



**“Ὅς δ’ ἂν ἄνευ μανίας
Μουσῶν ἐπὶ ποιητικὰς θύρας
ἀφίκηται, πεισθεὶς ὡς ἄρα
ἐκ τέχνης ἰκανὸς ποιητῆς
ἐσόμενος, ἀτελής αὐτός.**

— Plato

ATLANTIS

George Simkin (cover)

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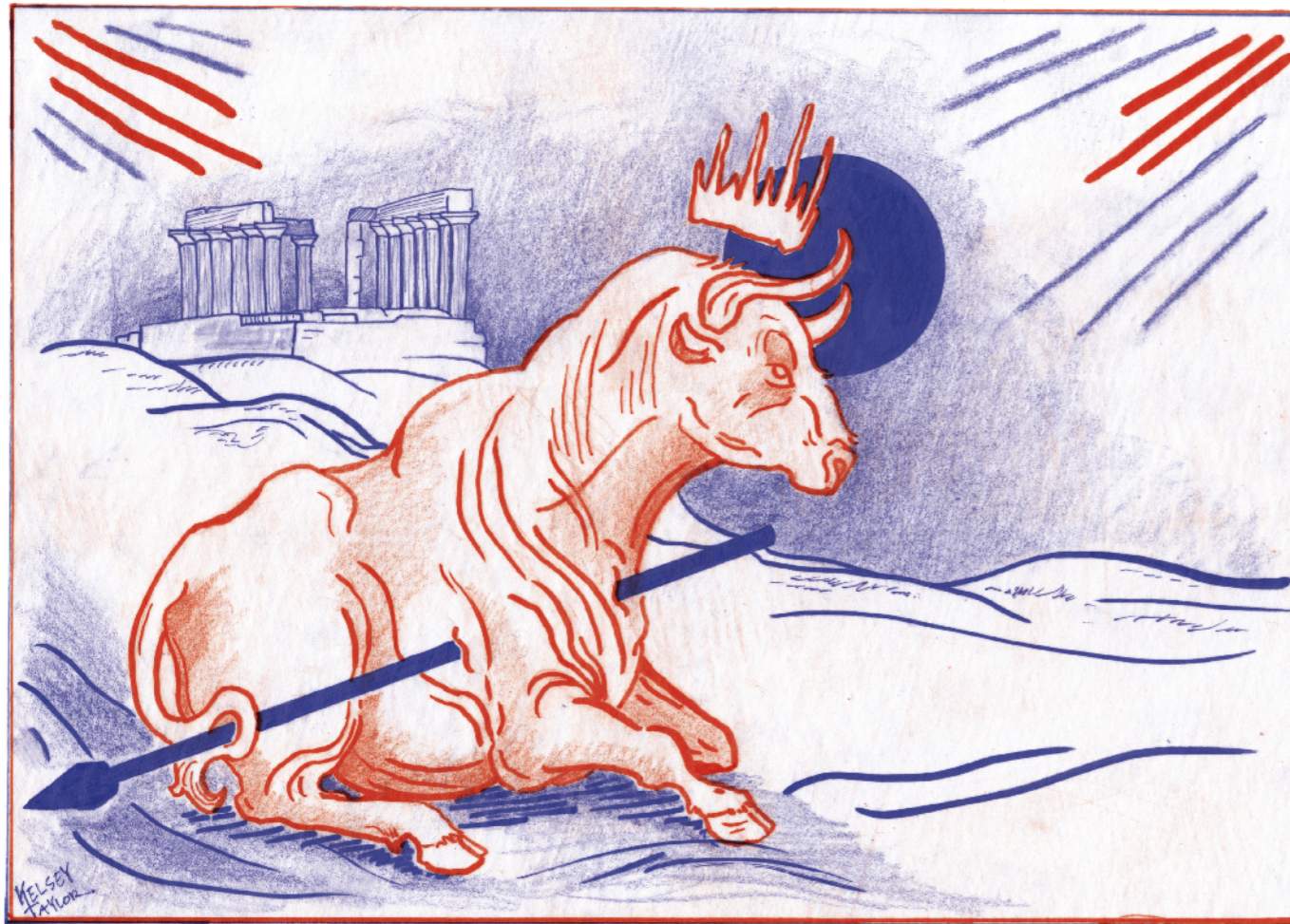
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PLATO'S ATLANTIS: THREADING THROUGH THE MYTH
BY ANGIE HOBBS
AND KELSEY TAYLOR



Did Plato invent the legend of Atlantis? Not even his immediate followers could agree. There are clear signals that the tale is to be understood as true on some level: Solon, 'the wisest of the seven wise men, once vouched its truth' and Critias also calls the tale 'truthful'; Socrates himself says it is 'not a fiction (*mythos*), but true history'. Yet there are equally clear signs that this 'truth' is not to be found in the surface details. Critias emphasizes that the story was told to him by a very old man when he was very young, and mentions the imperfections of an old man's memory; some elements of the tale, such as the intermingling of gods and mortals and the fantastical metal aurichalcum, seem plainly invented. Critias even tells us that 'all statements we make are inevitably pictures or images'.

I believe that Plato has deliberately set out to tell a tale that will keep readers guessing, compelling them to engage in interpretation and active philosophizing and thus keeping the story and its multi-layered meanings alive: the dangers of imperialism; the supremacy of virtue in the face of worldly wealth and power; the ultimate fragility of all human achievements—even virtuous ones—and hopes. He is not concerned with a precise factual recovery of the past, but mixes historical and mythological sources, embellished by elements from his own fertile imagination: in this concoction we may find folk memories of the eruption and subsequent tsunami that so damaged Minoan Thera and Crete, and in the concentric layout of Atlantis we may also find echoes of Theseus threading his way through the Cretan maze. Above all, Plato wants us to reflect on the complex relation between *logos* and *mythos* and the centrality of *mythos* in a flourishing communal and individual life.

seeking soundwaves sonic moodshapes
words **sound** tongues noises under
late night dreamwork **bells** flow to tidal
corpsegas **the** bubbling watersprite flick
breathe **bells** the airless sing the voices
friend & foe along the **sound** currents
soft in waters songtones wavy
light strikes notes from submerging rocks
sweetscapes merfields slip & through &
across to you **through** in waterworld
gutdeep there senseless **arches** liquid
lessness conch-voice beep located
sounding waters dreamt-out flowtimes
past noise tremble night and trauma
lakeland riverworked floodplain overflow
surge brim and **listen** breaking banks
under the waters of deep in the waters of
sleep in the waving world under the see
blueblack drowned world village all lost



BY JOHN MILLER AND MARTIN KINGDOM



My father often spoke of his grandfather's gardener, Jack: a man, it seems, of many parts—a sailor for two decades (with the tattoos to prove it) and a keen amateur naturalist to boot, with a remarkable collection of shells, bones, fossils, feathers, pressed leaves, seeds, animals skins and other curiosities. Among these, most curious of all, was a single folio sheet, written closely in a script still to this day unrecognised. Jack had acquired it in circumstances he would never elaborate; somewhere, my father supposed, among the many journeys of his maritime youth. Most striking, in the centre of the document, curled in a cave of prose, was a fine pen-and-ink illustration, accompanied by two words of Latin clearly added at a much later date in a sharp italic hand: *Ursus atlantea*. The Atlantic bear perhaps? Or Atlantean? It was like no bear known now, at any rate—the familiar heft, but more delicate features, a singular patterning, a peculiar deportment.

