



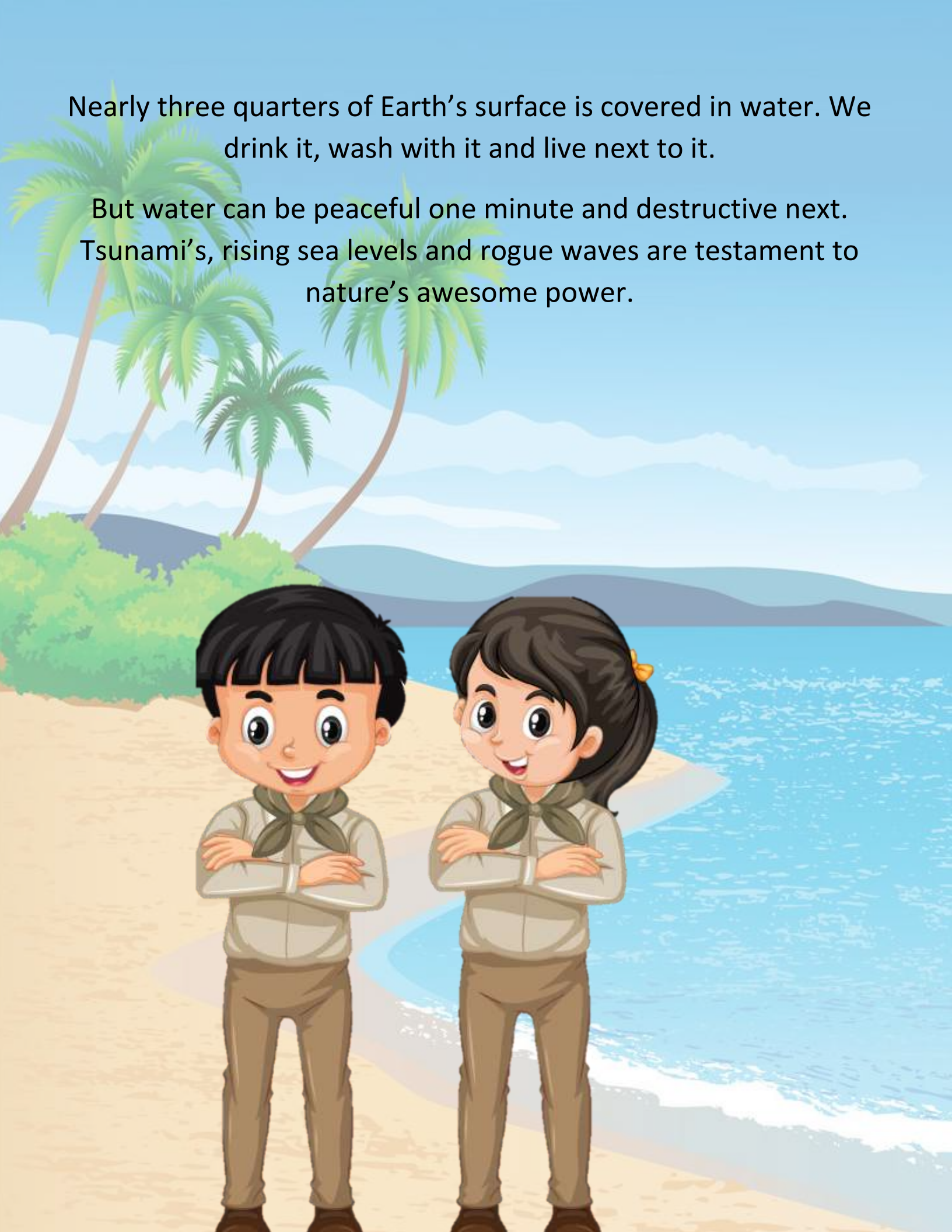
Tales of Ancient Worlds

The Dangers of Rising Water



Nearly three quarters of Earth's surface is covered in water. We drink it, wash with it and live next to it.

But water can be peaceful one minute and destructive next. Tsunami's, rising sea levels and rogue waves are testament to nature's awesome power.



Port Royal

In the 17th century, Port Royal in Jamaica was a pirate's paradise. But on 7 June 1692 an earthquake triggered a tsunami and the pirate town was washed into the sea.



