Behold them, ye lovers of derring-do... ye purveyors of high adventure...

...Behold these gold-haired twins who but an instant ago plunged headlong into a gleaming, mystic chalice whose finding had made warriors of them both.

Behold them now, carried down, down into the uncharted depths of a world under wave.

I--I can't believe my eyes.

It's just like the image we saw--in the bottom of the chalice--before we dived!

Their names are Torr and Tarra, and they have just accepted the third challenge of their--
A CROWN... AND IT'S NO MIRAGE!

IT'S REAL... AND IT'S MAGNIFICENT!
IF WE CAN ONLY...

BUT, EVEN AS THE PLUMMETING SIBLINGS RECOVER CONTROL OF THEIR LIMBS, AND BEGIN TO ARCH THEIR LITHE BODIES TOWARD THE GLEAMING PRIZE...
"IT SHIMMERS BEYOND THEIR REACH WITH A FRUSTRATING--"

WE SHOULD'VE KNOWN! WHATEVER THAT THING WAS--I GUESS IT 'SAY' FOR THE LIKES OF A COUPLE OF THIEVES-TURNED-WARRIORS.

POPP!

EACH OF THE OTHER TWO WORLDS WE'VE ENCOUNTERED & HAD A SPECIAL TALISMANS, WHICH WOULD HELP US IF WE GRASPED IT.

THE CROWN MUST BE WATERWORLDS!

* EARTHWORLD AND FIREWORLD... ALSO AVAILABLE ON ATARI CARTRIDGES.

MY LUNGS-- THEY'RE ABOUT TO BURST! NUN?

NOW WHAT'S TARRA GESTURING AT? IT BETTER BE...

AS IF WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLE ALREADY...

OH, NO!

...WE'RE CAUGHT IN SOMETHING SPINDY!
Born of the mystic chalice, the gargantuan spot carries the youthful, fate-tossed pair high, flash into the air—

—only to drop them again, some distance away:

Levyn! landed amid—some strange kind of seaweed—getting all tangled up!

Wonder what kind of world this one'll turn out to be—

—If we ever stop being tossed around long enough to take a look at it?!

Good girl, Tarr! Free already—floating toward the surface—and another gulp of air!

My armor’s light—weight, too, so I’ll just—

They’re holding me—like some sort of net!

—Far above the ice-flecked, water-covered surface of this eerie new world they have not even time to glimpse—

Muh??
NEED AIR! BUT-- SHOULDN'T TAKE MY KNIFE LONG TO SAW THROUGH--

--GODS! TH' THIS WON'T CUT-- HALF FAST ENOUGH!

THEN-- I'M GOING TO DIE HERE-- ONLY A FEW METERS BELOW THE SURFACE!

NO USE! SHE DOESN'T EVEN SEE ME-- PROBABLY THINKS WE FELL LEAGUES APART!

NO! I CAN'T-- I WON'T ACCEPT THAT! IF I DIE-- I DIE TRYING!

--EH? TARRA-- IS THAT--?

GOT TO KEEP HACKING AWAY AT THIS STUFF-- EVEN IF--
Hold it! It's nothing but a man's skeleton, trapped by the seaweed--and wearing some kind of fancy helmet.

Don't know how he happened to be down here in Davitjen's locker, as they call it--

But those things that fit where his nostrils used to be might just be breathing apparatus--

--and since Master Bowers here won't be using them anymore--!

Thank the gods! I--I was right! First time today!

Never saw anything like this helmet before.

Well, all that matters is that now I've got plenty of time to cut my way out of these--uh-oh!
SOME DAYS IT DOESN'T PAY TO GET OUT OF YOUR OWN WORLD!
AS IF THESE TENTACLES AREN'T HOLDING ME TIGHT ENOUGH--

—I SURE DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THOSE THINGS COMING AT--

ARRGH

MY ARMOR--PROTECTED ME--JUST BARELY MAYBE CRACKED A RIB OR THREE--

THONK!

—but since my mail shirt's now about as much protection as a shield of wet parchment--

—might as well get rid of it and use the extra speed I gain--

—to strike at old snaky-legs faster than he'd think I--

GOT HIM! BUT--his grip so tight!

