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No. 27 15¢

THE ADVENTURES OF MARCO POLO



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WHO AM I?

I am a famous literary character. Can you guess my name from the clues below? Rate your familiarity with me as follows. If you can identify me from CLUE I, your score is superior; from CLUE II — excellent; from CLUE III—very good; from CLUE IV—good; from CLUE V—fair. If after CLUE V you still cannot identify me, I suggest you read the exciting story in which I appear.

CLUE I: I was born in a swamp. When I was just a baby, I learned my first lesson in survival—lay low and see nothing, whatever happens.

CLUE II: I learned many tricks and lessons from my mother. The most brilliant was how to lead a dog on a straightaway chase, letting him come quite close, then keeping one leg ahead. I ran him full tilt into a breast high barbed-wire fence.

CLUE III: One day I saw a stranger hopping toward me. A new feeling rushed over me—a boiling anger to see a stranger in my swamp. Fiercely I rushed at the newcomer. But he was bigger and heavier than I and I was no match for him. I was forced to flee.

CLUE IV: From that day on the big stranger tried a dozen times a day to sneak up and catch me. Then one day I heard a hoard in the swamp. Deliberately I crossed the dog's view and the chase was on. I led him to the nest where I knew my enemy would be. The big stranger found himself caught between myself and the hoard. Then the hoard was upon him, and it was too late to escape.

CLUE V: Over again I was master of the swamp. Then winter came and with it freezing weather. One night as my mother and I were huddled under a brush pile, a fox found us. We darted out into the blinding storm. The fox charged after my mother. She reached a pond and having no chance to turn, plunged in. The fox turned back and came after me. The exciting climax of my story can be found in Wild Animals I Have Known by Ernest Thompson Seton.

CLUES

The Adventures of Marco Polo

Illustrated by
HOMER FLEMING

EVER SINCE THE 13TH CENTURY THE NAME MARCO POLO HAS CONJURED UP PICTURES OF THE MOST THRILLING ADVENTURES; THE MOST EXOTIC SCENES AROUND THE TRAVELS OF THIS MAN HAVE BEEN WOMEN COUNTESSLESS STORIES; FANTASIES SURPASSING THE WILDEST TALES OF BARON MURCHAUSEN. YET THROUGH THE SMOKE SCREEN, THE MAIN STORY OF MARCO POLO STANDS OUT AS CLEAR AS EVER.

THE FOLLOWING BOOK HAS BEEN BASED UPON CERTAIN RECORDS OF MARCO POLO'S OWN STORY. SAPE IN HARBALTON HAVE BEEN FILLED IN TO MAKE THIS A DRAMATIC PRESENTATION OF THE TRAVELS OF THE WORLD'S MOST TALKED OF EXPLORER.

MARCO POLO





INTO YOUR CELL, MAD VARLET, AND NO MORE OF THY FANTASTIC TALES!



HAH, HAH, HAH! 'TIS INDEED A WILD TALE HE'D HAVE US BELIEVE!



THE FOOLS! LET THEM LAUGH! THEIR STUPID RIDICULE SHALL NEVER BREAK MY SPIRIT. WITH THIS PEN I WILL PUT MY STORY ON PAPER SO THE WORLD CAN KNOW THE WONDERS I HAVE SEEN.



It all began many years ago when I was a lad of eighteen. I lived in Venice then. One day while searching for my father, who was soon to leave on his second voyage to the Orient, I wandered into a rough cafe on the waterfront... where...





HERE, TAKE THIS KNIFE. IT THINKS SOMEBODY WANTED YOU TO HAVE IT.

COME HERE, BOY. I LIKE YOUR HUNGRY. I WOULD HAVE WORDS WITH YOU... PLEASANT WORDS.



MY NAME IS LEE TEEN, BOY. I AM A SEA-FAKING MERCHANT AND I HAVE COME A LONG WAY TO YOUR BUSY CITY.

I AM HONORED TO KNOW YOU, SIR. MY NAME IS MARCO POLO..



WHY, YES, MARCO... I KNOW OF YOUR FAMOUS FATHER, AND WHEN HE TRAVELS TO CHINA AGAIN, YOU MUST LEAVE WITH HIM..

... MY FATHER HAS VISITED YOUR LAND.



THERE YOU WILL FIND ADVENTURE AND BEAUTY, AND THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS, SILVER BELLS, WITH A VOICE LIKE HER NAME...



HERE IS HER PICTURE

SHE IS LOVELY TO SEE HER WOULD ALONE BE WORTH THE JOURNEY. MY FATHERS MET LET ME GO WITH HIM!!



SHORTLY AFTER, EARLY ONE MORNING...

THINK YOU WILL, MARCO. THIS WILL BE THE LAST YOU SEE OF VENICE FOR MANY A YEAR... IF EVER.

AH... DANGER CANNOT PROSEUTEN ME, FATHER. NOT WITH SUCH HIGH ADVENTURE IN SIGHT!



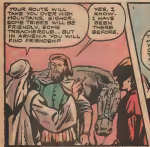
BLOWING SAILS FURLED AGAINST THE DRIVING WINDS, THE TEEM BOAT CARRIES MARCO FOLD AWAY FROM THE BUSY, TREMING VENICE HE LOVES SO WELL.



AT LAST, THE FIRST STOP... LAIASSUS...

SO THIS IS LAIASSUS. I HAVE HEARD MUCH OF THIS BUSY PORT.

YES, MY SON. WE HAVE TRAVELED LONG OVER SEA, BUT OUR JOURNEY OVER LAND WILL BE STILL LONGER.



YOUR ROUTE WILL TAKE YOU OVER HIGH MOUNTAINS, SIGHOR. SOME TRAILS WILL BE FRIENDLY, SOME TREACHEROUS... BUT IN ARKENA, YOU WILL FIND FRIENDSHIP.

YES, I KNOW. I HAVE BEEN THERE BEFORE.



MANY DAYS LATER, TIRED, WEARY, THEY ARRIVE AT THE FOOT OF MT. ABRARAT...

THERE, MY SON IS MT. ABRARAT. IT WAS ON THE PEAK OF THIS MOUNTAIN THAT NOAH BROUGHT HIS ARK TO REST AFTER THE GREAT FLOOD.

