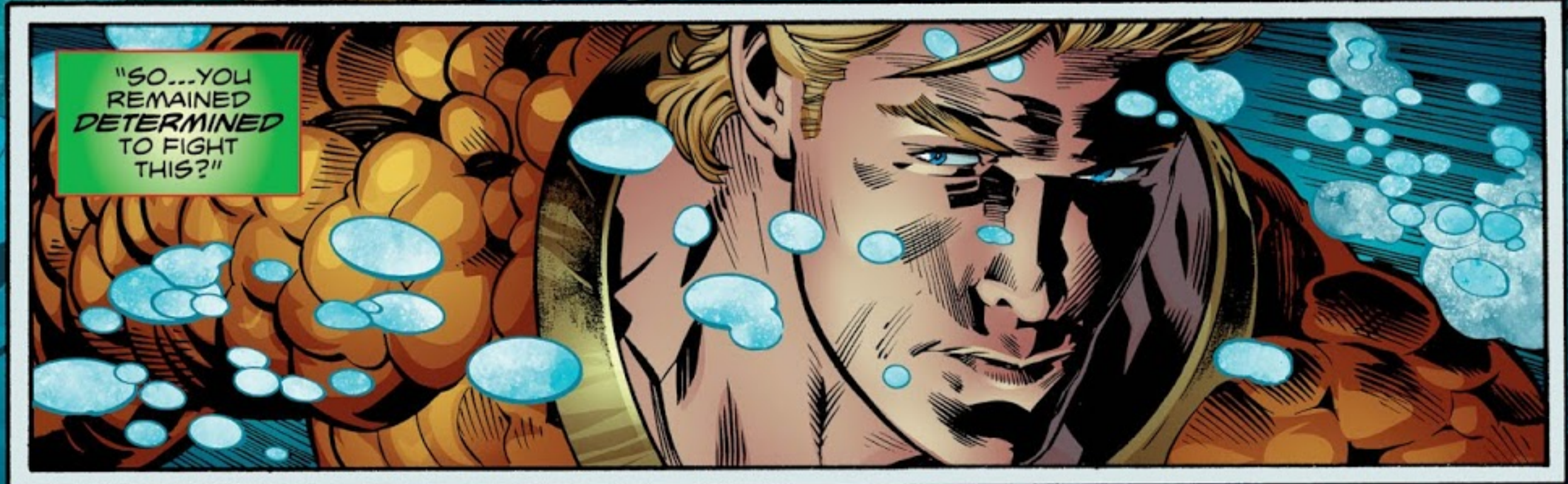




CROWN OF THORNS

DAN ABNETT STORY SCOT EATON & PHILIPPE BRIONES PENCILS
WAYNE FAUCHER PHILIPPE BRIONES & SCOTT HANNA INKS GABE ELTAEB COLORS
PAT BROSSEAU LETTERING BRAD WALKER, ANDREW HENNESSY, & GABE ELTAEB COVER
JOSHUA MIDDLETON VARIANT COVER BRIAN CUNNINGHAM GROUP EDITOR HARVEY RICHARDS ASSOCIATE EDITOR
ANDY KHOURI EDITOR AQUAMAN CREATED BY PAUL NORRIS



"SO...YOU
REMAINED
DETERMINED
TO FIGHT
THIS?"



YES.

WHERE'S TULA?

