

**THE COLLECTED WORKS  
OF HENRIK  
IBSEN. VOL. VII: A  
DOLL'S HOUSE; GHOSTS**

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The Collected Works of Henrik Ibsen. Vol. VII: A Doll's House; Ghosts by Henrik Ibsen

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**HENRIK IBSEN**

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**A DOLL'S HOUSE**

## CHARACTERS.

TORVALD HELMER.

NORA, *his wife.*

DOCTOR RANK.

MRS. LINDE,<sup>1</sup>

NILS KROGSTAD.

THE HELMERS' THREE CHILDREN.

ANNA,<sup>2</sup> *their nurse.*

A MAID-SERVANT (ELLEN).

A PORTER.

*The action passes in Helmer's house (a flat) in Christiania.*

<sup>1</sup> In the original "Fru Linde."

<sup>2</sup> In the original "Anne-Marie."

## A DOLL'S HOUSE.

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### ACT FIRST.

*A room, comfortably and tastefully, but not expensively, furnished. In the back, on the right, a door leads to the hall; on the left another door leads to HELMER'S study. Between the two doors a piano-forte. In the middle of the left wall a door, and nearer the front a window. Near the window a round table with arm-chairs and a small sofa. In the right wall, somewhat to the back, a door, and against the same wall, further forward, a porcelain stove; in front of it a couple of arm-chairs and a rocking-chair. Between the stove and the side-door a small table. Engravings on the walls. A what-not with china and bric à-brac. A small bookcase filled with handsomely bound books. Carpet. A fire in the stove. It is a winter day.*

*A bell rings in the hall outside. Presently the outer door of the flat is heard to open. Then NORA enters, humming gaily. She is in outdoor dress, and carries several parcels, which she lays on the right-hand table. She leaves the door into the hall open, and a PORTER is seen outside, carrying a Christmas-tree and a basket, which he gives to the MAID-SERVANT who has opened the door.*

NORA.

Hide the Christmas-tree carefully, Ellen; the children must on no account see it before this evening, when it's lighted up. [*To the PORTER, taking out her purse.*] How much?

PORTER.

Fifty öre.<sup>1</sup>

NORA.

There is a crown. No, keep the change.

[*The PORTER thanks her and goes. NORA shuts the door. She continues smiling in quiet glee as she takes off her outdoor things. Taking from her pocket a bag of macaroons, she eats one or two. Then she goes on tip-toe to her husband's door and listens.*

NORA.

Yes; he is at home.

[*She begins humming again, crossing to the table on the right.*

HELMER.

[*In his room.*] Is that my lark twittering there?

NORA.

[*Busy opening some of her parcels.*] Yes, it is.

HELMER.

Is it the squirrel frisking around?

NORA.

Yes!

HELMER.

When did the squirrel get home?

About sixpence. There are too öre in a krone or crown, but is worth thirteence hal penny.



NORA.

Just this minute. [*Hides the bag of macaroons in her pocket and wipes her mouth.*] Come here, Torvald, and see what I've been buying.

HELMER.

Don't interrupt me. [*A little later he opens the door and looks in, pen in hand.*] Buying, did you say? What! All that? Has my little spend-thrift been making the money fly again?

NORA.

Why, Torvald, surely we can afford to launch out a little now. It's the first Christmas we haven't had to pinch.

HELMER.

Come come; we can't afford to squander money.

NORA.

Oh yes, Torvald, do let us squander a little, now—just the least little bit! You know you'll soon be earning heaps of money.

HELMER.

Yes, from New Year's Day. But there's a whole quarter before my first salary is due.

NORA.

Never mind; we can borrow in the meantime.

HELMER.

Nora! [*He goes up to her and takes her playfully by the ear.*] Still my little featherbrain! Supposing I borrowed a thousand crowns to-day, and you made ducks and drakes of them during Christmas week, and then on New Year's Eve a

tile blew off the roof and knocked my brains out——

NORA.

[*Laying her hand on his mouth.*] Hush! How can you talk so horridly?

HELMER.

But supposing it were to happen—what then?

NORA.

If anything so dreadful happened, it would be all the same to me whether I was in debt or not.

HELMER.

But what about the creditors?

NORA.

They! Who cares for them? They're only strangers.

HELMER.

Nora, Nora! What a woman you are! But seriously, Nora, you know my principles on these points. No debts! No borrowing! Home life ceases to be free and beautiful as soon as it is founded on borrowing and debt. We two have held out bravely till now, and we are not going to give in at the last.

NORA.

[*Going to the fireplace.*] Very well—as you please, Torvald.

HELMER.

[*Following her.*] Come come; my little lark mustn't droop her wings like that. What? Is my squirrel in the sulks? [*Takes out his purse.*] Nora, what do you think I have here?

NORA.

[Turning round quickly.] Money!

HELMER.

There! [*Gives her some notes.*] Of course I know all sorts of things are wanted at Christmas.

NORA.

[*Counting.*] Ten, twenty, thirty, forty. Oh, thank you, thank you, Torvald! This will go a long way.

HELMER.

I should hope so.

NORA.

Yes, indeed; a long way! But come here, and let me show you all I've been buying. And so cheap! Look, here's a new suit for Ivar, and a little sword. Here are a horse and a trumpet for Bob. And here are a doll and a cradle for Emmy. They're only common; but they're good enough for her to pull to pieces. And dress-stuffs and kerchiefs for the servants. I ought to have got something better for old Anna.

HELMER.

And what's in that other parcel?

NORA.

[*Crying out.*] No, Torvald, you're not to see that until this evening!

HELMER.

Oh! Ah! But now tell me, you little spend-thrift, have you thought of anything for yourself?