4. The young Rustam kills the mad elephant (32b)

Rustam grows into a powerful child, and Sām resolves to make a visit to see him in person. Approaching Zālbulistān, Sām first sees Rustam in a greeting party of mounted warriors on a mighty elephant. Rustam salutes his grandfather, and a month is spent in revelry. Sām enjoins on Zāl to be loyal to the shah, and departs to the west. Father and son return to Sistān and further revelry. At Zāl’s instruction, Rustam gives his men gifts, so that they too may return home. Rustam retires to bed, his head swirling with wine. He is aroused by shouts that his father’s white elephant has broken out, and is wreaking havoc. Rustam takes up his grandfather’s mace; the gatekeepers are unwilling to open for him, but he strikes off the head of one and the others fall back. He breaks open the gate, and finds his warriors fleeing before the mountainous elephant. Rustam strikes the elephant on the head:

‘The raging elephant was toppled dead,  
The sturdy youth went briskly back to bed’.  

In the morning Zāl hears what has occurred. He laments the loss of his elephant, but congratulates Rustam. Zāl concludes that his son is capable of undertaking a mission: he is to go to Mount Špand to avenge the blood of his great grandfather, Nariman, who was killed trying to take the fortress, a feat even Sām has not been able to accomplish. Rustam should, however, go in the guise of a salt-merchant.

Like Zāl in the claws of the Sinurgh, Rustam is shown as younger than is required by the text. At the present stage of manuscript research it is not clear if this is an innovation on the part of the present artist, but it seems possible. Where the text gives us a young hero who has killed a man on his way to this first proof of his courage, the illustration conveys the impression of a little boy who has sneaked out at night, and whom an attendant is trying to tempt back discreetly. As a child recently roused from sleep, Rustam wears light, white clothing, his arm half out of the upper garment, but a cap of snow-leopard skin betokens the future warrior. The action is low in the picture, dwarfed by the great expanse of bluish wall, its blocks shaded on the left. Care is taken that the wall should not be a dull space, so it has a projecting window, and it bears a text panel. However, there are no spectators in the upper level. Trees loom over the action, and even the elephant, which by tradition would have been portrayed smaller than in nature, seems here to be further reduced to match the scale of its vanquisher. The relation between the two is hinted at by colour, the white of the elephant’s skin and of Rustam’s garment. The child’s character is clearly indicated by his movements: his feet stump determinedly forward as he casts a triumphant glance over his shoulder. The very small rocky extension into the right margin is emblematic of child-sized but determined movement. It seems that the painter, who appears the same as of the previous picture, has worked deliberately for humorous effect.  

Manūchehr dies. His successor becomes embroiled in war with Turān, whose army is led by Faraqgīh, son of Patang. Two more rulers succeed to the throne of Irān and die. Without a king the people of Irān appeal to Zāl for help; he offers the support of Rustam. Rustam acquires a worthy steed, the spotted horse, Rakhs. While Zāl faces Faraqgīh, Rustam is sent to Mount Alburz to seek out Kay Qubād, a descendant of Farīdun, to be king of Irān. At length Kay Qubād names his son, Kay Kā’īs, as his successor.

The young king is intrigued by a div (lemon) in the form of a minstrel into invading Mazandaran, where he and his companions are captured by the White Divs. Informed of this, Zāl tells Rustam that he must rescue the king: there are two routes to Mazandaran, Kā’īs had taken a longer, but the shorter route is attended by many hazards. The first three of these are a lono (dispatched by Rakhs), a desert in which the hero is led to water by a ram, and a dragon (killed by Rustam).

Lacuna between 41 and 42

This starts at the outset of the account of the reign of Kay Qubād and ends in Rustam’s Fourth Exploit, the ‘Killing of the witch’.

There may have been an illustration here (hypothetical p. 3).
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5. Rustam slays Taimur in his fifth exploit.

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"With down dagger!"

The liver fr Rustam releases liver; he renewes Manashian. The and its blood en man. Kay Khaz Manashian; after warfare against th ruler arises, and demanding tribut the course of this this turns himself into demolition by Ru but is handed over suit, Iliad is made

As coloured rock Simurgh, here gl denizen. The pit stillness: the div i ceased to struggl mouth. Rustam, ove him and doc subject had been Shaml, but t combatants are h and the div is still which goes back companion volu
S. Rustam slays the White Div (44a)\(^\text{17}\)

In his fifth exploit Rustam meets and defeats Uład, who is trying to exact a recompense on behalf of one of his peasants, whose ears Rustam has torn off. Rustam orders Uład to guide him to the imprisoned Kay Kā`īs. After defeating the div Arzhang, conqueror of Kay Kā`īs, Rustam reaches the king and learns that the latter has been stricken with a blindness that can only be cured by blood of the White Div. Rustam’s seventh feat will be to obtain this.

