

M.S.C.U
METROPOLIS . SPECIAL . CRIMES . UNIT

METROPOLIS: SUPPLEMENTAL
EPISODE 8: "CROWN"

Written by

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Executive Producers
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XaleCorp Productions 2016

CAST

ARTHUR 'A.C.' CURRY Alan Ritchson
QUEEN MERA Elena Satine
PRINCE ORM Dylan Bruce
PALACE GUARD
TROOPER

with

BLACK MANTA Lance Reddick
QUEEN ATLANNA Jeri Ryan

and

JOHN JONES Phil Morris

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - DAY

A NIMITZ-CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIER cruises at standard speed across the a calm sea, it's engines churning the water behind it as it passes by, and we sink below the waves...

EXT. OCEAN DEPTHS - CONTINUOUS

Deep, deep down, to the darkness at the bottom we descend, until a faint light begins to flicker into view. It is soon joined by one, another, then another, the light growing brighter as more join it, becoming clearer until we see...

ATLANTIS

The continent-sized kingdom beneath the sea. It's *beautiful*, with a certain other-worldliness about it, majestic and ancient as befitting it's origins, but with an organic feel to it...

EXT. SCIENCE CENTER, CITY OF POSEIDONIS - CONTINUOUS

Like the rest of the buildings, the Science Center has an organic feel to it's construction, but is also clearly inspired by Greek/Roman architecture, befitting the origins of the kingdom itself.

ARTHUR (PRE-LAP)

This waiting is driving me crazy!

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM, SCIENCE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Lying on a bed of sorts, made of soft coral, is a clearly PREGNANT attractive red-headed woman we recognize as MERA.

Watching anxiously through a transparent, clear partition, not glass but similar, as several white-robed people - HEALERS - check on her, nervously biting his lip, is a well-built blonde man.

He is dressed in a simple green and orange one-piece wet-suit. To some, this is King Orin of Atlantis, to others, he is "Aquaman", but to us, he is simply ARTHUR "A.C." CURRY.

INT. CORRIDOR, SCIENCE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

He turns away, effortlessly floating through the water as he turns to look at the man next to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

(frustrated)

It's the 21st freaking century! How can I not be allowed to be present while my wife has her check-up?!

The man smiles. He is as handsome as Arthur, and just as well built, differing only in two ways. One is that his hair is a dark brown, the second is that he is attired more regally in clothing that carries over the look of times past.

This is ORM MARIUS.

ORM

Cousin, you know as well as I do, that even though the changes since you assumed the throne, many of the old ways are still part of life in Atlantis.

ARTHUR

(sighs)

Believe me, there are times I wish I could just click my fingers and bring everyone up to speed with living in this day and age.

ORM

Maybe it's for the best you can't? We are an ancient people, it takes time for us to learn new ways of thinking. That's why Queen Atlanna sent Mera out to find you, to bring fresh perspective to the throne room.

He floats over to Arthur, and gently clasps him on the shoulder with familial affection.

ORM (cont'd)

You're ushering in a new age of modern thinking, one that she herself was pushing forward.

(beat)

She'd be very proud of you.

The two men exchange a sad look, Orm smiling with sympathy.

ARTHUR

I'm glad I kept you around, Orm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ORM

So am I, Arthur. We may be family,
but I'm also glad we're friends.

ARTHUR

Although it wasn't like we got on
straight from the get-go, was it?

ORM

(laughs)

We had a... what's the surface-
dweller term? A 'rocky start'?

(beat)

My jaw still hurts some days, you
know. You have a deadly right hook.

Arthur grins that familiar huge grin of his, as Orm gently
rubs at his jaw in memory.

EXT. PALACE, ROYAL QUARTER, POSEIDONIS - LATER

If Atlantis is beautiful, then the royal palace is
absolutely gorgeous, again built in a Greek/Roman style with
a touch of the organic, as if carved from the local coral.