MT. ARRARAT

WE NOW COME TO GEORGIA. HARGO, IT WAS HERE THAT ALEXANDER THE GREAT ONCE TRIED TO BATTLE THE TARTARS. BUT THEY HELD ONE PASS...

..ALEXANDER SENT HIS TROOPS THROUGH THE PASS - BUT...

"SO A SMALL GROUP OF TARTARS FOUGHT ALL OF ALEXANDER'S ARMY!"

THEY DID VERY QUICKLY, THESE MEN OF ALEXANDER!

WHY NOT! OUR ARROWS HURT THEM AS THEY LEAVE THE PASS. THIS IS A FINE, COMFORTABLE WAR!

"THE NARROW PASS LET ONLY A FEW SOLDIERS THROUGH AT A TIME..."

"ALEXANDER THEN ORDERED A GREAT WALL WITH FORTIFIED TOWERS TO BE BUILT AT THE MOUTH OF THE PASS... SEALING THE TARTARS IN THEIR OWN LAND."

WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL. NEVER THEY CAN NEVER COME IN.

YES, BUT WE CAN NEVER GO OUT!

"... BUT ENOUGH OF STORIES. WE HEAD FOR THE DANGEROUS LAND OF THE KURDS!"



TO THE SOUTH OF HARGO POLO AND HIS PARTY A FIERCE SQUAD GATHERS - THE BANDY KURDS!

WORD HAS COME FROM ONE OF OUR SCOUTS THAT A CARAVAN OF TRAVELERS HEADS THIS WAY...

WE WILL MAKE EASY FEAST OF THEM... BUT THEIR THROATS AND STRAL THEIR TREASURE TOMORROW MORNING WE GO... TO TRAP THEM AT THE GREAT STONE BRIDGE.



MEANWHILE...

WE WILL REST HERE TONIGHT FOR ON THE MORROW WE ENTER THE LAND OF THE MURDERING KURDS.

FATHER, I HAVE AN IDEA!

YOU HAVE TOLD ME THAT THE KURDS ALWAYS ATTACK AT THE BRIDGE. I BELIEVE IF WE TRAVEL TONIGHT, UNCLE AND I, WE CAN DECIDE A TRAP FOR THEM BEFORE THE SUN RISES FULL.



VERY WELL! THEN GO AND TAKE MY BROTHER WITH YOU UPON YOUR SUCCESS OR FAILURE RESTS THE LIVES OF THE ENTIRE PARTY. WE WILL FOLLOW SHORTLY.

HERE WE ARE MARCO AT THE BRIDGE!

THEN LET US DISMOUNT AND SET TO WORK!



I (POLO) THINK THE IS STRONG ENOUGH (PUPY) TO HOLD AN ARMY. WE WILL (POLO) COME LEVE THE TRAP (POLO) WHEN FATHER ARRIVE.



JUST BEFORE DAWN...

HURRY, MARCO... DAWN BREAKS SOON!

I AM ALMOST FINISHED.



THE LEATHER ROPE IS LIGHT IN COLOR, BUT HEAVY IN STRENGTH. IT WILL NOT BE SEEN... BUT IT WILL BE FELT!

AT THAT MOMENT... RIDING WITH THE SUN, THE MURDERER HORDES SWEEP OVER THE HORIZON...



DEATH TO THE TRAVELERS!



WE WILL LET THEM START ACROSS THE NARROW STONE BRIDGE, THERE WE WILL STAMPEDE THEM TO DEATH!



LET US MOVE QUICKLY FATHER! THEY APPROACH!



DAYS LATER, THE POLDS
EMERGE FROM THE
DANGEROUS MOUNTAINS...

THE TIGRIS RIVER
THAT MEANS WE
ARE NEAR
BAGHDAD, RICHEST
CITY IN THE NEAR
EAST. WE WILL
STOP THERE.

GOOD, WE
NEED
REST
SORELY.

BAGHDAD



HERE THE
FINEST PEARLS
OF INDIA
ARE BROUGHT
TO HAVE HOLES
BORED IN THEM.
IT IS DELICATE
WORK.

THE BANDIT
KURDS MUST
REAP A RICH
HARVEST FROM
CARAVANS
THAT CARRY
THESE PRECIOUS
PEARLS TO
EUROPE.

WE STAY WITH MY
FRIEND, AS I
KNOW, BUT MARCO
ISN'T HERE... THE
OLD MAN HAS MANY
THINGS TO TELL.

WORRY NOT,
RATHER, I'
BEHOLD.
LISTEN, AND
NOT LOOK ALL
AT GAZE.
WHAT A
SPLENDID
HOUSE!



AS THEY
STEP IN-
SIDE

GREETINGS, WORTHY
FRIEND. IT HAS BEEN
MANY YEARS SINCE
LAST WE WERE TO-
GETHER.

GREETINGS, BEN
MARRA. YOU KNOW
MY BROTHER, MARCO,
AND THIS IS MY
SON, MARCO.







"AS THE CALF AND HIS MEN ADVANCE..."

"SEE, THEY RETREAT ALREADY. WE'LL FOLLOW THEM... IT'S LIKE HUNTING A TAME BONE."

"IN A SHADY FOREST."

"TO HORROR, MEN! IN A FEW MINUTES, ALAU WILL HAVE RETREATED TO HIS WOODS..."

"...ALAU FALLS BACK, NEVER RETREATING..."



"MASTER, I FEAR THE PASSING OF ANOTHER MOMENT."

"MY HAND GIVES THE SIGNAL, AND DO NOT FEAR. BY FAITHFUL AIDE, THE TRAP WILL NOW CLOSE!"

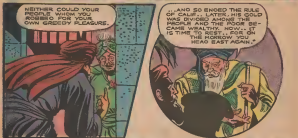
"WE HAVE BEEN TRICKED! DEFEND ME, MEN, FROM TWO SIDES! COME THE WARRIORS OF ALAU!"

"AS THE CALF'S ARMY IS ALMOST ON THE TROOPS OF THE WARRIORS OF ALAU..."



"SURRENDER, CALF! YOUR ARMY LIES SCATTERED ON THE GROUND."

