This third image from the same manuscript is entirely different. The union of the two heroes has been consummated and the women look emotionally at the blood-stained sheet that bears witness to Humayun's virility at the time of her marriage. Humayun sits modestly while a concealed Humayun leaves the nuptial chamber to receive gifts and compliments from the men. Some spectacular sweetmeats are being prepared on the women's side while an actor or courtier dances on the men's side. This image is not so much a mystic commentary on the forms of love but rather an almost journalistic description of a royal marriage. It also offers an array of red tones in the robes, the curtaining and the lanterns and an astonishing wealth of detail in the carpets, furniture and architectural decoration. Nor is the scene without humor, as the four heads seen at the window bear witness.
This celebrated miniature comes from a manuscript that is now lost, but many copies from it containing chapter titles were later glued to the sides of the pages to make frames. The meeting between Humay, on the right, and Humayun on the left accompanied by two maidens, is an illustration of a dream Humay had in which he reigned over a mysterious country. In his dream, he discovers his beloved in a beautiful garden. He tells her of his love but she replies that it is impossible to be a reigning monarch and yet keep to the path leading to his beloved. In this delightful nocturnal image of a flower-filled garden, the four figures resemble trees in bloom. They may perhaps represent pantheism, the divine presence found in all expressions of nature—a constant theme in mystic Islamic thought.
The Khamsa
of Nizami [vers 1141–1217]

Very little is known about the life of Nizami. Nizami was born in 1140 and died in 1209, and spent his whole life in what is today independent Azerbaijan. His masterpiece consists of five (hence the name Khamsa which means five) didactic poems studded with anecdotes intended to evoke a mystical vision of the passions, in particular, love.

**PL. 34 Sultan Sanjar and the old woman**
Page from the Khamsa or "Quintet" of Nizami [c. 1141–1217]
1539–1543 (Tabriz, Iran)
Painting attributed to Sultan Muhammad (?-post 1556)
London, British Library, Or. 2265, fol. 18

Once again this is a tale of political morals. Sultan Sanjar, who lived in the twelfth century, is writing out hunting. An old woman has come to him to complain of being mistreated by his soldiers. Sanjar replies saying that her complaint is justified compared with the success of his conquests. "What good is it to conquer territories," the old woman answers, "if you do not control your soldiers?"

This is a fine piece of composition; rocks filled with life frame a large empty space where the main scene takes place, with Countess surrounding it. No-one betrays the slightest emotion, except perhaps the herald shown at the front right who turns round to see why the king is not advancing.

There is a striking contrast between the elegant colors of the sultan and his page, and the old woman dressed in blue and white, humbly knelt over, yet certain of the rightness of her claim.

**PL. 35 King Khosrow arrives at a ruined palace**
Page from the Khamsa or "Quintet" of Nizami [c. 1141–1217]
1539–1543 (Tabriz, Iran)
Painting signed (on the white background to the right of the two deen Agha Mir)
London, British Library, Or. 2265, fol. 18 v

King Khosrow (Anachir) arrives with his companions at a ruined palace. He hears the howling of two owls (upper left) and one of the owls is saying to the other that if the king continues to govern his kingdom badly, dozens of villages will become deserted. The story serves as a moral tale to sovereigns to take good care of their kingdoms. But it is also a reference to the ancient Persian theme of the irresponsible decay of all human construction. Only the animals (deer, ibex in their nests, a dog in the gateway of a damaged palace entrance, a mouse inside the building) appear to be destined to survive. One wonders if the harrowing of the donkey in the bottom left of the image and the energy being expended by the two figures cutting trees are signs of instruction or of future promise. The image has a moral lesson to convey, but it is also a highly valuable work in terms of the range of construction techniques of the period that it depicts.