I'm not robot!

This play script is presented for your reading pleasure only. Whilst this manuscript is now out of copyright in the UK, this applies only to public. Should you choose to download and/or utilise this script in any way, it is your responsibility to ensure it is free for your intended usage in your jurisdiction. Are you a teacher? Subscribe today to access hundreds of premium teaching resources and lesson plans! close close close close close close close close close today to access hundreds of premium teaching resources and lesson plans! close clos the room above. MRS. LINDE is sitting at the table idly turning over the leaves of a book; she tries to read, but does not -... [Listens again.] Ah, there he is. [Goes into the hall and opens the outer door carefully. Light footsteps are heard on the stairs. She whispers.] Come in. There is no one here. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. LINDE: It is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you. KROGSTAD: [in the doorway]. I found a note from you at home. What does this mean? MRS. 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Come in; we are quite alone. The maid is asleep, and the Helmers really at a dance tonight? MRS. LINDE: Yes, why not? KROGSTAD: Certainly—why not? MRS. LINDE: Now, Nils, let us have a talk. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: We have a great deal to talk about. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. LINDE: No, you have never properly understood me. KROGSTAD: I shouldn't have thought so. MRS. 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KROGSTAD: [more gently]. When I lost you, it was as if all the solid ground went from under my feet. Look at me now—I am a shipwrecked man clinging to a bit of wreckage. MRS. LINDE: But help may be near. KROGSTAD: It was near; but then you came and stood in my way. MRS. LINDE: Unintentionally, Nils. It was only to-day that I learned it was your place I was going to take in the bank. KROGSTAD: I believe you, if you say so. But now that you know it, are you not going to give it up to me? MRS. LINDE: No, because that would not benefit you in the least. KROGSTAD: Oh, benefit, reasonable. But deeds you must believe in? KROGSTAD: I had good reason to say so. MRS. LINDE: You said you were like a shipwrecked man clinging to some wreckage—no one to mourn for, no one to care for. KROGSTAD: It was your own choice. MRS. LINDE: There was no other choice—then. KROGSTAD: Well, what now? MRS. LINDE: Nils, how would it be if we two shipwrecked people could join forces? KROGSTAD: What are you saying? MRS. LINDE: Two on the same piece of wreckage would stand a better chance than each on their own. KROGSTAD: Christine! MRS. LINDE: What do you suppose brought me to town? KROGSTAD: Do you mean that you gave me a thought? MRS. LINDE: I could not endure life without work. All my life is so dread fully empty and I feel so forsaken There is not the least pleasure in working for one's self. Nils, give me someone and something to work for. KROGSTAD: I don't trust that. It is nothing but a woman's overstrained sense of generosity that prompts you to make such an offer of yourself. MRS. LINDE: Have you ever noticed anything of the sort in me? KROGSTAD: Could you really do it? Tell me—do you know all about my past life? MRS. LINDE: Yes. KROGSTAD: And do you know what they think of me here? MRS. LINDE: You seemed to me to imply that with me you might have been quite another man. KROGSTAD: I am certain of it. MRS. LINDE: Is it too late now? KROGSTAD: Christine, are you saying this deliberately? Yes, I am sure you are. I see it in your face. Have you really the courage, then-? MRS. LINDE: I want to be a mother to someone, and your children need a mother. We two need each other. Nils, I have faith in your real character-I can dare anything together with you. KROGSTAD: [grasps her hands]. Thanks, myself in the eyes of the world. Ah, but I forgot-MRS. LINDE: [listening]. Hush! The Tarantella! Go, go! KROGSTAD: Why? What is it? MRS. LINDE: Do you hear them up there? When that is over, we may expect them back. KROGSTAD: Yes, yes-I will go. But it is all no use. Of course you are not aware what steps I have taken in the matter of the Helmers. MRS. LINDE: Yes, I know all about that. KROGSTAD: And in spite of that have you the courage to-? MRS. LINDE: I understand very well to what I have done! MRS. LINDE: You cannot. Your letter is lying in the letter-box now. KROGSTAD: Are you sure of that? MRS. LINDE: Quite sure, but— KROGSTAD: [with a searching look at her]. Is that what it all means?