

Adventures on the American Frontier

EXPLORERS in a NEW WORLD

Part Two

The Search for the Seven Cities of Gold



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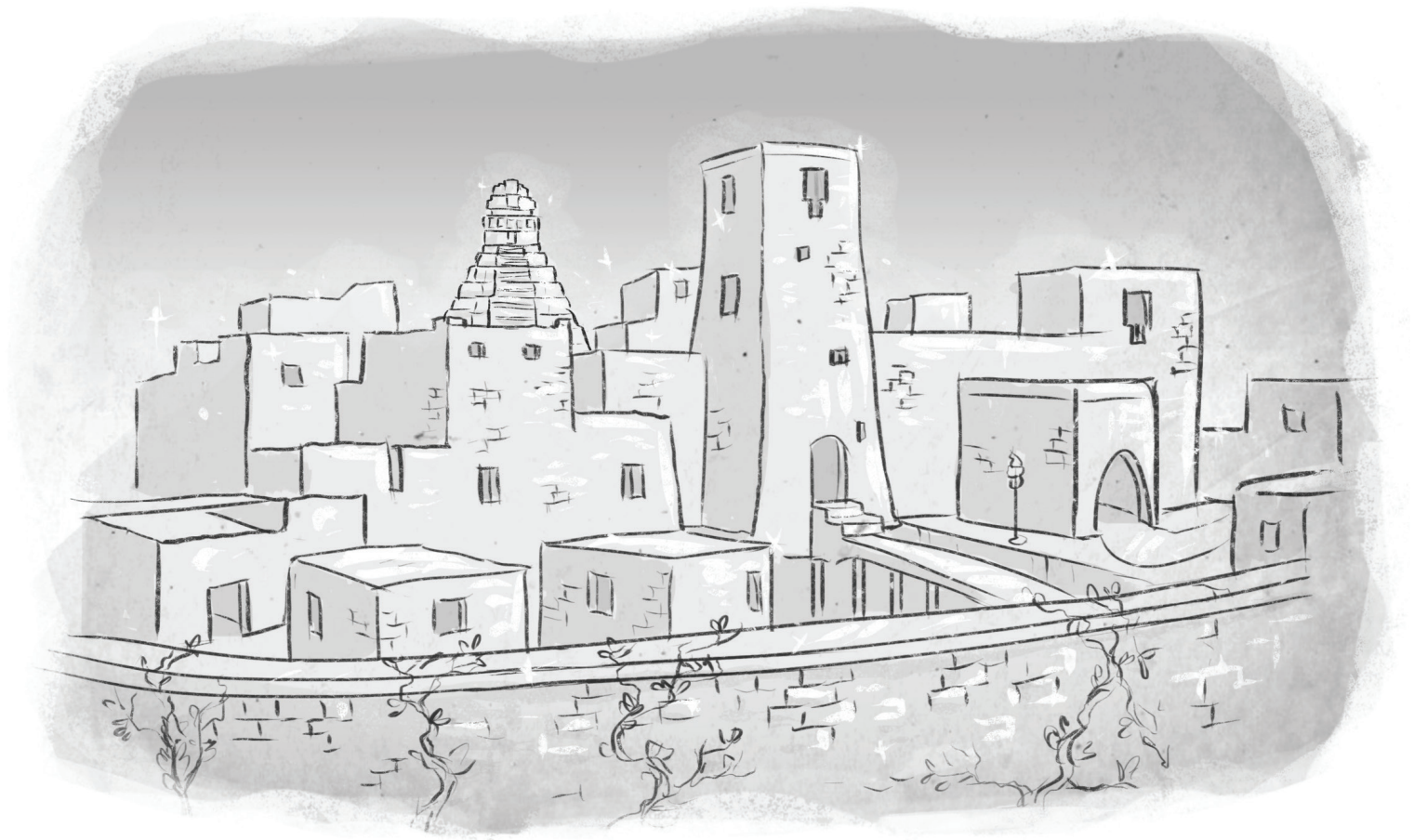


A tall North African man, dressed in the skins and feathers of a Native American, and a small Spaniard, in the brown robe of a monk, stood before the governor of part of New Spain, which is now Mexico.

The governor, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, had an eager look in his eyes as he spoke. "I have heard stories of great cities that sparkled from the gold in their walls. Have you seen these cities, Estevan?"

The African nodded. "I have."





“I, too, saw them from afar,” said the
monk, Friar Marcos. He and Estevan had



been among a group of shipwrecked men who had wandered in the valley of the Rio Grande for several years.

Coronado was pleased. "They must be the Seven Cities of Cibola," he said. Every Spaniard had heard of the wonderful cities, but no one knew where Cibola was or who had first told of its seven cities. Coronado pictured the cities as having walls and streets of gold set with gems. Inside the buildings, there would be chests of riches waiting for him and his men to take.

His fist struck the table. He would go,
and these two would show him the way!
But to do that, he must have the help of
Pedro de Mendoza, the ruler of New Spain.

“You two will take another journey,”
he said. “I must have more reports for
Mendoza.”

A worried look crossed Friar Marcos’s
face. “Sir, there are great dangers—”

“I’ll send soldiers with you,” Coronado
said. He did not understand the dangers
that the friar and Estevan would face.



So Estevan and Friar Marcos, with a few Native American guides and some soldiers, were soon on their way to Cibola, which was supposed to be to the north of New Spain. It was the year 1539.

When they reached a place in what is now southern Arizona, Friar Marcos called the men together. "From here there are many ways we could go," he said. "We should split up. Some of us should go one way, and some another. I'll stay here to wait for your reports."