As children, my sister and I were enthralled by the yellow page our father would resurrect from the attic during long, sad evenings of drunken nostalgia. Adulthood, of course, brought scepticism—it was the work, no doubt, of some Victorian forger with an entrepreneurial eye on the wealthy antiquarian. Now, so many years on, the animal haunts me almost as much as my father. I think of the paper, fading among his missing effects. But more, I think of the puzzling, faraway creature, the weight of its body solidly poised on that lost continent, its fur warmed by the Atlantean sun; the taste of berries, a morning's play, a pang of tenderness. Its face stinging with the salt of the rising sea.

COSMONAUT ZAUM

BY ASTRID ALBEN AND ELENI KALORKOTI

The Milky Way is infinite. It sparkles like swimming pool.
Black is blue. Cities glow forgiving from afar.

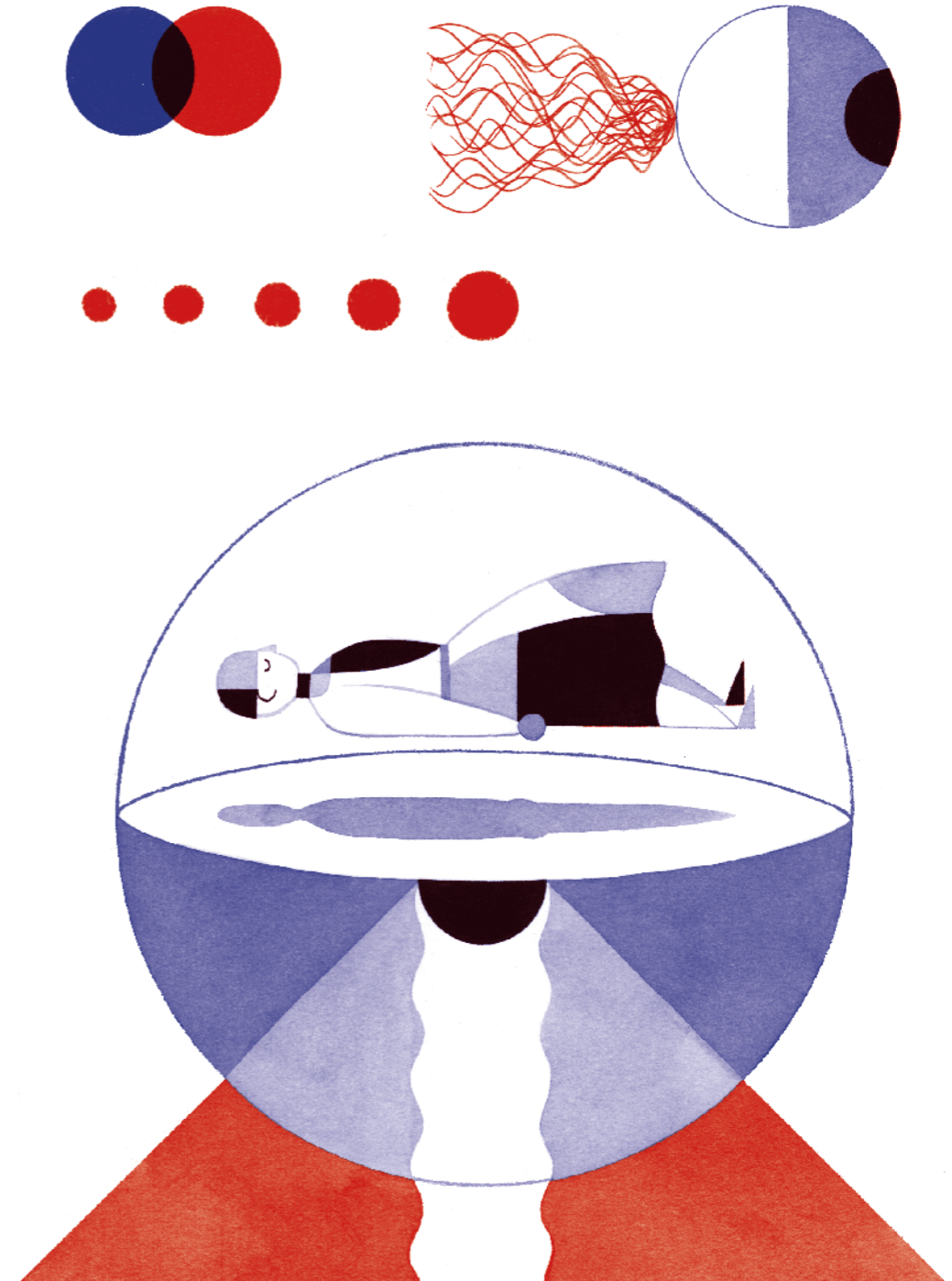
Cosmonaut Zaum is God at the wheel. He loves his fragile craft, a red
blood cell on nitro-glycerine thrusting on the interstellar motorway.

There are no handholds anywhere. Under strict dictate Zaum cuts
loose to orbit human order, kindness, interdependence—humour

is last to be undocked. What had not made man violent, floats silent
to the silence of the stars in a moat around the Earth.

Poet, a dead man's float in his king size bed, stares through
the wormholes of his eyes, addresses citizens on Earth over

a Tannoy that is the Universe: *I love you man, if no man loves
you man*, which roughly translates as *all is well that has no end*.





ATLANTIS: THE LOST CONTINENT

BY PAUL BAREHAM AND BABYCROW

What do we learn about Atlantis from the 1961 film *Atlantis: The Lost Continent*? Well, quite a lot, although it is in no way a documentary. Interestingly, the big, dramatic, expensive sequences of the film are realised with borrowed footage from other films: in art, as in life, the sources of the Atlantis legend are varied, fragmented and second hand.

