

## **The Foundations of a Skyscraper**

*Reed, John, 1887-1920*

Ghastly the pit with thousand-candle flares  
Sharp as a sword--white, cold and merciless.  
Bared to the world, the rock's swart nakedness--  
Shadows, and mouths of gloom, like dragon's lairs;  
Thunder of drills, stiff spurting plumes of steam,--  
Shouts and the dip of cranes, the stench of earth,--  
Blinded with sweat, men give a vision birth,  
Crawling and dim, men build a dreamer's dream.

Clamor of unknown tongues, and hiss of arc  
Clashing and blending; screech of wheel on wheel,-  
Naked, a giant's back, tight-muscled, stark,  
Glimpse of mighty shoulder, etched in steel.  
And over all, above the highest high,  
A phantom of fairtowers in the sky.