EVERYTHING--GOING BLACK--!
In its extreme agony, the gigantic octopod does what Torr's human muscles and purloined dagger could never have done in time:

It rips the restraining net of gathered seaweed asunder, as if there but a thing made of strands of rotted grass...

...Two separate objects, both gleaming in their own ways, go floating up...

...becoming entangled by an errant fate as they rise slowly, inexorably surfaceward.
As above, where icy winds blow like invisible messengers of death across a world seemingly all blue and white...

Torr!

Where are you, Torr??

The only answer is the rending and cracking of icebergs, muffled by distance and mist.

He didn't come up! That means-- even though it's even cold enough up here to make icicles out of a dragon's breath--

--I've got to go back after him!

So murky I can't--

Wait! Something ascending from below--!

Torr...?
NO!!

--HE'S DEAD...

...DEAD...

OH, GODS...

NO, NOT QUITE YET, DEAR TARRA

BUT SOON... VERY SOON...

...AND IF HE PERISH...?
...shall his gold-tressed twin be far behind?

Ah, my king! The Chamber of Komuzo is honored by your most gracious presence.

Even my magic cannot touch them directly from afar, O Tyrannus.
SEEK NOT TO STALL ME WITH YOUR HONEYED WORDS, WIZARD!

WELL? HAVE YOU DONE AS I COMMANDED?

HAVE YOU FOUND A WAY TO DESTROY THOSE DANGEROUS WHelps, ERE THEY FIND THE SWORD OF ULTIMATE SORCERY WHICH THEY SEEK?

OR DID I SLAY THEIR NOBLE PARENTS, YEARS AGO, ONLY TO BE OVERTHROWN BY THEM ONE DAY--AS FORETOLD IN YOUR OWN PROPHECY?

FORGETFULNESS!? WILL YOU MAKE THEM FORGET THAT, WHEN FIRST WE LEARNED OF THEM, THEY WERE MERE THIEVES IN THE SHADOW OF MY CASTLE, DARKSPIRE--?

MY SPELL CAN MAKE THEM FORGET FAR MORE THAN THAT, SIRE...

BUT I CAN LAY THE HAND OF FORGETFULNESS UPON THEM--WHilst THEY LIE IN THEIR CURRENT WEAKENED STATE.

--AND NOW, THEY HAVE BECOME YOUTHFUL WARRIORS, INSTEAD?

--- EVEN IF THEY MANAGE TO SURVIVE THE ICY TORMENTS AND SMOTHERING WATERS THEY NOW ENDURE.

OBSERVE.
I but stir mine enchanted cauldron with the wand of wonderment--and even if they live--

--their memories shall be hopelessly scrambled--their pasts an unknown void to themselves.

They'll forget not only their swordquest, but all that has transpired in their young lives, until this moment...

Observe, King Tyrannus, as the memories are washed away in the waters of oblivion.

"First, their twin birth--daughters of your mightiest warrior and his lady...

"...as well as your rage, at learning of their very existence, in fulfillment of the prophecy.

"They'll forget they ever learned how you had their father slain--or how their mother leaped to her death, after giving you over secretly to the care of a master thief and his wife...

"They'll not remember they could call upon the mysterious figures Mentor and Mentarra for advice, as they did to guide them first through Earthworld..."
...OR HOW, RECENTLY, THEY INVADED MY GREAT TOWER, THEN FLED INTO THE FIRST OF FOUR NETHERWORLDS IN SEARCH OF THE "SWORD SHINING BRIGHTLY AS SUMMER'S SUN..."

"...WHICH THEY MAY OBTAIN ONLY BY FIRST WINNING CERTAIN OTHER OBJECTS OF POWER.

"PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THAT THEIR ARCHIVIAL HERMINUS, THE THIEF DOES NOT SET THEM FIRST!"

"AND, IF THE EVIL GODS ARE WITH US, THEY WILL FIND THEIR FINAL DOOM IN THE SPHERE CALLED... WATERWORLD."

"...THEN AMID THE SCORCHING DANGERS OF FIREWORLD."
Thank the gods—I'm alive! Thanks to this mask, I'm still breathing!

Huh? What's that sudden churning in the water?

Yeeowww! Some kind of giant shark-like fish!