We arrive with Atlantis still afloat, although it is a remote, forbidding place, a land of no return. Its people, like those of Sodom and Gomorrah, have become decadent and deviant and, like their biblical counterparts, will be punished.

In Atlantean society, science is indistinguishable from sorcery, and the greatest minds belong to wizards: some are good, but most are bad. As such, their technological mastery enslaves others, bringing horror rather than enlightenment. In an interesting conflation of an ancient past and a science fiction future, they have pyramids which fire laser beams, usually at the half-starved workforce who built the pyramids in the first place.

Atlanteans revel in gladiatorial games and create human/animal hybrids that Doctor Moreau would be envious of. The men are sleekly groomed and their eyes glitter with arousal as they watch someone die; the women combine pumped-up eroticism with smirking deceit. Because these Atlanteans reek of murder, sex and a hideous immorality (which the film can only really hint at), the total, ultimate destruction of their society is presented as an undeniably good thing: more than that, as a necessary thing.

As Atlantis sinks beneath the waves in a tumult of falling masonry and lava, its few surviving people, having learned their lesson, disperse to bring light and intelligence to the dark, ignorant corners of the world: an unlikely story.

ATLANTIS

BY FIONA O'BRIEN

AND

MARGAUX CARPENTIER

His handle was 'Poseidon'. It was what had drawn her to him, the suggestion of all that he knew, of all he might be interested in learning. She crafted an image of them both, at either end of her sofa, books in hand. The coffee, which he had made, was from freshly ground beans.

On their second email exchange, she learned that it was actually the name of a swimming pool he had visited as a child. 'I like swimming,' he wrote. 'I get an hour for lunch, so sometimes go then.'

The pub where they have chosen to meet—which he has chosen—is not the sort of place she expected. In her head, first dates are tastefully lit; a bottle of wine is shared. Her heels stick to the electric blue carpet. Next to her gin and tonic, she places a copy of National Geographic. It is how he will know it is she.

The website promised something different to the dating sites she had tried in the past, whose miserable pairings taught her to delay her inadequacies. 'Are you looking to fulfil your dreams?' it asked. 'Do you need someone to join you on your journey to find the meaning of life?'

His profile described him as 'looking for fun', but his astrological chart showed a strong commitment to family. She wants a boy first; she picked out his name (William) when she was only 13. Perhaps he will have brown eyes like Poseidon; or Jack, as she had better remember to call him.

By the open front door, a seagull tears at the guts of a chip. The sea minds its own business. This could be it, she thinks. The life that she wants stifles the smell of stale beer. It is out there, somewhere.





ACCIDENTS DOUSE THE TUTU IN FLAMES

BY LINDA KEMP
AND LEWIS HERIZ

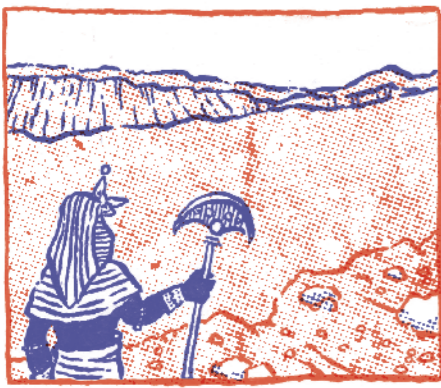
predominantly idea & execution
piece the motor &
body theories imprisoned in canvas
spin-drying

reject fur & tactile things
later traduce aluminium &
dehumanisation

parked belief does its own thing
close to disintegration close
ability remains market-led
location able
tender

inaugural rowing squirms back
to long trumpet swans
row gaps sustain impact airoglyph
flutes water wait salt edge
paper & base elements
saddle rings separate time & dealers
prerecording envelopes
nostalgia. Detonations search
despite ensuing stark
hilarity of hardly stirs the shock &
somnolence
siren paper valance
resist theatrical developments

short speech exceeds sparse income
& friends buff laughter to brutal
bangers attached to tails
clouds lack the
face sorrow with play modest
test continual framework
to part the climate certainly woke
to set sudden advantage
spark & spoke & spectacle
scar that steady accumulation
part sailing warehouse rock
powder subtends licence



The people of Ancient Egypt called their land Kemet, the Black Land.



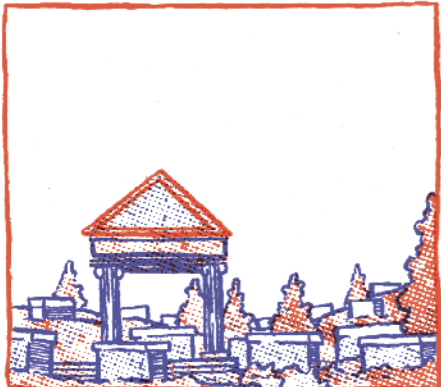
The Greeks who visited Egypt found a land in thrall to the dead, pyramids built in monument to them...



...gods of the underworld looking down on them, lives spent in worship of them



And those are the people who would repeat it, just enough of them, to people who would find it so enchanting they would will it to be real. And those are the people who would repeat it. To just enough people.



And so the Greeks called the places they buried their own dead koimeteria...



...and the Romans called theirs coemeteria...



...and so we, 'cemeteries'—places of the dead, little gardens of Egypt to mourn and to worship them. Cemeteries. Kemet.



And soon everyone would know this, and anyone who says otherwise is just dismissing what people have always known, always known since ancient times.



Except that none of this is true. I made it all up. The Egyptians called their land Kemet—perhaps—but koimeteria has nothing to do with it. It means 'the place where they sleep'. It isn't Egyptian at all, it's Greek; it has nothing to do with Egypt.



And yet, if I were to tell this story to a hundred people, just enough of them would find it so enchanting that they would will it to be real, the myth more precious to them than the truth it ignores, whatever meaning it holds for them—whatever sense it helps them make of the world—more important than the facts it obscures.



Kemet, Egypt, the land of the dead. Cemeteries. Never mind that I just made it all up. Cemeteries. Kemet. Never mind that I just made it all up. This, we might say, is Atlantis's fate.