INT. PRIVATE ROOMS, PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Inside an opulent bedroom, Mera casually stands in front of
a wide, full-length mirror, stroking her swollen belly - she
is radiant, glowing with happiness and joy as only an
expectant mother can.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

(admiring)

You look beautiful.

She turns and smiles at Arthur, who is leaning against the
archway that leads into their bedroom. He gently floats over
to her, and wraps his arms around her, Mera easily falling
into the embrace.

MERA

Only a few months to go, then we'll
have a little A.C swimming around the
place.

ARTHUR

I can't wait.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR (cont'd)

(beat)

I never really thought of myself as a family man, you know, getting married and being a dad much. But now, I can't imagine life without you at my side.

MERA

(amused)

You've come a long way from that angry young man I met back in Mercy Reef.

ARTHUR

(laughs, thoughtful)

You mean that angry asshole you met, the one who'd practically given up on everything?

(beat)

Yeah, I had some growing up to do, but you helped with that.

As they gently float, reminiscing...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MERCY REEF LIGHTHOUSE, MIAMI (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

The streets are dark, befitting the late hour marked by a nearby clock striking midnight, illuminated by the meager light of nearby street lamps.

Outside a tall, dilapidated looking building, the actual lantern room covered in dirty, cracked windows, a bedraggled figure STUMBLES against the wall, using it for support as they make their way to the door.

They don't notice another figure behind them, this one a lot more slender and in a form-fitting wetsuit, long red hair flowing over their shoulders. They step into a patch of light to reveal a younger MERA, with a familiar arrogance.

MERA (O.C.)

(authoritative)

You there! I would speak with you.

(beat, reluctant)

Please.

She curls her lips with barely concealed disgust as the figure shuffles around and looks at her from under an unruly fringe of blonde hair - it's A.C., younger, dirtier. *Drunk.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR
 (slurring, dizzy)
 Hello, gorgeous.

MERA
 (ignoring)
 You are Arthur Curry. You must come with me.

ARTHUR
 Sorry, lady, you got the wrong guy. I'm Tom, Tom Kent.

MERA
 (impatient)
 No, you are Arthur Curry. I know this to be true.

ARTHUR
 (bored, annoyed)
 Damn, I knew this would happen.

He makes a show of cracking his knuckles, but his balance is still clearly not altogether there.

ARTHUR (cont'd)
 Look, what? You some kind of LuthorCorp goon, huh?

MERA
 I do not know what that means.

ARTHUR
 I only came back here to sort out my dad's affairs, okay? He died a couple of weeks ago, and I couldn't be at his bedside because I was too busy laying low from you people.

MERA
 (suddenly sympathetic)
 I am sorry, I did not realize.

ARTHUR
 Yeah? Well, now you do, okay, so I'm not in any mood to keep running from you people, so if you want me, come get me!

He holds up his fists, taking a sloppy fighting stance, wobbling every so often. Mera calmly raises her palms in surrender, slowly approaching him, before putting her hands on his fists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERA

I have come a long way to find you,
Arthur Curry. I have the answers you
seek about your past, your origins,
your birthright.

Arthur squints at her, his face twisting in concentration as he tries to focus... until a familiar cocky grin breaks out.

ARTHUR

Are you hitting on me?

With surprising speed considering how drunk he is, he pulls a stunned Mera in close, one hand reaching down her back and onto her posterior.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

Because I could sure use some company
right about-

SMACK!

Arthur reels back from the SUCKER PUNCH a furious Mera just landed on his jaw, letting go of her and wobbling for a second, before *collapsing* to the floor - out cold!

Mera stands there, shaking her fist out for a moment, completely indignant, before rolling her eyes.

MERA

(curses in Atlantean)

<What a pig!>

With ease contrary to her size, Mera lifts the unconscious Arthur up and flings him over her shoulder, heading into the lighthouse...

