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Tech 201 – Midterm #1 Take-Home Question

Having just escaped the Loch Ness monster by the narrowest of margins, all of the crewmen were a bit uneasy. Columbus himself couldn’t shake the feeling that they weren’t in the clear yet. So it wasn’t much of a surprise to them when another sea serpent struck the Santa Maria late at night only three days later. All of the men rushed to the deck and haphazardly slashed at the serpent as it rose up out of the water next to them. Their blows didn’t seem to do much damage, but it seemed to dissuade the foul beast from continuing its attack. Within 20 minutes it had retreated back into the black abyss of the ocean.

Many days passed without another incident. Aside from the occasional fight among crewmen, life on the three ships was very boring. Some of the men on the Niña and Pinta started complaining about their lack of rations. The Santa Maria, the ship carrying Columbus, was clearly favored and had much heartier rations than the other two. Day by day, the men on the other ships got more and more upset until one day they mutinied. After pulling abreast with the Santa Maria, men from the Niña and Pinta put out a plank to connect their ships with the Santa Maria and stormed onto the ship. Before Columbus knew what was happening, his men had him bound and were deciding whether or not they should throw him overboard.

Diego de Arana was appointed by the men as their new captain and Columbus’s fate was up to him. After a lengthy discussion with the others, he decided that Columbus’s knowledge of the waters was valuable enough to keep him alive. Columbus was thrown in the small ice-cellar, which had long been free of ice. Whenever his knowledge of the waters and stars was needed, Columbus was pulled from his small confines, put in shackles, and marched up on deck. It wasn’t until they landed at the New World that he was allowed to walk freely without chains. By then the men didn’t care if Columbus ran away – they had made it to their destination and could find their way back without him.

The Indians that greeted them were a lot more hostile than they had anticipated. Within the first week, their landing camp had already been attacked three times and many of the men were injured. Luckily, they had been able to capture a prisoner: a woman that called herself Pocahontas. She couldn’t speak English, but probably wouldn’t have said much even if she could. Nearly every time she was untied for eating she tried to run away or call for help. Eventually the sailors had no choice but to throw her in the same ice-cellar that had imprisoned Columbus on the way to America.

One day ten scouts were sent into the woods to find out how many Indians there were and when they were planning on attacking. Only a few of those scouts made it back to camp – the rest were presumed to have been taken or killed by the Indians. That very night, the Indians ambushed the crew’s camp and killed five more men. Angry and defeated, the crew decided to set sail again and land at another point along the shore. They hoped to get away from the savages that had decimated them.

After sailing south for three days, the men reached a point where the land seemed to stop. They decided to stop and explore there. Leaving the ship anchored in the harbor, they cautiously rowed to shore with their crossbows at the ready. After a full day of trekking around the land, they deemed it safe. No savages were in sight and the animals posed little threat to them. Without returning to the ship for more supplies, they set up camp on the shore and left one man to stay watch. Many of them slept soundly for the first night in nearly three years. In the morning they started gathering strange fruit that was extremely delicious to them…