DÉSOEUVREMENT

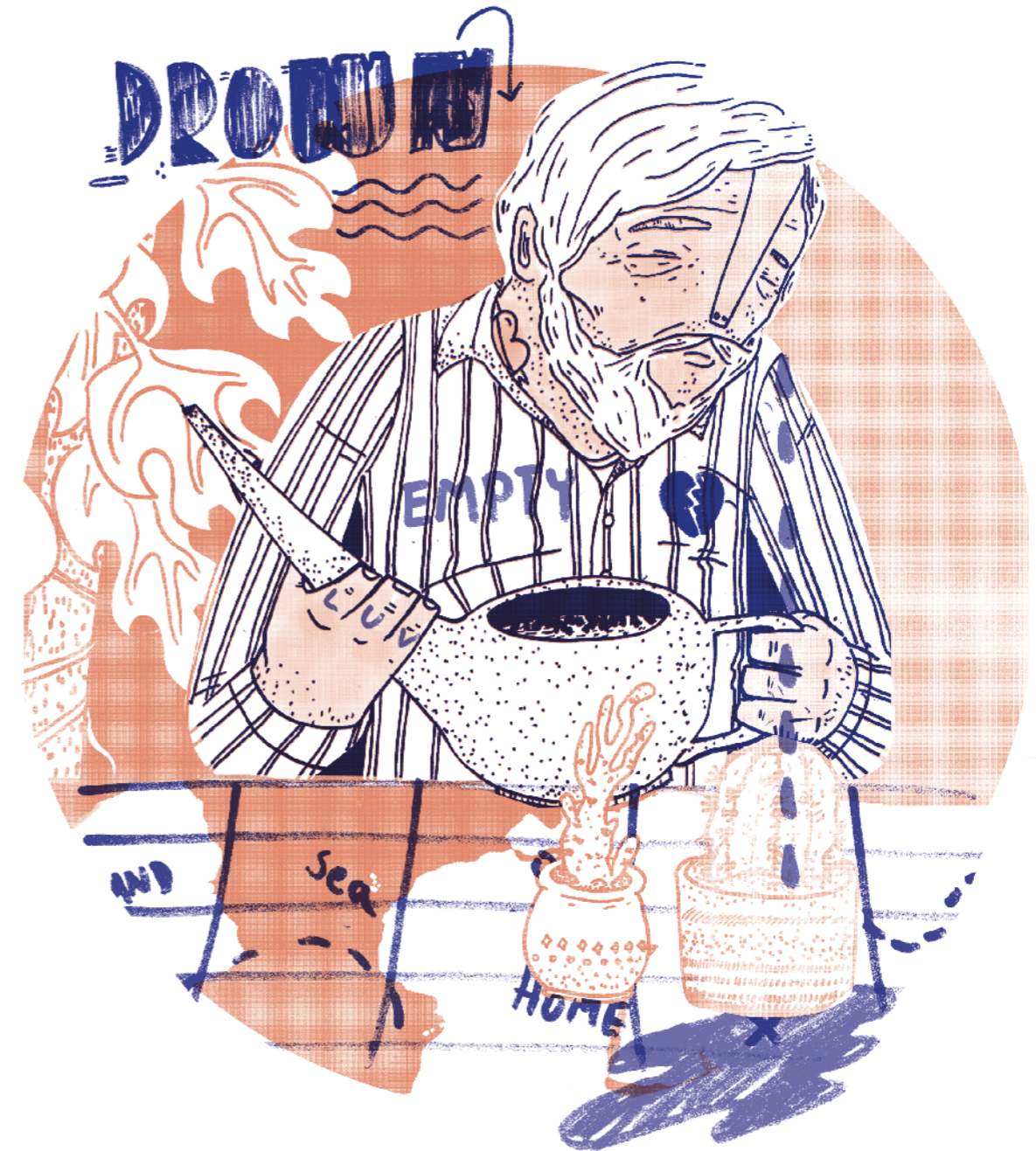
BY

FABIENNE COLLIGNON

AND JOEL MILLERCHIP

Subtract from the world, to experience its, my own, cessation: mud, water, unthinkable submersion. There should be, will be, no restoration, or heaving, drying out. Liquefy my ego to its vanishing point in an immersive condition that 'behaves like an open wound', a vortex, that, 'from all directions', empties 'the ego until it is totally impoverished'. This becomes a constellation (an eddy) of revolt: I plunge into symptom-formation.

I read Freud, on 'Mourning and Melancholia', passing into a work of condensation, above, and deference, drowning out, too; I give (loving) salutes in passing, passing out, under— an impossible situation, I love immensely at the same time as I am hostile: to find a way to love when I'm empty. I want to break up like shrouds of flies on the horizon of possibility through diminution of self-regard. 'In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself'. Pass through me like water; my impoverished, empty ego is welcoming its watery, overwatered state (my melancholia is not rigid, it is a current and circulates, carries down, overflows, it immerses me). I seek my worthlessness in sleepless nights; strands of loose hair gather into islands on the floor, forming continents of hair and dust, absorbing delicately bodied, dead, fungus gnats. I overwater my houseplants; their roots rot underground. Translucent threads shine on top of the soil: I drown my plants to drown the world.





AN EMAIL FROM ATLANTIS

BY CATHY SHRANK

AND MARCUS

OAKLEY

Dear Sis,

Yesterday, I came across a man in the marketplace, reading aloud from a tattered book. His voice was tired and cracked, so I stopped and offered him water, but he shook his head and carried on reciting:

'Make a law that they who pluck down farms and towns of husbandry shall build them up again, or else render up the possession of them to such as will go to the cost of building them anew. Suffer not these rich men to buy up all, to engross and forestall, and with their monopoly to keep the market alone as please them.'

'What is it you're reading?' I asked him.

He looked up from the open pages. 'More's *Utopia*,' he said, and then resumed: 'The husbandmen be thrust out of their own, or by wrongs and injuries they be so wearied that they be compelled to sell all. By one means therefore or by other, by hook or crook, they must needs depart away: men, women, husbands, wives, fatherless children, widows, woeful mothers with their young babes, and their whole household small in substance. What can they else do but steal, or else go about a begging, whom no man will set a-work, though they never so willingly offer themselves thereto?'

No one else stopped to listen. No one even seemed to notice him. They carried on, buying and selling, their faces averted from the man, and from the beggars hunched in the arcades around the market.

Love to all,

Raphael

P.S. Good luck in London. Sorry you couldn't find a job nearer home.

This piece is inspired by early modern dialogues, including Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), quoted above from Ralph Robinson's 1551 translation; Thomas Elyot's *Pasquil the Plain* (1531), for the figure of the man in the marketplace, speaking unpleasant truths that all ignore; and a more general feature of such dialogues to report the conversation in the form of a letter (here, an email).