Pavlopetri

People started building the town of Pavlopetri in Greece 5000 years ago and lived there for two millenia.



However, around 1000 BCE, an earthquake shook the foundations of the town, lowering it into the sea. You can still see Pavlopetri lying beneath the waves today.



Doggerland

Today Britain is an island, but it wasn't always the case. For most of prehistory it was connected to Europe by a stretch of land called Doggerland (though there weren't any poodles there at the time).



As the Ice Age ended and sea levels started to rise, Doggerland began to disappear. By 6500 BCE, Britain was all at sea.



Global Warming

It's important to remember that disasters aren't just the stuff of history books. Due to global warming, ice is once again melting and sea levels are rising. We must look after the environment, or more civilisations will be lost to the ocean.



The City at the Bottom of the Ocean



SPLASH! A team of divers rolled over the side of a boat, 3,5 miles (6 km) off the coast of Egypt. Deeper and deeper they dived, through murky waters and past curious fish, until they reached the seabed.



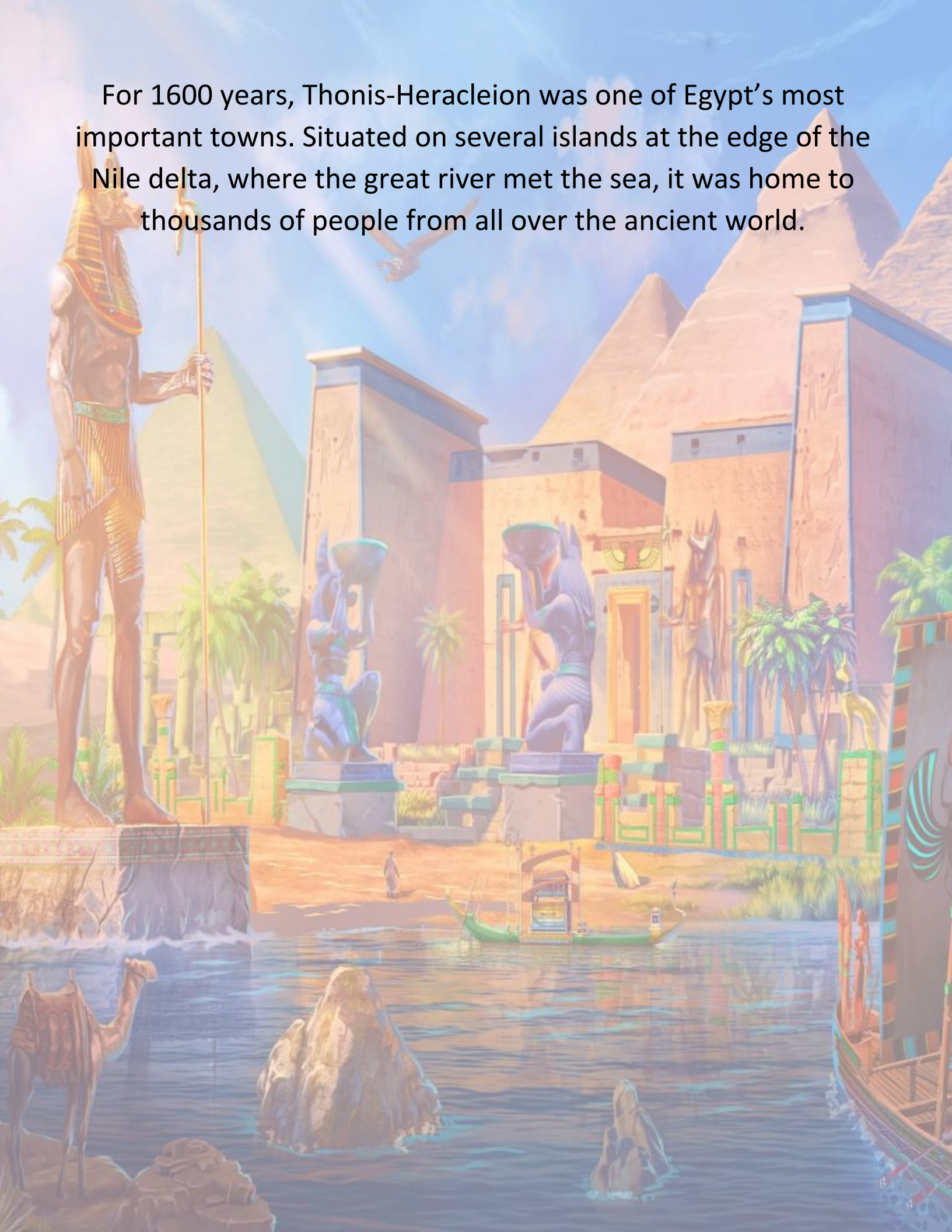
The lead diver, Franck Goddio, is an underwater archaeologist. He was looking for something incredible hiding beneath the waves – not gold or buried treasure, but Thonis-Heracleion, the lost port city of ancient Egypt.



