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MINIATURE FROM A COPY OF FIRDAWSI'S *SHAHNAMA*. 'KAY KHUSRAW CAPTURES THE DEMON-OCCUPIED BAHMAN CASTLE'

IRAN, TABRIZ; BETWEEN 1520 AND 1535

LEAF: 47.6 × 32.1 CM

Kay Kaus wishes to abdicate, but cannot decide whether he should leave the throne to his son, Fariburz, or to his grandson, Kay Khusraw. Both are asked to capture the demon-occupied Bahman Castle, and Kay Khusraw succeeds where Fariburz fails.

The prince is seen on his black charger in front of the nearly impregnable castle, as the last demons are being driven out.

While the men are shown in quite a stereotyped manner and with blank expressions, according to the usual conventions, the demons are depicted with great humor and reflect everything from rage to fear and embarrassment. The black water in the moat was originally shiny silver.

Published in:

*Tales from a king's book of kings. The Houghton Shah-nameh miniatures: an exhibition presented by the Corning Museum of Glass, November 17, 1973-January 31, 1974, and the Baltimore Museum of Art, February 12-March 31, 1974*, Corning 1973, cat. 34;  
Martin Bernard Dickson and Stuart Cary Welch: *The Houghton Shahnameh*, Cambridge, Masp. 1981, vol. 2, pl. 135;  
Christie's, London, 11/10-1988, lot 3;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *Islamic art. The David Collection*, Copenhagen 1990, cat. 25;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *Fabelvæsner fra Islams Verden*, Davids Samling, København 1991, cat. 70;  
Kjeld von Folsach, Torben Lundbæk and Peder Mortensen (eds.): *Sultan, Shah and Great Mughal: the history and culture of the Islamic world*, The National Museum, Copenhagen 1996, cat. 270;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection*, Copenhagen 2001, cat. 33;  
Kjeld von Folsach: *For the Privileged Few: Islamic Miniature Painting from The David Collection*, Louisiana, Humlebæk 2007, cat. 34;  
Sheila R. Canby: *The Shahnama of Shah Tahmasp: the Persian Book of Kings*, New York 2011, cat. 155;  
Sheila R. Canby: *The Shahnama of Shah Tahmasp : the Persian Book of Kings*, New York [2014], cat. 197;  
Joachim Meyer and Peter Wandel: *Shahnama: the Colorful Epic About Iran's Past*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2016, cat. 34;  
Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom (eds.): *By the pen and what they write: writing in Islamic art and architecture*, New Haven 2017, fig. 159, p. 185;  
<http://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk/new/jnama/card/cemanuscript:-2038354105>;  
Joachim Meyer, Rasmus Bech Olsen and Peter Wandel: *Beyond words: calligraphy from the World of Islam*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2024, cat. 78, pp. 226-227;