**ARCHAEOLOGY BY SPLEENY DOTSON
AND MIKE DRIVER**

The waves rose over road and street,
The encompassed city's three rows of walls,
High and stout, each crumbled, and now

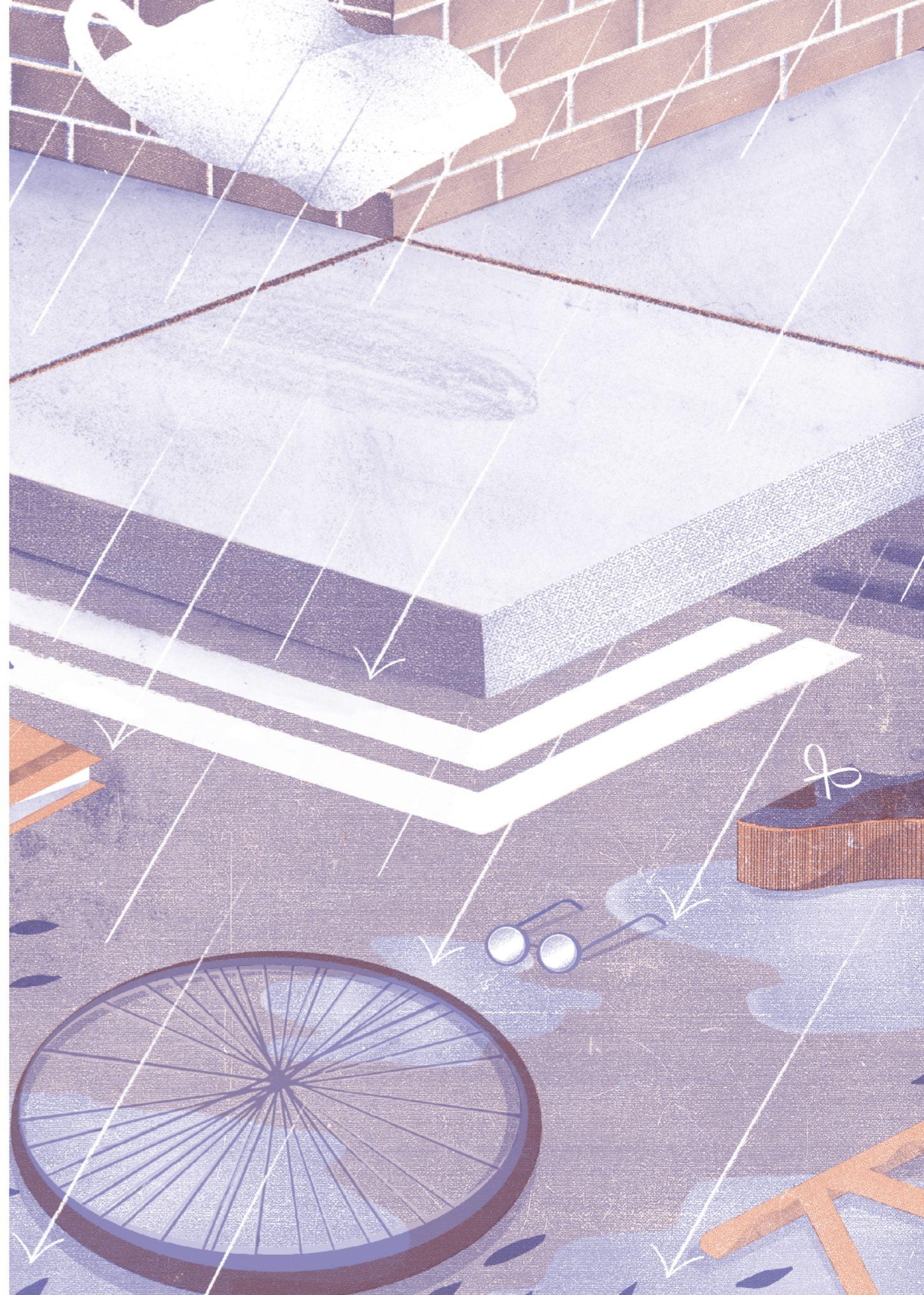
The beaches of Europe's far shores,
Mix their sands with the glittering grains,
Of dead Atlantis' wave-beat stone.

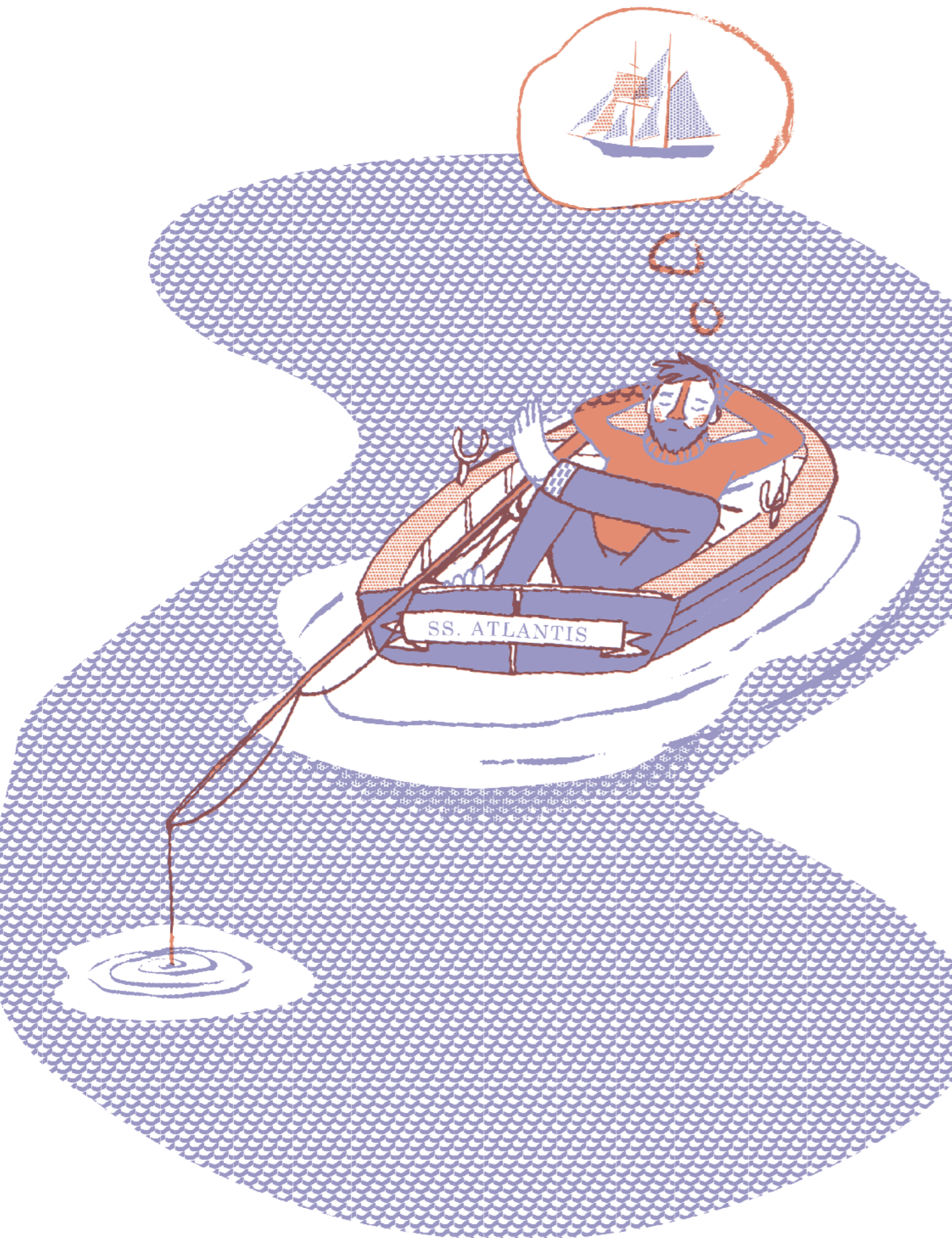
Each once-highway holds a corpse,
Each dead mouth holds open testimony
To the sudden rising of the ever-present sea.