"SCATTERED BY YOUR KNIGHTS, ON ALAU, YOU... YOU SHALL PAY FOR THIS. MY FRIENDS SHALL AVENGE ME."



HEADING EVER EAST, MARGO APPROACHES
REOBARA PROVINCE IN INDIA WHERE
LIVE NOW THE MERCHANTS' GATHER.

FRIENDS, THE WINTER
SEASON IS UPON US. WE
MUST TAKE OUR BEASTS
OF BURDEN TO THE
FULL PASTURES IN THE
COUNTRY. THEY RICHLY
DESERVE THE REST.

AND TO A SPY THAT LURKS IN THEIR
MIST, THESE WORDS ARE A CHOICE BIT
OF NEWS.

THAT NIGHT A SLINKY FIGURE
RIDES INTO THE DARKNESS...

THE TIME HAS COME.
WITH THE MERCHANTS'
GATHERING, KOROBEAR
WILL WANT TO BUY THE
PEOPLE OF REOBARA
ANOTHER VISIT!

UNAWARE OF THE GATHERING FORCES OF
EVIL, MARGO POLO AND HIS PARTY RIDE
INTO REOBARA IN THE MORNING SUN...

THIS IS THE SEASON
WHEN THE TRADERS
REST THEIR CARAVANS.
IT IS A WONDERFUL
SIGHT, WE ARE
FORTUNATE TO
SEE IT, MY SON.

I CAN'T HELP BUT
WONDER WHAT THE
KURDS WOULD DO
TO A GROUP AS
WEALTHY AND
UNDEFENDED!

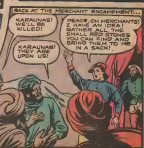
HA! THERE ARE BANDITS IN THIS
COUNTRY. JUST AS TERRACROUS
AS THE KURDS. THEY ARE CALLED
KARAJNAS AND ARE LED BY THE
VICIOUS KING COBORAN. THEY SWEEP
UPON MERCHANT CARAVANS UNDER
A CLOUD OF DARKNESS,
DARKNESS THAT FALLS AT
THE HEIGHT OF DAY!

LOOK AT THE
WEALTH IN THAT
TEXT. FINER
TRILLY A KING'S
RANSOM!

SOMETIMES ALL OF THIS
WEALTH IS THE RANSOM
OF ONLY ONE MAN
CAPTURED BY THE
KARAJNAS!

THAT NIGHT, MARGO
TOSSES IN A LIGHT
PRETFLUL SLEEP...

I AM TROUBLED... I
KNOW NOT WHY... I
FEEL A HEAVY
DANGER APPROACHING...
I HOPE I AM WRONG...







SAFE! AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!



COME! BACK TO THEIR CAMP SITE... THEY HAVE LEFT ENOUGH WORTHY OF OUR LOOTING. IT IS USELESS TO ATTEMPT SCALING THESE WALLS! WE RIDE ON!

BEASTLY IN THEIR FEROCIOUSNESS, THE BANDITS SEIZE THE RICHES LEFT BY THE BARRING STOCKHORN MERCHANTS...



HA! A RANSOM FIT FOR A KING! WE'VE DONE WELL DESPITE YON DECEIVING YOUTH!

AND LIKE SAVAGE BARBARIANS, THEY DESTROY WHAT THEY CANNOT CARRY AWAY...



HA! A WONDERFUL SIGHT!

FEARWELL... AT NORSALM'S CASTLE...



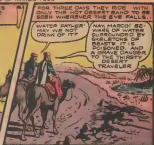
THEY HAVE BURNED OUR TOWN! THIS IS NOT A HEALTHY COUNTRY FOR TRAVELERS!

THAT IS TRUE, FATHER... I WONDER HOW THEY TRAVELED IN DARKNESS... AT NOON!

PERHAPS YOU CAN ANSWER THAT QUESTION, LORD OF NORSALM?



WELL... SOME SAY IT IS MAGIC... I SAY NO! COCOBAR HAS MADE A BRILLIANT STUDY OF SANDSTORMS, WHERE THESE STORMS TRAVEL YOU WILL FIND COCOBAR, LOOTING... DILLING... KILLING!



SO FATHER AND SON WANDER THROUGH THE
CROOKED STREETS OF KOSHAN UNTIL THEY
DISCOVER THE SHOP WHERE THE WONDER-
FUL EYE SALVE IS MADE . . .

I AM HONORED BY YOUR VISIT,
O STRANGERS, AND WILL
GLADLY SHOW YOU THE
SECRET OF MY ART. MY
APPRENTICE IS EVEN NOW
THROWING CARBON ZINC ORE
INTO THE FURNACE . . .



THIS SPECIAL GRATE WITH
THE MESH PLACED SO CLOSE,
ONE TO THE OTHER, IS THEN
CAREFULLY FITTED OVER THE
OPENING IN THE TOP OF THE
FURNACE . . .



YOU SEE THAT HEAVY
VAPOR, SIR . . . THAT IS
THE VERY ESSENCE
OF THE ZINC ORE.
WATCH IT ASCEND
AND . . .



SEE THE VAPOR
CLING TO THE LITTLE
IRON BARS . . . FROM
THAT SOFT MASS YOU
WILL PRESENTLY SEE
OUR WONDERFUL
EYE SALVE MADE . . .



WHEN THE SHEETINGS
ARE COVERED WITH
VAPOR, WE PLACE THEM
ON THOSE BARS . . . SO
TO COOL AND HARDEN.
NOW, SIR, IF YOU WILL
STEP THIS WAY, YOU
MAY OBSERVE THE
LAST STEP IN THE
PROCESS.



HERE THE HARDENED
VAPOR OR TUTTY IS
FIRST POUNDED INTO
A FINE POWDER—
THEN MIXED TO
FORM THE PASTE
FROM WHICH
COMES THE
SALVE.

THANK
YOU, SIR
IN EUROPE
WE KNOW
NOTHING
OF THIS
MAGNIFICENT
ART!







"THE TERRIBLE SHERKS OF THE VICIN
ATTRACTED PASSENGERS BY... AS MY SON
ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE... HE WAS
FATAALLY WOUNDED..."

"I HAVE BEEN
TRICKED! I WAS
ALIVE ALL THE
WHILE... BUT NOW
I TRULY DIE...
CALL MY FATHER...
I SEE YOU... CALL...
MY... FATHER..."