—that you want to save your friend at any cost? Tell me frankly. Is that it? MRS. LINDE: No, no. KROGSTAD: Yes, of course I will. I will wait here till Helmer comes; I will tell him he must give me my letter back—that it only concerns my dismissal—that he is not to read it— MRS. LINDE: No, Nils, you must not recall your letter. KROGSTAD: But, tell me, wasn't it for that very purpose that you asked me to meet you here? MRS. LINDE: In my first moment of fright, it was. But twenty-four hours have elapsed since then, and in that time I have witnessed incredible things in this house. Helmer must know all about it. This unhappy secret must be disclosed; they must have a complete understanding between them, which is impossible with all this concealment and falsehood going on. KROGSTAD: Very well, if you will take the responsibility. But there is one thing I can do in any case, and I shall do it at once. MRS. LINDE: [listening]. You must be quick and go! The dance is over; we are not safe a moment longer. KROGSTAD: I will wait for you below. MRS. LINDE: Yes, do. You must see me back to my door. KROGSTAD: I have never had such an amazing piece of good fortune in my life! [Goes out through the outer door. The door between the room and laying her hat a difference! Someone to work for and live for—a home to bring comfort into. That I will do, indeed. I wish they would be quick and come—[Listens.] Ah, there they are now. I must put on my things. [Takes up her hat and cloak. Helmer's and NORA's voices are heard outside; a key is turned, and Helmer brings NORA almost by force into the hall. She is in an Italian costume with a large black shawl around her; he is in evening dress, and a black domino which is flying open.] NORA: [hanging back in the doorway, and struggling with him]. No, no, no!- don't take me in. I want to go upstairs again; I don't want to leave so early. HELMER: Not a single minute, my sweet Nora- NORA: Please, Torvald dear-please, please, please, norad dear-please, please, please along into the room; you are catching cold standing there. [He brings her gently into the room, in spite of her resistance.] MRS. LINDE: Good-evening. NORA: Christine! HELMER: You here, so late, Mrs. Linde? MRS. LINDE: Yes, you must excuse me; I was so anxious to see Nora in her dress. NORA: Have you been sitting here waiting for me? MRS. LINDE: Yes, unfortunately I came too late, you had already gone upstairs; and I thought I couldn't go away again without having seen you. HELMER: [taking off NORA's shawl]. Yes, take a good look at her. I think she is worth looking at. Isn't she charming, Mrs. Linde? MRS. LINDE: Yes, indeed she is. HELMER: [taking off NORA's shawl]. Yes, take a good look at her. I think she is worth looking at. Isn't she charming, Mrs. Linde? MRS. LINDE: Yes, indeed she is. HELMER: [taking off NORA's shawl]. Yes, take a good look at her. 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Lind Everyone thought so at the dance. But she is terribly self-willed, this sweet little person. What are we to do with her? You will hardly believe that I had almost to bring her away by force. NORA: Torvald, you will repent not having let me stay, even if it were only for half an hour. HELMER: Listen to her, Mrs. Linde! She had danced her Tarantella, and it had been a tremendous success, as it deserved—although possibly the performance was a trifle too realistic—a little more so, I mean, than was strictly compatible with the limitations of art. But never mind about that! The chief thing is, she had made a success—she had made a tremendous success. Do you think I was going to let her remain there after that, and spoil the effect? No, indeed! I took my charming little Capri maiden. I should say-on my arm; took one quick turn round the room; a curtsey on either side, and, as they say in novels, the beautiful appeared. An exit ought always to be effective, Mrs. Linde; but that is what I cannot make Nora understand. Pooh! this room is hot. [Throws his domino on a chair, and opens the door of his room.] Hullo! it's all dark in here. Oh, of course— excuse me—. [He goes in, and lights some candles.] NORA: [in a hurried and breathless whisper]. Well? MRS. LINDE: [in a low voice]. I have had a talk with him. NORA: Yes, and— MRS. LINDE: Nora, you must tell your husband all about it. NORA: [in an expressionless voice]. I knew it. MRS. LINDE: You have nothing to be afraid of as far as Krogstad is concerned; but you must tell him. MRS. LINDE: Then the letter will. NORA: Thank you, Christine. Now I know what I must do. Hush-! HELMER: [coming in again]. Well, Mrs. Linde, have you admired her? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: What, already? Is this yours, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, and now I will say good-night. HELMER: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LINDE: Yes, this knitting? MRS. LI it's far more becoming. Let me show you. You hold the embroidery thus in your left hand, and use the needle with the right—like this—with a long, easy sweep. Do you see? MRS. LINDE: Yes, perhaps— HELMER: But in the case of knitting—that can never be anything but ungraceful; look here—the arms close together, the knitting-needles going up and down-it has a sort of Chinese effect-... That was really excellent champagne they gave us. MRS. LINDE: Well,-good-night, Mrs. Linde. MRS. LINDE: Good-night, Mrs. Linde. MRS. LINDE: Good-night, Mrs. Linde. MRS. LINDE: Well,-good-night, Mrs. Linde. MRS. LINDE: Good-night, Mrs. Linde. MRS. LINDE: Well,-good-night, Mrs. Linde. M should be very happy to—but you haven't any great distance to go. Good-night, good-night, good-night, good-night, lore, that woman. NORA: Aren't you very tired, Torvald? HELMER: No, not in the least. NORA: Nor sleepy? HELMER: Not a bit. On the contrary, I feel extraordinarily lively. And you?— you really look both tired and sleepy. NORA: Yes, I am very tired. I want to go to sleep at once. HELMER: [kissing her on the forehead]. Now my little skylark is speaking reasonably. Did you notice what good spirits Rank was in this evening? NORA: Really? Was he? I didn't speak to him at all. HELMER: And I very little, but I have not for a long time seen him in such good form. [Looks for a while at her and then goes nearer to her.] It is delightful to be at home by ourselves again, to be all alone with you—you fascinating, charming little darling! NORA: Don't look at me like that, Torvald. HELMER: Why shouldn't I not look at my dearest treasure?—at all the beauty that is mine, all my very own? NORA: [going to the other side of the table]. You mustn't say things like that to me to-night. HELMER: [following her]. You have still got the Tarantella in your blood, I see. And it makes you more captivating than ever. Listen—the guests are beginning to go now. [In a lower voice.] Nora—soon the whole house will be quiet. NORA: Yes, I hope so. HELMER: Yes, my own darling Nora. Do you know, when I am out at a party with you like this, why I speak so little to you, keep away from you, and only send a stolen glance in your direction now and then?—do you know why I do that? It is because I make believe to myself that we are secretly in love, and you are my secretly in love, and you are my secretly in love, and you are my secretly in love, and that no one suspects there is anything between us. NORA: Yes, yes—I know very well your thoughts are with me all the time. HELMER: And when we are leaving, and I am putting the shawl over your beautiful young shoulders—on your lovely neck—then I imagine that you are my young bride and that we have just come from the wedding, and I am bringing you for the first time—quite alone with you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time into our home—to be alone with you for the first time. but you. When I watched the seductive figures of the Tarantella, my blood was on fire; I could endure it no longer, and that was why I brought you down so early— NORA: Go away, Torvald! You must let me go. I won't— HELMER: What's that? You're joking, my little Nora! You won't? Am I not your husband—? [A knock is heard at the outer door.] NORA: [starting]. Did you hear-? HELMER: [going into the hall]. Who is it? RANK: [outside]. It is I. May I come in for a moment? HELMER: [in a fretful whisper]. Oh, what does he want now? [Aloud.] Wait a minute! [Unlocks the door.] Come, that's kind of you not to pass by our door. RANK: I thought I heard your voice, and felt as if I should like to look in.[With a swift glance round.] Ah, yes!—these dear familiar rooms. You are very happy and cosy in here, you two. HELMER: It seems to me that you looked after yourself pretty well upstairs too. RANK: Excellently. Why shouldn't I? The wine was capital— HELMER: Especially the champagne. RANK: So you noticed that too? It is almost incredible how much I managed to put away! NORA: Torvald drank a great deal of champagne to-night too. RANK: Did he? NORA: Yes, and he is always in such good spirits afterwards. RANK: Well, why should one not enjoy a merry evening after a well-spent day? HELMER: Well spent? I am afraid I can't take credit for that. RANK: [clapping him on the back]. But I can, you know! NORA: Doctor Rank, you must have been occupied with some scientific investigation to-day. RANK: Exactly. HELMER: Just listen!—little Nora talking about scientific investigations! NORA: And may I congratulate you on the result? RANK: Indeed you may. NORA: Was it favourable, then? RANK: The best possible, for both doctor and patient—certainty. NORA: Yes, you certainty were, Doctor Rank. HELMER: I think so too, so long as you don't have to pay for it in the morning. RANK: Oh well, one can't have anything in this life without paying for it. NORA: Doctor Rank—are you fond of fancy-dress balls? RANK: Yes, if there is a fine lot of pretty costumes. NORA: Tell me—what shall we two wear at the next? HELMER: Little featherbrain!