

Second Half of the Shāhnāmeḥ of Ferdowsi

folio 12

Goshtāsp Puts His Son Esfandiyār in Chains

The miniature is basically an irregular rectangle in shape, wider than it is high, including a portion that extends well into the right margin. A column that aligns with the frame on the right side divides the miniature compositionally into two zones: Shāh Goshtāsp and his entourage on the right, Esfandiyār and his incarcerators on the left. The shāh is seated on a throne in the far right, wearing a yellow robe and crown, gesturing with his left hand toward the center of the miniature. Two courtiers - one dressed in blue-gray and the other purple - stand behind him on the extreme right, and two elders, or religious men, with white beards and turbans are seated on the floor in the right foreground. One of the elders is dressed in a gray robe, the other in blue. Esfandiyār stands in the center of the left zone, bareheaded, with a purple coat and yellow trousers, his arms bound behind him, and long chains shackling his neck to his feet. He is surrounded by three helmeted soldiers, two of which are physically restraining him, while a fourth soldier dressed in a blue coat kneels before the shāh apparently interceding on Esfandiyār's behalf. In the far left background is a large white elephant, its trunk reared and an Indian driver on its back. The setting is the interior of the royal palace which is entirely tiled in light pastel hues. At the top of the extension on the far right is the roof of the palace with a tiled bulbous dome, a small pavilion, and the tops of two cypress trees.

There are four columns of text comprised of two or three lines each above the miniature, and nine lines of four column text below. A chapter title is encapsulated within the lower text block. A rectangular ruled frame encloses miniature and text, except on the right side where the miniature spills freely into the right margin. The miniature is signed in the center of the lower margin in miniscule characters in Mo'in's handwriting: *ze toufiq ṣān'e raqam zad kamīneh mo'in* (Drawn with the grace of the Maker by the most humble Mo'in). No date is indicated.

Location:

Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. no. 270, folio 12

Miniature references:

Unpublished.

Text references:

Warner, V, p.84.

Mohl, IV, p.353.

