ESCAPE FROM ATLANTIS

 Twelve thousand years ago, an island continent the size of the Iberian Peninsula was believed to have existed in the North Atlantic Ocean, some 1500 kilometers west of what would later be called Portugal.

 This lost continent was known as Atlantis. Its mysterious civilization flourished for two thousand years, until a catastrophic combination of massive earthquake, volcanic explosion, and tsunami sunk it forever beneath the waves. All that remains are scattered mountain peaks, which are known today as the islands of the Azores.

 The pioneering inhabitants of Atlantis had teleported themselves one-way from another galaxy near the star Sirius after surveying our solar system and finding Earth a suitable planet to colonize. [Returning teleportation was determined to be impossible, due to unusual differences found in the Earth's gravity.] Primitive humans -- Homo Sapiens -- were already living on other Earth continents, of course, but this singular mid-ocean continent was uninhabited. The Atlanteans were a handsome race -- slender, of average height, olive-skinned, silver-haired, and violet-eyed. There had been no contact with any Homo Sapiens, however, at this time.

 Atlantis was verdant, with fertile soil for growing food crops, fresh water rivers and lakes, ample woodlands, and abundant mineral wealth. The native limestone was also perfect for quarrying and building towns and a capital city. The climate was beneficial and mild year-round.

 The Atlantean civilization was incredibly advanced. Their scientists had harnessed the limitless power of solar rays. They additionally built windmills to harness the abundant energy which the prevailing westerly winds provided. They had also mastered the art of crafting tools made of iron.

 The capital city was named "Axis." It was built in a series of expansive concentric circles around the continent's most pronounced natural feature, an enormous extinct volcano in a classic cone-shape, named "Axios." Axis featured family homes, terraced hanging gardens, schools and community buildings, public squares, parks, sports arenas, decorative fountains, bridges, and aqueducts. Although they worshiped nature rather than a single god, there were temples to the Sun, the Moon & Stars, and to Fire to make seasonal offerings and to show gratitude. Agricultural farmlands were located in the countryside beyond the capital zone. Sheep and goats were domesticated for the purposes of wool and milk/cheese, and chickens were raised for eggs. But -- other than fish -- the Atlanteans were mostly vegetarians, and avoided eating animal flesh. The continent had grown to a vigorous population of nearly 750,000 people, with two-thirds of those living in the capital.

 What distinguished this advanced race from the other inhabitants of Earth were their extraordinary paranormal abilities. Atlanteans had the gifts of telepathy, precognition, psychic healing, remote viewing through astral projection, psycho-kinesis, and clairvoyance. They also understood that dreams were indeed portals to other levels of consciousness, rather than the mere re-organization of the sleeping mind to the past day's thoughts, emotions and events.

 The most important governmental departments in Axis included a Council of Elders (a confirmed-by-acclimation wise panel of three males and three females), a Council of Meditators (the twelve highest adepts of meditation -- who met together daily to perceive the harmonic energy of the continent and note any negative fluctuations), and the Hall of Records (a three-copy repository which kept track of the history and accomplishments of the new civilization of Atlantis). Atlanteans had developed a sophisticated system of picture writing during their two thousand years on Earth.

 Astra and Xeno were the proud parents of two robust grown sons, Zytar and Qtor. Astra was a teacher, and her husband was a physician. Zytar was interested in ship-building, navigation, and potential exploration, while his brother was fascinated with stone masonry, engineering, and architectural designs. As a child in school, Qtor had learned that pyramid-shapes and pyramid-capped obelisks were especially prized by Atlanteans in building and design. This was because such shapes mimicked the pictograph **A** (a symbol still used in our English alphabet today), which dominated their once-home planet centuries ago. This was also why the words Atlantis, Axis, and Axios all began with the same pictograph.

 Like all Atlanteans, the family enjoyed creating art, music and poetry in addition to their daily routine tasks and responsibilities. They also discussed and debated philosophy and the ethics of good citizenship. Because both young men were of marriageable age, talk over the family evening meal often centered around the eligible young women whom had seriously caught the lads' eyes.

 "How are events proceeding with Tarix?" Astra asked her oldest son. "Her family is quite enthusiastic about your deepening relationship, I'm sure you know."

 "Yes, Mother, I am encouraged by our growing commitment to each other. We should be wed later this coming summer," Zytar replied.

 "And how is Syma doing?" Xeno wanted to know, calmly facing his youngest son, smiling.

 "All is likewise well, Father," Qtor admitted, grinning. "We are happy together and long to get married soon as well."

 "That is good news from both of you, my sons. Your Father and I are very pleased. Our duties as your parents will conclude after your weddings. We, of course, look forward to eventually welcoming many grandchildren!" Astra added.

