



# LOST KINGDOMS

By Emily Hawkins

Atlantis  
Legendary  
Sunken City



## Sunken Lands and Phantom Islands

Around the world and through the ages, tales of sunken lands have been told in many different cultures, from ancient Greece to the Mayan Empire, from the myths of Indigenous Americans to stories from the remote Solomon Islands. These tales may have been inspired by real places that were submerged by rising waters, or dragged beneath the sea by earthquakes.



Alongside these sunken lands, these stories also reveal many phantom islands: places that used to appear on maps, until geographers worked out that they never really existed. Most came about due to navigator's mistakes, or the vivid imaginations of sailors.



## A Note on the Maps

Each story opens with a map revealing a selection of lost kingdoms and mythical lands from a particular continent. The maps aren't 'real' in the strictest sense: they reveal a land of the imagination. They show the places associated with certain legends and stories, as well as the destinations sought by explorers and treasure-hunters over the centuries.





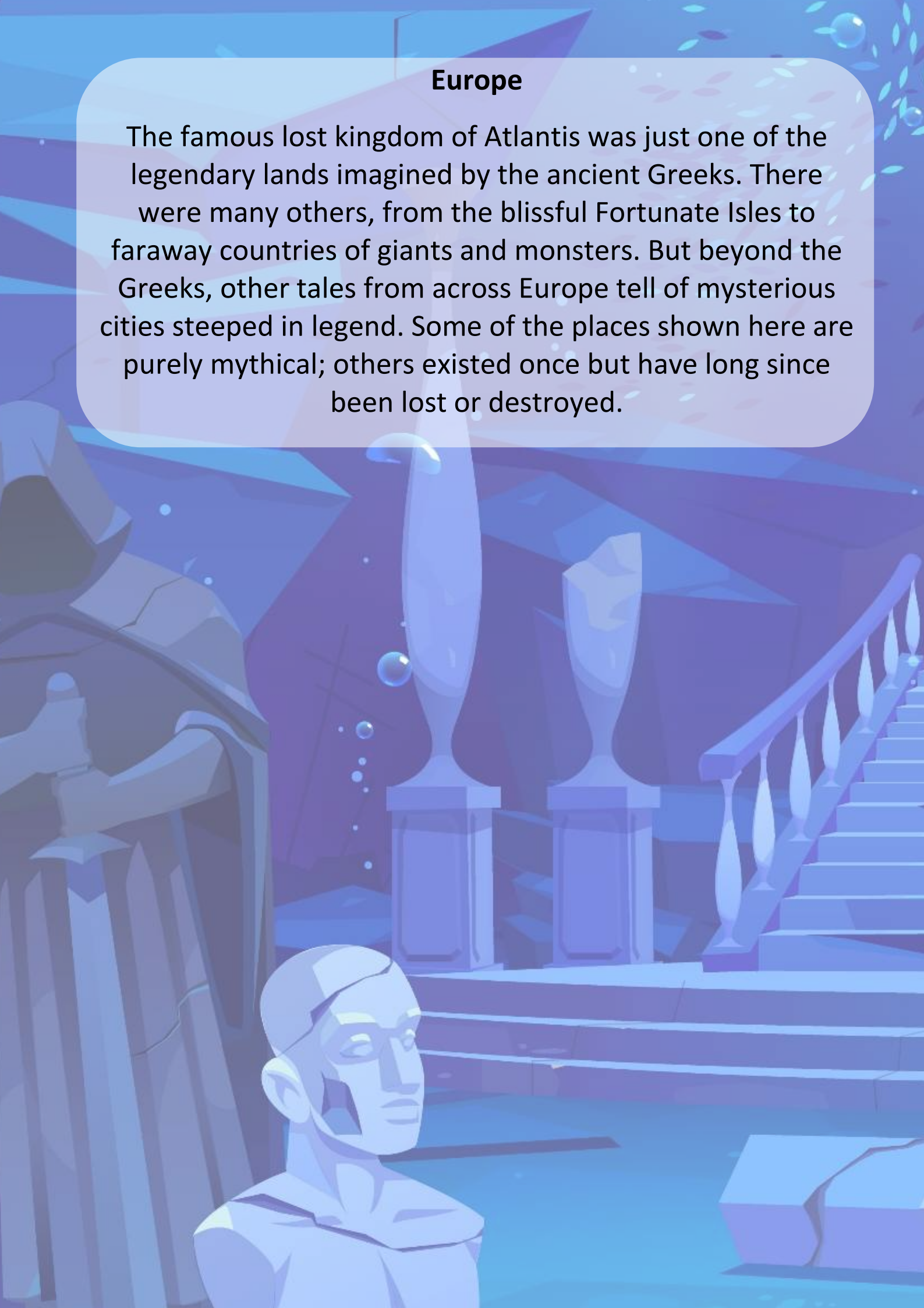
## One Last Thought

As you flop through these pages, consider this ... There are some ancient cities (such as Troy), that were once thought to be mere legends, but whose remains have been discovered by modern archaeologists. How many more lost kingdoms, do you think, remain buried beneath the ground or under the sea, just waiting to be discovered?