—are you thinking of the next already? RANK: We two? Yes, I can tell you. You shall go as a good fairy— HELMER: Yes, but what do you suggest as an appropriate costume for that? RANK: Let your wife go dressed just as she is in everyday life. HELMER: That was really very prettily turned. But can't you tell us what you will be? RANK: Yes, my dear friend, I have quite made up my mind about that. HELMER: Well? RANK: At the next fancy-dress ball I shall be invisible. HELMER: That's a good joke! RANK: There is a big black hat—have you never heard of hats that make you invisible? If you put one on, no one can see you. HELMER: [suppressing a smile]. Yes, you are quite right. RANK: But I am clean forgetting what I came for. Helmer, give me a cigar— one of the dark Havanas. HELMER: With the greatest pleasure. [Offers him his case.] RANK: [takes a cigar and cuts off the end]. Thanks. NORA: [striking a match]. Let me give you a light. RANK: Thank you. [She holds the match for him to light his cigar.] And now good-bye! HELMER: Good-bye, good-bye, dear old man! NORA: Sleep well, Doctor Rank. RANK: Thank you for that wish. NORA: Wish me the same. RANK: You? Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. NORA: Wish me the same. RANK: Thank you for that wish. NORA: Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. NORA: Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. NORA: Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. NORA: Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [in a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. NORA: Well, if you want me to sleep well! And thanks for the light. [He nods to them both and goes out.] HELMER: [In a subdued voice]. He has drunk more than he ought. 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What is this? Someone has been at the lock. NORA: At the lock.—? HELMER: Yes, someone has. What can it mean? I should never have thought the maid—. Here is a broken hairpin. Nora, it is one of yours. NORA: [quickly]. Then it must have been the children— HELMER: Then you must get them out of those ways. There, at last I have got it open. [Takes out the contents of the letter-box, and calls to the kitchen.] Helen!—Helen, put out the light over the front door. [Goes back into the room and shuts the door into the hall. He holds out his hand full of letters.] Look at that— look what a heap of them there are. [Turning them over.] What on earth is that? NORA: [at the window]. The letter—No! Torvald, no! HELMER: Two cards—of Rank's. NORA: Of Doctor Rank's? HELMER: [looking at them]. Doctor Rank. They were on the top. He must have put them in when he went out. NORA: It is just what he is doing. HELMER: What? Do you know anything about it? Has he said anything to you? NORA: Yes. He told me that when the cards came it would be his leave-taking from us. He means to shut himself up and die. HELMER: My poor old friend! Certainly I knew we should not have him very long with us. But so soon! And so he hides himself away like a wounded animal. NORA: If it has to happen, it is best it should be without a word-don't you think so, Torvald? HELMER: [walking up and down]. He had so grown into our lives. I can't think of him as having gone out of them. He, with his sufferings and his loneliness, was like a cloudy background to our sunlit happiness. Well, perhaps it is best so. For him, anyway. [Standing still.] And perhaps for us too, Nora. We two are thrown quite upon each other now. [Puts his arms round her.] My darling wife, I don't feel as if I could hold you tight enough. Do you know, Nora, I have often wished that you might be threatened by some great danger, so that I might risk my life's blood, and everything, for your sake. NORA: [disengages herself, and says firmly and decidedly]. Now you must read your letters, Torvald. HELMER: No, no; not to-night. I want to be with you, my darling wife. NORA: With the thought of your friend's death— HELMER: You are right, it has affected us both. Something ugly has come between us—the thought of the horrors of death. We must try and rid our minds of that. Till then—we will each go to our own room. NORA: [hanging on his neck]. Good-night, Torvald—Good-night, Torvald—Good-night, my little singing-bird. Sleep sound, Nora. Now I will read my letters through. [He takes his letters and goes into his room, shutting the door after him.] NORA: [gropes distractedly about, seizes Helmer's through. [He takes his letters and goes into his neck]. domino, throws it round her, while she says in quick, hoarse, spasmodic whispers]. Never! [Puts her shawl over her head.] Never! [Puts her shawl over her shawl over her head.] Never! [Puts her shawl over her shawl over her head.] Never! [Puts her shawl over her shawl over her head.] Never! [Puts her shawl over her shawl over her head.] Never! [Puts her shawl over her Torvald and my children! [She is about to rush out through the hall, when Helmer opens his door hurriedly and stands with an open letter in his letter? NORA: Yes, I know. Let me go! Let m [trying to get free]. You shan't save me, Torvald! HELMER: [reeling]. True? Is