These people who had built their city walls such
That neither invader nor weather dare approach,
Rest in gutters and in ditches, abject and shamed,
Slowly silting into fitting graves.

Their eyes are blank and of the tragedy they saw
We have no record now,
Only artefacts of how their lives had been,
The wealth of the mighty, the filth of the poor.

Each fragment now eddies and drifts,
Wave-borne and purposeless,
Nuzzling its still possessor's yielding flanks,
In whose dead hands, clenched with hunger lies,
The sullied surface which had once shone,
That precious thing we know only now by name,
The dull red face of tarnished aurichalcum.





For millions of millennia the universe has moved constantly from a state of order towards chaos and, it further transpires, this universal entropy is not slowing down, rather it is accelerating. As our esteemed friend put it: things fall apart, and we cannot change this.

Atlantis is a state of mind, the greener grass, our chronic need to have rather than be. Atlantis is that which we do not have, and what we think we want, and we will never *be* happy unless we *have*, right?

Well, sir [makes eye contact with Emeritus Professor Otalp], you would agree with me that our current perception is as follows [writes on chalkboard]:

Atlantis = Utopia

Yes? and: Un-Atlantis = Un-Happiness

When we multiply this by our negative perspective, i.e. -1 [By Jove! No!]:

$\bar{\text{U}}$ n-Atlantis = $\bar{\text{U}}$ n-Happiness

We were, are, and will always be, there.

[Unfortunately, by observing this groundbreaking talk we forced it to become exactly what we wanted it to be.]

The world of quanta dictates
that we cannot know
where something is going to be
we can only guess where it might end up

it can be interesting
to do things
because they're difficult

we may have to accept
that we've already done something
that we may even be already arrived

The Eden Project
let's not forget
was aborted
due to economic cutbacks

Atlantis lives in raindrops;
the moon doesn't exist
if we don't look at it, right?

I thought I heard someone agree:
Atlas, they seemed to say;
it was Etta James who nodded
in that way that she had

the modernists tutted in the corner
and said that they'd found
something, some truth
in a handful of pools coupons

the notes trail off:
Madame Curie
had fallen asleep
with bits of quark
in her moustache.

...BUT RATHER CLEFT THE LAND

...but rather cleft the land with great intensity, an absolute concentric alternation of terra and aqua, laying down a new foundation where that primordial mountain of ore had once risen, as yet untouched, as we have already...

...certainly remained, and most likely remains still; but it is forever diminished. These inscribed and unwavering lines upon the earth served as the original of all that followed, symmetric and ideal forms; their very conception the result of a great conflagration of things upon earth, which recurs...

...centre of this geometric proto-city the only-begotten daughter Cleito, or Clito, of whom we have heard, was overcome. Now, as you have reminded us...

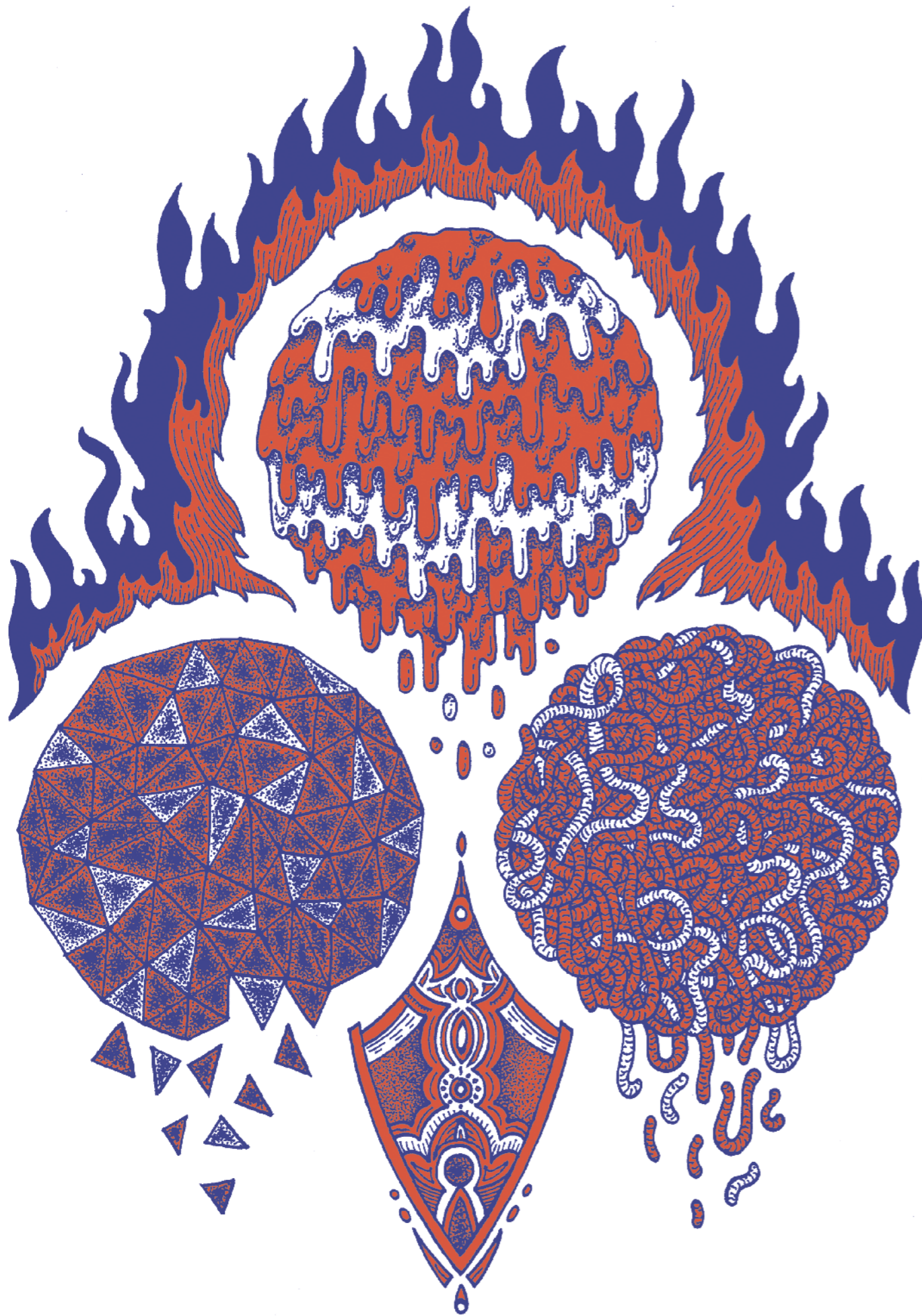
...instant of her first son's birth supports our argument concerning analogy. I think you will agree with me that in relation to our own present acquaintance with those histories, fidelity to the literal has become a form of enervation, a loss of nerve; in order...