As the divers reached the bottom of giant human shape emerged from the darkness. It was a huge statue of an Egyptian pharaoh! Franck knew he had found the lost ancient city at last.



For 1600 years, Thonis-Heracleion was one of Egypt's most important towns. Situated on several islands at the edge of the Nile delta, where the great river met the sea, it was home to thousands of people from all over the ancient world.



Egyptian pharaohs had built lavish monuments throughout the city. As Franck and his team swam around, they came across more and more treasures. There were startling discoveries – the statue of the Egyptian pharaoh was chiselled out of red granite, one of the hardest stones in the world.

Pharaohs spent huge sums of money building statues in their honour. Imagine spending all that time carving a monument, only for it to sink in the sea.



Sticking out of the sand was a large black stele. A stele was basically a massive board. In ancient times there were no newspapers, no TV, no internet, no post – no easy way to communicate at all. So how would anyone know what the king wanted them to do?



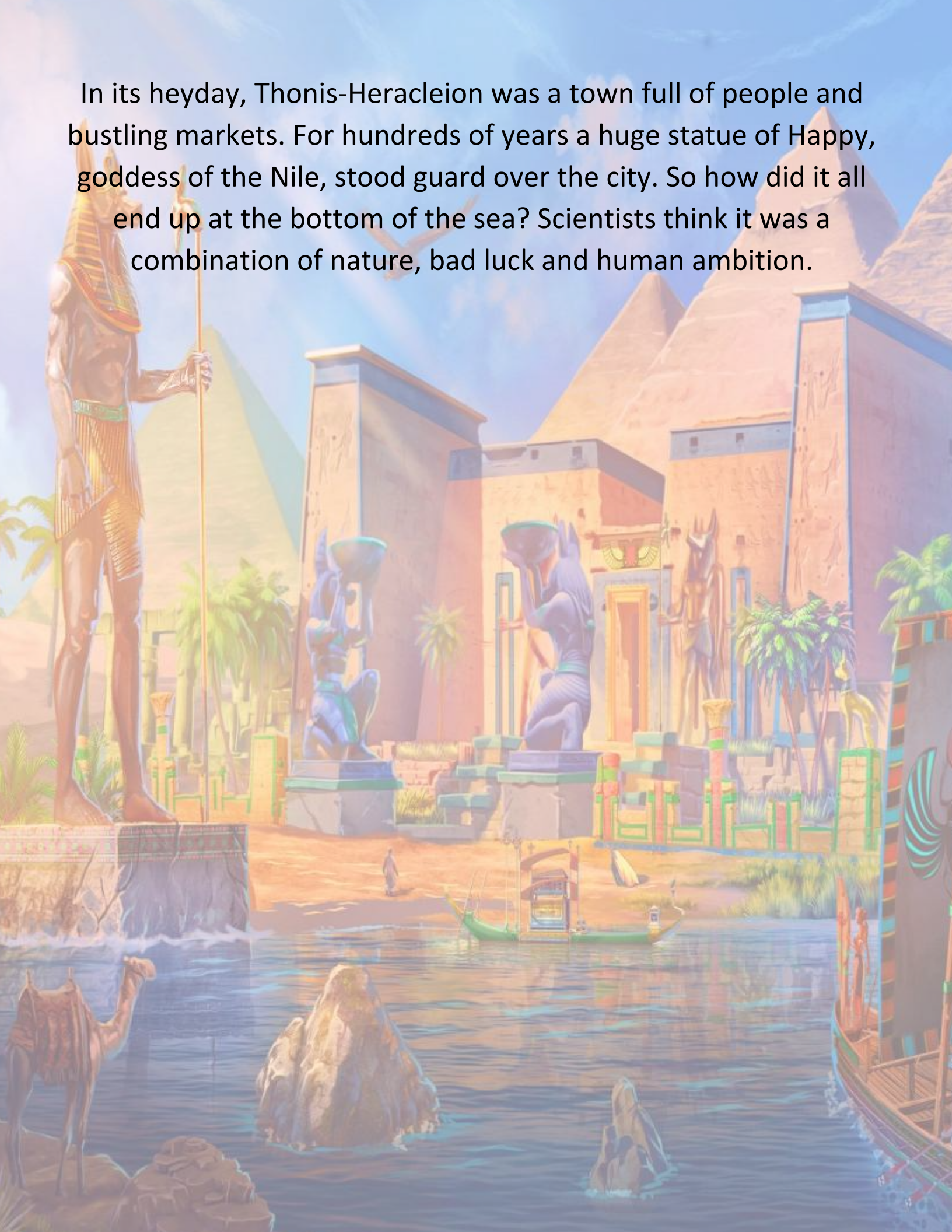
Well, Egyptian pharaohs carved steles, big messages on big pieces of rock. Things like: *don't steal your neighbour's chickens, don't for to pay your taxes and the king is handsome and smart and everyone loves him.* The stele found at Thonis was carced in around 370 BCE by the pharaoh Nectanebo I. it let merchants know they had to pay a 10% tax to the temple of the goddess, Neith.



