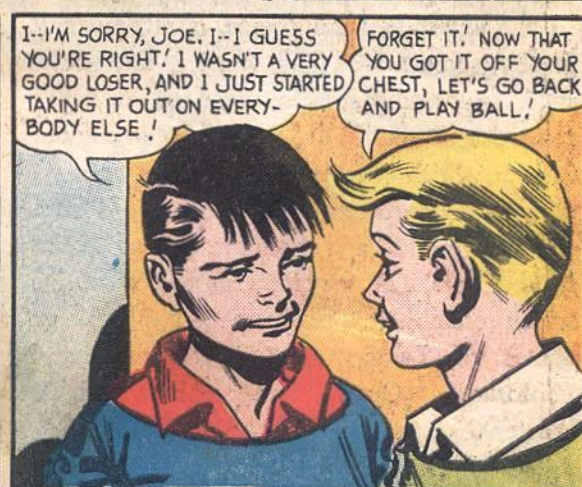
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10¢

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GET a GRIP on your GRIPEs!



STRANGE DENIZENS OF THE DEEP

FROM behind a dense patch of undersea vegetation slithers a monstrous fifteen-foot rooster fish. Its bright-red comb is slightly luminescent to light its way.

Nearby, a hatchet fish, so-called because of its amazing resemblance to the tool of that name, rears up. It will chop wickedly with its hatchet edge if attacked. But it is no match for the giant rooster fish, and swims away.

Still nearer, a bat-like sea slug, grazes on a group of hydroids, which are tiny animals related to the coral polyps. The sea slug is a mollusk without a shell. It moves about by sliding along on a single muscular foot. It feasts by nibbling off the heads of the hydroids. But the hydroids don't mind. When the sea slug moves off, the hydroids simply grow new heads.

These are only a few of the fantastic creatures that dwell in the silent world of the sea. There are thousands more, and most of them have only been seen by intrepid explorers in diving bells, for they live near the ocean floor where the pressure is too great for skin-divers to descend.

In any case, no diver would be foolhardy enough to approach some of these maritime monsters without the protective armor plate of the diving bell.

The viperfish, for instance, is rather small in size, about a foot long. But it is one of the most frightening fish in the deep. It has a long dragon-like body, topped by a pointed head in which glow two fiery eyes. Two rows of needle-shaped teeth protrude outward from the open mouth, and these are as long as the head itself. The viperfish has two cousins which resemble it. They have the jaw-breaking names of *Lamprotodus Flagellibarba* and *Photostomias Guerhi*, and are both a little shorter than the viperfish.

It was long believed that because sunlight cannot penetrate the layers of water to the depths, where it is eternally dark, the fish