this true, that I read here? Horrible! No, no—it is impossible that it can be true. NORA: It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world. HELMER: Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses. NORA: It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world. HELMER: Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses. NORA: It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world. HELMER: Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses. NORA: It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world. HELMER: Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses. NORA: It is true. I have loved you above everything else in the world. creature—what have you done? NORA: Let me go. You shall not suffer for my sake. You shall not take it upon yourself. HELMER: No tragedy airs, please. [Locks the hall door.] Here you shall stay and give me an explanation. Do you understand what you have done? NORA: [looks steadily at him and says with a growing look of coldness in her face]. Yes, now I am beginning to understand thoroughly. HELMER: [walking about the room]. What a horrible awakening! All these eight years—she who was my joy and pride—a hypocrite, a liar—worse, worse—a criminal! The unutterable ugliness of it all!—For shame! [NORA is silent and looks steadily at him. He stops in front of her.] I ought to have suspected that something of the sort would happen. I ought to have foreseen it. All your father's want of principle—be silent!—all your father's want of principle has come out in you. No religion, no morality, no sense of duty—. How I am punished for having winked at what he did! I did it for your sake, and this is how you repay me. NORA: Yes, that's just it. HELMER: Now you have destroyed all my happiness. You have ruined all my happiness. You have ruined all my future. It is horrible to think of! I am in the power of an unscrupulous man; he can do what he likes with me, ask anything he likes of me, give me any orders he pleases—I dare not refuse. And I must sink to such miserable depths because of a thoughtless woman! NORA: When I am out of the way, you will be free. HELMER: No fine speeches, please. Your father had always plenty of those ready, too. What good would it be to me if you were out of the way, as you say? Not the slightest. He can make the affair known everywhere; and if he does, I may be falsely suspected of having been a party to your criminal action. Very likely people will think I was behind it all—that it was I who prompted you! And I have to thank you for all this—you whom I have cherished during the whole of our married life. Do you understand now what it is you have done for me? NORA: [coldly and quietly]. Yes. HELMER: It is so incredible that I can't take it in. But we must come to some understanding. Take off that shawl. Take it off, I tell you. I must try and appear as if everything between us were just as before—but naturally only in the eyes of the world. You will still remain in my house, that is a matter of course. But I shall not allow you to bring up the children; I dare not trust them to you. To think that I should be obliged to say so to one whom I have loved so dearly, and whom I still—. No, that is all over. From this moment happiness is not the question; all that concerns us is to save the remains, the fragments, the appearance— [A ring is heard at the front-door bell.] HELMER: [with a start]. What is that? So late! Can the worst—? Can he—? Hide yourself, Nora. Say you are ill. NORA stands motionless. HELMER: Give it to me. [Takes the letter and shuts the door.] Yes, it is from him. You shall not have it; I will read it myself. NORA: Yes, read it. HELMER: [standing by the lamp]. I scarcely have the courage to do it. It may mean ruin for both of us. No, I must know. [Tears open the letter, runs his eye over a few lines, looks at a paper enclosed, and gives a shout of joy.] Nora! [She looks at him questioningly.] Nora!—No, I must read it once again—. Yes, it is true! I am saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! NORA: And I? HELMER: You too, of course; we are both saved! 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My poor little Nora, I quite understand; you don't feel as if you could believe that I have forgiven you. But it is true, Nora, I swear it; I have forgiven you don't feel as if you could believe that you did, you did out of love for me. NORA: That is true, Nora, I swear it; I have forgiven you everything. I know that what you did, you did out of love for me. NORA: That is true. HELMER: You have loved me as a wife ought to love her husband. Only you had not sufficient knowledge to judge of the means you used. But do you suppose you are any the less dear to me, I will advise you and direct you. I should not be a man if this womanly helplessness did not just give you a double attractiveness in my eyes. You must not think