

Civilization 103

Chapter 103 - The End of 1482 - Discovery of Congo

"When we return, if you fellows go out again, be sure to call me along!"

"Sure, Brother Bruno, as soon as you marry my sister, we'll be family. Then we can seek fortune together with the local tribes!" Paulo gave Bruno a brotherly hug.

"It's all in service to the Lord. May the merciful Holy Mother protect us!" Bruno made the sign of the cross again.

After discussing their plans for wealth, the atmosphere between them markedly warmed.

Bruno remembered something he had witnessed in the Capital City and decided to share it with his future brother-in-law.

"Some time ago, there was a gathering of foreigners near Sintra Palace."

&"Some time ago? The old king died, and a new king ascended the throne, right!" Paulo thought for a moment, recalling what other sailors had mentioned.

"Exactly. The noble King Afonso V had returned to the Lord's Kingdom, and the kind Joao II has just ascended the throne. Joao II is truly a great man like Prince Enrique, and this voyage is sponsored by

him. The honorable Captain Diogo Cao is under the will of the Pope and the king, seeking a route to the East, to find the powerful Kingdom of Prester John, and to attack the evil Ottoman people."

A look of admiration for the heroes and the king filled Bruno's face.

"Damn it! It's fine to look for Prester John, I've heard from the priests it's a land flowing with milk and honey. But only a fool would go back and fight fiercely with the Ottomans. Ever since we encountered the Ottomans in North Africa, I never want to see them again in my life." Paulo's fierce face showed uncontrollable dread.

"The Ottomans are that formidable? We Portuguese have never feared our enemies, our kingdom's independence comes from fearless battles!" Bruno was obviously unconvinced.

"Let me put it this way, killing us is as easy for the Ottoman army as it is for us to kill these local tribes. Endless cavalry, continuous infantry, thousands of cannons, and even new matchlock guns. If our ships weren't fast, we would have stayed on the shores of North Africa." Paulo sighed, sincerely acknowledging the strength of the Ottomans.

"Sigh, but to be honest, these local tribes are not easy to deal with either. Iron weapons, war elephants, and cavalry, not to mention the terrifying jungle and diseases. I don't know what happens, but once you engage them, men just disappear. If only we could encounter tribes richer and more fragile than these locals!"

"Damn it! Then we could send them all to Hell, burn them clean with fire, and then have a blast plundering!"

Paulo's eyes were filled with a longing for wealth. As for the lives of the pagans, devout believers only watch their suffering and laugh out loud!

Bruno sneered, thinking Paulo lacked a heroic spirit. He quickly shifted the topic: "With the kind Joao II's ascension, the Spaniards also sent an envoy to congratulate him."

"Damn, those Castilians are like bulls always in heat. The Moors won't last much longer; the tribunals in Madrid have been prepared. This bull can't find another target and is now salivating over our kingdom. Damn them! They're our biggest threat!"

"Sigh, Castile and the Kingdom of Aragon have long merged, and now they've devised a new name, Spain, España, a kingdom rich with wealth and minerals." Bruno's nobility allowed him access to more knowledge.

"Damn it, Fuck the Spaniards, the sheep of Spain!"

"Lord... Nobility and commoners have always been two completely different breeds, innately destined from their very bloodlines," Bruno thought somberly.

Thanks to the legacy of Prince Enrique, there were always a large number of minor nobility among the Portuguese explorers. In fact, at this time, Portuguese fleets were the most subtle and civilized among the navies of the world. It was hard for future generations to imagine the hellish scenes of Spanish exploration parties, purely made up of societal riffraff.

No Portuguese could ever ignore the threat from Spain, and cursing Spain was a common delight. After whispering insults for a while, Bruno continued to share some novel observations.

"After the merciful Joao II ascended the throne, a rogue sailor named Columbus came from the City-State. This fellow, hearing the King supported navigation, repeatedly sought an audience with the King, claiming he wanted to sail westward to reach India!"

"Ha, he must have had too much wine, spouting nothing but demonic lies. Columbus? Doesn't even have a surname, Fodesse! And he's a commoner?" Although he had never met Columbus, that didn't stop Paulo from despising the people of the City-State.

"Right. It's said he's the son of a wool textile worker from the City-State, a rogue who muddled through many years aboard ships, a captain without a ship, a smuggler without merchandise. He apparently heard from somewhere that the world is round, and now he wants the King to fund him to voyage deep into the Atlantic, seeking passages to India and China."

Bruno joked, mocking this City-State rogue, which was one source of entertainment in their lives.

"Ha, Fodesse! People from the City-State are Satan worshippers who sold their souls to the devil. They hoard food, drive down prices, and practice usury everywhere! They deserve to be sent to the stake by a religious tribunal!"

Bruno agreed. "The man is just a braggart rogue. We Portuguese are the silent doers, the least fond of these incessant prattlers. The nobility in Sintra Palace didn't even pay him any heed, and sent him packing right away!"

Paulo laughed too, striking the reflective pose of a captain gazing at the sea and sky, murmuring softly.

"Fodesse! Tenho saudades! I miss you! Where are you, King Joao?"

Just then, a sailor atop the mast suddenly shouted loudly, "The water ahead has changed color, there's a freshwater rivermouth!"

The melancholy as a sculpture Diogo Cao suddenly sprang to life, "Turn the fleet to the left, toward the coast! Bosun, distribute the weapons! All sailors, prepare for battle!"

Bruno and Paulo immediately shut up, both noble and common sailors quickly demonstrating their seasoned skills.

They took up cutlasses, steel crossbows, and matchlock guns, grabbing the ropes between ships, their faces filled with intense intent to kill, ready for everything.

Less than two hours later, a mighty Long River appeared before everyone. The river was a whopping ten kilometers wide, stretching beyond sight. It flowed powerfully from the depths of the jungle, surging into the sea. At the river's end was a vast floodplain, with sparse wisps of cooking smoke rising from distant villages.

"Lord! Such a huge river! What river is this? Have you heard any related rumors?" Captain Diogo Cao stepped forward briskly, grabbing the translator from the Gold Coast who had converted to the Lord years earlier, asking urgently and seriously.

The dark-skinned native translator struggled to recall, then stuttered a response in his newly learned Portuguese.

"A particularly large and long river, the legendary Zaire River only from distant legends! Nzadi Kongo!"