FADE TO:

INT. ARTHUR'S BEDROOM, LIGHTHOUSE (FLASHBACK) - DAY

Sunlight streams through the open window, rousing Arthur, spreadeagled across the bed - it seems clear Mera just threw him there. He sits up, *confused*, and rubs his cheek - as an old fashioned kettle WHISTLES from somewhere.

INT. KITCHEN AREA, LIGHTHOUSE (FLASHBACK) - CONTINUOUS

Mera is pouring some just-brewed coffee into a couple of large mugs, looking surprisingly at ease in the compact kitchen. She still has on her wet-suit, now slightly open, exposing her cleavage somewhat, and a coral-like NECKLACE.

Arthur steps in, vigorously rubbing his face, before taking note of the sight before him - his eyes rove up and down Mera's lithe form, finally resting on her rear.

ARTHUR
(confused, but
pleased)
Uh, hey there, um..?

MERA
Mera. My name is Mera, and before you ask, no, we did not 'hook up', as the surface dwellers say.

ARTHUR
(disappointed)
Oh, okay then, so what are you--
(falters, realizes)
Wait, what did you say? 'Surface dwellers'?

Mera turns to face him, as he slides into a seat by the old and rickety dining table. She places the coffee down, and joins him.

MERA
Drink. You need a clear head.

Arthur does as he's told, no arguments. Mera looks at him, almost sadly, studying him for a moment the way he studied her. He may be a little rough around the edges, but he's still handsome.

MERA (cont'd)
How much do you remember of your mother?

ARTHUR
(uncomfortable)
Not much, bits and pieces from when I was little, but nothing solid. Why?

Mera reaches up and takes off her necklace, and lays it on the table. It looks vaguely like a trident, made of delicate coral.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERA

You recognize this?

Arthur stiffens, before reaching under his own shirt, and pulling out a MATCHING necklace of his own. He gently removes it and lays it down next to Mera's. They are virtually identical aside from a blue stone embedded in his.

ARTHUR

My dad, he left this to me, in his will, along with the lighthouse. It was my mothers, I never knew about it until recently.

MERA

They signify the royal lineage of Atlantis, such as myself. The stone represents the ruling family.

(a touch of sorrow)

Your mother, Queen Atlanna.

ARTHUR

(disbelieving)

'Atlantis'? As in 'the lost city of...'? Oh, come on, lady.

Mera reaches out a finger, and lays it against the small stone. It begins to GLOW with an ethereal light. Arthur watches in amazement, as Mera, eyes closed, concentrates as the light coalesces into a small HOLOGRAM.

MERA

Your mother left you a message, a long time ago, Arthur. Let her say her peace.

The hologram is of a beautiful woman in early middle-age, mid 40s or so, with long blonde hair and piercing blue eyes. She carries herself with regal grace, even dressed in a bikini top and denim shorts.

ATLANNA

(echoey, recording)

Hello, Arthur, my beautiful baby son. I'm so sorry I had to leave you when I did. I knew that one day, my destiny would come calling, but I was so happy with you and Tom that I thought I could ignore it. I was wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Arthur watches in stunned amazement, TEARS in his eyes. Mera gently places a hand on his, surprised but pleased when he takes hold of it and squeezes it tightly.

ATLANNA (cont'd)

(echoey, recording)

One day, your own destiny will come calling. As my son, you will be the rightful heir to the throne of Atlantis, a great kingdom of cities under the sea, unknown to our brothers who live on the surface. Your middle name, Orin, comes from the lineage before you, and is passed down to all male heirs.

ARTHUR

(quietly, processing)

Orin?

ATLANNA

(echoey, recording)

I'm using the last of my magic to leave you this message on my pendent, in case one day, for whatever reason, I cannot come find you myself but send someone else. Believe me, I wish I could be there to see the handsome man you'll no doubt become, but I must prepare both you and I for the fact it may not be possible. I won't ask you to trust a stranger, but trust your instincts, let them tell you if this person should be believed.