any more about the hard things I said in my first moment of consternation, when I thought everything was going to overwhelm me. I have forgiven you, Nora; I swear to you I have forgiven you. NORA: Thank you for your forgiveness. [She goes out through the door to the right.] HELMER: No, don't go-[Looks in.] What are you doing in there? NORA: [from within]. Taking off my fancy dress. HELMER: [standing at the open door]. Yes, do. Try and calm yourself, and make your mind easy again, my frightened little singing-bird. Be at rest, and feel secure; I have broad wings to shelter you under. [Walks up and down by the door.] How warm and cosy our home is, Nora. Here is shelter for you; here I will protect you like a hunted dove that I have saved from a hawk's claws; I will bring peace to your poor beating heart. It will come, little by little, Nora, believe me. To-morrow morning you will look upon it all quite differently; soon everything will be just as it was before. Very soon you won't need me to assure you that I have forgiven you; you will yourself feel the certainty that I have done so. Can you suppose I should ever think of such a true man's heart is like, Nora. There is something so indescribably sweet and satisfying, to a man, in the knowledge that he has forgiven his wife—forgiven her freely, and with all his heart. It seems as if that had made her, as it were, doubly his own; he has given her a new life, so to speak; and she has in a way become both wife and child to him. So you shall be for me after this, my little scared, helpless darling. Have no anxiety about anything, Nora; only be frank and open with me, and I will serve as will and conscience both to you—. What is this? NORA: [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now. HELMER: But what for?—so late as this. NORA: [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now. HELMER: But what for?—so late as this. NORA: [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now. HELMER: But what for?—so late as this. NORA: [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now. HELMER: But what for?—so late as this. NORA: [in everyday dress]. 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NORA: [after a short silence]. Isn't there one thing that strikes you as strange in our sitting here like this? HELMER: What is that? NORA: We have been married now eight years. Does it not occur to you that this is the first time we two, you and I, husband and wife, have had a serious conversation? HELMER: What do you mean by serious? NORA: In all these eight years—longer than that—from the very beginning of our acquaintance, we have never exchanged a word on any serious subject. HELMER: Was it likely that I would be continually and for ever telling you about worries that you could not help me to bear? NORA: I am not speaking about business matters. I say that we have never sat down in earnest together to try and get at the bottom of anything. HELMER: But, dearest Nora, would it have been any good to you? NORA: That is just it; you have never understood me. I have been greatly wronged, Torvald—first by papa and then by you. HELMER: What! By us two, who have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me. HELMER: Nora, what do I hear you saying? NORA: It is perfectly true, Torvald. When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinions; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll-child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls. And when I came to live with you— HELMER: What sort of an expression is that to use about our marriage? NORA: [undisturbed]. I mean that I was simply transferred from papa's hands into yours. You arranged everything according to your own taste, and so I got the same tastes as you—or else I pretended to, I am really not quite sure which—I think sometimes the one and sometimes the other. When I look back on it, it seems to me as if I had been living here like a poor woman—just from hand to mouth. I have existed merely to perform tricks for you, Torvald. But you would have it so. You and papa have committed a great sin against me. It is your fault that I have made nothing of my life. HELMER: How unreasonable and how ungrateful you are, Nora! Have you not been happy. I thought I was, but it has never really been so. HELMER: Not-not happy! NORA: No, only merry. And you have always been so kind to me. But our home has been nothing but a playroom. I have been your doll-wife, just as at home I was papa's doll-child; and here the children have been my dolls. I thought it great fun when I played with them. That is what our marriage has been, Torvald. HELMER: There is some truth in what you say-exaggerated and strained as your view of it is. But for the future it shall be different. Playtime shall be over, and lesson-time shall begin. NORA: Whose lessons? Mine, or the children's, my darling Nora. NORA: Alas, Torvald, you