 "We must invite your future brides over with their families for a fine feast soon, and discuss the details," Xeno added. He then resumed enjoying his meal of a mushroom and cheese omelette, accompanied by a fresh chunk of multigrain bread and an earthenware cup of red wine. Between chews, he detailed his latest plant experiments, which were using natural herb combinations in an attempt to newly ease pain and promote healing in his current medical patients. Astra then talked about two upcoming field trips to the seashore that she had planned for her students. She also told about the several new songs that she had taught her class, which were recently performed in one of the public squares. Zytar, when asked, next explained how his second large wooden sailing boat construction was coming along. "After making several smaller models and testing them, my second full-sized craft is much easier to build than the first prototype," he confessed. "In fact, it is almost finished. I'm hoping that one day, the Council of Elders will approve my taking an exploratory cruise far beyond our island shores."

 It was early May. The bees were pollinating the flowers, and birdsong gently filled the air. Life was progressing along at its best, and the future looked peaceful and bright.

 The fact that mighty Axios had been giving off a few plumes of smoke from its summit caused no real alarm, for the Council of Meditators sensed nothing that might disturb the harmony of Atlantis.

 The months passed. Zytar was joyfully married to Tarix in August, and Qtor married Syma the following month. Both couples, as expected, moved out of their parents' houses and set up their own homes -- but they stayed in the capital city so as to allow for easy visitations. Tarix was fascinated with mathematics, astronomy, and geometry (which was nicely compatible with her husband's interest in navigation), while Syma specialized in the domestic arts of weaving, clothes-making, cooking, baking, gardening, and animal husbandry.

 One day in early November, Syma approached Qtor after he returned home from the limestone quarries. "Qtor, I have noticed something very strange lately about the animals. Sheep, goats, chickens, wild fowl, even mice and lizards are all behaving confused and frightened. Should I mention this to our friends and neighbors, or to our parents, to gauge their opinion?" Qtor did his own animal observations over the next few days, and came to the same conclusion as his wife. "Something is wrong, Syma. You were correct. We should alert our families, then tell the Council of Meditators. Maybe they can ascertain the cause."

 After an intensive six-hour group meditation session, the Council quickly called upon the Council of Elders and gave their report. "The natural harmonic energy field of Atlantis is being affected by some unknown, negative force. The animals of our continent are the first to detect it and react." The Elders conferred, then advised caution, and wanted to wait for a week before informing the citizenry, to see if the disruption persisted or whether it was passing anomaly.

 But soon the peculiar paranormal qualities of the Atlanteans activated themselves without needing to be told anything, as if all of them were under some kind of invisible threat. Terrifying dreams of destruction -- to an advanced civilization which had never known war or violence -- now appeared during sleep and were shared in hushed tones the following morning. Disturbing images of earthquakes... Cities and villages lying in rubble atop the dead...Tidal waves... Volcanic explosions... Even total annihilation and extinction!

 Meanwhile, mighty Axios began regular, deep rumblings as it expelled increasing amounts of smoke and noxious gases. Ground tremors also began with alarming regularity. Serious concerns were mounting.

 The capital city's most renowned seers and clairvoyants next met in emergency session and entered into a mass psychic trance. Their somber conclusion? Atlantis was but a few weeks away from complete extermination, in an explosion so massive that its like had not been experienced on Earth since an asteroid had collided with the planet sixty-six million years and wiped out the dinosaurs. After this news was reported to the Council of Elders, a pronouncement was communicated to all parts of the island continent: Prepare. Accept. Sit cross-legged on the ground and calmly join hands when the calamity strikes. Be in deepest inner peace. Death was but a natural transition to another dimension. Fear not.

 The two newlywed couples agreed to meet at the home of Astra and Xeno, along with Tarix's and Syma's parents. There, they discussed a slim plan of possible hope.

 "Zytar, you have built two large sailing vessels. What if you and Qtor each captained a ship with, let's say, five other young and healthy newlywed couples, and set out with your wives to safety and survival in a new land? You could take food, tools, and other necessary provisions. And if the Council of Elders approves, you could also take copies of our Hall of Records with you to your new world, to remember us while keeping you and your future children alive. There is an original version and at least two other copies of those records that I am aware of," Xeno explained.

 "But Father, exactly where would we sail? No one has ever explored beyond our island home," his eldest son wondered.

 "True, Zytar. Such a voyage has never been attempted. But if we summon together now our psychic powers of 'remote viewing,' perhaps we can travel on the astral plain and 'see' where the best place is for you to settle," Xeno announced. "Quickly, let us all join hands and enter into the mysterious realms of the mind." The eight Atlanteans, sitting on the floor, made a solemn circle and closed their eyes.

 What was revealed was two possible areas, each several weeks away from Atlantis by sea -- one to the west and the other to the east.

 "Qtor, your ship must go east with the prevailing ocean currents to a narrowing land area leading into a large inland sea. There will be little navigation worries for you. Once inside that sea, you must sail to a remote point still going east, until you come to a large river delta on the south bank . That is where you, and Syma, and your group will settle. Meanwhile, I will sail to the west, using the stars and my navigation skills in sailing against the ocean currents until I come to a large peninsula of tropical land past an area of scattered islands. There, my shipmates, and Tarix, and I will settle," Zytar commanded.

