

I've given Team Arrow a bit of grief for not advantage of Ollie's absence to come into their own, but that doesn't give credit to the independence they were obliged to exert while he was gone. Maybe if his return had ended with him atop that truck, promising things would go back to normal, the team would have followed suit and it'd be as if his "death" ever happened. But when Ollie decided to partner with Merlyn, the change that started when he left took root, and now Team Arrow is waking up to that fact. As always, these observations are best expressed by Felicity, who's still wearing some of the leadership she quietly took on while Ollie was away. Just when Ollie's frustrations with everyone else's stubbornness reaches its peak, she tells him, "[W]e had to go on with our lives and doing that meant not doing things your way." "Fine! I'm back now!" "That doesn't mean that we can go back. And you do not have the right to come back here and question everyone's choices." What she's really saying, and what Diggle tells Ollie later, is while he was gone, they all realized his crusade is bigger than him. Actually, that's putting it too passively; it's more accurate to say they decided Ollie's crusade is bigger than Ollie. By picking up where he left off, they turned it into their crusade, a shared experience that Ollie can't just hijack for his own anymore. Ollie doesn't quite realize it yet, but giving up control of the reins, even partially, is a very good thing. It means he's not solely responsible for the good of an entire city anymore, and that means getting back some of the happiness he thought he had to give up at the start of the season. Letting others take a greater hand in his affairs does expose them to more danger, but it also allows for the kind of mutual support that makes everyone more capable of protecting themselves. Ollie should already be seeing this from the way things play out after he finally tells Thea about his biggest secret. It's heartwarming, honestly. Her pride in what he's done is a powerful reminder that while Ollie is entertaining us week after week, he's also doing a whole lot of good for people. More than that, knowing Ollie's secret opens the door for Thea to be involved in the show in a way her sparring sessions with Merlyn did not. It's not just for Ollie's moral support ("I smell smoke," she remarks when he comes home, "Korean barbeque?" "C4."); it's for her growth as well. Another important side-effect of Ollie's big revelation is it drives Thea and Merlyn apart from the uncomfortable closeness they've shared in the past few months. It makes Thea a rather fickle character; her loyalties rapidly shift to whoever gets in the last secret, which is a problem when both Ollie and Merlyn have more to tell. You can enjoy the renewed bond between the Queen siblings now, especially as they embark on their special camping trip to Lian Yu, but expect a few more turns in the relationship before it all truly settles down. These are the really crucial developments in the episode, the ones that will become part of the show's backbone, but since this is Arrow, there's always a lot more than that going on. I won't bother running through them all, but I will mention the return of Werner Zytel gets a bit lost amidst all the family and team drama and in the process Dinah's internal conflicts get a little lost, too. Some Musings:- DJ Chase is dead. Long live DJ Chase.- Okay, so Ollie not only got off the island, but he actually made it back to Starling City? At a certain point—probably when Ollie is sneaking around the back of his house while Moira and Thea are in the front room—his pre-Arrow activities are going to get out of hand. The post Arrow: Canaries appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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