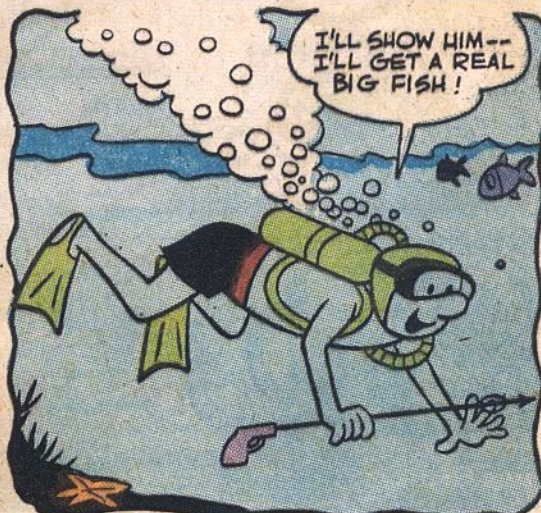
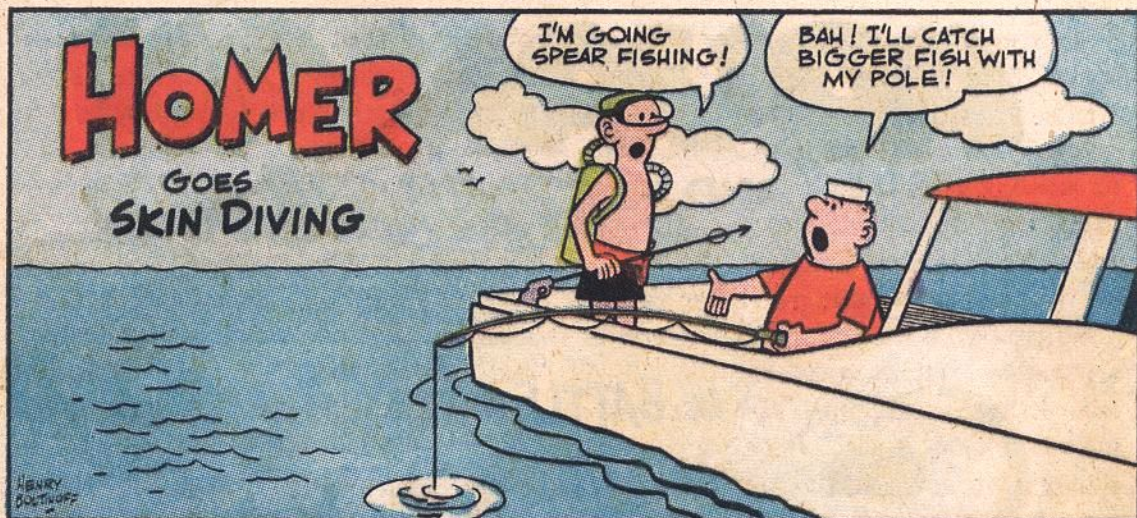
dwelling down there were blind. This is true of some of them, but most of them can see. Between 800 and 1,500 feet, the fish have greatly enlarged eyes with a special sensitivity to dim light.

Farther down, the fish provide their own ghostly illumination. The Cyclothone, for example, which somewhat resembles a feathery parachute, bears rows of glowing lamps or portholes along its sides, which it can turn on and off at will. Others carry torches which they dangle in front of their mouths. In some undersea creatures, the luminescence is generated by bacteria on the body of the animals, in others by special luminescent organs in which a slimy secretion reacts with oxygen in the blood to produce light.

Most of the denizens of the deep protect themselves by amazing forms of camouflage, imitating the forms and colors of their environment. Flatfish and rockfish, for instance, can change color at will. Decorator crabs cement pieces of seaweed over their shells and legs. Certain sea urchins cover themselves with snails so they will look like a snail colony. The pipefish, when menaced, poses itself vertically among blades of eelgrass, being hardly distinguishable from them in shape, position and color.

But other fish have more spectacular devices for their self-protection. Outstanding is the blowfish, a denizen of the coral seas, which inflates itself with water, making itself too big a mouthful for most of its enemies. At the same time, it erects wicked-looking spines that normally lie flat on its body.

Most of these fish have never been glimpsed except by a few scientists, but they live on in a strange sea world miles beneath the surface. Some day, perhaps, a special submarine, with viewing windows, will transport us to this strange undersea world, where we will be able to watch close-hand these fantastic denizens of the deep.



SHORTLY



AQUAMAN

AND AQUALAD

THIS IS THE SHOWDOWN! WILL THE CREATURE CRIMINALS SUCCEED IN THEIR DIABOLICAL PLAN TO CONQUER THE EARTH? OR CAN AQUAMAN SOMEHOW FIND A WAY TO OVERCOME THE DEADLY MASTER WEAPON? THE ANSWER AWAITS THE OUTCOME OF...

the BATTLE of the SEA CREATURES

Chapter
3

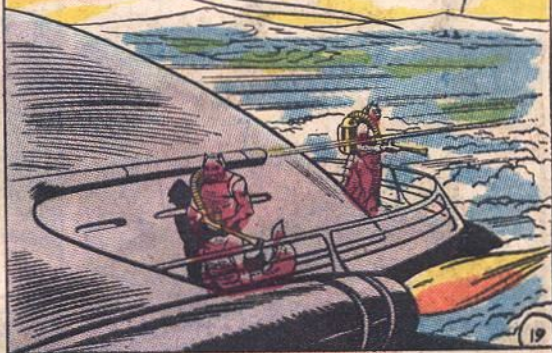
AS AQUAMAN AND HIS YOUNG ASSISTANT, AQUALAD, SWIFTLY SURFACE...

