

'Why, mother,' cried Rebecca, clasping her knees with her hands—'why, mother, it's enough joy just to be here in the world on a day like this—to have the chance of seeing, feeling, doing, becoming! When you were seventeen, mother, wasn't it good just to be alive? You haven't forgotten?'

'No,' said Aurelia, 'but I wasn't so much alive as you are, never in the world.'

'I often think,' Rebecca continued, walking to the window and looking out at the trees—'I often think how dreadful it would be if I were not here at all. If Hannah had come, and then, instead of me, John; John and Jenny and Fanny and the others, but no Rebecca—never any Rebecca! To be alive makes up for everything. There ought to be fears in my heart, but there aren't; something stronger sweeps them out—something like a wind. Oh, see! there is Will driving up the lane, mother, and he ought to have a letter from the brick house.'