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Atlantis and the Why

by Christopher McKitterick

A long time ago, at night,
a wise god
-- some say a mischievous one --
entered the sleep
of a young man named Lukas and said,
I bestow upon you the Power
of restoration
...that is, Lukas could restore anything
inanimate.

Excited about his new Power,
Lukas resurrected
a rotted pleasure boat
back to rich mahogany and lacquer.

It worked.

That's when his quest began,
for Lukas was a man of no small vision.

After twenty-one sweaty years,
three wives,
two cabin cats,
-- our wise, mischievous god
revelled in this little contrast -and countless restorations
performed to pay the bills, Lukas found the city
drowning beneath miles of gulping ocean.

He hired hundreds of men and ships
to raise the city...
after another ten years
and thousands more restorations
performed to raise

But, oh
he felt it was worth all this effort when he listened to the watery rush
of a thousand sinking ships,
the creak of a million tons of rock; when he smelled the ancient reek
of three thousand years of seaweed, of dust dissolved to mud
and fortunes feasted upon by fish. He watched the city drink sunshine
and gulp sea breezes.

Then he sent the men away, each now rich,
and restored what he had taken from the sea.
It consumed six months of his life
spent wandering ruined streets
and most of his Power.

the requisite fortune.

One sun-drenched day,
the city came alive.
Lukas fell to his knees and cried out:
"City! See what I have done for you!"

His voice echoed
along the streets, off their sea-murals.
Lukas did not expect a reply.

Yet his heart heard the dolphin-colored walls weep
in the voice of the waves:
He'd restored their glory
yet they were hollow,
devoid even of bone-chips of skeletons. Stillborn.

Lukas sensed the desolation
and knew what he must do.
He had grown wise;
he wondered what he'd done with his life and regretted all
the wives.

Perhaps all but one.

It consumed the last of his Power
to sink the towers back under:
His Power in reverse
was a great destroyer.
That's why no one can find the lost city.
And why the ocean sometimes
batters little wooden boats
searching