THERE'S THE MASTER WEAPON NOW, AQUAMAN—AND IT'S HEADING FOR THE MAINLAND!

WE'VE JUST GOT TO STOP IT—EVEN IF WE HAVE TO USE EVERY FISH IN THE SEA! COME ON!

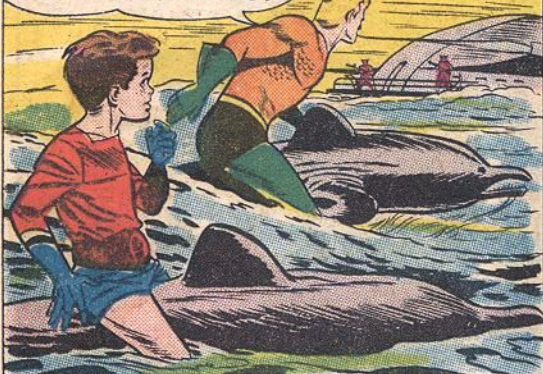
NO FISH WILL EVEN GET CLOSE! SEE?... A COUPLE OF MARKSMEN ARE STANDING GUARD!

YOU'RE RIGHT...WE'LL HAVE TO TRY A DIVERSIONARY TACTIC TO GET RID OF THEM!



SWIFTLY, AQUAMAN DISPATCHES A TELEPATHIC MESSAGE BELOW THE SURFACE--AND SOON...

FULL SPEED AHEAD PORPY!
WE'VE GOT A TOUGH
FIGHT AHEAD OF US!



OBSERVE! ONE OF
THE ATLANTEANS
HAS SURFACED --
AND DARES TO
CHALLENGE US
SINGLE-HANDED!

SET YOUR GUN TO
MAXIMUM POWER!



A TENSE CALM DESCENDS OVER THE WAVES, AS THE
SEA KING AND HIS FANTASTIC FOES DRAW CLOSER...

GOLLY... I--I SURE HOPE
AQUAMAN KNOWS WHAT
HE'S DOING!



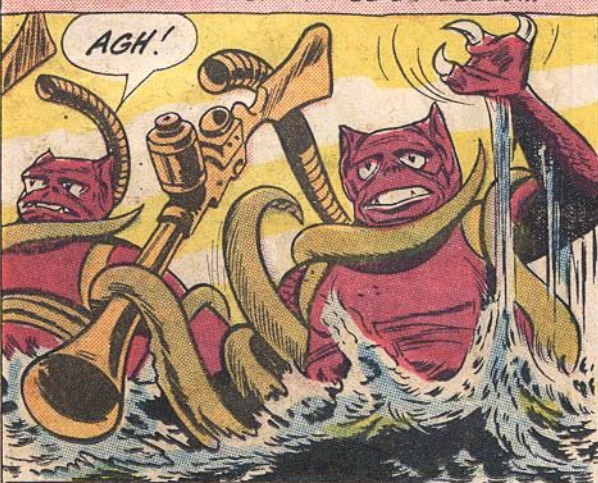
NEXT INSTANT...

FIRE!



BUT BEFORE A TRIGGER CAN BE SQUEEZED...

AGH!



GOOD WORK, TOPO! NOW, QUICKLY--
PULL THEM BELOW, BEFORE WE'RE
SPOTTED BY THE CREATURES INSIDE
THE MASTER WEAPON! I'LL GRAB
THEIR GUNS!



