

ROI DOR TENDS SHEEP FOR PRESTER JOHAN = MARCO POLO

R *surrounding the King of Gold they laid hand to sword and said to the king, either he*
 LT *will go with them immediately or they will put him to death. When the king saw*
 FB LT *it he was afraid and had great wonder at it and said to them, And how now can this*
 LT *be, fair sons, and what is it that you say? Why do you treat me thus, and where do you*
 LT FB *wish me to come? You shall come with us·willy nilly, say they, to our master the*
 V *Prester Johan, say they. And they told him that he should not be so rash as to send for*
help; that they would kill them and that then he would cause the death of his own people. And
if he came with them, truly he will have no harm and will not lose his kingdom. Then the King
of Gold made commandment to his sons and to his people that they should not come near him,
and left them that they should govern the kingdom until he returned.¹

FB VB V **H**OW THE PRESTER JOHAN MADE THEM TAKE THE KING OF GOLD. And
 when the King of Gold hears this name of Prester Johan, and saw that indeed
 he must go to the Prester Johan he has so great wrath that it wants but little
 LT that he does not die of grief, and he says to them, *Ab, good sons; have mercy, fair*
 FB FB *sons, for God's sake. Now have I not honoured you enough in my lodging and loved*
 LT LT *you, you know well, as my own sons? Yet you wish to put me into the hands of Prester*
 FB FB *Johan and of my mortal enemies. If you do this you will surely do great evil and very*
 LT VB *great villainy and great disloyalty. And they said that it must be so. And he prayed*
the knights rather to kill him. But when no prayer nor the reminder of his kindness availed
anything, he was forced to go with them; and being near the border of his land he was soon in
 R FB *the land of Prester Johan. And then they take him back again to their lord the Prester*
 R *Johan by force, while none of his men could help him ever. And when the Prester Johan*
 VB FB VB *hears of the taking of his enemy and sees him he has very great joy at it. He received him*
with terrible and threatening words reminding him of the benefits done and how much he had
 FB *been loved by him and loved and honoured above all the rest. And he tells him that he is ill*
 FB FB *come. The King of Gold he does not answer a word nor know what he ought to say*
 LT VB *about it, for the great fear which he had of him, but only begged for mercy confessing his*
 VB *fault. Then after many threatening words, while the King of Gold expected the sentence of*
 FB *death, the Prester Johan commands that this King of Gold be taken immediately and*
 VA VB *led outside and that they make him watch his flocks, that he might be lord in command*
 FB *only of sheep and other animals, and that he should be well guarded. And then the King of*
 R FB LT *Gold dressed in common clothes was taken and set to watch his flocks. And the Prester*
 VB V *Johan made them do this to him for despite of him and to insult and to show that*
he was nothing. And in that office the King of Gold stayed in very great misery·watching

¹ Part at least of this passage seems to be corrupt:— . . . tanto ardito chel mandasse per sochorso
 cheli lolzideria eche puo elli iera per morir dalaso zente . . . (fol. 62r^o)