No! There are several of them—

—and it looks like they've all decided I'm the main part of a one-course meal!
AND ME WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A SHARP OBJECT TO CALL MY OWN!

CAN'T GO UP--THEY'D PICK ME OFF, FOR SURE.

ONLY HOPE--TO DIVE DOWNWARD FAST--HOPE I CAN FIND A PLACE TO--

--BUT THAT SUNKEN CITY OUGHT TO FILL THE BILL JUST FINE--IF I CAN REACH IT!

WHAT?! I DON'T SEE ANY CAVES HANDY--
I DID IT! EITHER I'M THE GREATEST SWIMMER ANYBODY'S EVER SEEN-- OR AT LEAST THE LUCKIEST--

JUST NOTICED--THOSE THINGS SEEM TO BE HOLDING BACK A BIT--

--AS IF THEY WEREN'T CHASING ME SO MUCH AS HERDING ME!

--OR ELSE-- WAIT A SECOND!

NOT THAT I DARE STICK AROUND TO FIND OUT WHICH.

ANYWAY, MAYBE THEY WON'T FOLLOW ME--

HMM... SOME KIND OF VAST HALL-- AND THE WHOLE PLACE SEEMS MADE OF LIVING, GLOWING CORAL.

PLenty of fish around-- but at least none bigger than I am.

THAT'S NICE. NOW MAYBE, AT LAST, I CAN--
-- Relax.

Well, so much for that line of thought!

-- Maybe I can hurl it down the throat of one of those sharks -- I then get away while it's choking!

Those crossed swords... they may be my only chance!

No good! They won't come loose!

Now what?

That giant pearl or whatever it is -- inside that big clam...

Not likely, I know -- but otherwise, this is the end of the road!
BY THE GODS! THEY'VE STOPPED SHORT!

IT'S THE PEARL! IT MUST BE!

NOT MERELY THE ORB, MY HANDSOME YOUNG FRIEND... ONLY PARTLY.

Huh??

SHADES OF THE SPIRIT WORLD!

A GIRL... A GREEN-HAIRED GIRL... INSIDE THAT GIANT CLAM I TOOK THE ORB FROM!

AND... SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!

WHY, THANK YOU, SIR.

MY NAME IS AQUANA.

WHAT IS YOURS?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? I DON'T -- HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT!

I DON'T REMEMBER IT -- OR MUCH OF ANYTHING ELSE!

WHAT'S MORE -- I SEEM TO BE TALKING! BUT HOW DOWN HERE --?

THAT STILL DOESN'T TELL ME WHO I AM.

I SHALL CALL YOU AQUON.

IS THAT NOT A FINE NAME?

EXQUISITE! BUT WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT'S MINE?

NOT TALKING. THINKING.

TELEPATHY IS MUCH MORE USEFUL UNDERWATER THAN SPEECH.

YOU AWAKENED ME FROM THE PRISON IN WHICH KONJURO PLACED ME, EONS AGO.

KONJURO? THAT NAME -- HAS A FAMILIAR RING, SOMEHOW.

A MOST EVIL WIZARD OF THE OUTWORLDS -- WHO LAID WASTE MY KINGDOM WITH HIS MAGIC, IN THOSE DAYS WHEN I RULED AQUALANDIA.

WE WILL BE ABLE TO FIGHT HIM, IF STILL HE LIVES, ONCE WE FIND THE CROWN OF LIFE --
-- IN ITS PROPER PLACE.

YOU KEEP CALLING ME THAT, BUT-- WHAT?

S--SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ME-- AS I GRASP IT!

IT'S THOSE SHARKS! I CAN UNDERSTAND THEIR THOUGHTS NOW-- AND THEY, MINE!

OF COURSE, THEY RESPECT THE ORB AS A Symbol OF MY POWER...

BUT-- THAT'S A SCEPTER, NOT A CROWN!

FIRST THINGS MUST COME FIRST, AUGH.

... BUT THE SCEPTER ENABLES THE HOLDER TO CONTROL THEM.

M-- MY HELMET--!

YOU NEED IT NO LONGER... MY PRINCE.

YOU'RE RIGHT! I DON'T!

JUST AS ALL I NEED TO SHARE MY NEWLY-REGAINED THRONE...
Above, a second youthful figure wakes; trembling with cold.

