



Aquaman, Volume 4: Underworld

Dan Abnett , Phillippe Briones

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Former terrorists have replaced the Atlantean police. Crime lords control huge swaths of the kingdom. And a deadly undersea arsenal is trained on the surface-dwellers. All is as King Rath commands—and yet whispers persist of a rebel in the slums of Atlantis: A hero with the potential to change the world.

In a tale that echoes sci-fi and fantasy sagas of the past, this critically acclaimed graphic novel is already being hailed as one of the greatest Aquaman stories ever told. Collects AQUAMAN #25-30.

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From Reader Review Aquaman, Volume 4: Underworld for online ebook

Cisz Strasters says

Love it! Moest even wennen aan de nieuwe stijl t.o.v. van de vorige 3 TPB's, maar het verhaal is wederom geweldig!!! #fan

Aldo Haegemans says

3,5/5

Scott S. says

Not horrible, but a let-down after volumes 1 and 2. (Looking at other reviews of *Vol. 4: Underworld* I'm completely in the minority with this opinion. Yikes.) While the artwork was in a distinct new style the story-line - which, unlike the stories in previous books, took place 99% of the time in Atlantis - felt slower-paced and was not holding my interest. That one of the protagonists - Vulko(?) - occasionally reminded me of Comic Book Guy (in both appearance and attitude) from 'The Simpsons' did not help, either. I hope it was only a coincidence.

Richard says

Wow, this was really a big step up! Not only did Abnett turn the Aquaman series into what it always should've been: an underwater *Game of Thrones*, but the art by the inimitable Stjepan Sejic was spectacular, where every page was a joy to look at, and turned a 4-star volume into a 5-star one. He's up there with Joelle Jones, Jason Fabok, and Ivan Reis as some of my favorite superhero artists working today.

After the last volume, Arthur Curry has been removed from the throne, stabbed in the back, and believed dead, replaced by former Deluge terrorist Corum Rath, who has placed Atlantis under a version of martial law, covering it with the magical Crown of Throws. But the rumors of the former king's death might have been greatly exaggerated, because there are whisperings in the slums of Atlantis, talk of a vigilante in the shadows, a man inspiring revolution, a man known only as "the Aquaman."

What a freaking awesome direction for this series to go in! And what a cool way to give a reason to reintroduce Arthur's beard and long hair just in time for Jason Momoa's portrayal in the movie. It really makes me wish that the previous three volumes were all working toward this, as it really deserved much more buildup. Abnett continues to go even further with the political and cultural Atlantean world-building, touching on banned magic and xenophobia directed toward Atlanteans with underwater mutations. In my opinion, this is where the strengths of Aquaman writing lies, it's what sets him apart from the other big DC

heroes, so why not focus on that? The book is also pretty entertaining as we follow Arthur trying to stay ahead of the Drift in the bowels of the Atlantean ghetto and witness Mera losing her shit and going berserk as she attempts to break in to Atlantis to find her man!

I really wish this keeps going and that Abnett can keep up the quality!

Adam Spanos says

Dan Abnett's run has been an absolute joy to read and now it has reached a new high. Aquaman, dethroned, has been forced to survive in the Atlantian underground and has become bitter to the people. Fed up with everyone blaming him and resisting his attempts to open up Atlantis to the world, he begrudgingly joins a growing resistance to take down King Rath. At the same time, Mera, his love, fights to try and find Arthur and reunite with him to take back Atlantis. The art is also absolutely fantastic. Sejic on art is a perfect fit for Aquaman. Incredible detail and amazing facial expressions. I encourage everyone to also look up Sejic's other work and support him. BUY THIS! Buy Abnett's entire run. You will not regret it.

Wing Kee says

What a turnaround!!!!