Arrived near the White Div’s lair, which is surrounded by other divs, Rustam learns from Uład that the best time to attack is by daylight, when these become lethargic. Rustam waits until noon. He ties Uład to a tree for security, and fights through a guard of divs. Making his way into the dark cave, he finds the mountainous and black-avised White Div, and rosses him with a roar. A fierce combat follows, Rustam cuts off an arm and a leg of the div, and dashes him to the ground:

‘With downward stroke the rending
dagger flew,
The liver from its dark recess he drew.’

Rustam releases Uład and causes him to carry the liver; he renews a promise that Uład will rule Mazandaran. The liver is presented to Kay Kā`īs, and its blood smeared on his eyes and those of his men. Kay Kā`īs is enthroned as overlord of Mazandaran; after a week of revelry, and a day of warfare against the divs, the question of a new local ruler arises, and a letter is sent to the div king demanding tribute. Eventually warfare ensues. In the course of this Rustam impales the div king, who turns himself into rock. When threatened with demolition by Rustam, he returns to animate form, but is landed over to an executioner. At Rustam’s suit, Uład is made king of Mazandaran.

As coloured rock was used for the dwelling of the Simargh, here glacial white rock reflects its denizen. The picture suggests a moment of stillness: the div is completely prone and has ceased to struggle, a last breath escapes its open mouth. Rustam, wearing his tigerskin, kneels over him and does indeed draw out his liver. The subject had been illustrated in the Baysungbor Shīḥāznāmah, but there the rock is coloured, the combatants are headed in the opposite direction, and the div is still fighting: this is a treatment which goes back at least as far as the Shīḥāznāmah companion volume to the Epics of 1397.\(^\text{18}\) It is clear that the painter of Muhammad Jūkī’s picture deliberately chose to produce a different effect. He has also added a dark hole to the right of Rustam, to show where he would have entered, and to balance the surrounding whiteness. Outside there is a warmer stillness; Rakhab waits and Uład squints with anxiety.\(^\text{19}\)
6. Tahminah comes to Rustam (56h)

Rustam decides to go hunting, he mounts Raksh and makes for the borders of Turan. Having met with success, he roasts an onager, and goes to sleep. In the night Raksh is stolen by a band of Turkman. In search of Raksh, Rustam comes to the territory of the king of Samangan. The king offers Rustam hospitality, while his men find the horse. Rustam is entertained with food, wine and music, and retires to sleep in a scented chamber. At midnight he is awoken by a sound, and the door opens to admit a slave with a perfumed taper. Behind him is a beautiful girl with arched eyebrows, curling locks and bright cheeks. Rustam asks her name:

'She answered him 'Tahminah is my name, And riven is my heart by lover's pain'.'

She is the king's only daughter, but knows of no consort worthy of her; however, she has heard tales of Rustam, and his great deeds, and has longed to see him. She offers herself to him, out of love and the hope that he might sire a son on her; she will see that Raksh is returned, and will give Rustam power in Samangan. Rustam sends a priest to ask Tahminah's hand of her father, and rites of marriage follow with much joy. The couple make love, and Rustam is sure that he has fathered a child. He gives Tahminah an emulet; if she bears a daughter she must place this in her hair, if a son, she must put it on his arm. In the morning Tahminah is left to her tears, but Raksh has been found, and Rustam rides off.

In this illustration a received composition is given vibrant treatment. The subject had been used in Ibrahim's Shahnama, 10 The essential elements are the same: Rustam, lying with his head to the left and his weapons behind him, rises on his elbow; the black servant with the taper inclines his head towards his mistress; Tahminah enters with the shy gesture of the sleeve to the face. In both Tahminah wears an orange-red coat lined with fur, but whereas in the earlier work the coverlet is red and the slave wears dark green, in Muhammad Juki's Shahnama these colours are reversed. The disposition of colour in the juki Shahnama is the more effective since the slave and his mistress, both wearing red and echoed by a reddish parapet above them, bring disruptive colour and action into the cooler and darker sleeping chamber. The chief difference between the two versions, however, lies in the intensity of the characterisation in the later picture.

A different tradition is followed by the picture for 'Ala' al-Daulah, in which the entry comes from the left, the slave is white and Tahminah is in yellow (pl. 24), but the pictures are alike in distinguishing the doorway that frames the princess from the alcove where Rustam sleeps. Rustam's eyes blaze with excitement, the coverlet is convulsed with ripples, his left hand sketches a caress on the mattress. The black servant has become a character, if a rather enigmatic one: his arm stretches sensuously up into the curtain, and it may be that he is inspired by envy. Tahminah is a more person than many other heroines. Her head is down but in determination rather than submission, her eyes are wide, and her cheeks slightly flushed; her sleeve does not conceal her face, but forms part of a hugging motion.

It appears that the print of a seal on the lower right rulings has been erased, painted over, and then largely removed in the remarquing process.