(beat)

Goodbye, Arthur Orin Curry. I love you. So, so much.

With that, the image fades, as does the light coming from the stone. Arthur futilely reaches out his hand, which passes through the disappearing form of his mother, before bowing his head.

ARTHUR

(softly, realizing)

It's all true. I don't know how I know, I just-- just do.

He takes the necklace back, placing it back on, as does Mera with her own. They stare at each other across the table for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR (cont'd)

(hard)
How did she die?

MERA

(surprised)
How did you..?

ARTHUR

It's makes sense the only reason she couldn't come find me herself would be if she couldn't. I saw how you looked when you spoke about her.

(beat)
How long?

MERA

(sadly)
Two months ago. She was out visiting one of the outlying areas of Tritonis, one of our cities, when the entire royal retinue was attacked by Trenchers - savage, mutant creatures that lurk in the darkest depths.

ARTHUR

(realizing)
Just before my dad died. Almost as if he sensed it, and just gave up.

MERA

I know this is a lot for you to absorb, Arthur, but we don't have much time. Atlantis is in chaos with the Queen's death. A Regent currently sits on the throne, but he's not the person who should be there. You are.

He stands, backing away from the table fast.

ARTHUR

(shocked)
Me? A King?! Are you crazy?

MERA

No more then you are, 'Aquaman'.

ARTHUR

You know about that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERA

All of Atlantis does! The Queen made sure to spread your legend, how you were not just a hero to surface dwellers, but also someone who cared about what was happening to the ocean.

She stands, and slowly approaches Arthur, who doesn't back away.

MERA (cont'd)

You are what Atlantis desperately needs right now. The Regent, your mother's cousin, Orm Marius, will have no right to the throne if you are presented to the court.

(beat, impassioned)

You're not just a hero, Arthur Curry, you are King Orin of the Seven Seas, it's your destiny, your birthright.

As she talks, we can see the effect it is having on Arthur - he is swelling with pride and a little bit of that familiar cocky arrogance of before. He grins.

ARTHUR

You're just trying to appeal to my vanity, aren't you?

For the first time, Mera properly *smiles*, mirroring his cockiness with a touch of her own. She turns to leave, opening the door, before looking back at him, with an expectant, hopeful look, then offering her hand.

Will he join her?

CLOSE ON: Arthur's hand takes Mera's, as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRIVATE ROOMS, PALACE - DAY

Mera and Arthur are still cuddling gently, comfortable in their embrace, as Arthur laughs.

ARTHUR

I still can't believe you punched me!

MERA

You *deserved* it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR

Not that you mind me grabbing you like that now, though, huh?

MERA

(cheekily)

What can I say, you grow on a person.

PALACE GUARD (O.C.)

Excuse me, my liege?

Both of them turn to face the archway into their rooms, where the GUARD, decked in ceremonial but effective warrior garb, including a sword sheathed at his waist, and a spear in hand, floats patiently.

ARTHUR

Yes, Guardsman, what is it?

PALACE GUARD

You have a visitor, sir. From the surface world.

Both react, *surprised*.

ARTHUR

Send them in.

The guard nods, and gestures, allowing a figure to swim around the archway. They're dressed in a black one-piece swim suit with red highlights, a large red X crisscrossing their chest.

It's JOHN JONES!

ARTHUR (cont'd)

John! Dude!

He and Mera easily swim over to the Martian, before Arthur envelops him in a huge bear-hug.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

It's so good to see you!

JOHN

You too, A.C., but could you not squeeze so tight, I still need to breathe a little.

Arthur quickly lets go, embarrassed, as John formally bows to Mera.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHN (cont'd)

My Lady Mera.

MERA

Hello, John. This is a surprise.

ARTHUR

Are you okay? I mean, being down here this deep?

JOHN

(amused)

Mars may not have had oceans like Earth, but I am a shape-shifter, remember? I can manage down here for a while, anyway.

