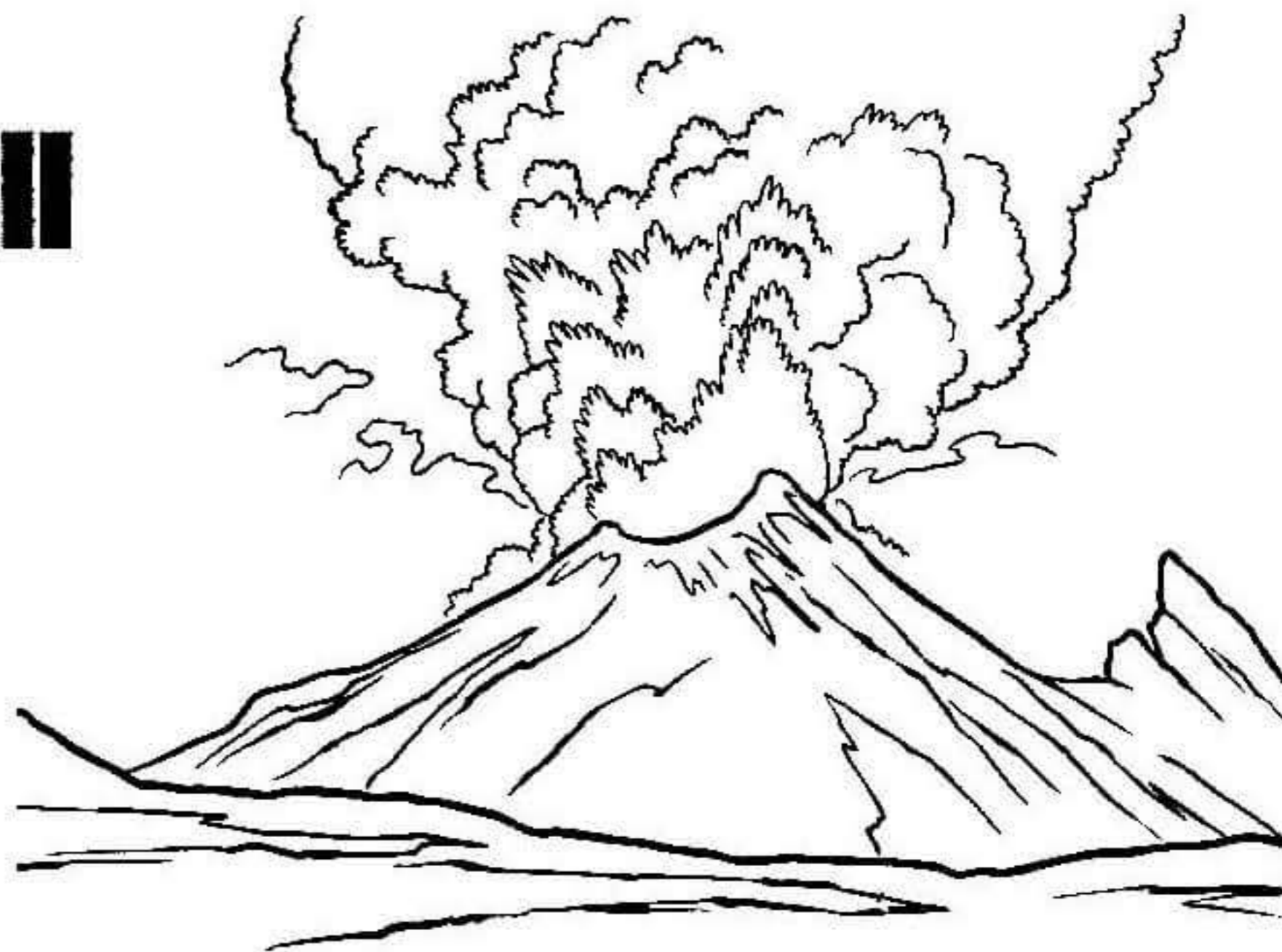




Time Stood Still



On the morning of August 24, 79 A.D., the people of **Pompeii, Italy**, woke for the last time in their beautiful town. Pompeii had already been rebuilt once after a big earthquake in the year 62 A.D.

By 79 A.D., it was a busy port town on the Bay of Naples. It was a part of the great Roman Empire. On August 20, there seemed to be another earthquake. It did not damage much, except the city's water supply. Springs and wells suddenly dried up. The people in the town did not know that the small earthquake and the water problems were signs that a volcano was about to *erupt*, or explode.

Mount Vesuvius stood behind the town. It is a volcano. But, the people of Pompeii did not know that. After a normal morning on August 24, the volcano blew. A cloud of smoke and ash shot into the air. The blast was 12 miles high. It blocked the sun. Trees burned. Rocks rained on the town. Some people ran away. But, others stayed in their houses. They thought that it was safer to stay inside. They thought that the rocks and ash would eventually stop falling.

The rocks and ash did stop falling, but not until the town was almost buried. Then, something much worse happened. Fiery volcanic mud and red-hot magma shot out of the volcano. A blast of heat called a *surge cloud* rolled toward the town. When the blast hit Pompeii, the people who were still hiding in the town died. Time stopped in Pompeii. After a few weeks passed, the people who had fled the city tried to go back to see what had happened.

Conversion

12 miles = 19.31 kilometers



Make a prediction.

What do you think the author will write about next?