 The plan was presented to the Council of Elders and wisely approved. The two requested copies from the Hall of Records were provided, after a pair of identical wooden chests lined with copper and perfectly water-proofed were carefully constructed to hold the precious volumes of Atlantean pictographs. It was thus hoped that if either or both ships accidentally sunk on their voyage, the chests would float and survive, and wash up on some distant shore someday and be ultimately made useful to its discoverers. Each chest was emblazoned with the large pictograph symbol **A** on its lid in precious metal.

 The Council of Meditators, meanwhile, used their group powers of telepathy to summon to their capital chambers ten young newlywed couples. In addition to being in excellent health, each person was in possession of a particular necessary skill to help develop a new civilization. There was no panic or outcry or disappointment from other couples who had not been selected. All knew what was most important for the survival of their race.

 As the massive volcano Axios turned more angry, and the ground tremors intensified, the Atlanteans knew that the ultimate catastrophe was imminent. The two ships built by Zytar were loaded with their necessary food and water supplies and equipment, and the families of the passengers gathered to say their goodbyes. Along with the Council members, several thousand members of the community also came to the harbor to wish their brave explorers safety and success. Positive psychic energy was poured into the hearts and minds of the twenty-four young people -- twelve would-be settlers in each of the two boats.

 Zytar gave his brother some final advice and encouragement, then embraced him. "Qtor, we will never meet again on this Earth. But I am convinced that we will survive, and that we will help spread our two-thousand years of useful accumulated Atlantean knowledge and culture to the outside world." The brothers then emotionally embraced their parents. It was a tender moment of both pure joy yet final realization, under the most dreadful of upcoming circumstances. The ships raised anchor, and set out --one to the east and one to the west. The crowds watched and waved from the shore as the vessels gradually sailed out of sight.

 Five days later, the massive underwater tectonic plates under the island continent of Atlantis shifted with such force that an earthquake of such unimaginable power caused Axios to completely explode, then submerge itself under the ocean. The volcanic submersion pulled the entire island continent -- and all of its remaining inhabitants -- under with it, the suction causing gigantic inverse tidal waves. Everything was destroyed, and what was once a model civilization quickly and completely vanished.

 The tremendous sound soon reached the ears of Zytar and Qtor and the other surviving Atlanteans as they sailed on in opposite directions, and they knew they were now the last of their race. [Such an explosion would not be heard again on the Earth until August 26, 1883, when the unstable volcanic Indonesian island of Krakatoa obliterated itself, killing more than 36,000 people, many from the subsequent tsunamis. The sound waves of the explosion were heard over 3000 miles away, and they were determined to have circled the planet three times. The ejected ash and sulfur dioxide gases from the catastrophe affected the world's weather for five years, actually dropping the global temperature by 2.2 degrees F. due to reduced sunlight.]

 After another week of sailing east, Qtor spotted what would later be called the Pillars of Hercules -- the narrow entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. He continued near the shoreline to the southern end of this body of water, sailing past many forlorn desert areas, until he spied a wide, lush green river delta. "This will be our new home," he proclaimed to Syma and his crew. "This is the place that was foreseen." The land would be known in the coming centuries as Egypt.

 Meanwhile, stormy seas made Zytar's voyage longer and more perilous. But -- after passing several small island groups -- he and his crew arrived at the foreseen jungle peninsula that would later be called the Yucatan of Mexico. "We have arrived," he announced. "And we are all healthy and safe." Zytar embraced his wife, Tarix, who in turn joyfully whispered in her husband's ear that she was now 'with child...'

 \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

 Some scholar's have claimed that Atlantis is only a legend, an imagined story later attributed to the noted Greek philosopher, Plato. Or perhaps Atlantis was the Aegean island of Santorini, which was similarly destroyed by a volcanic explosion in 1600 B.C., and may have been tied to the collapse of the Minoan civilization on the neighboring island of Crete.

 Yet strange, unexplained evidence persists: the building of limestone pyramids in both ancient Egypt and by the Mayan Indians in the Yucatan; the remarkable pictographic inscriptions of early writing used by both cultures, neither of which had any possible contact with the other -- seeing as they were separated by many thousands of miles; and the mathematical focus of both cultures upon the rhythms of nature and astronomy, as in their carefully tracking the movements of the sun, moon & stars. Did the Atlantean survivors multiply and eventually inter-marry among the local populations over the centuries, teaching the Atlantean skills and ways?

 And what about the two copies of Atlantean history and accomplishments brought from the Hall of Records? One is supposedly buried in a secret hidden chamber under the Great Sphinx on the Giza plateau near Cairo, Egypt. The other is supposedly buried under a special pyramid now somewhere lost under the unexplored jungle foliage of Mexico's Yucatan.

 Perhaps one or both of these history-enhancing Atlantean artifacts will be found someday, providing the proof.

 Until then, you be the judge...

 THE END

 by Jack Karolewski

 January 24, 2021