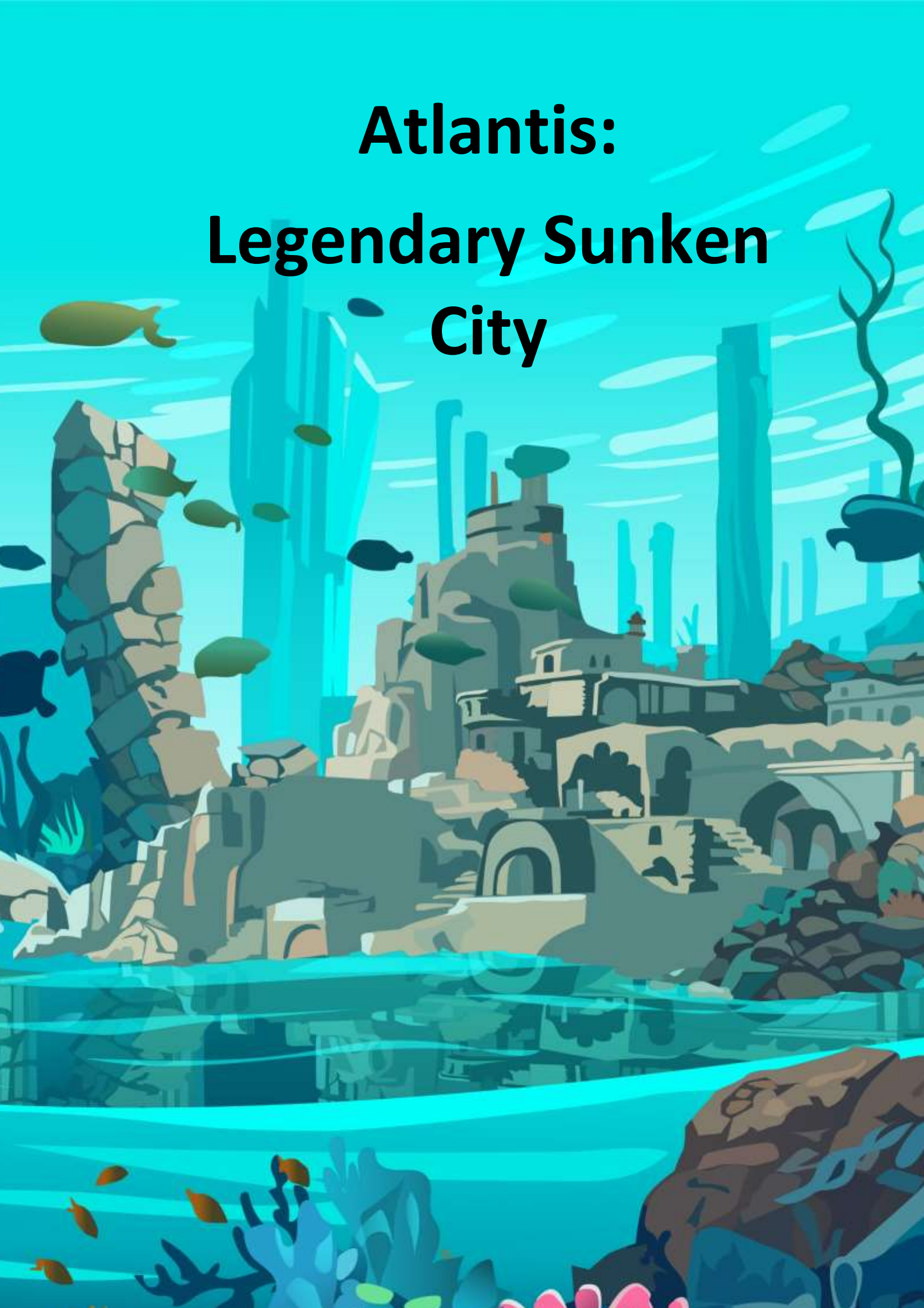


## Europe

The famous lost kingdom of Atlantis was just one of the legendary lands imagined by the ancient Greeks. There were many others, from the blissful Fortunate Isles to faraway countries of giants and monsters. But beyond the Greeks, other tales from across Europe tell of mysterious cities steeped in legend. Some of the places shown here are purely mythical; others existed once but have long since been lost or destroyed.



# Atlantis: Legendary Sunken City



Can a city be swallowed by the sea in a single night? According to an age-old legend, that is exactly what happened to the kingdom of Atlantis.





The word 'Atlantis', is steeped in mystery, conjuring images of ruined underwater temples, where shoals of fish dart between ancient statues and crumbling pillars. But does this sunken city really exist? Some people think this vanished island is one of history's greatest unresolved puzzles; others believe it is just a myth.



The idea that a city could be wiped out by a natural disaster is quite believable. The ancient city of Heracleion, in Egypt, was destroyed by earthquakes and tsunamis.