She knows not her name, or how she came to be here.

But, for the moment, that matters little...

...as she suddenly feels the very sea buckle and roll beneath her...

What--?

...then come alive, a thousand tons of erupting, sentient mass!

WHROOOOOSS!

Ummnnah--!

Yet, even as she flounders amid the icy brine, the behemoth--and more of its huge kind--pass her by as if she were no more than a piece of insignificant flotsam.

--something they have reason to fear.

They are fleeing something--something they fear--

Gods of my fathers...
--IT'S A SHIP--
A HUGE SHIP, GREATER THAN ANY I'VE EVER SEEN!

A SHIP CARVED ENTIRELY OF ICE!
JUST THEN, A STAGGERING SHAPE LOOMS, AND SHE WHO WAS TARRA SEIZES BOTH MOMENT AND MONSTER--

THEY'LL NEVER SEE ME--HEAR ME--UNLESS--

--HOLDING FAST FOR DEAREST LIFE ITSELF.

IF--IF ONLY SOMEONE ON BOARD--SEES ME--!

PERHAPS THEY SEE HER; PERHAPS NOT.

...THE BENA-MOTH!

GRONK!

BUT THEY DO SEE...

SPLESH!
WHERE--?

OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY WHO-- OR EVEN WHAT?!

OUT OF THE POLAR SEA A PRETTY FISH HAULED WE, EH, WORT?

AYE, SKABB... BUT METHINKS WE'LL NOT THROW HER BACK.

NO, HER KEEP WE. HERE COME, LITTLE WENCHIE!

LISTEN, YOU APES IN SHIP'S CLOTHING...

KEEP AWAY FROM ME...
--OR I'LL DEAL
HARSHLY
WITH YOU BOTH!

LOOKS TO ME
LIKE YOU ALREADY
HAVE, LASS.

OOOF...!

AND WHO MIGHT
YOU BE, OLD CROW
IN THE NEST?

BONK!

SWOOP DOWN
HERE, AND I'LL
SLICE OFF YOUR
BEAK!

WHY, DON'T YOU
KNOW ME IN MY
PIRATE GEAR,
GIRL?

HERMINUS? IT'S
NOT A NAME I
KNOW, FELLOW--
BUT THEN, WHY
SHOULD I--

WHEN I
KNOW NOT MY
OWN?

--WHEN I
KNOW NOT MY
OWN?

EH? YOU
DON'T KNOW--?

--WHEN I
KNOW NOT MY
OWN?

HOLD IT
THERE! I'LL
BE RIGHT
DOWN!

YOU'D BEST HURRY, HERMINUS--

SO!

--OR YOU'LL HAVE TO BECOME SHARK'S
MEAT YOURSELF IF YOU WANT TO JAW
WITH HER!

AYE! DOWN
WORY AND
SHAB, WILL
SHE?

HERMINUS
IS USED TO
MAKING A FAR
STRONGER
IMPRESSION
ON FOLKS
THAN THAT.*

* IN OUR FIRST
TWO GAMES/ISSUES

28
Over the side with—Huh?

It's some of you scum who'll be tickling the sharks' bellies from the inside, if you don't watch your tread—

—and remember that it's Cap'n Frost who gives the orders on board the pirate ship Ice Queen!

I warn you, Cap'n—The men had a good idea to make this one walk a short plank.

I've had truck with her before! She's trouble, she is, and—

A bit more quiet now, eh? That's more like it!

Silence, knave!

Just because we fished you out of the drink not long before her, don't seek to put on airs!

We could toss you back again, just for your insolence.
NOW, WHO ARE YOU, GIRL? DO YOU CLAIM TO COME FROM A WORLD OF FIRE, AS HERMINUS DOES?

I--I DO NOT KNOW WHERE I CAME FROM--OR WHO I AM, I FEAR.

HMMMM... A LASS WITH NEITHER HOME NOR NAME, AND HANDY WITH A BLADE, TO BOOT!

WELL, SINCE YOU'VE NO NAME OF YOUR OWN, I'LL GIVE YOU ONE.

HOW LIKE YOU--DAWN-HAIR?