FATHER... YOU... HAVE
HEARD MY... STORY...
YOU MUST WARN...
WARN EVERYBODY...
AGAINST THE... OLD...
MAN... OF THE
MOUNTAIN!"



"I HAVE TOLD
YOU THE STORY
TO WARN YOU!...
**DON'T GO INTO
THE MOUNTAINS!**"

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR
STORY, BUT NOTHING
CAN STOP US... NEITHER
THE TALE OF A YOUNG
MAN NOR THAT OF AN
OLD ONE!"



SHORTLY AFTER, A LONE FIGURE IN
THE TOWER THAT OVERLOOKS THE
WINDING MOUNTAIN ROAD... WATCHES...
HIS SHADY EYES GLISTEN...

"HA! A CARAVAN!
FOOD AND DRINK
WILL TEMPT
THEM AND MY...
OH... HEAVEN!
NEEDS RE-
PLACEMENTS...
YES, THEY'LL
BE TIRED AND
THIRSTY..."



"HOLD THESE MEN'S HANDS AND GO
THE OLD MAN THE HONOR OF
YOUR COMPANY... I HAVE FOOD
FOR THE HUNGRY AND DRINK
FOR THE THIRSTY..."

"OUT OF OUR
PATH, EVIL
ONE!"



DISDAINING TEMPTATION THE
CARAVAN RIDES ON...

"SO... SO YOU ARE ABOVE
TEMPTATION! SOMEONE
MAY HAVE WARNED YOU
AGAINST ME, BUT BY
YOUR ACTIONS I AM
WARNED AGAINST YOU!
YOU ARE DANGEROUS
TO ME... AND I
SHALL REMEMBER
THAT!"





ROUTE TO CHINA
 TRIPS WHILE LIVING IN CHINA
 ROUTE BACK TO VENICE

ROUTE of the TRAVELS
of
Marco Polo



ON FOOT... ON HORSE... AND CAMEL... THEY CONTINUE THEIR JOURNEY... PLUNGING EVER ONWARD... DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE HEART OF THE LUSH ENCHANTMENT THAT IS ASIA... THE FIRST SIGN OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO DRIVE INTO THE REMOVED SECRETS AND RIDDLES OF THE ORIENT.

GHOST TOWN...
THE BROKEN SKELETON OF
A FORGOTTEN CIVILIZATION...
TOO OLD EVEN TO BE FOUND
IN THE WRITTEN ANNALS
OF MAN...

FISH IN THE COOL
MOUNTAINS THEY
PASS GIANT LIONS...

THIS VILLAGE, MY SON,
WAS DESERTED BY ITS PEOPLE
WHEN LAWLESS MARAUDERS
RAIDED IT ONE DAY. THE
PEOPLE HAVE NEVER
RETURNED...

IT'S A
PHANTOM
VILLAGE!

PERHAPS IT
WOULD BE WISE
TO KILL THEM,
FATHER, BEFORE
THEY ATTACK US!

IN NATURE,
BARRID,
NOTHING
DISTURBS
THAT IS
NOT FIRST
DISTURBED.
NOT EVEN
LIONS.

HOW CAN THEY
POSSIBLY WORK
IN THIS INTENSE
HEAT?

A SITE WHERE ONCE
FOUNDED THE TIDES
OF THE OCEAN...
NOW SAND AND
SALT MINES...

TO LIVE MAN WILL
SUFFER HEAT OR
COLD. SALT IS
NECESSARY FOR
LIFE... AND THESE
MEN HAVE CHOSEN
SALT MINING TO
EARN THEIR BREAD.

THE FABULOUS SALASHAN...
HOME OF PRICELESS GEMS...

UNCLE, YOU ARE WELL
INFORMED ON
JEWELS. WHAT ARE
THESE THAT
BRATTLE SO?

CHILD, MY
NEPHEW, YOU SEE,
THE KING OWNS
ALL THE MINES
AND PERHAPS
THE RIGHTS OF
ONLY SUCH JEWELS
HE NEEDS OR
DESIRES TO SELL.
THUS THERE ARE
POWER KINGS
AND WORTH A
FORTUNE WHEN
SOLD!



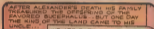
ONE EVENING AS THEY REST IN BALASHAN

HOW GLAD I AM THAT I LEFT VENICE TO BE WITH YOU NOW, RATHER THE STORIES I HAVE HEARD THE NIGHTS I'VE SOON HAVE BEEN WORTH ALL THE DANGERS WE FACED BUT LOOK! I WONDER WHY ALL THE HORSES BEAR THE SAME MARKINGS?



BECAUSE MARCO, THE FORERUNNER OF THIS STRAIN OF SPEED WAS THE FAVORITE MOUNT OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

ONWARD, SUCEPHALUS! ONWARD, PITHELL MOUNT!



AFTER ALEXANDER'S DEATH WE EARLY TREASURED THE OFFSPRING OF THE FAVORED SUCEPHALUS - BUT ONE DAY THE KING OF THE LAND CAME TO HIS UNCLE...

WE ARE BOTH OF ALEXANDER'S FAMILY UNCLE - BUT I AM KING OF THE LAND I DEMAND CUSTODY OF THE HORSES!

NO MY NEPHEW THEY WERE LEFT IN MY CARE AND THEY WILL REMAIN WITH ME WHILE THERE IS BREATH LEFT IN MY BODY!

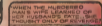


STOP! REMEMBER NEPHEW I AM YOUR ELDER!

I WANT THOSE HORSES! UNDERSTAND, I WANT THOSE HORSES!



IF MY BLOWS DON'T KILL YOU, CROWNING WILL, I SHALL HAVE ALEXANDER'S FAMOUS HORSES BY ANY PRICE!



WHEN THE MISERABLE MAN'S WIFE LEARNED OF HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, SHE THOUGHT ONLY OF REVENGE!

THE KING SHALL NEVER WIN THE ILL EARNED GAINS OF HIS COIN! I WILL DESTROY THE HORSES, ALL EXCEPT ONE. THIS HORSE I'LL RIDE TO THE HILLS!



AND FROM THIS ONE HORSE WAS DESCENDED THE TRIBE OF STEEDS YOU SO ADMIRE.