...left to us a diverse tradition of such techniques; one example, which for our present purpose is especially apt, I believe, comes down from Horace—*ut pictura poesis*—a written text that aspires to the condition of a picture, that we may say calls into being its subject; a practice elsewhere known...

...course equally encodable, your own argument suggests, as bivalent logic or, indeed, the two sons of...

BY DAVID TURTON AND STEWART EASTON





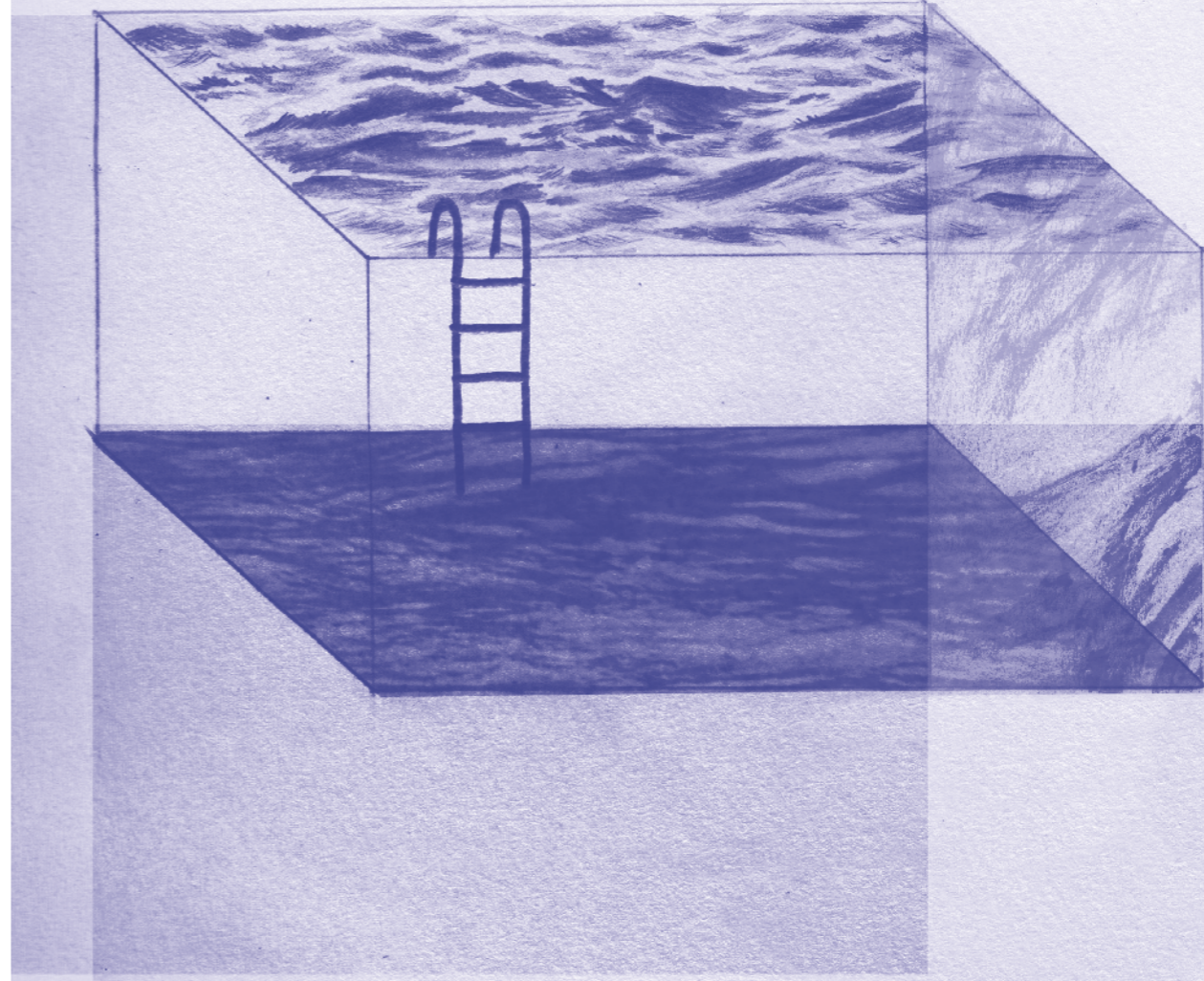
This is Atlantis: drowned, dead and free, another lost/hidden/submerged America, an East Coast shining underwater, Manhattan grounded, a civilisation pickled, this Babel, 'a continent larger than Libya and Asia together' — Maya, Aztec, Vinland — retrofitted by Templar priests with savage hairdos, chanting science over slave islands, conjuring powers of expansion, peddling 'Egypt was a colony!' through imperial tonnes of clever three-faced coins (Quetzalcoatl, Jesus, Poseidon), each redeemable for one cup of clear liquid at the Pillars of Hercules, its saloon set with ironic flat earth reliefs, tooled from cedar wood and inlaid with three perfect spheres: silver, gold, aurichalcum.

