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MINIATURE FROM A COPY OF FIRDAWSI'S *SHAHNAMA*. 'RAKXSH KILLS AN ATTACKING LION WHILE RUSTAM SLEEPS'

IRAN, SHIRAZ?; 1480-1490

LEAF: 34 × 21.5 CM

The greatest of the Persian heroes in Firdawsi's *Book of Kings* is undoubtedly Rustam, who was so big at his birth that he had to be delivered with a cesarean section. He was inseparable from his wise stallion Rakhsh, the only horse that could carry him and – as here – often saved the hero thanks to its courage and sagacity.

The painter, who worked in the Turkmen style, depicted the animals' bloody struggle against a peaceful and idyllic landscape, and showed Rustam, always ready for battle but sleeping soundly, wearing his characteristic tiger caftan and leopard helmet. A Chinese *ling zhi* cloud hovers in the golden sky.

Published in:

Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat.no. 22;

Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic About Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, cat.nr. 14;

<http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:2143526758>;