

A large school of fish swimming in clear blue water. The fish are of various sizes and species, including large tuna-like fish and smaller, more numerous fish. The water is bright blue with some white bubbles and light rays filtering through. The fish are swimming in a coordinated pattern, moving towards the right side of the frame.

TO BEGIN,
PICTURE THE
WORLD.

A REALITY CHECK
CAN BE HUMBLING.
IT REMINDS A MAN
OF HIS PLACE IN
THE COSMOS.

PICTURE THE
OCEANS.

THEIR AVERAGE
DEPTH IS TWO-AND-
A-HALF MILES. THEIR
MAXIMUM, MORE
THAN SEVEN.

THEY COVER ALMOST
128,000 SQUARE
MILES OF THE
PLANET'S SURFACE.

THAT'S
TWO-THIRDS
OF THE PLANET.

NINETY-SEVEN
PERCENT OF
THE GLOBAL
BIOSPHERE.

COMPARED TO
THAT, ANY ONE
MAN IS SURELY
INSIGNIFICANT.

UNLESS HE
CLAIMS THE
OCEANS AS
HIS DOMAIN.

AND RULES
OVER THEM AS
AQUAMAN.

HOW
FAR OFF
AM I?

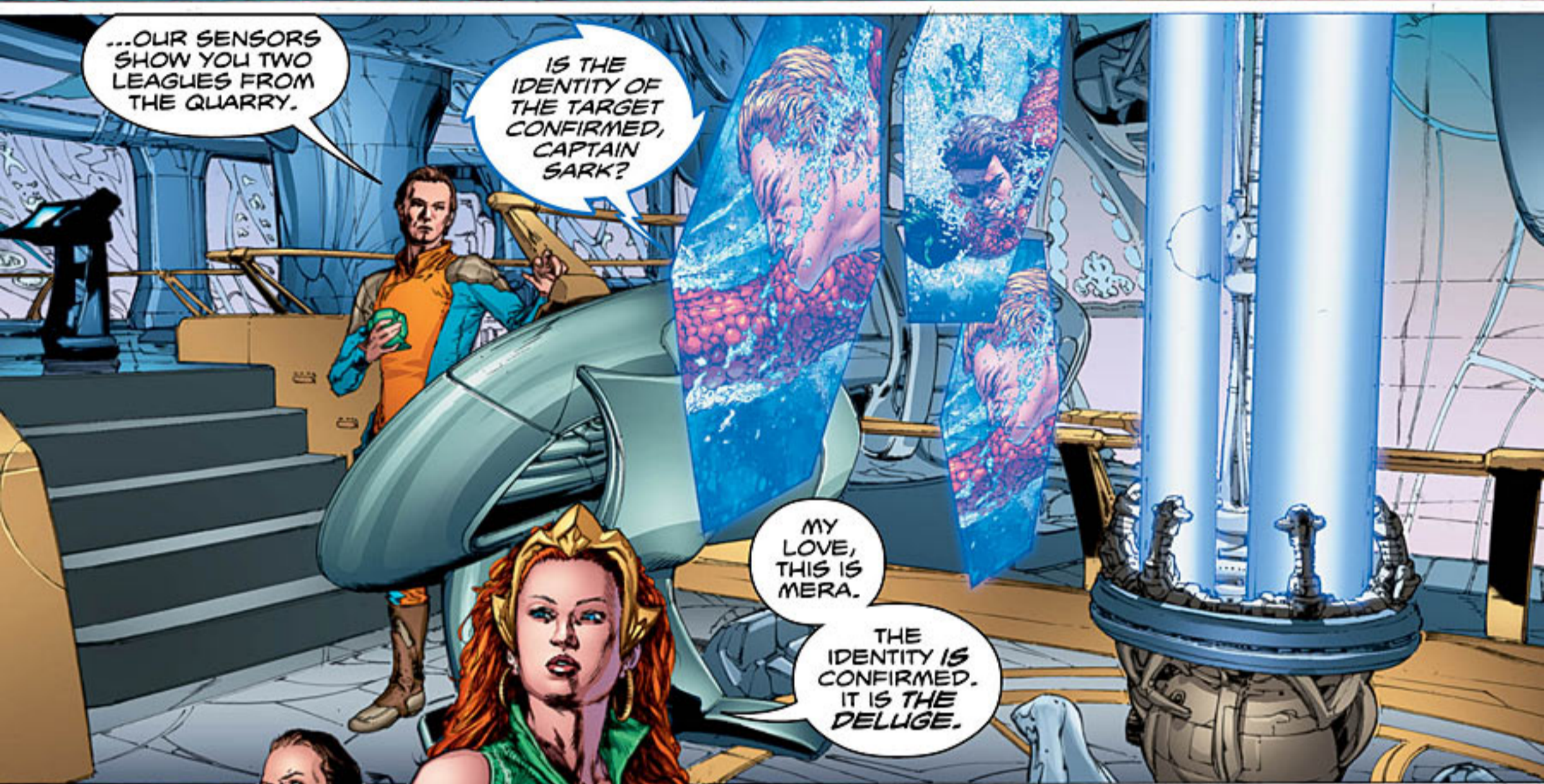
WESTERN
ATLANTIC.