Not all the finds were this big though. Underneath the corner of one of Thonis-Heracleion's main temples, archaeologists found tiny statues of gods, jewellery and food. What were all of these things doing buried under a temple? Egyptians believed that you had to made offering to the gods to prevent bad things from happening. They placed gifts under these buildings in the hope that the gods would stop them from falling down.



In its heyday, Thonis-Heracleion was a town full of people and bustling markets. For hundreds of years a huge statue of Happy, goddess of the Nile, stood guard over the city. So how did it all end up at the bottom of the sea? Scientists think it was a combination of nature, bad luck and human ambition.



Thonis-Heracleion was built on top of several islands made of nothing but sand. This made it a perfect place for a port, as the water went right up to people's houses and the markets. However, the water was slowly destroying the town. Sand is not very strong, and easily absorbs water. It seems that little by little, year by year, Thonis-Heracleion was sinking into the sea.



This wasn't helped by the fact that Egypt is on the edge of a tectonic plate. You see, Europe and Africa are not sitting on the same piece of rock. They're actually very slowly crashing into each other. All of a sudden the rocks can slip, causing an earthquake. When this happened, Thonis would sink further into the sea.



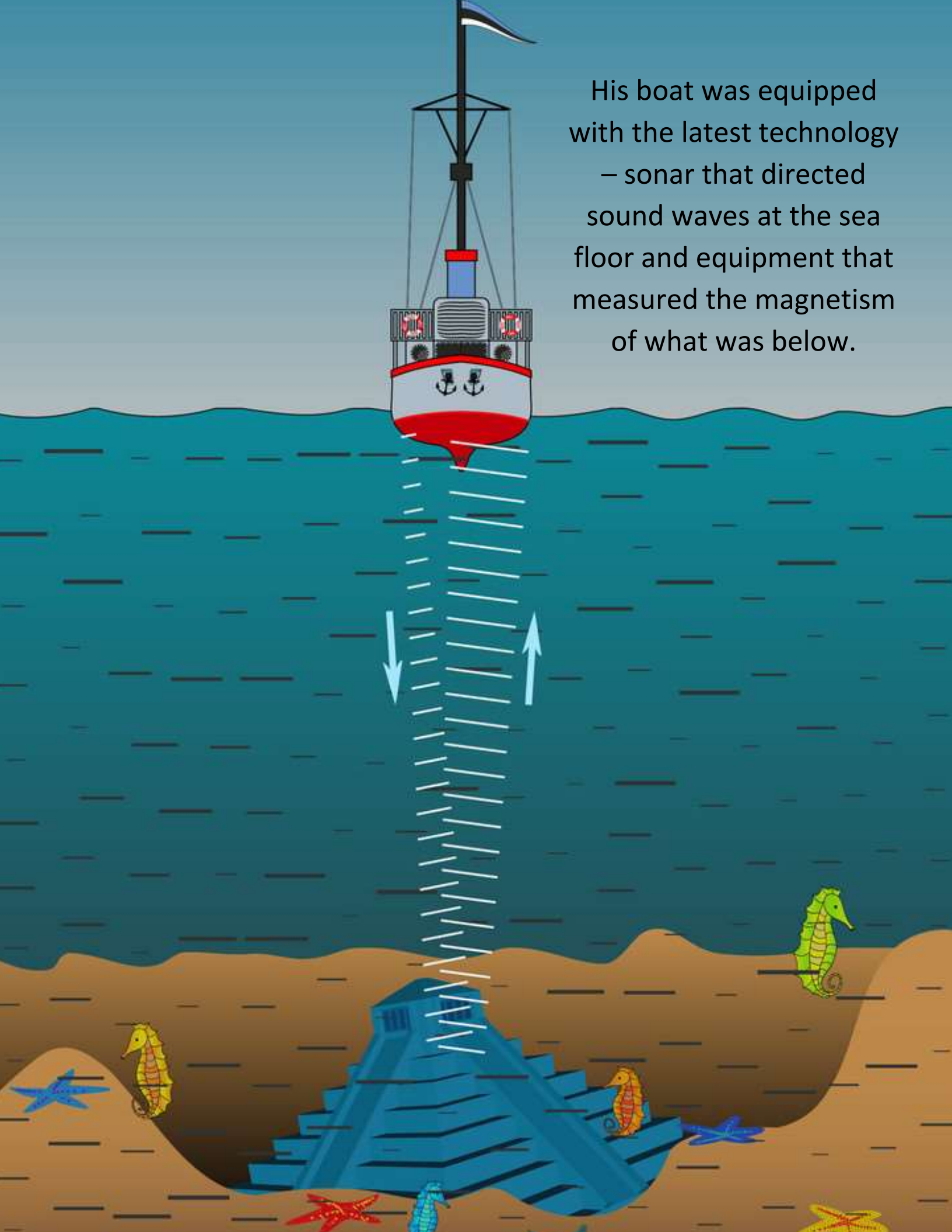