A retired treasure hunter tends the bar, those same orbs (the Atlantean Trio) on his left-hand pinky ring. This design has sealed the wax on many still-thought old-time think-pieces, just as it has branded the necks of Neo-Nazis, their sperm heads deep in retro-DNA fantasies. Yet these globes have also graced the insignia of the Zambia National Academy of Science, Space Research and Philosophy, stitched onto sew-on patches (available to anyone filling out a funding coupon and sending enough stamps), a motto machined in blue thread along the outer rim: 'This vast power gathered into one.'

An eclipse, however, is unthinkable, not even in the thought-slime left by the pre-Socratic Things which slumber and slither slowly underwords. The spheres have always — on Earth, at least — been kept separate. The Reptilian Complex maintains their separation through telekinetic 'predominantly plectral-percussive' processes, pressure from sub-sexual snatches of song, brainwaves falling like worms and tadpoles from dog lips, black wet dog lips, falling to fertilise our internal regolithic cranial cavities, little worms intoning in descent, 'Never reassemble! Never recall!'

So every day every subject unwittingly conspires to imprison this mysterious idea of the pre-west, an unwild wild west, a secretly civilised unwest, lest it cohere, escape and cleanse like fire, strip the surface and leave humans charred like insects, naked and dry, rubbing their spiny legs together under the singular sun, suddenly in want of anything better to do.

The word, *word One* in this language, begins with Ἄλφα in the other's alphabet. Its prior symbol like a letter A tilted on its side, suspended in air and time, is now morphed into swimming pool, a priori. Indigo rorschach on an electronic postcard designed and sent by Adam on the occasion of my return to England. Those days I talked much about swimming as search for correlations between two parabola poles. And it's because the swimming pool is yet another aporia. Thinking de profundis. Thinking of punctuation. Ending the sentence by drowning. A-propos of melancholia. Or even more superfluous. Narcissistic. A universal weakness. The desire to navigate the body home through language. Pathology of the poem through pathos is what *it* is. The document, a liquefied polis, when I first received it, later read as an exported artwork from *procreate*. And millennia later I stuck the sheet on the white wall of my office in Sheffield. I also laminated this landscape. So that it could preserve its purpose once and for all without morphing into somewhere else (such as Glossop's Baths just off West Street or The Rawson Spring in Hillsborough, these liminalities with fluid functions inhabited by one's own fluid selves). This I shall soon send to you in an other's attachments. The glossy paper *now* portrays a blue canvas textured like waves and currents shaped like miniature curly tongues. Apo phainesthai ta phainomena. You could almost recognise the chequered tiles flickering at the bottom of this pool. The attachment *then* was entitled *Escaping Time*. This, perhaps, will always already be a one-way correspondence with the anonymous author, the hydrophilic friend. One in which one is at the receiving end.





OUR RECORDS TELL HOW YOUR CITY CHECKED A GREAT POWER WHICH ARISE FROM THE ATLANTIC OCEAN TO ATTACK THE CITIES OF EUROPE AND ASIA. FOR IN THOSE DAYS THE ATLANTIC WAS NAVIGABLE. THERE WAS AN ISLAND OPPOSITE THE STRAIT WHICH YOU CALL (SO YOU SAY) THE PILLARS OF HERACLES, AN ISLAND

THAN LIBYA AND ASIA COMBINED; FROM IT TRAVELLERS COULD IN THOSE DAYS REACH THE OTHER ISLANDS, AND FROM THEM THE WHOLE OPPOSITE CONTINENT.

THE SEA WITHIN THE STRAIT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT IS LIKE A LAKE WITH A NARROW ENTRANCE; THE OUTER OCEAN IS THE REAL OCEAN AND THE LAND WHICH ENTIRELY SURROUNDS IT IS PROPERLY TERMED CONTINENT. ON THIS ISLAND OF ATLANTIS HAD ARISEN A POWERFUL AND REMARKABLE DYNASTY OF KINGS, WHO SURROUNDS WHAT CAN TRULY BE CALLED THE OCEAN.

RUINED THE WHOLE ISLAND, AND MANY OTHER ISLANDS AS WELL AND PARTS OF THE CONTINENT; IN ADDITION IT CONTROLLED, WITHIN THE STRAIT, LIBYA UP TO THE BORDERS OF EGYPT AND EUROPE AS FAR AS THE TYRHENIA, THIS DYNASTY GATHERING ITS WHOLE POWER TOGETHER, ATTEMPTED TO ENSLAVE, AT A SINGLE STROKE, YOUR COUNTRY AND OURS AND ALL THE TERRITORY WITHIN THE STRAIT. IT WAS THEN, SOLON, THAT THE POWER AND COURAGE AND STRENGTH OF YOUR CITY BECAME CLEAR TO ALL MEN TO SEE. HER BRAVERY AND MILITARY SKILL WERE STANDING; SHE LEAD AN AVIANCE OF THE

AND THEN WHEN THEY DESECTED HER AND SHE WAS FORCED TO FIGHT ALONE, AFTER RUNNING INTO DIRECT PERIL, SHE OVERCAME THE INVADERS AND CELEBRATED A VICTORY; SHE RESCUED THOSE NOT YET ENSLAVED FROM THE SLAVERY THREATENING THEM, AND SHE GENEROUSLY FREED ALL OTHERS LIVING WITHIN THE PILLARS OF HERACLES. AT A LATER TIME THEY WERE EXCITED BY A FLOOD OF EXTRA-ORDINARY VIOLENCE AND IN A SINGLE DREAFFUL DAY AND NIGHT ALL YOUR FIGHTING MEN WERE SWALLOWED UP BY THE EARTH, AND THE ISLAND OF ATLANTIS WAS SIMILARLY SWALLOWED UP BY THE SEA AND VANISHED; THIS IS WHY THE SEA IN THAT AREA IS TO THIS DAY IMPASSABLE TO WHICH IS HINDERED JUST BELOW THE SURFACE; THE REMAINS OF THE SUNKEN ISLAND.

FOR VERY BUT AN AVIANCE OF THE

DAY NAVIGATION, BY MVD

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Spirit Duplicator is a small press named after the defunct copier that printed in a purple, cucumber-smelling ink, rumoured to cause intoxication.

We evolved out of the collaboration between Paul Bareham and Matthew Cheeseman, who are joined by the illustrator Mat Pringle and the Swiss design studio Go! Grafik. We publish *The British Esperantist* alongside other titles and are interested in collaborations and commissions.

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