

RITA: Oh, we are children of earth.

ALLMERS: What do you really think you can do with all these neglected children?

RITA: I suppose I must try if I cannot lighten and—ennoble their lot in life.

ALLMERS: If you can do that—then Eyolf was not born in vain.

RITA: Nor taken from us in vain, either.

ALLMERS: (looking steadfastly at her.) Be quite clear about one thing, Rita. It is not love that is driving you to this.

RITA: No, it is not—at any rate, not yet.

ALLMERS: Well, then, what is it?

RITA: (half evasively.) You have so often talked to Asta of human responsibility—

ALLMERS: Of the book that you hated.

RITA: I hate that book still. But I used to sit and listen to what you told her. And now I will try and continue it in my own way.

ALLMERS: (shaking his head.) It is not for the sake of that unfinished book—

RITA: No, I have another reason as well.

ALLMERS: What is that?

RITA: (softly, with a melancholy smile.) I want to make my peace with the “great, open eyes,” you see.

ALLMERS: (struck, fixing his eyes upon her.) Perhaps, I could join you in that? And help you, Rita?

RITA: Would you?

ALLMERS: Yes, if I were only sure I could.

RITA: (hesitatingly.) But then you would have to remain here.

ALLMERS: (softly.) Let us try if it could not be so.

RITA: (almost inaudibly.) Yes, let us, Alfred. (Both are silent. Then Allmers goes up to the flagstaff and hoists