

*Rebecca.* What do you mean? You surely are never thinking of—!

*Rosmer.* Do you think it would be so surprising? After the pitiful, lamentable defeat I have suffered? I, who was to have made it my life's work to lead my cause to victory—! And here I am, a deserter before the fight has even really begun!

*Rebecca.* Take up the fight again, John! Only try—and you will see that you will conquer. You will enoble hundreds—thousands—of souls. Only try!

*Rosmer.* I, Rebecca, who no longer believe even in my having a mission in life?

*Rebecca.* But your mission has stood the test. You have at all events ennobled one of your fellow-creatures for the rest of her life—I mean myself.

*Rosmer.* Yes—if I dared believe you about that.

*Rebecca* (*wringing her hands*). But, John, do you know of nothing—nothing—that would make you believe that?

*Rosmer* (*starts, as if with fear*). Don't venture on that subject! No further, Rebecca! Not a single word more!

*Rebecca.* Indeed, that is just the subject we must venture upon. Do you know of anything that would stifle your doubts? For I know of nothing in the world.

*Rosmer.* It is best for you not to know. Best for us both.

*Rebecca.* No, no, no—I have no patience with that sort of thing! If you know of anything that would acquit me in your eyes, I claim it as my right that you should name it.

*Rosmer* (*as if impelled against his will*). Well, let us see. You say that you have great love in your heart; that your soul has been ennobled through me. Is that so? Have you counted the cost? Shall we try and balance our accounts? Tell me.

*Rebecca.* I am quite ready.

*Rosmer.* Then when shall it be?

*Rebecca.* Whenever you like. The sooner the better.