World: Šejic? is PERFECT for this series and brings a level of depth (pun intended) and weight to the world that was missing before. His characters are gorgeous and convey so much, his backgrounds are diverse but also well thought out and designed well (which this world desperately needed), the colors are also fantastic in it's diversity and grounding the story in the water. The world building is absolutely fantastic. So far Abnett has not done a great job at world building the series as it was way too choppy and inconsistent to create a unified and well thought out world for the story to play in. It wanted to be Game of Thrones underwater but the pieces were not presented and written well so it became a mess of a series. Here, with a steadier hand and an amazing artist to create the world through the visuals the world makes sense. Keep it simple, keep it in Atlantis but think it through from all the different Trides and places, the magic and the look of the world, the people and creatures. It's still not completely consistent and could do with a little bit more explaining and building (especially the mutations and their full effect on society) but this is a great great step back and huge leap forward for the series.

Story: I hated what was happening before with the surface world and Black Manta and the stupid NEMO stuff. I wanted it to be set in the ocean and if even smaller set in Atlantis. Let his series build outwards before trying to take on too much. If there was going to be political intrigue Abnett needed to build all the factions well and then have them play their games. You can't play the game if the pieces are not set properly. Well all that changed with the last arc which pretty much stripped Arthur of everything and put a new villain on the thrown. I hated how it was handled but now with this new arc and the new status quo I am happy that crap had to happen. This story is much more contained, it's smaller, it's focused on Atlantis and just the people of Atlantis. It does not ask Arthur to be King again and let's the world be the main character, it's great! Read this book if you want to feel happy about Aquaman again, cause I want this to be the new status quo. I want them to slow build the world like this arc which doesn't rush to an ending. I want the small character

moments like we got with Dolphin and Orin and Vulko and Ondine (those were just beautiful). I want this to be what Abnett is going to do with this book moving forward. Let Atlantis be Aquaman's Gotham or Metropolis, spend time developing this part in the story so this city matters. This arc is a great start...I hope.

Characters: Stripping all the dead weight from Arthur is brilliant, Abnett has poorly written him into a corner and he didn't have the skills to write a good political drama so it's good we get essentially a reboot. This is great. I love the journey he goes through, I like how simple it is cause we need this. I love Dolphin who is beautifully realized because of the art, without Šeji?'s art she would not have emoted this well and been a disaster. I love Vulko and his machinations and his banter with Ondine they were beautiful. I love Mera and Garth and their interactions and the slow build of the characters and the story. I love that Abnett slowed down!

I love this arc so much, this series went from a 1 star (gonna give up on it) to a 4 star read this time around. It's not perfect there are still some inconsistencies but if Abnett is going to keep it simple, slow it down, let Atlantis be Atlantis and forget the surface for a while (I hope at least a year in real time) than I am very much on board again.

Onward to the next book!

read individual issues

Michael says

Das erste TPB vom Abnett-Run, dass sich gezogen hat. Die Story ist nicht schlecht, hat aber einige Höhen und Tiefen. Insgesamt habe ich mehr Zug im Kamin und Tempo vermisst.

Dolphin, die den entthronten König unterstützt, hat mich als Figur nicht wirklich überzeugt, vielleicht darf sie auch gar nicht zu viele Sympathien wecken, weil Mera den Platz an Aquamans Seite wieder einnehmen muss.

Chris Lemmerman says

[Read as single issues]

Dan Abnett's Aquaman run has been chugging along quite nicely, but it seems he's ready to kick things into high gear and leave the surface world behind for a story set almost entirely in Atlantis. With Arthur dethroned and dead, and Corum Rath on the throne, Atlantis is in disarray. But there are rumours in the Ninth Tride of a familiar face opposing Rath's rule...And on the surface, Mera will do anything to find her way back to Arthur - even turn to one of Arthur's old sidekicks for aid.

The politics that wracked the first 24 issues of this series take a very different turn now, as all of the different factions of Atlantis begin working against each other. The Widowhood, the Silent School, Rath himself, Vulko, the gangs of the Ninth Tride, and Aquaman himself (plus another familiar face in the Rebirth debut of Dolphin) are on top form, and the intrigue is balanced out with some excellent action scenes along the way too.