LATER... AS MARCO AND HIS PARTY APPROACH THE VAST DOMAIN OF KUBLAI KHAN, A STRANGE EVENT TAKES PLACE . . .



THUS, AS THEY ENTER THE OUTSIGHTS OF SHENGTU...

IN THE NAME OF KUBLAI KHAN, HIGH EMPEROR OF ALL CATHAY I WELCOME YOU O ILLUSTROUS TRAVELERS FROM ANAK.

THANK YOU, SIR, BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW WE WERE COMING?



WE HAVE MANY SCOUTS IN THIS GREAT LAND OF GULU. O MARCO POLO... AND RIDERS TRAVELING WITH GREAT SPEED. WE HAVE KNOWN OF YOUR COMING THESE FORTY DAYS!

RIDING THROUGH THE ORIENTAL WILDERNESS THAT WAS OLD SHENGTU, MARCO POLO AND HIS PARTY ARE FINALLY BLENDED INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE MIGHTY MAJESTIC KUBLAI KHAN!

WELCOME, OLD FRIEND, WISDOM AND MY WISDOM ARE AT YOUR DISPOSAL...







IT DOES SEEM SO BUT OUR GUEST IS SO FULL OF THE UNBELIEVABLE.

AND OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND ELEGANT. ALSO PRINCESS... LIKE YOU...



SUDDENLY A BREATHLESS RIDER BURSTS INTO THE ROOM AND THROWS HIMSELF AT THE FEET OF KHAN, HOLDING FORTH A ROLLED SCROLL...

GREETINGS, HONORED KHAN... I AM THE UNWORTHY Bearer OF A MESSAGE OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE...



SO MY ENEMIES TO THE WEST ARE ON THE MOVE AGAIN! THIS TIME THEY HAVE RECRUITED A WILY SCOUNDREL WHO CALLS HIMSELF THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN. I SHALL RIDE WITH MY TROOPS IN THE MORNING.



I WOULD GO WITH YOU, O KHAN, TO DO BATTLE AGAINST THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN. HE NARROWLY ESCAPED HIS WILES. I KNOW THE COUNTRY WELL AND COULD SERVE YOU IN GODD STEAD.



I ADMIRE YOUR COURAGE, MARCO POLO. YOU MAY COME WITH ME.

AH, THIS IS THE KING OF DINE MOUTH I WOULD HAVE AS MY SON-IN-LAW.



IN THE DIM LIGHT OF THE APPROACHING DAWN...

GOOD LUCK, MARCO POLO. BE SURE YOU RETURN WITH MY FATHERS. I WOULD KNOW YOU BETTER.

NEVER FEAR. BRAGGARTS PRINCESS, I WILL BE BACK.

EVEN AS MARCO IS RIDING TO BATTLE, JEALOUSY STALKS HIS PATH. . . THE JEALOUSY OF WEARISOME MEN WHO NOTE HOW HIGH HE STANDS IN THE KHAN'S FAVOR.

I AM THE KHAN'S SON, YET A STRANGER. . . A FOREIGNER, SOME BELIEVE ME, I DO NOT LIKE THIS.

AND I DO NOT BLAME YOU, CHINGHSI. HE MIGHT TAKE YOUR PLACE IN YOUR FATHER'S HEART.



THEN WE MUST GET RID OF HIM. I WILL SEEK A PLAN. YOU DO LIKEWISSE, O FRIEND OF MY HAPPY CHILDHOOD.



SUDDENLY... A SCOUT SETS UP THE SPINE-COLLING CRY... "ENEMY SIGHTED!"

RIDE ON, O WARRIORS OF CATHAY, RIDE TO VICTORY!



BUT AT THAT MOMENT. . .

SON, YOUR FACE WEARS A CLOUD OF ENVY, FOR IF ANYONE WERE TO BE A VICTIM OF YOUR JEALOUS BANE... I WOULD HAVE YOU KILLED THOUGH YOU ARE MY MOST PRECIOUS SON.



IN THE FIRST WAVE OF MOUNTED FIGHTERS, RIDE HAND-PICKED, BULL-BULLY TRAINED ARCHERS... MOBILE MACHINE GUNNERS OF THEIR DAY.







PARSON HE SAYS, BUT WHEAT I MAKE A SUGGESTION? I KNOW THIS CASTLE. IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN STONES ALONE TO BOMB IT.

WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, BOY?



HAVE SOME OF YOUR MEN REBUILD THE BRIDGE... LET ME HAVE A GROUP OF MEN TO HELP ME BUILD A WEAPON WHICH I BELIEVE WILL DESTROY THE CASTLE WALLS.

IT SHALL BE AS YOU SAY, MARCO. SOMETIMES THE NOVICE HAS LESSONS FOR THE EXPERT.



GOOD WORK, MEN. THE CATAPULT IS ALMOST FINISHED.



FINALLY THE BRIDGE IS BUILT AND THE HUGE CATAPULT IS DRAGGED BEFORE THE WALLS.. THEN..

CATCH THOSE STONES WELL! NOW...



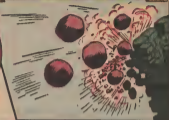
FIRE!



HERE IS
THE
CATAPULT
MARCUS
WAS
BUILT...



OVER AND OVER THE GIANT ROCKS
ARE HURLED AGAINST THE WAVERING
CASTLE WALLS.



IT'S BROKEN!
ROCK THROUGH!
PERFECT THE
ENEMY TO
OURS!



UNABLE TO STAND THE FURIOUS ON-
SLAUGHT OF KULAI KHAN AND HIS
BADDY WARRIORS THE ENEMY IS
SOON SLEAVED... AND...

NO... NO... DON'T
KILL ME...
MERCY!



I... I... SEE YOU
GREAT KHAN...
SPARE ME...
I'M AN OLD
MAN...

ONLY THOSE WHO
SPARE SHALL BE
SPARED. YOU ARE
ONE OF
CRIMINALS.
NO... YOU DIE
BEFORE AN
OTHER SUN
RISES!

... AND THIS THE OLD MAN OF THE
MOUNTAIN MEETS HIS DOOM...