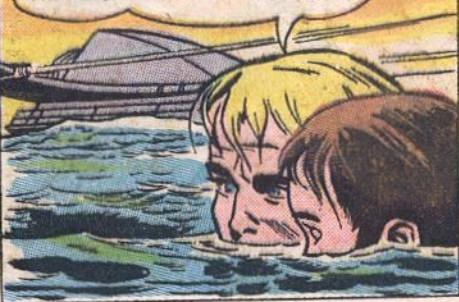
LITTLE GOOD THE GUNS WILL DO YOU! THEY CAN BE FIRED ONLY BY ONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRET COMBINATION!

HMM... SO I SEE! WELL, AT LEAST, YOU WON'T BE FIRING THEM EITHER! TAKE THEM DOWN, TOPO-- AND KEEP THEM THERE!



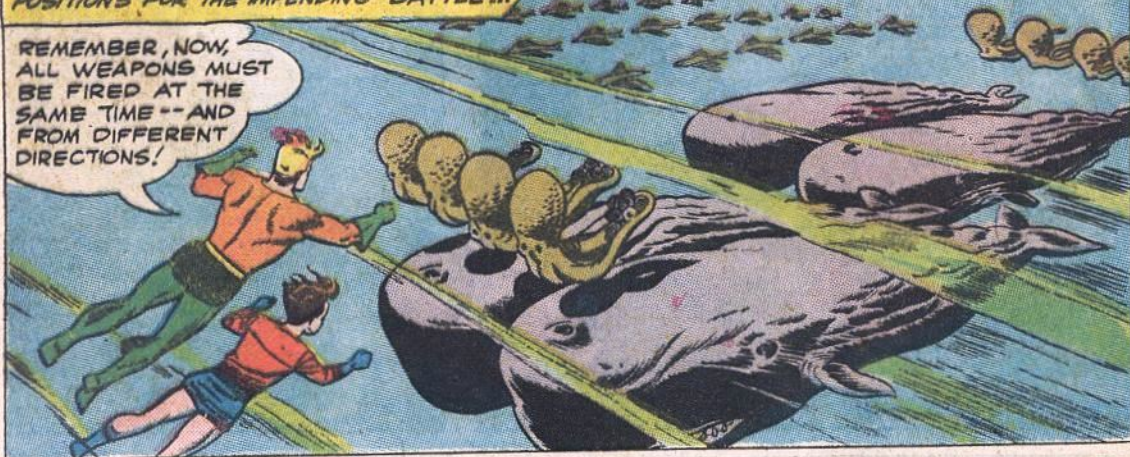
HIS FIRST SKIRMISH SUCCESSFUL, THE SEA KING REJOINS HIS JUNIOR PARTNER TO PLAN THE NEXT TACTIC...

AQUALAD, OUR ONE CHANCE IS TO HIT THEM HARD-- BY COMPLETE SURPRISE! THERE'S A SUNKEN WORLD WAR II AMMUNITION SHIP ON THE OCEAN FLOOR NEARBY-- SO HERE'S WHAT WE'LL DO...



BEFORE LONG, THE DISCIPLINED RANKS OF THE DENIZENS OF THE DEEP TAKE UP THEIR POSITIONS FOR THE IMPENDING BATTLE...

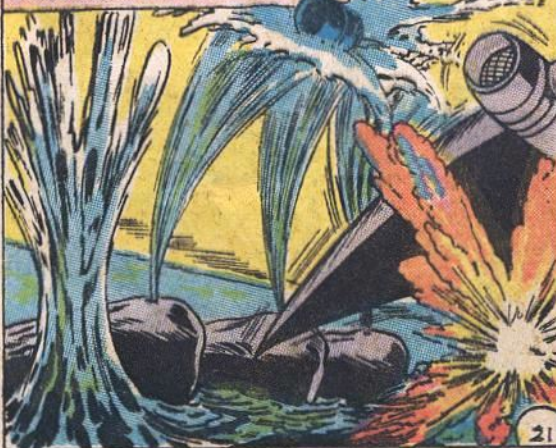
REMEMBER, NOW, ALL WEAPONS MUST BE FIRED AT THE SAME TIME-- AND FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS!