**SPINDRIFT STATION,
ATLANTEAN DRY LAND
EMBASSY, MASSACHUSETTS.**

MAJESTY...

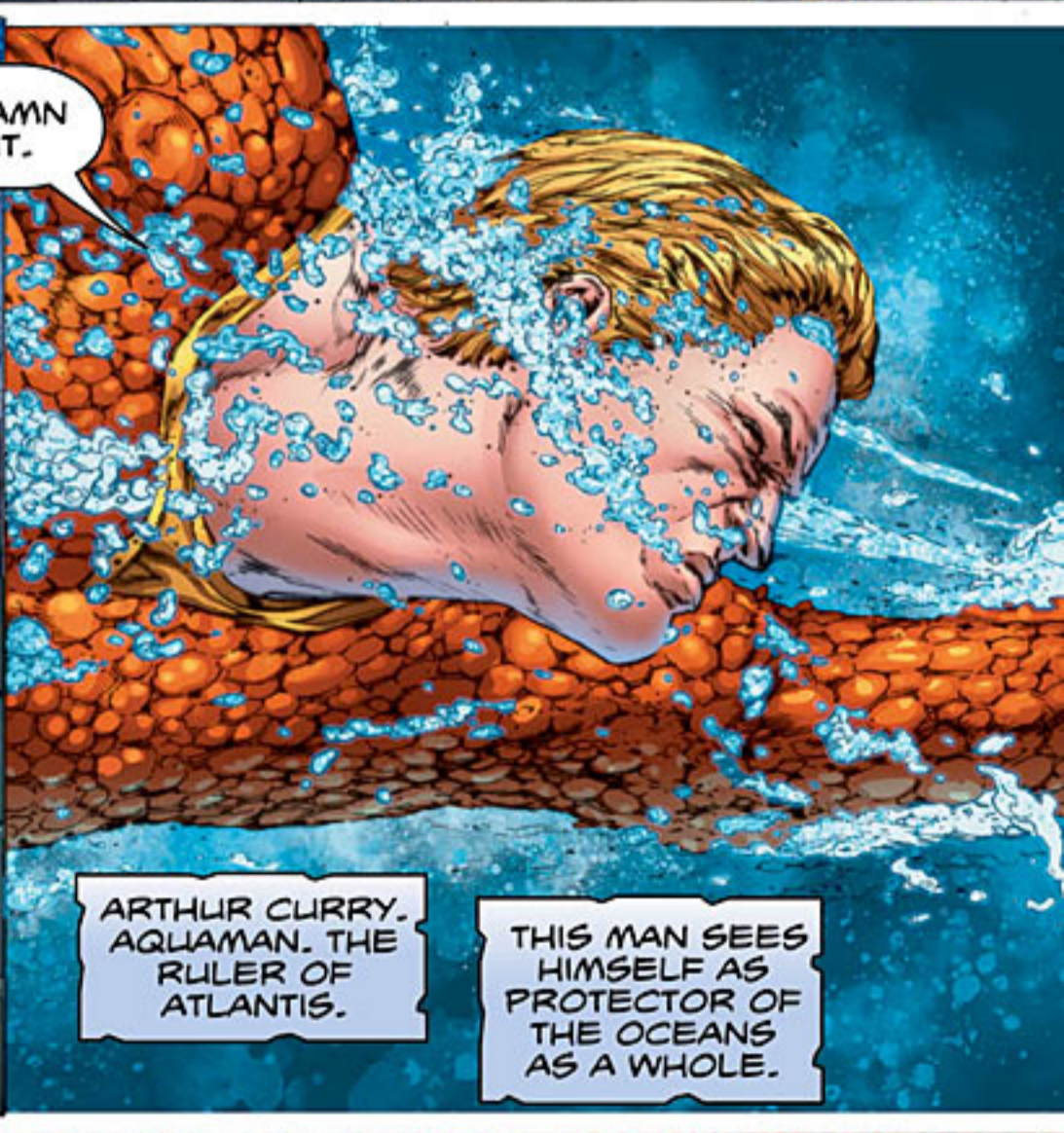
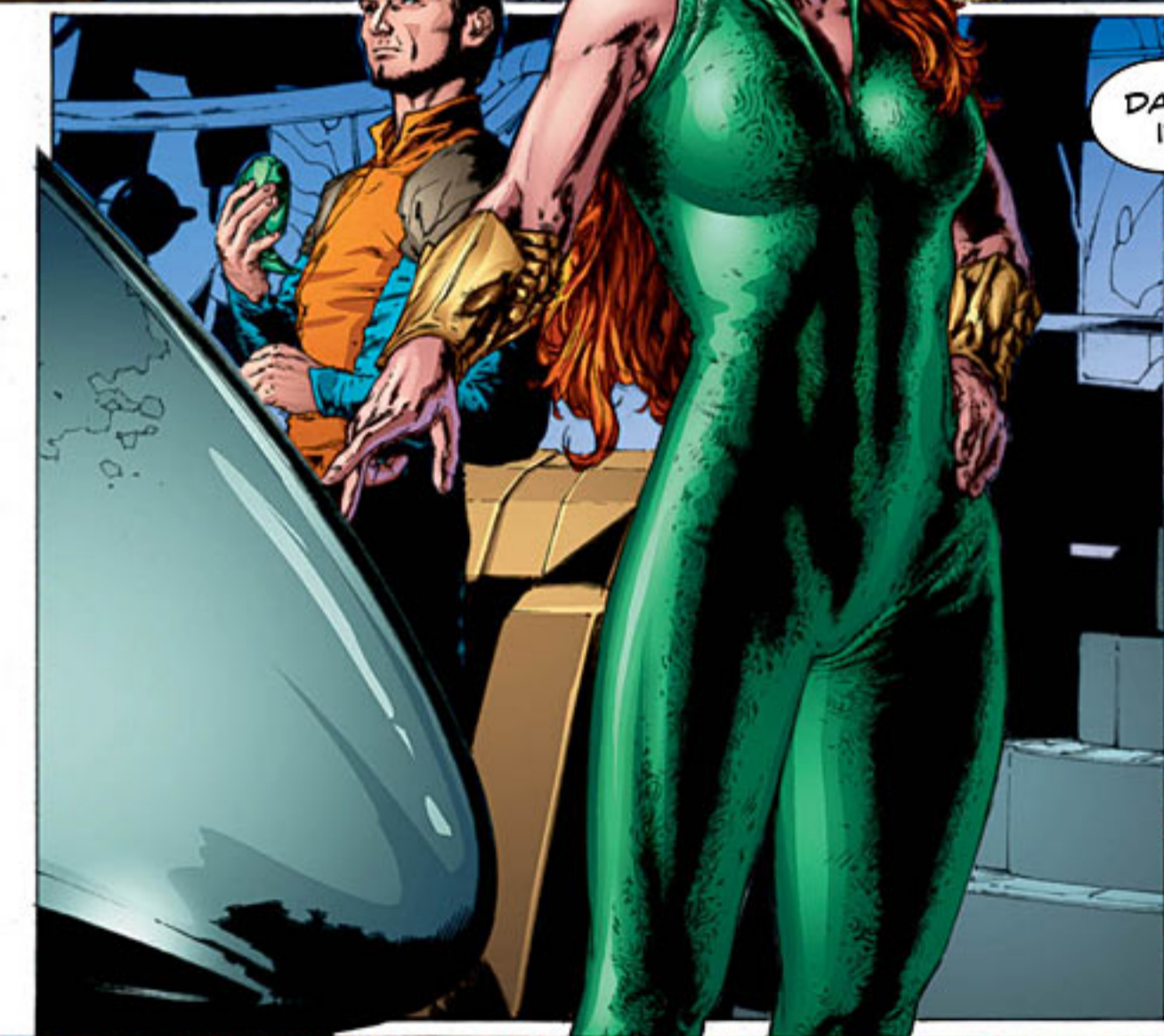