VICTORIOUS AND JUBILANT, THE WARRIORS OF KUBLAI KHAN FINALLY RIDE BACK THROUGH THE WALLS OF SHEN-TU, BACK THROUGH THE PALACE GATES OF THEIR EMPEROR...

SHE CHEERS NOT ONLY TO YOUR OWN VALIANT SOLDIERS, O PEOPLE OF CATHAY, BUT ALSO TO A FOESMEN WHO FIGHT BRAVELY WITH OUR TROOPS... MARCO POLO.



ISN'T THE YOUNG FOESMEN HANDSOME, LOTUS PLUM?

IT SEEMS TO ME, PRINCESS THAT THE LIGHT OF LOVE SHINES FROM YOUR EYES.



BUT THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE NOT SO HAPPY TO SEE MARCO POLO... ALIVE...

SOME DAY WE SHALL SEEK REVENGE ON THAT GLOYSOMEN FoesMEn... SOMEDAY...



LATER, THE VICTORY BANQUET AND MARCO MEETS PRINCESS SILKIE BELLS AGAIN...

WE COME BACK, MARCO POLO I THOUGHT MUCH OF YOU... I AM HAPPY YOU RETURNED... SAFE.

THANK YOU, KING PRINCESS... YOU HAVE GROWN MORE BEAUTIFUL IT SEEMS...



SHORTLY AFTER...

SIRE, I LOVE YOUR DAUGHTER DEARLY AND WOULD HER TO WIFE. I ASK FOR HER HAND IN MARRIAGE.

I WELCOME YOU AS MY SON-IN-LAW, MARCO. BUT TELL ME... WHY DID YOU WAIT SO LONG?



I PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE. MAY YOU KNOW ONLY HAPPINESS.





OUT AT THAT MOMENT. . .



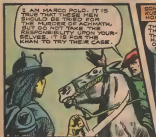
KUBLAI KHAN'S
TROOPS ARRIVE!

THEY ARE
MURDERERS,
KILL THEM ON
THE SPOT!



WAIT!

I AM MARCO POLO. IT IS
TRUE THAT THESE MEN
SHOULD BE TRIED FOR
THE MURDER OF ACHMATH,
BUT DO NOT TAKE THE
RESPONSIBILITY UPON YOUR-
SELVES. IT IS FOR THE
KHAN TO TRY THEIR CASE.



SOME WEEKS LATER, AT THE COURT OF
KUBLAI KHAN, POLO REVEALS THE DIS-
HONEST DEALINGS OF ACHMATH. . .

THANK YOU MARCO, FOR
THE ENLIGHTENMENT.
THE KILLERS OF ACHMATH
HAVE SO THEIR COUNTRY
OF A TRAITOR. THEY
SHALL SO FREE.



JUST THEN. . .

WHAT WOULD YOU,
O WORTHY
PHYSICIAN
OF OUR COURT?

I BRING THINGS.
SWORDWELL
THINGS FOR THE
GREAT KHAN
AND MARCO
POLO.



PRINCESS SILVER
BELLS DIED MOST
PEACEFULLY IN
HER SLUMBER
THIS DAY.



FROM THE ENTIRE EMPIRE OF MING COME SILENT TEARFUL MOURNERS



WITHIN THE PALACE, THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS SILVER BELLS LIES IN STATE... GOLD TRAPPINGS COVERED...



A THOUSAND HORSES JOIN FUNERAL MARCH. COUNTLESS THOUSANDS OF LOYAL SUBJECTS TRUDGE ON FOOT. A SAD DAY HAS GOTTEN ON CATNAY



AFTER THE BURIAL...

TODAY AND WENDEFOETH WE ARE JOINED TOGETHER AT MARCO. MY SON SORROW BRING OUR HEARTS FOR YOUR SORROW IS MINE

THANK YOU GREAT SUN. YOUR WORDS SOOTHE MY GRIEVING HEART





FATHER, WITH SILVER BELLS DEAD, THERE IS NOTHING LEFT IN LIFE FOR ME...

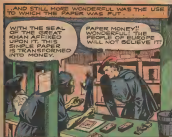
YOU ARE A MAN, MARCO, AND MUST LIVE LIKE ONE TRAVEL, LEARN MORE OF THIS GREAT LAND, FIND NEW INTERESTS ABOVE ALL, BURY YOUR GRIEVE IN WORK.



HEEDING HIS FATHER'S ADVICE, MARCO BEGINS A STUDY OF THE EAST, FOR THE BEST TUNE IN HIS LIFE, HE SEES HOW WOOD PULP IS TURNED INTO PAPER.

FIRST WE POUND THE INNER BARK OF THE MULBERRY TREES UNTIL IT FORMS A PULP.

FROM THAT PULP WE DO MAKE PAPER. BEHOLD!



...AND STILL MORE WONDERFUL WAS THE USE TO WHICH THE PAPER WAS PUT.

WITH THE SEAL OF THE GREAT KHAN APPLIED UPON IT, THIS SIMPLE PAPER IS TRANSFORMED INTO MONEY.

PAPER MONEY! WONDERFUL! THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE WILL NOT BELIEVE IT!



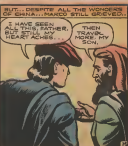
IN THE DAYS OF MARCO POLO, CHINA WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH TO USE PAPER MONEY. IT WASN'T UNTIL MANY CENTURIES LATER THAT THE EUROPEAN WORLD ADOPTED THE PRACTICE.



OTHER WONDERS TOO, DOES MARCO SEE...

WHAT WONDERFUL SHADE THESE TREES GIVE!

THEY ARE MORE USEFUL THAN JUST THAT, MARCO! THESE TREES WERE PLANTED BY ORDER OF KHAN SO THAT THE ROAD WOULD BE PLAINLY MARKED IN ALL WEATHER!



BUT... DESPITE ALL THE WONDERS OF CHINA... MARCO STILL GRIEVED...

I HAVE SEEN ALL THIS, FATHER, BUT STILL MY HEART ACHES...

THEN TRAVEL MORE, MY SON.

JUST AS MARCO IS ABOUT TO DEPART ON A JOURNEY, HE IS SUMMONED BEFORE KUBLAI KHAN . . .