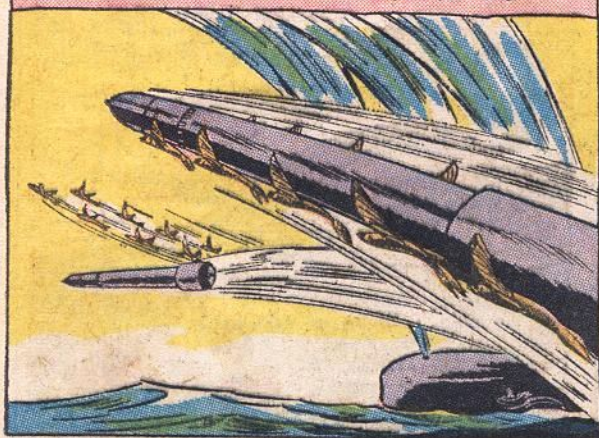
TENSE MOMENTS LATER, A TELEPATHIC ORDER GOES OUT-- AND OCTOPI OPEN THE ATTACK WITH HAND GRENADES...



WHILE WHALES COMBINE THEIR SPOUTS TO UNLEASH DEPTH BOMBS!



AT THE SAME MOMENT, FLYING FISH TEAM UP TO LAUNCH LIVE TORPEDOES, ALREADY ACTIVATED BY AQUAMAN AND AQUALAD!



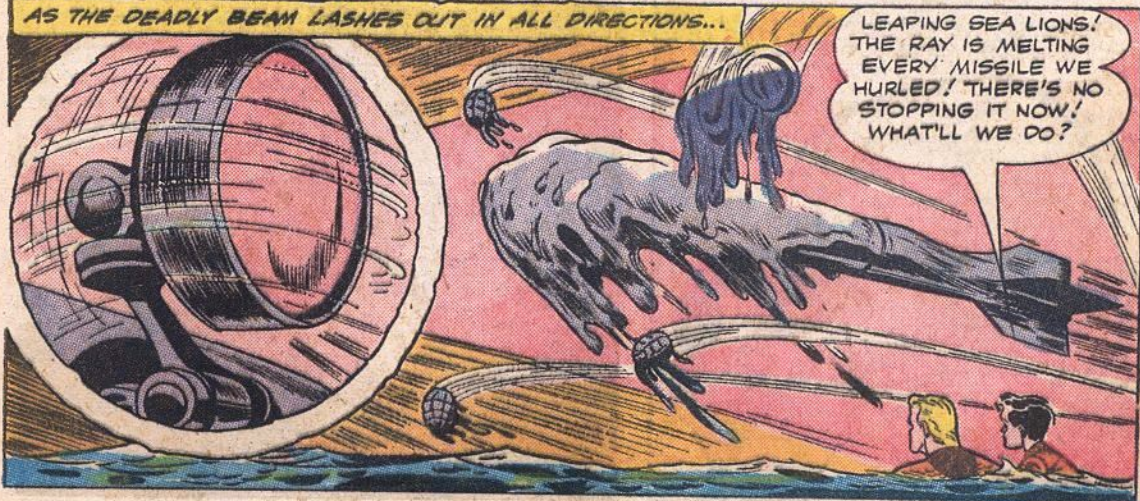
MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE MASTER WEAPON...

TO ARMS! WE ARE UNDER ATTACK ON ALL SIDES!

SPIN THE RAY AT 1000 REVOLUTIONS!



AS THE DEADLY BEAM LASHES OUT IN ALL DIRECTIONS...



LEAVING SEA LIONS! THE RAY IS MELTING EVERY MISSILE WE HURLED! THERE'S NO STOPPING IT NOW! WHAT'LL WE DO?