I... LIKE IT MUCH, CAPTAIN... I... SINCE YOU GAVE IT TO ME.

LATER...

I GUESS STRANGER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED, LASS, THAN PEOPLE WHO DROP FROM THE SKY... OR RIDE THE BACKS OF THE SNOW-WHALES.

'TIS SAID, AFTER ALL, THIS AGE OF ICE WAS THRUST UPON OUR WORLD BY A WIZARD NAMED KONJURO.

NOW, SLOWLY, THE ICE IS BREAKING UP, BUT--WELL, NOW!

YOU WEAR THAT GEAR LIKE A CORSAIR BORN, DAWN-HAIR.

THOSE ABOVE AND BELOW THE WAVES WERE ONE PEOPLE THEN... BUT NOW THEY DO NOT EVEN SPEAK THE SAME TONGUE.

MY THANKS, CAPTAIN.
I wish I knew if I were of this world, either of your kind, or of those you call the... uh...

The Aqualanians. But you're not one of that scattered, barbarous, water-breathing race.

I guess not... yet why do you kill the snow-whales, and strip their bones bare?

Because they would serve the Aqualanians, if ever they united against us...

And I am determined it be an air-breather... myself... who'll rule this watery world.

All will obey me, when I've found the elusive crown of life I seek, dawn-hair.

And when I do, whoever you may truly be...

...I may just find myself in need of a Queen with hair like the rising sun.

Curse Cap'n Frost!

Yet, without his ship, I'd have frozen even before I drowned.

How can I find the sword of ultimate sorcery upon this mad, landless world...

-- when she who might lead me to it knows not her very name?

And where's her churlish brother, I wonder?!

As Herminus muses the bones of the slaughtered snow-whale are cast over the ship's side...

...to gleam phosphorescently amid darkling depths.
WITH MY MEMORY GONE, I'M NOT CERTAIN, AQUANA... BUT ISN'T THAT THE TYPE OF THING A MAN USUALLY SAYS TO A WOMAN...

WHAT MATTERS IS WHICH OF US IS...

...ESPECIALLY TO ONE LIKE YOU?

WHAT'S WRONG??

THE SNOW-WHALES! DON'T YOU HEAR THEIR CRY?

I HEAR SOMETHING, SOMETHING PIERCING... YET SAD...!

YOU LOOK LOVELY!

THAT IS THE DEATH-SONG OF THE SNOW-WHALES-- THE OLDEST ALLIED RACE OF AQUALANIA.

ONE OF THEIR NUMBER HAS BEEN BARELY SLAIN-- BY MEN WHO SAIL THE SEAS ABOVE!

COME! KONJURO FORETOLD A WAR 'TWIXT AIR-BREATHER AND OUR PEOPLE, THE DAY HE RAISED A MAGICAL WALL OF ICE BETWEEN US--

--AND IF HIS PROPHECY IS COMING TRUE... 'TWILL BE A WAR THAT WILL LEAVE NO ONE LIVING ABOVE THE ALL-CONQUERING WAVES!
NIGHT STILL LIES LIKE A HEAVY SHROUD UPON A WORLD DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF...

CAPTAIN...

NO, HE'S STILL ASLEEP... EXHAUSTED FROM THE DAY'S LABORS, AND HIS CROWN-QUEST.

YET I HEARD... SOMETHING.

BEST HAVE A LOOK...!

HERMINUS! YOU!

UHHH...

DAWN-HAIR? I WAS... DREAMING, YOU WERE PULLED, WRESTED FROM MY ARMS... BY A SKELETAL FIGURE THAT...

DAWN-HAIR? WHERE--?

NO!
WHAT HAPPENED, GIRL? WE DOZED FROM ALL MY BABBLE, AND WHEN I WOKE--

HERMINUS--I SAW HIM BY THE LIGHT OF MY CANDLE! HE--

I'LL CARRY OUT MY THREATS TO FEED HIM TO THE FISHES FOR THIS! BUT WHY--?

I KNOW NOT THE WHY, CAPTAIN--BUT AT LEAST I KNOW THE HOW.

HE STRUCK THE GLANCING BLOW--WITH THIS SILVERY SKATE!