SOME OF MY SEAFARERS HAVE BEEN WRECKED ON THE COAST OF JAPAN, MARCO. THE CANNIBALS WHO INHABIT THOSE ISLANDS HAVE PUT THEM TO DEATH. WOULD YOU LEAD AN EXPEDITION TO THE ISLANDS TO TEACH THESE PEOPLE A LESSON?

I WILL DO GLADLY THE TASK PERHAPS WILL HELP ME FORGET MY SORROW, KUBLAI KHAN.



ON THE TREACHEROUS CHINA SEA, MARCO AND HIS PARTY ARE GRAVELY THREATENED BY THE FURY OF AN UNEXPECTED STORM THAT TOSSES THEIR SMALL BOAT ABOUT MERCILESSLY. . .



AND, WITH THEIR GOAL IN SIGHT, THEY ARE SUDDENLY DASHED AGAINST THE HUGE, JAGGED COASTAL ROCKS. . .



THIS WAY, MEN! WE MUST SWIM OUR WAY THROUGH THE CHANNEL. KEEP YOUR COURAGE UP, WE'LL MAKE IT!



WE'VE BEEN FORTUNATE NOT ONLY BY SAVING OUR OWN LIVES BUT WE'VE ALSO SALVAGED OUR WEAPONS. THAT IS GOOD. NOW WE MUST TAKE TO THE HILLS AND HIDE. WE'LL TECK, THE JAPANESE, BUT WE MUST HASTEN. FOR OUR PRESENCE WILL SOON BE KNOWN.



MARCO WAS RIGHT. FOR EVEN AS HE SPEAKS, HOSTILE EYES ARE WATCHING THE SHIP-WRECKED CREW. . .

STRANGERS ON THE ISLAND! THE EMPEROR MUST KNOW OF THIS!

I'LL SPREAD THE NEWS!

AND... THE NEXT DAY...

YOU COME IN TIME OF MIGHTY EMPEROR, THEY JUST MOVE TO HIDE. I WATCH!

WE CAN SEE THEM FROM HERE. YOU TWO RUN AHEAD, SAY YOU WANT TO BE FRIENDS. WE WILL MOVE FROM BEHIND AND USE OUR SWORDS ON THEIR STUPID NECKS!

THAT'S A WISE PLAN, EMPEROR. WE GO!

STRANGERS! HAL! WE WISH TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOU!

WHY DO THEY NOT ANSWER?

MEANWHILE...

DEATH TO YOU, FOUL STRANGERS!

EMPTY! WE'VE BEEN TRICKED! THEY'VE GONE!

BUT AT THAT VERY MOMENT, MARCO ATTACKS. . .

MAKE SHORT WORK OF THEM, MEN! THEN RUN FOR THEIR BOATS WE CAN USE IT!



AS THE KHAN'S
WARRIORS
CLIMB INTO
BOAT JAPANESE
CANNIBALS
RACE AFTER
THEM...

HERE THEY COME! MIMI
SHOW THEM HOW
WARRIORS OF KUBLAI
KHAN CAN FIGHT!



THEY STEAL OUR
BOAT, AND NOW
THEY ARE SHOOTING
US DOWN FROM
ITS PROTECTION!



LOOK! A NOTE!
THEY DARE TO
SEND US A
NOTE!

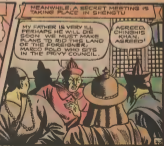


IT IS A WARNING! LISTEN!
THEY SAY IF WE DOUBT
THE KHAN'S WARRIORS
AGAIN, THEY WILL COME
TO THE ISLAND OF JAPAN
IN GREAT FORCE AND
LAY IT TO WASTE!



AND A PROFITIOUS WIND CARRIES THE
BRAVE WARRIORS BACK TO CHINA

I HAVE SEEN MANY
STRANGE PEOPLE,
BUT NEVER HAVE I
HATED ANY - EXCEPT
THESE SNEAKY MEN
OF JAPAN.



MEANWHILE, A SECRET MEETING IS
TAKING PLACE IN SHENGTU

MY FATHER IS VERY ILL,
PERHAPS HE WILL DIE
SOON. WE MUST MAKE
PLANS TO BID THE LAND
OF THE FOREIGNERS
DE THE FOREIGNERS.
MARCH SOLD WHO GETS
IN THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

AGREED,
CHINGHS
KHAN,
AGREED!



SO... ONCE MORE MARCO POLO SETS OUT ON A NEW ADVENTURE...

FEAR NOT PRINCESS,
THE VOYAGE SHALL BE
MADE IN YOUR TRUSTY
BOAT AND WE SHALL
PROTECT YOU FROM
ALL HARM.

BUT UNKNOWN TO MARCO POLO,
EVIL IS AFOOT.

YOU HAVE ENOUGH
MEN MARCO AS I
KNOW AS YOU LEARN
OF MY FATHER'S
DEATH... SLAY THE
POLO!

IT WILL
BE DONE
CHIEFS

THIS IS YOUR LAST
VOYAGE, MARCO
POLO. ALL OF THE
HONORS MY FATHER
SHOULD HAVE
BEEN GIVEN ON ME
HAVE BEEN GIVEN
YOU. BUT NOW
YOUR MURDER, THEY
SHALL BE MINE!

MANY NEW SIGHTS DO MARCO AND HIS PARTY BEHOLD ON THIS
NEW VOYAGE.

INDO-CHINA

SEE PRINCESS,
HOW THE ELEPHANT
AIDS MAN IN HIS
WORK HERE

CEYLON

WHAT A
MAJESTIC
MOUNTAIN
THIS IS
MARCO
POLO!

SUMATRA

OUR HUNT IS
SUCCESSFUL
THE RHINOCEROS
IS DEAD!

AT LAST, THE WEARY TRAVELERS
ARRIVE IN PERSIA . . .



"IN THE NAME OF THE
KHAN OF PERSIA,
I WELCOME YOU
TO OUR LAND,
YET IT IS WITH
SAD NEWS I MUST
MAKE MY GREETING.
THE GREAT KHAN
IS DEAD!"

BUT SOME MEMBERS OF THE
EXPEDITION GREET THE SAD
NEWS WITH JOY IN THEIR
TREACHEROUS HEARTS . . .



