

NAIAN AND CAIDU PLOT AGAINST CUBLAI KAAAN ~~≠~~ MARCO POLO

VB V R his messengers very secretly to Caidu who was a very great lord and strong in the regions towards the great Turquie, and was nephew to the great Kaan, but was also a rebel against him and wished him great ill, because he was always afraid that the great Kaan would chastise him, & was cousin to Naian. He sends to him saying these words, that he was making himself ready with all his power, which was very great, to go upon the great Kaan his lord from the one side, and that he prayed him that he will also do his utmost and come from the other side upon the great Kaan, to rob him of the land and the rule when they came upon him with so great a force one from one side and the other from the other. And this Caidu, when he had heard this news which Naian<sup>1</sup> sent him, says that it pleases him well, and he thought indeed that now was the time to have his desire, and says that he will be well prepared to come to his help with his people at that time which they had planned, and will go upon the great Kaan. [34c] And you may know that this man really had power to make up and to put in the field 100000 horsemen. And what shall I tell you about it? These two barons, that is Naian and Caidu, determined the day that they wished to meet & having agreed together as secretly as they could went hastening to prepare themselves and make a great gathering of cavalry<sup>2</sup> and of men on foot to go upon the great Kaan. And they agreed together to meet in a certain plain with their armies that afterwards they might suddenly invade the king's lands together. Moreover Naian having assembled 400000 horsemen arrived at the appointed place and there waited the coming of king Caidu. But they could not do these things so secretly that it should not come to the ears of Cublai Kaan.

V HOW THE GREAT KAAAN GOES AGAINST NAIAN. And when the great Kaan knows this thing, how Naian was coming upon him with so great an army, he was not at all dismayed<sup>3</sup> at their conspiracy, but like a wise man and one of great valour he would not delay, and prepares himself with his people to oppose them very quickly, as one who was not afraid of them because they did contrary to right, and when his people were gathered he says that he will never wear crown nor hold land if he does not put these two Tartar lords who are traitors and disloyal to him to an evil death. And you may know that the great Kaan made all his preparation in twenty-two<sup>4</sup> days so secretly that none knew anything of it but those of his privy council.

<sup>1</sup> If FA, from which so many additions are here borrowed, represents (as it well may do) something like the original, the passage provides a good example of the way in which F was shortened, resulting in the reversal of the parts in the sentence "He sends to him saying . . .", and here in the accidental keeping of Naian in place of Caidu.

<sup>2</sup> TA<sup>3</sup>: di charri and, above, Mc for c<sup>m</sup>

<sup>3</sup> V: sono molto spaudentato and, just above, gaidin for Naian.

<sup>4</sup> .xxii. But .x ends a line, and xii. begins the next. FA: en.ij.jours ou en.xij. FB: en x.ou en xij.