

helpless. And he had found it ineffably sweet to enfold that warm mass of wan helplessness in his own virile strength.

She asked for time, and he was glad to consent to the delay, so long as it did not keep him from seeing her. In matters of the emotions he was still as uninitiated as a child. He found himself a little dazed by the seemingly accidental tenderness, by the promises of devotion, in which she proved so lavish. Morning by jocund morning he built up his airy dreams, as carefully as she built up her nut-brown plaits. He grew heavily light-headed with his plans for the future. When she pleaded with him never to leave her, never to trust her too much, he patted her thin cheek and asked when she was going to name the day. From that finality she still edged away, as though her happiness itself were only experimental, as though she expected the blue sky above them to deliver itself of a bolt.

But by this time she had become a habit with him. He liked her even in her moodiest moments. When, one day, she suggested that