...OUR SENSORS SHOW YOU TWO LEAGUES FROM THE QUARRY.

IS THE IDENTITY OF THE TARGET CONFIRMED, CAPTAIN SARK?

MY LOVE, THIS IS MERA.

THE IDENTITY IS CONFIRMED. IT IS THE DELUGE.



DAMN IT.

ARTHUR CURRY. AQUAMAN. THE RULER OF ATLANTIS.

THIS MAN SEES HIMSELF AS PROTECTOR OF THE OCEANS AS A WHOLE.

HE REGARDS HIMSELF, WITHOUT IRONY, AS MONARCH AND CUSTODIAN OF TWO-THIRDS OF THE GLOBE.

IS THIS CONFIDENCE AND ADMIRABLE AMBITION, OR SUPREME ARROGANCE?

FOR TAKING TWO-THIRDS OF THE PLANET INTO YOUR CARE IS NO *SMALL* JOB.

TOO MUCH FOR ONE MAN, SOME WOULD SAY. TO BE HERE *NOW*, HE IS IGNORING A TYPHOON IN INDONESIA, A SEAQUAKE IN THE SEA OF JAPAN, AND A MIGRANT SHIP FOUNDERING IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.




TODAY, HE HAS MADE HIS PRIORITY THE DELUGE.

AN ATLANTEAN TERROR CELL, *FIERCELY* XENOPHOBIC.

STOP THIS. *NOW*.

LIGHHHNKK!





THE *FINER* DETAILS OF ATLANTEAN SOCIETY ARE POORLY UNDERSTOOD BY US OF THE SURFACE WORLD, FOR ATLANTIS HAS FAMOUSLY KEPT ITSELF *ISOLATED*.

BUT I UNDERSTAND THE DELUGE RECRUITS FROM THE NINTH TRIDE OR "NINTH HOUSE" OF ATLANTIS, SOCIALLY AND LITERALLY THE *LOWEST* SECTOR OF THE CITY-STATE.

THE KING HIMSELF!

NO FEALTY NOW, DELUGE! WE ARE *SWORN* TO THIS ACT!

CORUM RATH OF THE NINTH TRIDE! I KNOW YOU!

YOU ARE A *TRUE* ATLANTEAN! TURN *BACK* FROM THIS COURSE!

PEOPLE OF THE NINTH TRIDE REFER TO THEMSELVES AS "*HADALIN*," AN ATLANTEAN WORD FOR THE ORGANISMS THAT DWELL IN THE MIDNIGHT ZONE OF THE DEEP SEAFLOOR, SURVIVING ON ORGANIC MATTER FALLING FROM THE PRODUCTIVE ZONES HIGHER UP.

"*BOTTOM-FEEDERS*."

THIS IS *NOT* A SLUR. TO ATLANTEANS, *HADALIN* ARE *NOBLE*. THEY TOIL ETERNALLY TO KEEP THE SEAS *CLEAN*.



YOU ARE NO KING OF *MINE*!

WHERE IS YOUR *CROWN*? YOU DRESS LIKE A *SURFACE FOOL*! YOU ARE NOT ONE OF *US*!

THE DELUGE SEES THE NATIONS OF DRY LAND AS *POLLUTION*. THEY OPPOSE ANY CONTACT BETWEEN ATLANTIS AND THE SURFACE.