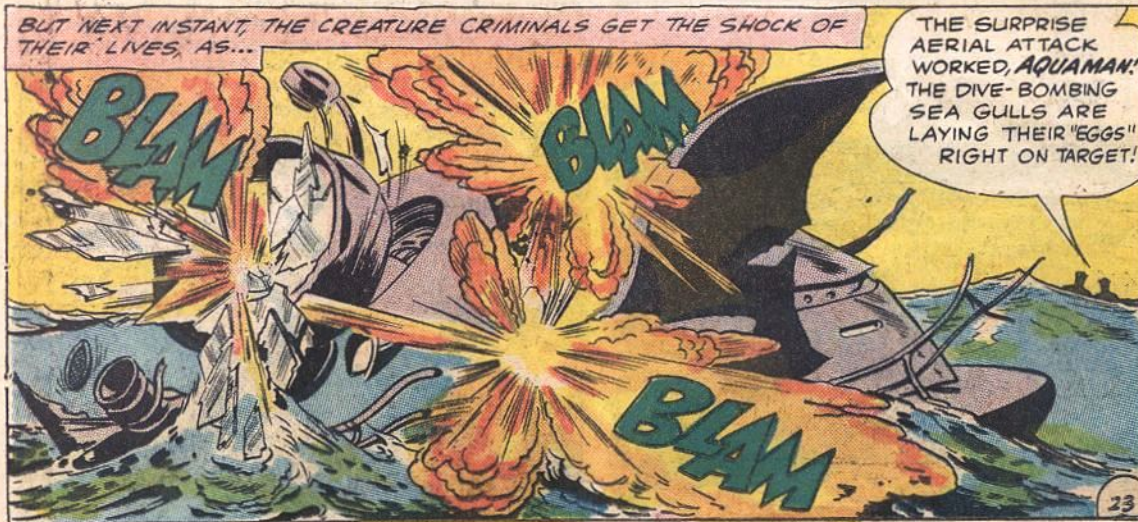
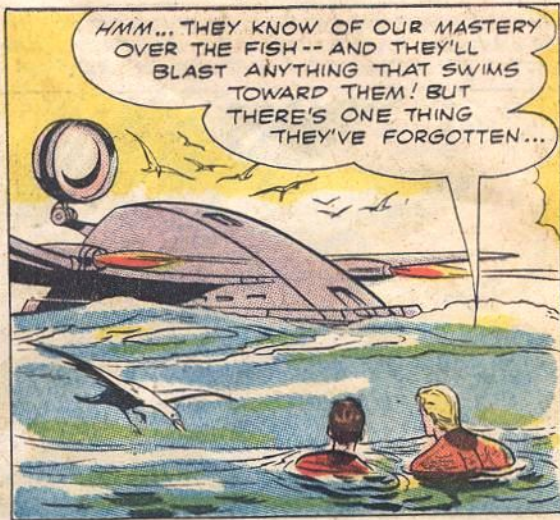
THERE'S A PHONE IN THAT DESERTED LIGHTHOUSE! WE MUST GET TO IT--AND WARN THE MAINLAND! COME ON...

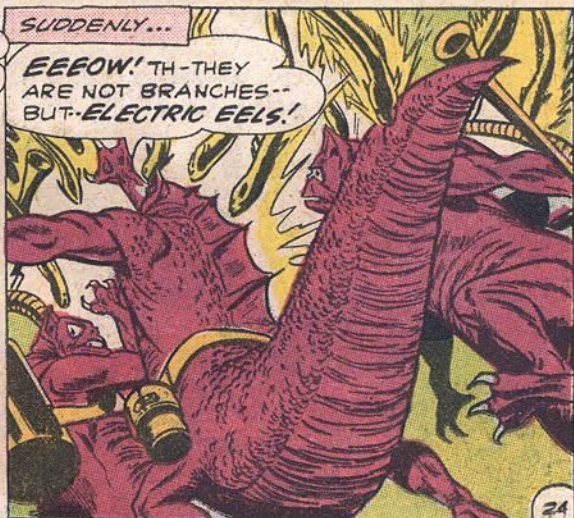
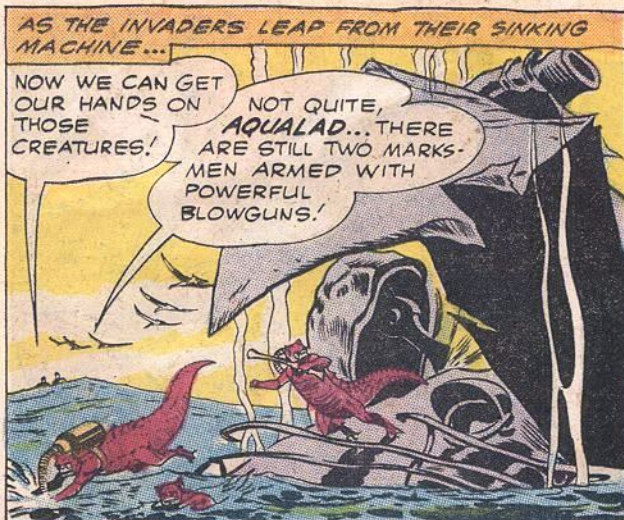