The final nail in the coffin was the ambition of the pharaohs. On top of everything else, the last thing this town needed was for Egyptians to build large temples, palaces and markets. But that's exactly what they did! Each new statue of a king slowly pushed the sand further into the sea. The Egyptians didn't know this, of course, but it's an important lesson to learn. It's always better to work with nature than against it.



If it wasn't for Franck and his tam, we might never know any of this. It wasn't by luck that he found the city, either.



His boat was equipped with the latest technology – sonar that directed sound waves at the sea floor and equipment that measured the magnetism of what was below.



Both of these tools were fired underneath the boat and Franck's team could see what bounced back. What else might we find under the sea using such tools?



The Might of the Roman Empire



The Roman Empire has probably had more influence on European politics and culture than anything else. From its founding in 27 BCE, when Augustus Caesar declared himself emperor, to its final fall in 1453 CE, the empire was always changing and evolving.



The Emperor

The empire was led by the Roman emperor. He had almost unlimited power over his subjects. Some emperors, such as Marcus Aurelius, were great rulers, but others used their power in horrible ways.



The dreaded Caligula was such a terrible emperor that he was murdered by his own soldiers only four years into his reign!



Legions

The backbone of the Roman army was its legions. Each legion had around 6000 soldiers. They wore heavy armour and held large shields, which they held in a tortoise formation in battles.



Absolutely Minted

The Romans took coins with them everywhere they went. Each emperor minted new ones with his face on them, which archaeologists can use to date Roman sites.

