

# BLUE TOWER

LOUISE MOREY BOWMAN

## I

A white moth poised upon the window ledge.  
Such a frail entity takes no cognizance  
Beyond its instinct, and within the tower  
The candle's flame was a most pallid gleam.  
The white moth merely fluttered, poised, and passed  
Into the silence of the sleeping wood.  
Then came an owl, when it was almost light,  
In noiseless swooping flight, very well-fed;  
Ready to sit on stone and watch for day.  
His eyes, released to light by dark, gazed in  
Like burning alien topaz. Jungles hold  
Such eyes, and by small cheerful fires of home  
Pussy-cats turn such eyes upon their lords  
And ladies; with a delicate ecstasy  
Receiving saucers of white milk to drink;  
Yet not so much bound as Persephone  
Whose pomegranate seeds took six months' toll  
From the years freedom. By Blue Tower the owl  
Lingered and gazed until the early dawn.  
Then he too vanished in the silent wood.

## II

On high piled cushions of a deep sea-blue  
The Princess lay asleep. White moth and owl—  
Instinct and wisdom long personified,  
Moth to a flame, owl in his silence wise—  
Had lingered and then vanished with the night.  
The Princess waked to dawn, curved like a bowl  
Rosy above blue sea beyond the wood.  
Another day—with little white wheel humming  
The lessons of old spinning; with deep blue  
Of curtains and of cushions folding her  
Inviolate for some far holy fate  
Which she,—with her long trailing robe of blue

And small blue-slippered feet, and copper curls  
 Bound with blue snood, and her small white moth-face,—  
 Had never questioned. Yet her eyes were strange—  
 Those eyes of greenish hazel, topaz-flecked,  
 That gazed yet saw not in the light of day,  
 But only when they closed at night in dreams.  
 The blue tower of Tradition held her fast.  
 The little white wheel hummed its measured song.

## III

Over the window-ledge, where moth and owl  
 Had rested, flashed a scarlet shaft of sound  
 From a wild trumpet blown outside Blue Tower.  
 Reality! It pierced the turning wheel  
 With poignancy that left it turning still  
 But feebly, like a slow and broken thing  
 Beside the comfort of blue cushions piled  
 For dreams' soft wooing. Then the Princess rose,  
 Her strange eyes seeming, like the owl's, awake  
 In sudden darkness after blinding day.  
 She stared at crystal jars, sweetmeats and cakes  
 On creamy porcelain, flagons of deep blue glass  
 Holding rich syrups of cut flowers distilled—  
 Fond luxuries of beautiful mothering blue.  
 Again the sound!—Reality that cleft  
 Familiar shadowy walls of grey-blue stone.  
 The little white wheel quivered and was still.  
 Then down the stairway, with her trailing gown  
 High-kilted as she peered forth on fresh dew—  
 The trembling Princess passed beyond Blue Tower.