

# **The Blue Scarf**

Amy Lowell

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PALE, with the blue of high zeniths, shimmered over with silver, brocaded  
In smooth-running patterns, a soft stuff, with dark, knotted fringes, it lies there,  
Warm from a woman's soft shoulders; and my fingers close on it, caressing.  
Where is she, the woman who wore it? The scent of her lingers and drugs me.  
A languor, fire-shotted, runs through me, and I crush the scarf down on my face,  
And gulp in the warmth and the blueness; and my eyes swim in cool-tinted heavens.  
Around me are columns of marble, and a diapered, sun-flickered pavement.  
Rose-leaves blow and patter against it. Below the stone steps a lute tinkles.  
A jar of green jade throws its shadow half over the floor. A big-bellied  
Frog hops through the sunlight, and plops in the gold-bubbled water of a basin  
Sunk in the black and white marble. The west wind has lifted a scarf  
On the seat close beside me; the blue of it is a violent outrage of color.  
She draws it more closely about her, and it ripples beneath her slight stirring.  
Her kisses are sharp buds of fire; and I burn back against her, a jewel  
Hard and white, a stalked, flaming flower; till I break to a handful of cinders,  
And open my eyes to the scarf, shining blue in the afternoon sunshine.

How loud clocks can tick when a room is empty and one is alone!