

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD^s THE OLD MAN ALAODIN
 name of Mulecte [18b] means to say a place where heretics stay, in the tongue of Saracens.¹ R
 And from the said place the men are called Mulebetici, that is heretics of their law, like Patarini R
 among the Christians. Now I shall tell you all his doings and the life this Old Man led V
 according as I Master Marc Pol heard it told by several men of these countries. FB FB
 Now they said that the Old Man was called in their language Alaodin and was with V P
 all the people over whom he ruled a follower of the law of Mahomet. He thought moreover of
 an unheard-of wickedness, that he should make men into bold murderers or swordsmen, who
 are commonly called assassins, by whose courage he might kill whoever he wished and be feared
 by all. He dwelled in a most noble valley shut in between two very high mountains V V P P
 where he had made them make the largest garden & the most beautiful that ever was V
 seen in this world. There are abundance and delight of all the good plants, flowers, and Z VA P
 fruits of the world, and trees which he had been able to find. And here he had made make R
 the most beautiful houses and the most beautiful palaces that ever were seen, of P
 wonderful variety, for they were all gilded and adorned in azure very well with all FB TA FB
 the fair things of the world, both with beasts and with birds, and the hangings all of TA R
 silk. And besides he had made them make in that garden many beautiful fountains V
 which corresponded on different sides of these palaces, & all these had little conduits there, R V
 for each one, through which ran that which they threw up; through some of which it was V R
 seen ran wine & through some milk & through some honey & through some the R
 clearest water. There were set to dwell ladies & damsels the most beautiful in the R
 world, who all knew very well how to play on all instruments & sing tunefully & VA Z Z
 sweetly dance better than other women of this world round these fountains, so that it Z Z V FB
 was a delight, & above all trained in making all the dalliance & allurements to men that can R
 be imagined. Their duty was to furnish the young men who were put there with all delights P
 & pleasures. There was plenty of garments, couches, food, & all things which can be desired.
 No sad thing was spoken of there, nor was it lawful to have time for anything but play, love,
 & pleasure. And these damsels most beautifully dressed in gold & silk were seen going sporting R
 continually through the garden & through the palaces; for the women who waited on them
 remained shut up & were never seen abroad in the air. And the Old Man made his
 men understand that in that garden was Paradise. And for this reason he had it FB
 made in such a way, that Mahomet in his time made the Saracens understand about Z
 it that those who did his will should all when they died go to Paradise where they would R V R
 find all the delights and pleasures of the world and will have there as many fair women

¹ de sarain This reading is certain, it cannot be desaram. L¹: sonat in lingua nostra Sarrain.
 V: muleze . . de saraxini L: de sarram The clause is omitted by TA,LT,VA,VB,P and
 curiously distorted by FG (FA: Et veult dire mulecte en francois.diex terrien.). See PN.