(beat)

Long enough to talk about something important. I need your help, Arthur.

ARTHUR

(sighs)

I thought we had an agreement, John. I'm out of the hero game for the foreseeable future. I have a family to think about, remember?

JOHN

Believe me, I respect that, more than you know, but there's something I've been asked to look into, and I could use some back-up.

ARTHUR

(understanding)

It's Clark. Isn't it?

(off their shock)

I've been keeping track about those 'Superman sightings' in Metropolis. I may be semi-retired but I like to stay informed.

MERA

(realizing)

You want to go, don't you?

ARTHUR

I'll stay if you don't want me to go, Mera.

MERA

No, you have to go. I know what Clark means to you. To all of you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERA (cont'd)

(smiles)

Besides, I have Orm, Dr. Vulko, and the entire royal retinue to help me.

ARTHUR

Not that you need help, right?

MERA

(haughtily, teasing)

Of course.

(gentler)

But I think the world needs Aquaman a little more than Atlantis needs its king right now.

(teasing again)

Just don't forget to come back, my King.

ARTHUR

Like I ever could, my Queen.

They kiss and re-embrace, as John smiles, albeit a little sadly...

FADE TO:

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN, DARKEST DEPTHS - LATER

From out of the gloom, a large, delta-like shape starts to form, two piercing beams of light cutting through the darkness.

A SUBMARINE. Nothing like its usual tubular shaped predecessors, this one follows the lines and shape of a MANTA RAY, complete with wide-spread 'wings' and a long, thin 'tail'.

TROOPER (PRE-LAP)

Heading altered, Commander.

INT. COMMAND CENTER, MANTA SUB - CONTINUOUS

Inside the state-of-the-art control room, various crewmen, all dressed in form-fitting light armor, that resemble wetsuits, complete with weapons holstered on their hips, work the stations.

Many of them stand, aside from the four HELMSMEN occupying the front helm and navigation control banks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Two free standing stations just behind the helm are each manned by a single crewmen. Behind them, in a large command chair sits their Commander - BLACK MANTA.

He is *fearsome* - clad in a BATTLE-SUIT of a similar design to the wet-suit/armor of his men, but he is covered head to toe. The HELMET that hides his face evokes the idea of a large bug with massive red multifaceted eyes.

The trooper standing at the left free-standing console turns to address his superior.

TROOPER

We will arrive at our destination within the hour.

BLACK MANTA

(digitally distorted)

Excellent. Have everything prepared for when we arrive at the drilling site.

TROOPER

Yes, sir.

The panel chirps, and the trooper works the console for a moment.

TROOPER (cont'd)

Sir, you have a private communique being routed from the communications room.

BLACK MANTA

Divert it to my system.

The trooper nods in acknowledgment. A moment later, the red 'eyes' of Manta's battle-suit GLOW for several moments.

BLACK MANTA (cont'd)

(pleased)

Interesting. It seems the Martian has paid a visit to Atlantis. Not only that, but it seems Aquaman will be leaving for an undetermined amount of time.

(beat)

Trooper.

TROOPER

Sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLACK MANTA

Have this communique copied and transmitted to our partners. They may find it of interest as well.

TROOPER

Yes, sir.
(works console,
unsure)
Commander, if I may?

BLACK MANTA

Speak.

TROOPER

I am surprised that you don't seem to want to act on this information.

BLACK MANTA

(chuckles)
I am playing what is called a 'long game', with our dear King Orin. I don't just want him dead, I want him to suffer.

(beat, coldly)

I will not rush my overall agenda for a seemingly fleeting chance to rid myself of him quicker.

As he speechifies, we pan in closer and close to those bug-like 'eyes'

BLACK MANTA (cont'd)

Once I have devastated all of Atlantis and personally ruined Arthur Curry, then - and *only* then, will I deal the fatal blow and bring an end to the so-called 'Aquaman'.

Off the sight of those huge blood-red 'eye', we:

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF EPISODE