THEN BE GLAD YOUR BANDANNA AND FULL HEAD OF HAIR PROTECTED YOU, LASS--FOR THESE ARE VERY SPECIAL SKATES.

IF HERMINUS WANTED THEM, PERHAPS HE TOO SEeks THE CROWN OF LIFE, JUST AS I--

ZOUNDS! IS THE NIGHT TO BE AS MAD AS WAS THE DAY?

OH-H-H! WHAT'S--?

CRUNCH!

CAP'N FROST! CAP'N FROST! THE SNOW-WHALES--THE SHARKS--THEY'RE ATTACKING THE ICE QUEEN--

--AS IF THEY WERE GUIDED BY THE HANDS OF THE VERY GODS!
ENOUGH BLOWS LIKE THAT ONE--
AND THOSE BEASTS'LL SINK THE
SHIP, LEAVING US AT THE MERCY
OF THE SHARKS!

READY THE CASKS
OF DEATH!

-- OR DEVILS?

THEN LOWER
AWAY, ME
HEARTIES--

--AND WE'LL
BLAST THE SEA-
DEMONS TO
KINGDOM
COME!

THEY'RE
READY, CAP'N!
CAPTAIN FROST—YOU'RE TEARING THOSE POOR, DUMB ANIMALS TO PIECES!

MUST YOU LASH OUT SO BLOODY AGAINST—?

KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE IN YOUR HEAD, GIRL! I'M CAP'N ABOARD THIS VESSEL.

I LOVE NOT KILLING FOR ITS OWN SAKE, BUT THIS IS WAR WITH A FOE UNSEEN, AND I'LL--

SUDDENLY--

HSSSS

YAAA

HSSSS

THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, BOYS!

A SPOUT OF BOILING HOT WATER—SHOOTING RIGHT THROUGH THE HULL!

BUT WHAT IN ALL THE SEAS COULD HAVE—?

MAY THE GODS TAKE PITY ON US!

NO! IT—IT CANNOT BE!

I'VE HEARD OF SUCH A THING—IN TIME-LOST LEGENDS—BUT I NE'ER DREAMED—!
HRARRRRR

'TIS THE SERPENT UNSPEAKABLE!

Yet, fearsome though the sea-snake be, the next moment all eyes are fastened not upon the sky-reaching reptile itself--
-- But upon the lithe and lovely form
poised dramatically upon its gigantic
head:

"Phoebus! Leave
off your mad quest for
the crown of life,
which is mine by rights--"

"-- or else
know that Aqualina
has returned at
last to destroy
you all!"

AQUANA? If you
be that fairy-tale
queen, best surrender
yourself--and bring
your warm to heel
with you!

I'll bring
you naught
but--this:

Yesss

Once more, it's not flame
which spouts from the dragon's
maw; but volcanically-hot
liquid--

A bit more of that--
and we'll have
neither men nor
ship left!

The silvery
skates! Where--?
I--I left
them in
the cabin.

Then do what you
can here, while I
fetch them!

It's folly
for the captain
to waste his life in
vain assault against
maid and monster--

-- when there's
one aboard
who owes her
very life to
him!

Gods! She's
a brave one--
for all that
she's a fool!

-- Yet a man may
be scalped to
death as easily
as merely burned.

AAAAAA
MAYBE I AM A FIRST-CLASS FOOL AT THAT--WHOEVER I AM!

I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IF I COULD STAND UP ON THESE THINGS OR NOT--

--AND NOW I'M A TARGET FOR THOSE SPIKE-HEADED SHARKS!

RACING ALONG ON THEM IS AS EASY AS RUNNING! EVEN MANAGED TO DODGE THAT SHARK AS I LEAPED FROM FLOE TO FLOE.

BUT--THOSE SKATES! THEY MUST WORK BY PURE MAGIC!

DON'T KNOW IF THE MAGIC WILL LAST, THOUGH--

YOU!

STAY RIGHT THERE-- AND PUT DOWN YOUR SWORD!

I KNOW JUST WHERE I'LL PUT IT-- IF YOU COME DOWN HERE!

--SO I'D BETTER SEE IF I CAN CIRCLE AROUND BEHIND THAT GIRL AND HER SERPENT, BEFORE THEY--

UH- OH! SOMEONE ATOP THAT WHALE-- AND HE'S SPOTTED ME!