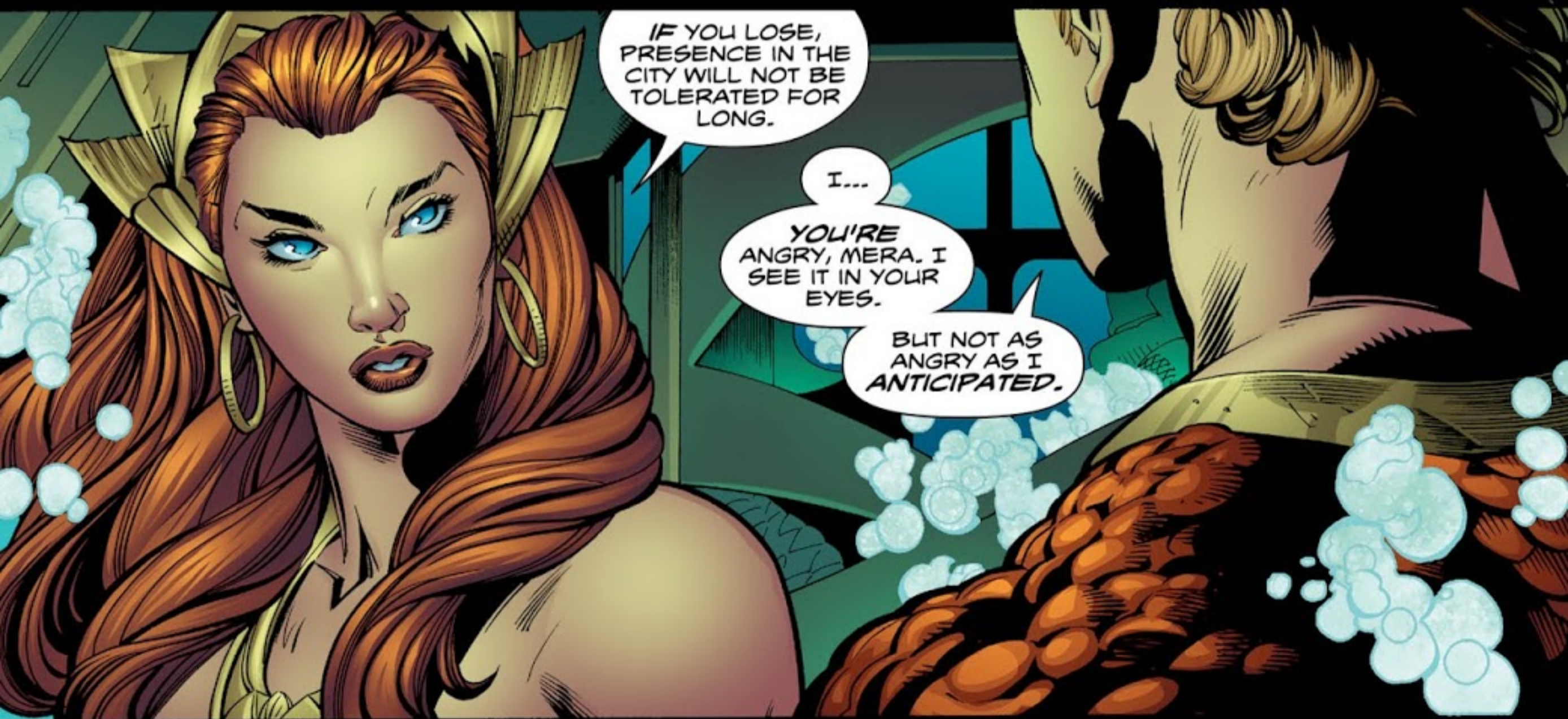
GONE ALREADY. SHE BROKE HER SHACKLES AND FLED. SHE WAS TOO UPSET TO STAY.



WE COULD FLEE, TOO.

JUST... GO.

I CAN'T, MERA.



IF YOU LOSE, PRESENCE IN THE CITY WILL NOT BE TOLERATED FOR LONG.

I...

YOU'RE ANGRY, MERA. I SEE IT IN YOUR EYES.

BUT NOT AS ANGRY AS I ANTICIPATED.



I HATE WHAT HAS BEEN DONE. THEY ARE BLIND FOOLS, AND I *WEEP* FOR THE FUTURE.

BUT THIS IS A CHANCE FOR US, ISN'T IT?

A CHANCE?

A BEGINNING.

WE HAVE LIVES *BEYOND* THIS. A HOME IN AMNESTY BAY. A HOME I HAVE BECOME *FOND* OF.

YOU HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY AS *AQUAMAN*. THE SURFACE, AT LEAST, *NEEDS* YOU.

WHY DO I FEEL THAT YOU SYMPATHIZE WITH THE ELDERS? DO YOU THINK I AM TOO PROGRESSIVE?

THE SURFACE IS PART OF YOU, ARTHUR. YOU UNDERSTAND IT IN WAYS THAT VERY FEW ATLANTEANS CAN.

YOU SEE SALVATION, BUT NOT A SALVATION THIS NATION *WANTS*.

YOU *DO*, THEN.

NO. BUT THIS REJECTION DOES NOT HAVE TO *DEFINE* US.

WE CAN BE *FREE* OF THESE RESPONSIBILITIES, OF THE BACKWARD TRADITIONS OF A CULTURE *TRAPPED* IN THE PAST.

WE CAN BE *TOGETHER*, LIKE YOU SAID YOU WANTED.

ISN'T THIS OUR CHANCE FOR *HAPPINESS* AT LAST?



SO... WE GO TO AMNESTY BAY?

YES. NOW. AND THERE WE WILL MARRY, ACCORDING TO SURFACE CUSTOM, AND LIVE, AND LOVE.



YOU DO LOVE ME, DON'T YOU?

I DO.

AND YOU ASKED ME TO BE YOUR WIFE...

AND MEANT IT.



THEN ARE YOU COMING? TO LIVE YOUR LIFE WITH ME, IN YOUR WORLD?

ARTHUR?



I WILL BE AT THE LIGHTHOUSE.