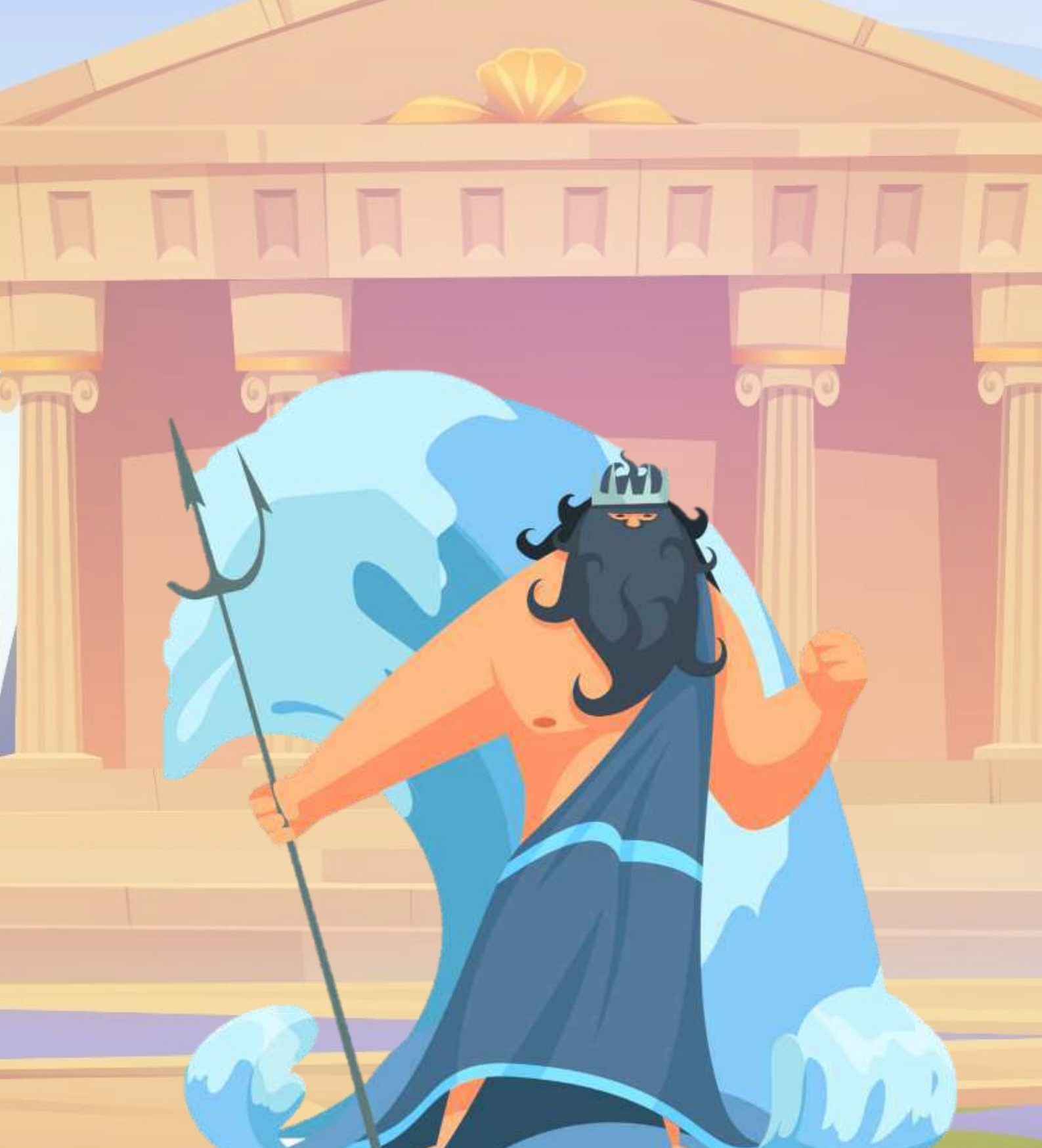


The ancient Greek scholar, Plato, said, that Atlantis lay beyond the 'Pillars of Hercules' – an area that we now call the Strait of Gibraltar.



## Canals and Bridges

According to legend, the capital city of Atlantis was made up of two rings of land, one inside the other, linked by bridges over canals. In the centre, lay an island with a temple dedicated to the powerful sea god, Poseidon.



## An Ancient Tale

Atlantis was first mentioned nearly 2500 years ago, by the ancient Greek philosopher, Plato. He described a kingdom said to have existed 9000 years before his time. In the tale, the island of Atlantis controlled an empire stretching from the Atlantic across the Mediterranean Sea.



Its Capital city was a wealthy port, home to lavish palaces, golden temples and grand canals. The citizens were good and happy at first, but over time they grew wicked and greedy, so the gods decided to punish them.



One night, they sent an earthquake to shake the city to its foundations. Then came a series of enormous waves that swallowed the ruins of this once-nighty kingdom, dragging the remains into the ocean depths.



Since the last Ice Age 20,000 years ago, melting ice has gradually raised sea levels by about 120 metres. Many ancient coastal cities would, over time, have been swallowed by the sea.