Not only is the story elevated to a higher level here, but the artwork is absolutely phenomenal. Stjepan Sejic joins the series for these six issues, and it is a feast for your eyes. His character expressions are on a Kevin Maguire level, everyone is sleek and stylized nicely, and the fact that he colours his own work on top of all of this is just amazing. This is almost worth buying for the artwork alone to be honest.

The first half of this mega-arc is superb. Aquaman's been pretty good so far, but this volume steps it up and then some.

Koen says

Yesyesyes, I liked this! :)

Don't know what it was... yeah I do, the art.. :)

Fell in love for the art... Stayed for the tension ... Seeing Arthur getting back after being killed in the previous part... I'm content.. This was a good story, well told.. and definitely drawn ^^

Jesse A says

Great story and interesting new direction with the art.

Robert says

All Hail The AQUAMAN!

Arthur lives (no big surprise) but has taken refuge in the poorest district of Atlantis to help where he can and keep a low profile. He even goes so far as to state he's inspired by one of his (super) friends from the surface world and utilizes fear, mystique, intimidation...and the occasional school of mackerel...to deal with the undersea city's seedy underworld.

Mera, meanwhile, believes Big A to be dead and is stranded outside the borders of Atlantis. She goes on her own journey of resistance and reunification in the meantime.

Lastly, a new character is introduced who has some prior fame in Aquaman lore. As she doesn't speak, my compliments to the art team for making her just as three-dimensional as the rest.

James DeSantis says

Well least we're getting back on track. After a meh third volume Dan decided to step his game up, and add a new artist...an AMAZING artist!

Stjepan Sejc comes in to give Aquaman a HUGE boost. Who else would be perfect for a underwater adventure? Stjepan Sejc that's who!!! So we have a new artist and a new setting. Aquaman last volume was stabbed and left for dead. He drifted into the down low area, the very dark and disgusting area, basically the ghetto in underwater world. He doesn't want to be the king anymore but when he starts going around saving people word gets out that the king is BACK! The political themes are still here, the fights are still happening, and our heroes are in trouble. Is it better than previous volumes though?

Good: The art. It's amazing. Seeing him draw the underwater areas plus the fights are stunning. The men are hot, the women are beautiful. Magic in the art here. The story is actually pretty good too. Much better than the last two volumes. Dan seems to want a faster paced, everything going wrong, type story. This is the best way to approach Aquaman for sure.

Bad: The political plotlines are kind of meh. They try but add very little. Also some of the new villains in the downlow are just terrible. Their powers make no sense, especially under water.

Overall this was a solid volume. The art greatly pushes this to the good area. If the story keeps up with the uprising storyline we might be in for a real treat. A 3.5 out of 5.

Chad says

Aquaman's alive and taking lessons from Batman in helping from the shadows. I like seeing the different factions playing the game of thrones. If only the bad guys weren't so dumb and mustache twirly. The real star here is the art. How can we get Stjepan Šeji? to draw every issue of Aquaman for the foreseeable future.? His designs for Atlantis are fantastic. For the first time in a long time, Atlantis looks like a city that developed organically underwater. His facial expressions on his characters display so much emotion. He's able to display what Dolphin is thinking by the face she's making which is important since Dolphin is mute. I also dig how Aquaman uses schools of fish to hide his movements in a fight. Very clever.

Anne says

This was maybe the best volume I've read since Geoff Johns stopped writing Aquaman, but it was the art that just pushed it into the 5 star territory for me. There was just all kinds of **wow** happening for my eyeballs while I was reading **Underworld**.

Look at it! Just LOOK at it!

Stjepan Šeji? is my new favorite illustrator. I just...this guy is my cuppa.

And you know what else I liked? The carpet matched the drapes, so to speak.

This is the cover:

This is the scene from the comic panels:

This is visually stunning, am I right?! <--Yes. Yes, I am!

