

the nervous breakdown, the ultimate collapse. She had wept, then, the blubbing, loose-lipped, abandoned weeping of hysteria. She had stumbled forward and caught at his arm and clung to it, as though it were her last earthly pillar of support. Her huge plaited ropes of hair had fallen down, thick brown ropes longer than his own arms, and he, breathing hard, had sat back and watched them as she wept.

But Blake was neither analytical nor introspective. How it came about he never quite knew. He felt, after his blind and inarticulate fashion, that this scene of theirs, that this official assault and surrender, was in some way associated with the climacteric transports of camp-meeting evangelism, that it involved strange nerve-centers touched on in rhapsodic religions, that it might even resemble the final emotional surrender of reluctant love itself to the first aggressive tides of passion. What it was based on, what it arose from, he could not say. But in the flood-tide of his own tumultuous conquest he had watched her abandoned