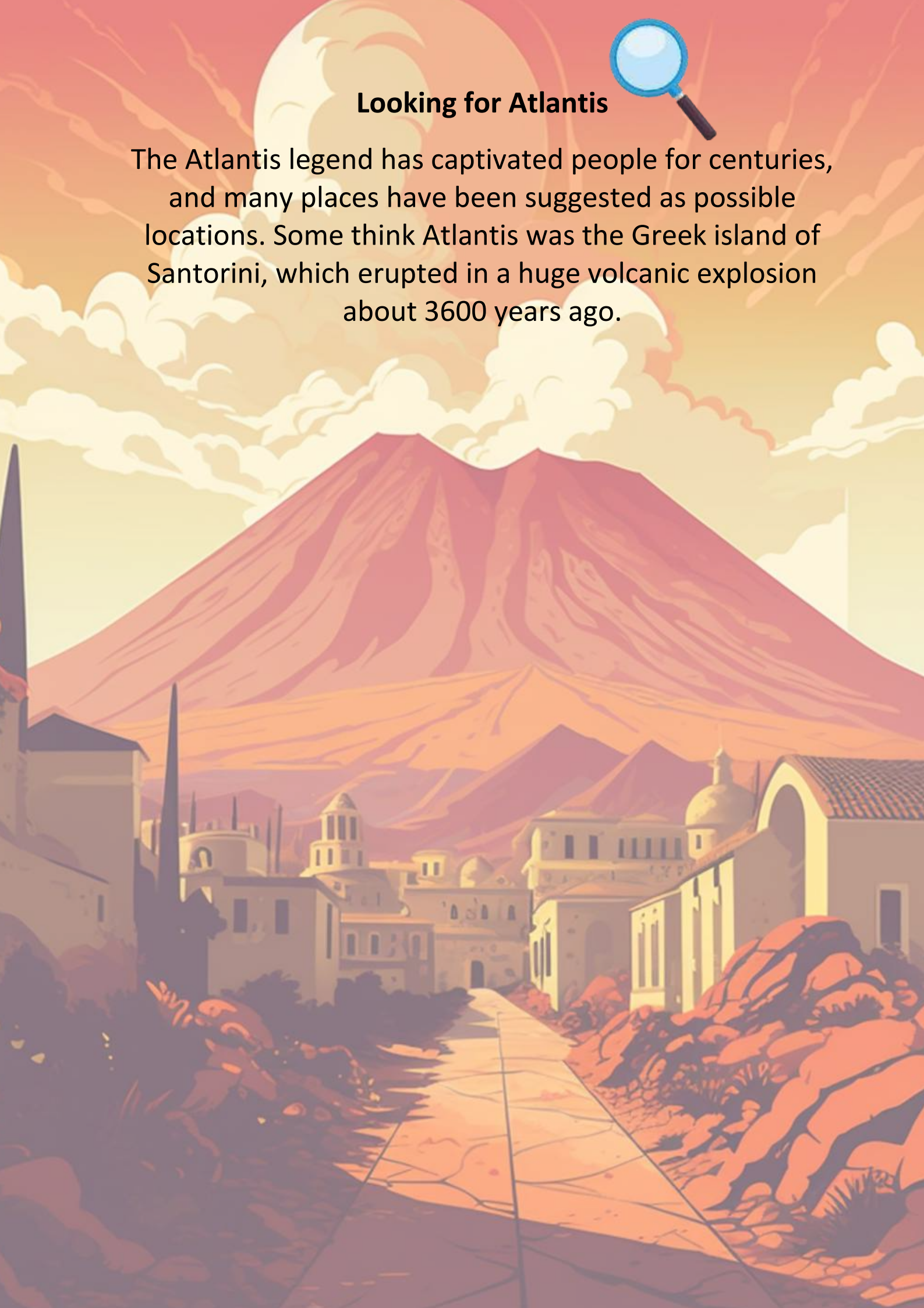




## Looking for Atlantis

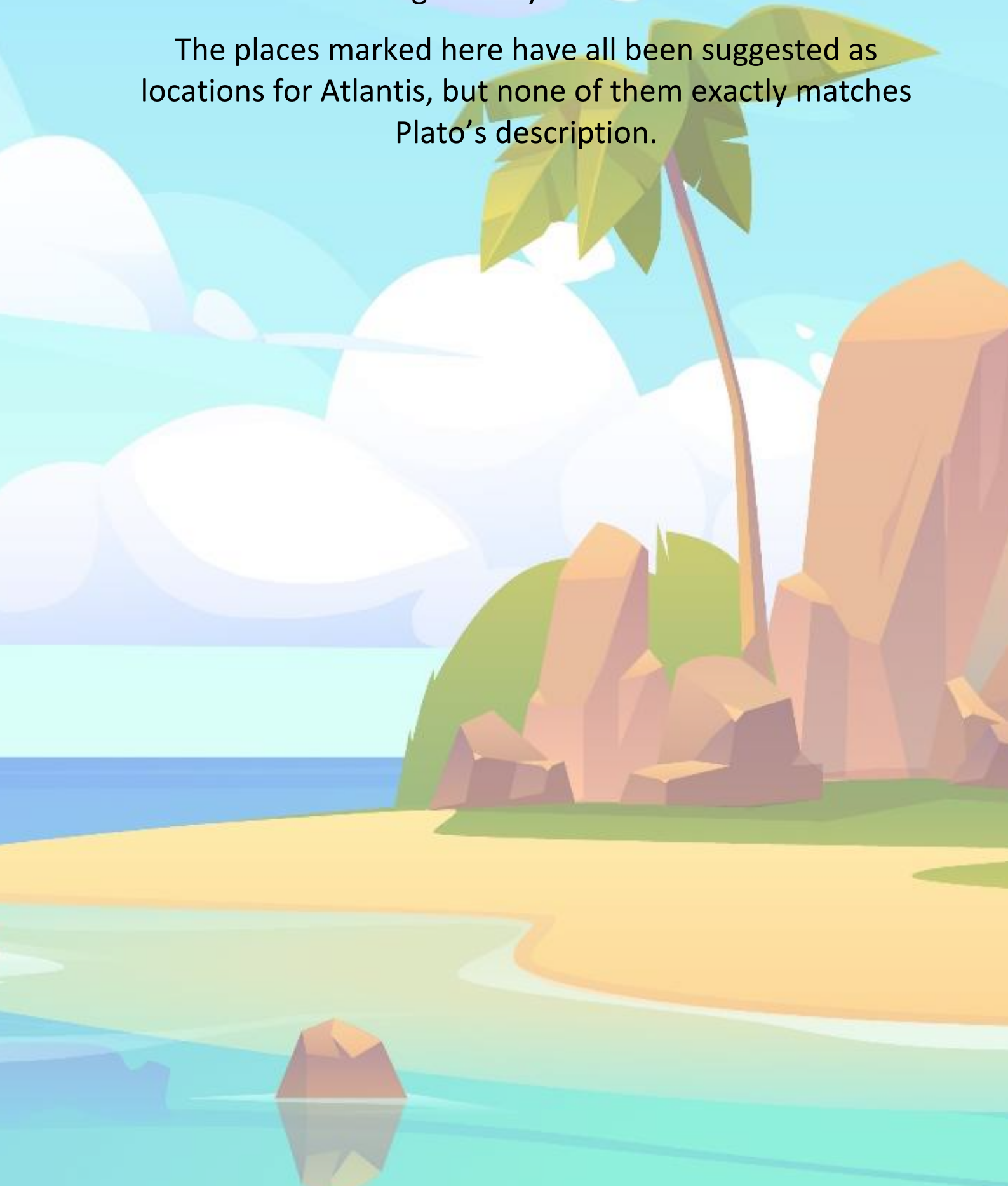


The Atlantis legend has captivated people for centuries, and many places have been suggested as possible locations. Some think Atlantis was the Greek island of Santorini, which erupted in a huge volcanic explosion about 3600 years ago.