YOU FIRST MUST DEAL WITH AQUON!
As above the gleaming decks nearby...

**Strike, serpent—strike!**

Let the scum learn the people of the deep will not stand idly by while the crown of life is plundered by pirates!

---

*Aquana!*

--Never come within reach of a desperate foe!

There are things you, as well, must learn, woman—and one of them is--

Grieve not for her! She's rightly served—for attacking the Ice Queen--
THE PIRATE SHIP--BEARING DOWN UPON HER--!
SERPENT! SAVE YOUR MISTRESS!
PERSHE THE GREAT DRAGON UNDERSTANDS.
MORE LIKELY, NOT.

YET, NEXT MOMENT, ITS VAST BULK SLAMS INTO THE CORSAIR CRAFT--
--WITH DEVASTATING RESULTS:

CAPTAIN FROST!

THWAM

ARRGH--!

HE'S HURT--AYE, HURT BAD!

AND HERE COMES THE HEAT--SPewing MELSPAWN!!
AYE, THE SERPENT OBEYS ME NOW, THROUGH AQUANA'S SCEPTER.
I COULD HAVE IT ATTACK YOU ANEW-- BUT SOMETHING STAYS MY HAND.

MY LADY AQUANA DESIRES THE CROWN OF LIFE HIDDEN NEARBY-- AS DOES YOUR LEADER-- BUT I SAY THERE HAS BEEN ENOUGH OF KILLING.

LET US CEASE THIS STRUGGLE-- AND SLAY NO MORE!

WELL SAID, BOY.

THUS, SINCE AQUANA CANNOT SPEAK FOR HERSELF, JUST NOW...

...IT'S LEFT UP TO THE CHURLISH CREWMEN:
I CARE NAUGHT FOR THAT CROWN, LET'S DO AS THE YOUTH SAYS!

'TIS AGREED, THEN! WE'LL--

HEAR NOW THE WORDS OF HERMINUS!

I SAY-- LET THOSE TWO WHELPS DEAL UPON THE ICE, WITH SWORDS ALONE, AT NO RISK TO US--

YES, LET'S GO-- WHILE I'VE STILL ONE GOOD EYE.

...MAND, MY STURDY LADS!

--WINNER TAKE ALL!
IF THE LASS WINS, WE GET CROWN AND SCEPTER
AND LORDSHIP EVEN OVER THE SERPENT--WHILE IF THE
LAD, HE WINS THE ICE QUEEN HERSELF!
WHAT SAY YOU? YOU'VE SEEN THE
LASS FIGHT!
AYE! LET THEM FIGHT!
AND EITHER WAY-- HERMINUS
SHALL COME OUT ON TOP!
THEN I, TOO... AGREE.
.jwt
I'VE... LITTLE
CHOICE.
BESIDES, A PIRATE'S A
PIRATE... FEMALE OR
NO!
I REJOICE YOU SAID THAT--
FOR THERE'LL BE NO MORE
QUARTER ASKED
THAN GIVEN.

WHILE I FIGHT FOR AQUANA'S
LIFE AND
KINGDOM--NOT
FOR MYSELF
ALONE!

THUS, WHILE A RE-
COVERED CAP'N FROST
WATCHES, KNOWING HIS
CREW WILL MUTINY IF
HE OPPOSE THEM NOW...

...AND A HALF-
DAZED AQUANA
STAKES HER ALL UPON
HER NEWFOUND
LOVE'S SUPERIORITY
TO A MERE GIRL...

...AND HERMINUS
STUFFS RETRIEVED
SKATES INTO HIS
AMPLE THIEF BAG...

... TWO SWORDS ARE RAISED
AGAINST THE COLD NIGHT SKY:
LET THE BATTLE
BEGIN!
Do they suspect these two antagonists upon the slippery ice?

As they cross swords -- as evenly matched as only twins with intricately entwined destinies can --

--- Does some small part of the mind of each recognize the other?

Strangely, it is TARRA now who has become the more aggressive, the more impetuous -- your less so than before...

... though he's no man to be counted out in a fight which may well be to the death.

At last, after what seems an eternity of klanging, echoing sword-clashings --

I admit it -- you are less the fop than you appear!