And guess who shows up? Well, you probably already know because the blurb tells you, but I'm going to say it in shouty all-caps anyway...**DOLPHIN!**

But beyond the art, I *really* liked this whole storyline. Mera and Arthur have been seperated by a magical artifact and Mera thinks Arthur is dead. But when she finds out he not?

She pulls out the big guns to go rescue her man!

Garth (Aqualad) is just awesome in this and I can't wait to read more with him in it! And Dolphin's mutation/powers are pretty cool, too. She's got this bioluminescent zappy-thing happening and it's really, really exciting stuff!

To me, anyway.

Ok, I know I used too many exclamation points and that maybe this was less a review and more just incoherent fangirling, but I can't help it! This is the most excited I've been over an Aquaman comic in a loooooong time.

Recommended!

Lashaan Balasingam (Bookidote) says

You can find my review on my blog by clicking here.

As the main writer of the current Aquaman Rebirth series, Dan Abnett, alongside comic book artist and writer Stjepan Šejić, blows everyone out of the water in Aquaman: Underworld. Known for several of his work with DC Comics and Marvel, Dan Abnett also garners great fame for his novels within the Warhammer franchise, and truly showcases his storytelling gift in Aquaman: Underworld. By drawing upon some of Aquaman's greatest elements from his mythology, he not only comes up with one of the most compelling stories simmering with potential, but also gives readers a reason to love the character and his beloved city of Atlantis. Collecting issues #25 to 30, this story arc is a grandiose achievement for the medium and presents fans with what would undoubtedly be an unforgettable underwater adventure.

What is Aquaman: Underworld about, you wonder? The story explores the reign of King Rath in Atlantis while the Old King is presumed dead. As rumours arise from the dark corners of the sea of a potential impostor of the Old King, the climate within the kingdom is boiling with rage and impatience. Decreeing the conjuration of an Atlantean techno-magic force field to protect the city from outside threat, an outright segregation within Atlantean civilization is noticed. However, rumours of the ex-king Arthur's survival

reaches the surface and brings a mourning and exiled Mera, wife of the Old King, to do anything to reunite with her lost love. As the story develops, an impending uprising is slowly teased, but most importantly a reflection on the qualities needed to be a king is brilliantly explored. The story also ventures into a closer look at marginalized communities and the underlying issues of corruption and prejudice that rules within the city.

Dan Abnett hits all the right notes in *Aquaman: Underworld*. There are a lot of recurring characters from the hero's lore integrated within this story arc, but never are they thrown in without context and complex characterization. With an excellent recapitulation of past events seamlessly interwoven into the narrative, the story flows with perfect rhythm and easily draws you into the world. While it may be the fourth volume of the series, it reads perfectly like a stand-alone story, although it does not regroup the entire story arc. An ending that however sends chills down your spine is present but will inevitably build desperation among fans for the rest of the story arc. Nonetheless, the story still contains enough information to be considered self-contained and tackles ideas of heroism and marginalization as it reflects on the current alliances and threats within the Atlantic kingdom. The introduction of a mysteriously silent ally is a gift to fans as well as this character was born with charm and embodies intrigue like no other character before.

Personally beyond astonished, the artwork shines upon the depths of these Atlantean waters an unprecedented amount of light that not only brings to life the obscure creatures of the sea, but also the unique politics of an underwater civilization. What Stjepan Šejić accomplishes in *Aquaman: Underworld* is a statement of his phenomenal talent as his visionary take of this aquatic universe is beyond reproach, especially when you bring a magnifying glass onto the meticulous details that he focuses on. From the attention he gives to facial expressions to the beautiful underwater movements he brings to the universe, there is no denying that he injects a rejuvenating boost to the franchise since Geoff John's revolutionary *New 52* run with the character. It is also necessary to mention the incredible aura that surrounds some of these characters in their design alone. From Arthur Curry to Mera, there is so much to praise in his work.

Aquaman: Underworld is a spectacularly stunning tale on the roles of kings and heroes through a war for the rightful heir to the throne.

Yours truly,

Lashaan | Blogger and Book Reviewer
Official blog: <https://bookidote.com/>