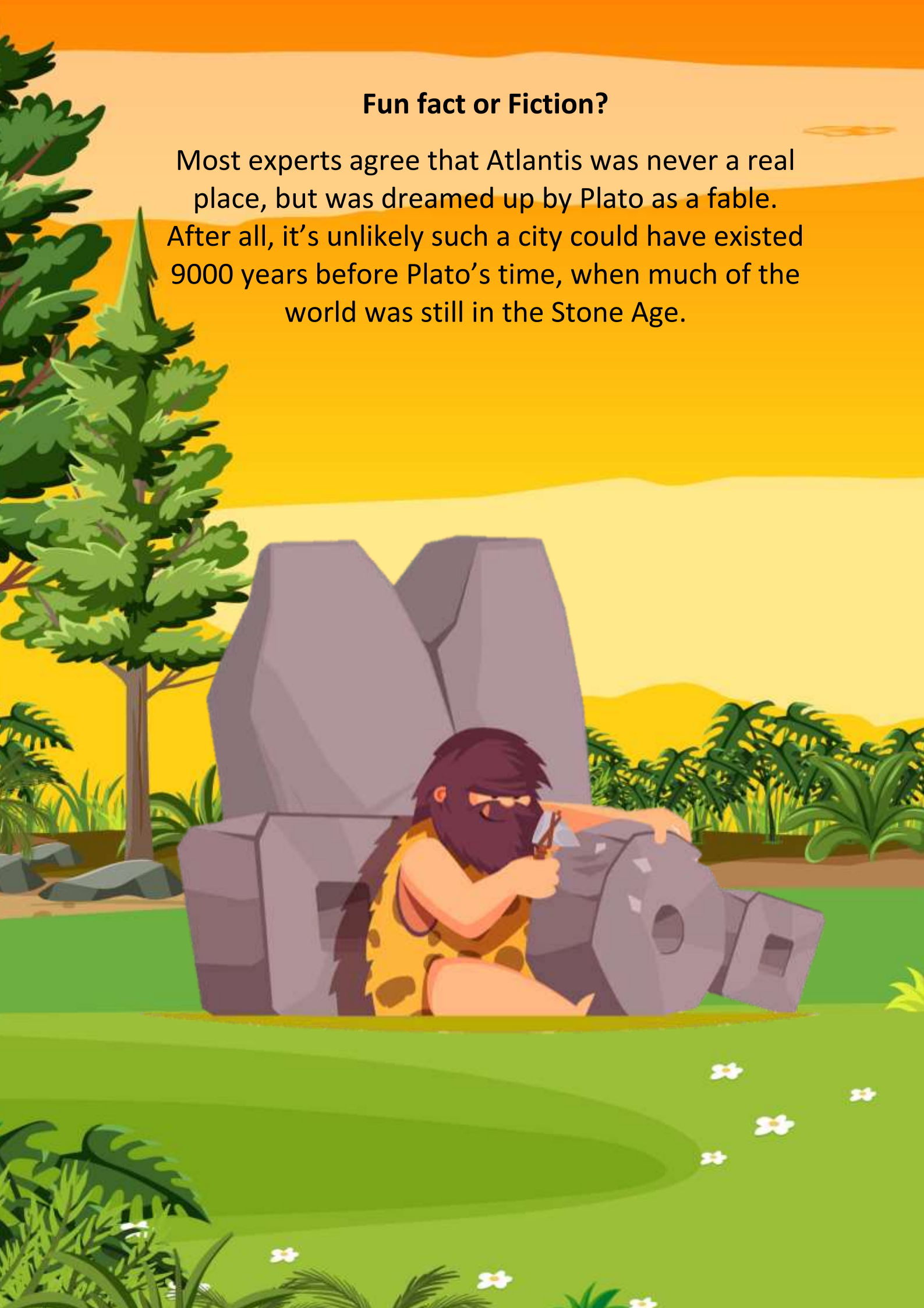
However, the timings of the eruption don't fit with Plato's story. Other say that the mountain tops of the sunken kingdom are the Azores Islands in the Atlantic. But no evidence of a once-great city has been discovered here.

The places marked here have all been suggested as locations for Atlantis, but none of them exactly matches Plato's description.



## Fun fact or Fiction?

Most experts agree that Atlantis was never a real place, but was dreamed up by Plato as a fable. After all, it's unlikely such a city could have existed 9000 years before Plato's time, when much of the world was still in the Stone Age.



Whatever the truth of the matter, the tale of Atlantis certainly makes an enthralling story. And who knows? One day, underwater explorers might come across the remains of an ancient circular city, destroyed by an earthquake, beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Perhaps ...





THINK

DIGITAL ACADEMY