"THE HOUR TO
STRIKE HAS
ARRIVED AT
DAWN. WE
MURDER ALL
THREE
POLOS!"

THAT NIGHT, IN THE POLO TENT . . .



"WE ARE IN
GRAVE
DANGER.
WE WILL
DIE TO-
NIGHT!"

"SOMEONE IS WATCHING
THE TENT RATHER. I
SHALL TAKE CARE OF
HIM BEFORE WE
LEAVE. HE MAY BE
THREE TO FIVE. THE
CONSPIRATORS DO
JUST SUCH A MOVE!"



"THERE! NOW YOU
WILL NEVER BE
ABLE TO WARN
THE OTHERS."

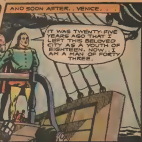
AT DAWN, THE CONSPIRATORS
STEAL TO THE POLO TENT TO
KIDNAP . . .



"THE SPY IS
SECURE. TELL
MORNING LET
US HURRY!"

"GONE!! LOOK, A NOTE
IT SAYS, 'THANK YOU FOR
YOUR HOSPITALITY, CON-
SPIRATORS. BUT WE ARE
NOT YET READY TO DIE.
SO GOODBYE, POLO.'"







SUDDENLY...

SKINORI... I HAVE BEEN SENT BY THE DUKE... WITH A MESSAGE... THERE IS WAR! WAR WITH GENOA!

WAR! VENICE IS AT WAR!

LATER...

I CAME AS SOON AS I HEARD OF THE WAR. I HAVE TRAVELED MUCH AND KNOW THE WAYS OF THE SEA. I WISH TO VOLUNTEER.

GOOD... WE NEED CAPTAINS FOR OUR SHIPS. BUT I MUST WARN YOU... WE WERE NOT EXPECTING WAR, AND WE ARE FAR FROM PREPARED.



FINALLY, THE FLEET OF VENICE RECEIVES ORDERS TO MOVE...



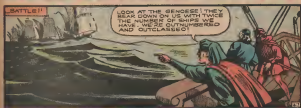
EVEN THE ELEMENTS SEEM TO BE BATTLING THE GALLANT LITTLE FLEET...

ANOTHER BALE OF FOOD WASHED OVERBOARD. I MUST TRY... TO SAVE IT!

AND... AFTER THE STORM...

THE MEN ARE ILL, SIR, AND WE LOST OUR WATER IN THE STORM. HOW CAN WE GO ON?

ALL VENICE DEPENDS ON US. WE CAN'T TURN BACK!



BATTLE!

LOOK AT THE GENOISE! THEY BEAR DOWN ON US WITH TWICE THE NUMBER OF SHIPS WE HAVE. WE'RE OUTHUMBERED AND OUTCLASSED!

FROM THE DECKS OF THE GENEESE SHIPS...

'T'WILL BE A WARM RECEPTION FOR OUR VENETIAN FRIENDS...

AYE... AND THEY'LL BE WASHED TO THE BOTTOM OF THEIR HEARTS... AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA!

HURRY! BORN BUCKET BRAGGERS TO COUSE THE FLAMES!

AYE AYE, SIR! ALREADY ONE OF OUR SHIPS IS IN GREAT TROUBLE!

MEN OF VENICE! SAVE US 'ERE WE'RE WE'RE!

SIRIOR POLO WE ARE INDEED LOST! NOW TWO GENEESE SHIPS ARE BEING DOWN ON US!

DEATH TO THE VENETIANS!

WAVE VENICE OFF THE FACE OF THE MAP!





MY ARMS ARE SO HEAVY I CAN BARELY MOVE THEM!

HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH, VENETIAN?

WE ARE OVERWHELMED!

DO NOT DESPAIR, FRIENDS! DRIVE THEM BACK INTO THE SEA!



DESPITE THE VALOR OF MARCO POLO AND HIS MEN, THEY ARE PRESSED BACK . . .

SURRENDER, MARCO POLO, OR MY SWORD PERCEES YOUR HEART!



REFUSING TO SURRENDER, MARCO POLO CLIMBS THE MAST . . .



CHOP DOWN THE MAST AND BRING THAT WERELT TO THE DECK! HIS HARD FIGHT SHOULD EARN HIM MANY YEARS IN A DUNGEON!



"THERE HE GOES! OBEY HIM, MEN! BEFORE HE REACHES! HE IS OUR POISONER! THE FRENCH MARCO POLO, THE EGG WHO BOASTS OF HAVING BEEN TO CHINA, AT THE COURT OF KURLAI KHAN!"

"THAT IS MY STORY TO THE TIME I WAS THROWN INTO A BRASSER DUNGEON," SIGNED *Marco Polo*

"IT IS GOOD THAT I HAVE WRITTEN THIS STORY, NOW LET THEM COUNT. THE FUTURE SHALL PROVE I HAVE SPOKEN TRUTHFULLY."



AND HERE ENDS THE STORY OF MARCO POLO.

SUDDENLY A PRISON GUARD APPROACHES.

STOP YOUR WRITING, LIAR! WHAT WERE IT YOU SAID ABOUT BLACK STONES THAT BURN LIKE WOOD?"

THEY ARE NOT STONES THE CHINESE CALL THEM COAL.

BELIEVE THIS OR NOT GUARD, BUT BY BURNING WHAT IS KNOWN AS KINDLING WOOD, THE CHINESE HEAT THE BLACK OBJECTS UNTIL THEY BURN, SOME-DAY WE TOO WILL USE COAL!"



EVERY DAY I COME HERE AND EVERY DAY HE TELLS ME A FUNNY STORY COAL HA-HA, A FUNNY WORD AND A FUNNY STORY! IMAGINE BURNING BLACK STONES?"



IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, MUCH OF WHAT MARCO POLO TOLD WAS NOT BELIEVED EVEN HIS OWN FAMILY DOUBTED HIM. BUT IN MODERN TIMES, EXPLORES HAVE RETRACED MARCO POLO'S ROUTE AND FOUND HIS STORY ACCURATE. THE WORLD HAILS THE BRAVE MAN THE HONEST MAN, THE FIRST WEST-ERNER TO LEARN OF COAL AND HUNDREDS OF OTHER EVERY DAY CONCEPTS...

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