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THEY FIND THAT POPE CLEMENT IV IS DEAD ~~≠~~MARCO POLO
P P carrying the letters & the tablet of gold.¹ And when they had ridden together some way
VA P VB & travelled twenty days marches then the Tartar baron Cogatal who went as messenger with
P TA the two brothers fell very ill² & could not pursue the way & stayed at a city which was
VB named Alau. And when Master Nicolau & Master Mafeu saw the baron their companion,
VB FB that he was ill[and]through the illness could ride no farther, after many days it seemed to
P the two for the best to leave him, & so by his wish and by the advice of many, they left him &
P set themselves on the way[&]pursued the journey which they had begun: & I tell you that
R they were received with the greatest kindness & served & honoured in all places where
FB R P they went with all that they needed & could order & escorts were given them because of the
FB P tablet of gold of the lord's authority which they had. And what shall I tell you about it?
V VB L They rode by their days marches until one day they were come sound to Laias a city on the
VA sea in Lesser Armenie; & I tell you that they work hard to go there from the land where
FB L the great Kaan was to Laias in three whole years.³ And this happened because they were
VB VB FB not always able to ride for the bad weather, for the great cold, & for the snows & ice &
FB great rains which sometimes fell & for the rivers which were swollen that they found
P FB VB in many places, which they could not cross, & for the difficulties of the road, which were the
VA causes of their long delay in reaching Laias.

·10·

VA **H**OW THE TWO BROTHERS CAME TO THE CITY OF ACRE. And from Laias, when
V they had arrived there & stayed a short time, they went on board a ship & set out
R V VA by sea & go off to Acre & in the space of many days arrive there in the middle
of the month of April in the 1260⁴ year from the incarnation of Jesus Christ, & find
that Master the Apostle was dead. And when Master Nicolau and Master Mafeu have
V P P found that the Apostle who had Pope Clement III for name was lately dead, at which they
R were exceedingly grieved, they went to a learned clerk who [6b] was legate of that Pope for
V the Church of Rome in all the realm of Egipte, who was come to Acre to go to the holy
LT places, that is to Jerusalem. He was a man of great authority & influence there & was named
P V Teald of the Visconti of Plajence. They told him all the embassy for which the great
VB Kaan lord of the Tartars sends them to the Apostle. And when the legate had heard
V what the two brothers who were come from so far a land had told him he has great wonder
VB VB at it & very great pleasure, & it seems to him that this is a mission from which can come

¹ P: *quam qui defert deduci debet de loco ad locum a cunctis rectoribus terrarum eius imperio subiectarum cum omnia sua comitiua securus et quamdiu immorari uoluerint in ciuitate uel oppido debet illis de expensis & necessariis omnibus integraliter prouideri.*—repeating what has been said above. R. reproduces this passage slightly expanded at an earlier point.

² VL: "Cochobal fell ill and died on the way."

³ VB: *per anj do*

⁴ The true reading is probably 1269; cf. p. 25 above.