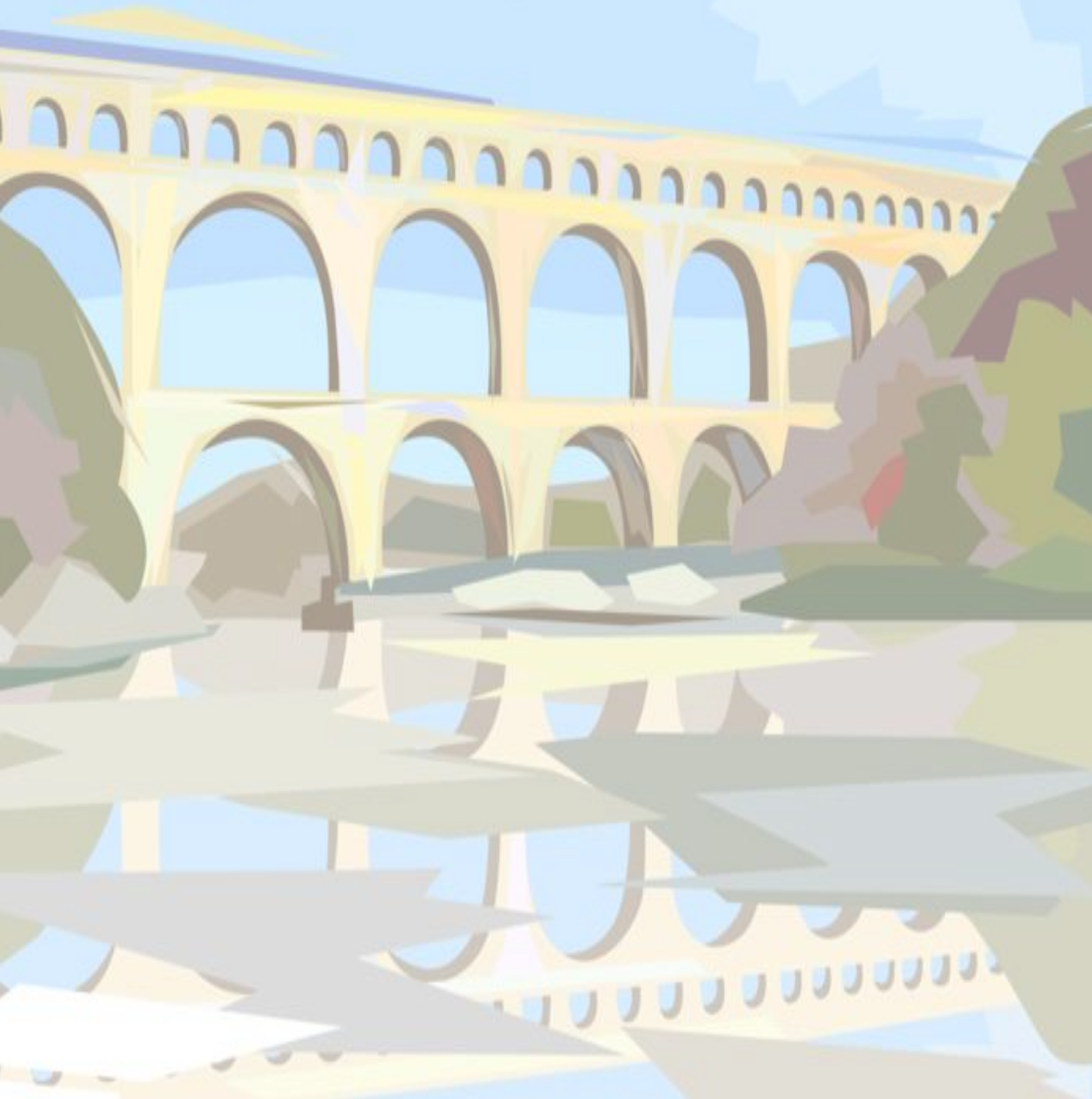


Aqueducts

Romans loved bathing and their cities often had sewer systems and public toilets.



To bring enough water to the cities they built huge aqueducts across the empire. Many still work, 2000 years later!



Vast Empire

At the height of its power, the Roman Empire reached from the cold hills of Scotland in northern Europe to the Sahara Desert in Africa. However, in 476 CE, the empire fell in the west of Europe and by 1453 CE, the empire only really controlled Constantinople (modern day Istanbul, in Turkey) in the east.



Different Roles

Women in the Roman Empire could not be elected to government roles. However, some women advised emperors, while others ran successful businesses. Many women also chose to become priestesses, worshipping the many Roman gods.



Gladiator Battles

Gladiator fights were a common feature of life in the early Roman Empire. Slaves would fight each other and wild animals, sometimes to the death! Successful gladiators were the celebrities of their time, like sports stars today.





THINK

DIGITAL ACADEMY