

To slay him, hitch him in the lasso's noose,
 Drag him aside, and cover him with dust,
 That no one might discover his own secret,
 Or hear his name or any news of him.
 He had awhile a countryman as guide
 From whom he hid the object of his quest.
 At length he said: "I fain would ask a question
 In confidence. If thou shalt wisely purge
 Thy heart of craft and answer truthfully
 Then I will give thee whatso'er thou wilt,
 And not deny thee e'en my soul and body."

V. 716

"There is no lack of knowledge," said the guide,
 "But then it is dispersed 'mongst all the folk.
 If I have any knowledge of the matter
 Thou wilt not find me speechless."

"Where," said Gívr,
 "Is Kai Khusrau? Thou must declare the truth."

The guide thus answered: "I have never heard
 Or asked concerning one so named."

And so
 Gívr smote him with the sword and laid him low.

§ 17

The Finding of Kai Khusrau

Gívr like a madman roamed about to find
 Some traces of the prince. While seven years passed
 His loins were galled by sword and leathern girdle.
 He fed on onagers and wore their skins,
 At times had brackish water and green herbs,
 And went about the desert and the mountains
 In travail and in hardship far from men.

Now at the time when Rustam led his host
 Across the river to the Íránian side
 Afrásiyáb returned to Gang, Túrán

Came to his hand again, and then he bade
 Pírán : " Bring hither ill-starred Kai Khusrau
 Back from Máchín and give him to his mother,
 But have the roads well watched."

Pírán dispatched

A messenger upon a noble camel,
 And had the son of Siyáwush brought back—
 A prudent and a life-inspiring youth—
 And gave him to his mother. Passed a while.

As gallant Gív was roaming o'er Túrán
 In melancholy case, it so fell out

V. 717

One day that, full of anxious thoughts, he came
 Within the precincts of a famous wood,
 And wandered woe-begone along the mead ;
 The world was jocund but his heart was sad.
 He saw the earth all verdant, brooks a-brim,
 And all the scene right apt for rest and sleep.
 Dismounting from his horse he turned it loose,
 And laid him down but with an anxious heart.
 He said : " The foul Dív verily possessed
 The paladin when he beheld that dream.
 I find no traces here of Kai Khusrau :
 What do I gain by all my wanderings ?
 Now while my comrades are engaged in war,
 And while my friends are sitting at the feast,
 These seeking pleasure, those in quest of fame,
 My lot is throwing walnuts on a dome !
 I do but spend my soul in vain, 'tis like
 A bended bow ; Khusrau hath not been born
 At all, or fate hath flung him to the winds.
 I get but toil and hardship by my quest :
 Blest is the man that perisheth by poison."

With heart all sorrowful he roamed about
 Those meadows in his search, and spied afar
 Beside a sparkling stream a beauteous youth
 Of cypress-height, a wine-cup in his hand,

And on his head a bright, sweet wreath. His mien
Betokened Grace and wisdom. Thou hadst said :—
“’Tis Siyáwush upon his ivory throne,
And turquoise-crowned ; his looks exhale the scent
Of love itself, his locks adorn the crown.”

Gív thought : “ This is none other than the prince !
Naught but a throne befitteth such a mien.”

Dismounting from his charger he advanced

V. 718

On foot and, as he drew anear, the bolts
Were loosened on the portal of his travail,
And all his splendid treasure came in sight.
When Kai Khusrau looked from beside the stream
He smiled, while gladness made his heart to throb,
And thought : “ This warrior is none else but Gív ;
This land hath not a chief of such a stamp.
He is engaged in making quest for me
To bear me to Írán to make me Sháh.”

As that redoubted warrior approached,
Khusrau the prince moved forward from his place,
And said to him : “ O Gív ! thou art well come ;
Thy coming here is wisdom’s fitting gift.
How didst thou make thy passage to this land ?
What tidings hast thou touching Tús, Gúdarz,
And Sháh Káús ? Are they in happiness,
And do they in their hearts think of Khusrau ?
How is it with the elephantine Rustam,
The aspiring one, with Zál, and all the rest ? ”

Gív heard the words amazed, invoked the name
Of God, and answered : “ O exalted chief !
All yearn for thee. Methinketh that thou art
The son of Siyáwush, of royal race,
And wise ; but say, thou head of upright men !
Who told thee of Gúdarz, Gív, and Kishwád ?
May Grace and happiness be thine.”

He answered :—

“ O lion-man ! my mother told me this—

V. 719

That when my father by the Grace of God
 Entrusted unto her his last commands,
 He said: "Whatever mischief may befall me,
 Still in the end will Kai Khusrau appear,
 And bring a key to open all the locks.
 When he hath grown a noble warrior
 The doughty Gív will come forth from Írán,
 And bear him to the throne among the nobles
 And lion-men. His valour will restore
 The world, and execute revenge for me."

Gív said: "O head of all the chiefs! what mark
 Hast thou to indicate the Grace of kingship?
 The mark of Siyáwush was manifest
 As 'twere a drop of pitch upon a rose-bed,
 Uncover then and show to me thine arm,
 Because thy mark is known to every one."

The prince made bare his arm and Gív perceived
 The black mark on it. Now this mark had been
 A birth-mark from the time of Kai Kubád—
 A clear distinction of the Kaian race.
 When Gív beheld that mark he did obeisance,
 And weeping told his errand. Kai Khusrau
 Embraced him, giving thanks with joy, and asked
 About Írán, the imperial throne, Gúdarz,
 And Rustam, lover of the fray. Gív said:—
 "O royal world-lord, noble, fortunate,
 And wise! were God, who knoweth good and ill,
 To give to me the whole of Paradise,
 The seven climes and sovereign sway withal,
 The seat of greatness and the crown of might,
 My heart would not exult therein so much
 As in beholding thy face in Túrán.
 Who knoweth in Írán if I am living,
 Or if I have been laid in dust or burned,
 Or have encountered Siyáwush alive,
 And questioned him about his care and travail?"

Thanks be to God that fate determineth
This irksome toil in happiness and joy."

Together they departed from the wood
While Kai Khusrau asked after Sháh Káús,
About Gív's seven years of grief and pain,
His lodging, sleep, and food. Gív answered all,
And spake about the purpose of the Lord,
The vision of Gúdarz, his own long toil,
His victuals, clothes, and rest, his pains and pleasures;
How years had spent the Grace of Kai Káús,
And how he was distracted for his son;
How all was dark and scentless in his palace,
And how the desolation was complete.
The heart of Kai Khusrau burned at these woes,
His two cheeks flamed like fire. He said to Gív:—
"Fate giveth thee for travail rest and ease;
Be as my sire, but say not anything
To any one, and note what time will bring."

§ 18

How Gív and Kai Khusrau went to Siyáwushgird

The chieftain mounted on the steed of Gív,
And that brave warrior preceded him
With Indian sword in hand. If any met them
Gív, ever on the watch, struck off his head,
And covered up the corpse with earth and dust.
They made their journey to Siyáwushgird,
And, when they both recovered heart and wit,
They made a confidant of Farangís,
And privily agreed to quit the place,
Unnoticed by the troops. "We shall but straiten
The world to us if we delay," said she.
"Afrásiyáb will hear, will neither eat
Nor sleep, but like the White Dív follow us,