BUT BEFORE THE HAPLESS DUO OF THE DEEP CAN GET MUCH FARTHER...

OH, NO! THE CREATURES ARE DESTROYING IT!







AND BEFORE THE STARTLED CREATURES CAN RECOVER FROM THE SHOCK, A SINGLE FIGURE STREAKS THROUGH THE WATER AT BLINDING SPEED!



DEFTLY, HE GRABS THE SECRET WEAPON FROM TRINO'S SIDE...



... AND DRAWS A BEAD ON THE ENEMY...

NO, NO--DO NOT SHOOT! IT IS THE DEVICE WHICH OPENS UP THE WARP TO OUR OWN DIMENSION, WHERE WE ARE WANTED CRIMINALS!

JUST WHAT I FIGURED!



AS AQUAMAN'S GRIP TIGHTENS ON THE WEAPON...



THERE THEY GO... AND DON'T FORGET THE TWO MARKSMEN TOPO IS BRINGING, AQUAMAN!

AND SO, LATER, IN THE SUNKEN CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS...

AQUAMAN-- WE HEREBY AWARD YOU OUR HIGHEST DECORATION... THE HERO OF ATLANTIS MEDAL!

M-MY MOTHER WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD, IF SHE COULD SEE THIS!



FAREWELL, ATLANTEANS!

FAREWELL, AQUAMAN AND AQUALAD! HENCEFORTH, WE SHALL LOOK UPON YOU BOTH AS OUR AMBASSADORS TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD!



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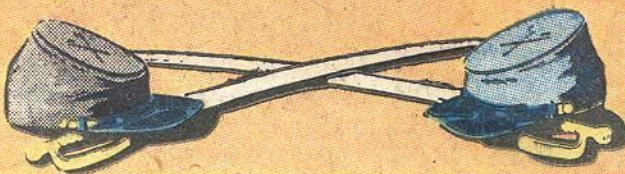
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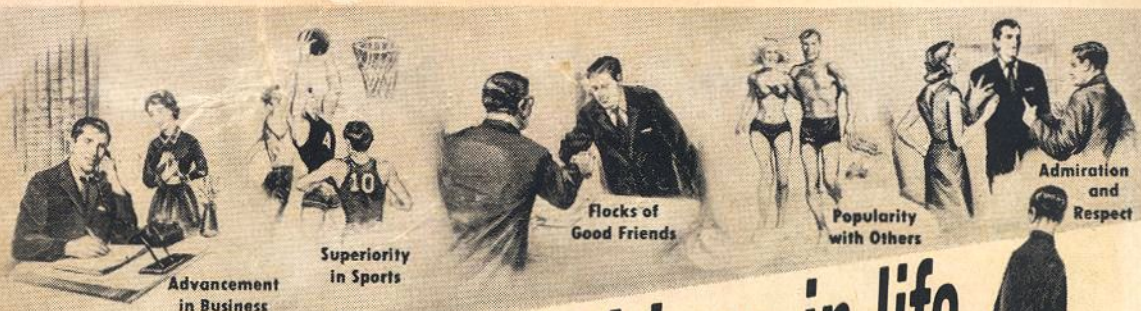
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