While you have considerable skill -- for a girl!
YET, EVEN AS FURROWED BROWS ARE KNIT FOR AN INSTANT'S CONCENTRATION--

WHAT SORCERY IS THIS, GIRL? SPECTRAL FIGURES--APPEARING OUT OF NOWHERE?!

THEY'RE NO DOING OF MINE, BOY. I KNOW THEM NOT.

AND YET, SOMEHOW... I DO.

AND NOW WE ARE COME AGAIN--BECAUSE, IN THE DARK RECESSES OF YOUR MINDS, YOU CALLED UPON US.

WE ARE THOSE WHO CAME TO YOU FIRST IN EARTHWORLD, THEN ON FIREWORLD.

AYE, BUT THIS TIME, LOOK NOT FOR MENTARR AND MENTARRA TO GUIDE YOU... FOR YOU MUST BE YOUR OWN GUIDES.

MERELY LOOK AT THE ONE YOU WOULD SEEK TO SLAY AND YOU SHALL SEE YOURSELF!

WE CAN SPEAK NO MORE; THE REST IS UP TO YOU.

REMEMBER--LOOK TO YOURSELVES!
AND WHEN THEY DO, AND FACES SO MUCH LIKE THEIR OWN PEER WONDERING BACK...

--BELLS OF DARKNESS ARE LIFTED FROM THEIR TROUBLED MINDS--

KCHINK!

TARRA--MY SISTER!

DEAR BROTHER--I MIGHT HAVE KILLED YOU!

OR I YOU!

THAT METALLIC TOUCH WHEN SWORDS STRUCK ICE--

DANNA--HAIR! LOOK TO YOUR BLADE!

AQUANA! DO NOT LET FROST'S FANCY ONE RETRIEVE WHAT MUST LIE BURIED THERE!

NEVER FEAR, AQUANA! WE'LL DRAW IT OUT--

LOOK! IT'S HALF A CROWN--SO GLEAMINGLY LOVELY--

AND I'VE THE OTHER HALF!

OUR BLADES SOMEHOW FOUND THE CROWN OF LIFE--EVEN AS THEY SLICED IT IN TWAIN!

--TOGETHER! SEE HOW THE VERY ICE MELTS, TORR!
You've destroyed it! A crown sought for untold ages -- and bringing total power over this world!

No, not useless --

But merely something to be shared!

Aquon and Dawn-Hair are no more -- but you've a world to rule and to save, as the Great Thaw continues.

Now -- 'tis useless!

There is world enough for all -- but not for one only!

Rise to the challenge! Join forces and --

Torr -- look up!

We should've known this would happen!

Now that we've gained the third talisman, on this third world --

I was the master thief who first tried to steal it -- and I'll have it yet!

No! Do not touch it, whelps!

--the sword of ultimate sorcery appears in the air -- mocking us with its nearness, for all that we cannot touch it!

The sword is mine!
THEN, EVEN AS UNDERSEA QUEEN AND ICE CORSAIR LOOK DEEP INTO EACH OTHERS' EYES--

--AND EACH REALIZES THAT HALF A WORLD IS BETTER FAR THAN NONE--

--AND, INDEED, MAY EVEN BE BETTER THAN A WHOLE WORLD, RULED ALONE--

NOW AT LAST WE HAVE THEM IN A COSMIC CORNER--FOR THEY HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO FLEE.

GOOD! THEN MAKE READY A SPELL, KONJURO!

--THE SWORD IS GONE ONCE MORE!

--WITH EERIE RESULTS

WH--? CAUGHT-- IN THE UPDRAFT! I'M--

THREE WORLDS DOWN, O TYRANNUS, AND BUT ONE TO GO.

--TARA-- HOLD ON!

I AM!

--BLAST! COULDN'T REACH THOSE BRAINS IN TIME TO--

WE ARE GOING PERSONALLY, YOU AND I--

--TO THE PLACE CALLED AIRWORLD!

THIS TIME, SUMMONING ALL THEIR ENERGIES GAINED AS MOMENTARY TWIN MONARCHS OF WATERWORLD, TORR AND TARRA HAVE MANAGED TO GRASP ITS GLOSSY POMMEL--