

HOW ACMAT WAS TAKEN AND PUT TO DEATH ≠ MARCO POLO trusted one, he becomes so dismayed at it and had so great fear that he does not know what he must do; but nevertheless he speaks like a brave man and like a valiant that he was and says to him who had brought him this news that he be not so rash as to make talk about it to any man alive. He says that he will obey his commandment well. And Acmat mounts all immediately on a horse with all those whom he trusted most and sets himself on the way to go to the sultan of Babilonie, and there he believed he would save his life. And none knew where he went but those who were with him only. And when he was gone about six¹ days journeys then he was come to a narrow pass through which he must go, and where he cannot go by other place than by that. And he who guarded the said pass knows well that this is Acmat and sees that he is flying. And he says to himself that he will take him, and he can well do this because Acmat had no people at all. And you may know that just as this one who was guarding the pass plans it so he did it, for he took him all immediately. And Acmat being taken cries to him for mercy that he may let him go, and offers to give him great treasure. And this man who loved Argon with great love said that all this avails him nothing, and that he would not take all the treasure in the world from him not to put him [103d] in the hands of Argon his true² lord. And what shall I tell you about it? This man who guarded the pass, when he had taken Acmat & when it had come to his knowledge that Argon had already obtained his dominion, he makes no delay but prepares himself all immediately with a very good company and put himself on the road to go to court and takes Acmat with him, and always guarded him so well that he cannot fly from him. And they ride so far without stopping that they were come to court, where they find Argon who was come there three days only and had great anger in that he believed³ that Acmat was escaped.

HOW ARGON HAD ACMAT HIS UNCLE KILLED. (HOW THE BARONS DO HOMAGE TO ARGON.) And when this guardian of the pass was come before him and had brought Acmat with him captive, saying, Welcome, my lord; now see how I present to thee this traitor who has done thee so great ill; do to day what thou wilt, he has so great joy at it that he could not have it greater. Turning himself then towards Acmat, he says to his uncle that he is a thousand times ill come. O villain and traitor, what didst thou think to do with me? It was not enough for thee to be a great lord next to me, but thou hast taken all my kingdom from me, and wishedst to make me die. Wherefore

¹ Z,V: "seven"

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³ *audoit* B., following 1824, reads *cuidoit* "believed". Z: *credebat*