are not the man to educate me into being a proper wife for you. HELMER: And you can say that! NORA: And I—how am I fitted to bring up the children? HELMER: Nora! NORA: Didn't you say so yourself a little while ago-that you dare not trust me to bring them up? HELMER: In a moment of anger! Why do you pay any heed to that? NORA: Indeed, you were perfectly right. I am not fit for the task. There is another task I must undertake first. I must try and educate myself—you are not the man to help me in that. I must do that for myself. And that is why I am going to leave you now. HELMER: [springing up]. What do you say? NORA: I am to understand myself and everything about me. It is for that reason that I cannot remain with you any longer. HELMER: Nora, Nora! NORA: I am going away from here now, at once. I am sure Christine will take me in for the night— HELMER: You are out of your mind! I won't allow it! I forbid you! NORA: It is no use forbidding me anything any longer. I will take with me what belongs to myself. I will take nothing from you, either now or later. HELMER: What sort of madness is this! NORA: To-morrow I shall go home -I mean, to my old home. It will be easiest for me to find something to do there. HELMER: You blind, foolish woman! NORA: I must try and get some sense, Torvald. HELMER: To desert your husband and your children! And you don't consider what people will say! NORA: I cannot consider that at all. I only know that it is necessary for me. HELMER: It's shocking. This is how you would neglect your most sacred duties. NORA: I have other duties? HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children? NORA: I have other duties? HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children? NORA: I have other duties? HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children? NORA: I have other duties? HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children? NORA: I have other duties? myself. HELMER: Before all else, you are a wife and a mother. NORA: I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are—or, at all events, that I must try and become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right, and that views of that kind are to be found in books; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say, or with what is found in books. I must think over things for myself and get to understand them. HELMER: Can you not a reliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not a reliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not an areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that?—have you not areliable guide in such matters as that? what religion is. HELMER: What are you saying? NORA: I know nothing but what the clergyman said, when I went to be confirmed. He told us that religion was this, and the other. When I am away from all this, and am alone, I will look into that matter too. I will see if what the clergyman said is true, or at all events if it is true for me. HELMER: This is unheard of in a girl of your age! But if religion cannot lead you aright, let me try and awaken your conscience. I suppose you have none? NORA: I assure you, Torvald, that is not an easy question to answer. I really don't know. The thing perplexes me altogether. I only know that you and I look at it in quite a different light. I am learning, too, that the law is quite another thing from what I supposed; but I find it impossible to convince myself that the law is right. According to it a woman has no right to spare her old dying father, or to save her husband's life. I can't believe that. HELMER: You talk like a child. You don't understand the conditions of the world in which you live. NORA: No, I don't. But now I am going to try. I am going to see if I can make out who is right, the world or I. HELMER: And is it with a clear and certain mind that you forsake your husband and your children? NORA: Yes, it is. HELMER: Then there is only one possible explanation. NORA: What is just it. HELMER: Nora!—and you can say that? NORA: It gives me great pain, Torvald, for you have always been so kind to me, but I cannot help it. I do not love you any more. HELMER: [regaining his composure]. Is that a clear and certain conviction too? NORA: Yes, absolutely clear and certain. That is the reason why I will not stay here any longer. HELMER: And can you tell me what I have done to forfeit your love? NORA: Yes, indeed I can. It was to-night, when the wonderful thing did not happen; then I saw you were not the man I had thought you were. HELMER: Explain yourself better. I don't understand you. NORA: I have waited so patiently for eight years; for, goodness knows, I knew very well that wonderful things don't happen every day. Then this horrible misfortune came upon me; and then I felt quite certain that the wonderful thing was going to happen at last. When Krogstad's letter was lying out there, never for a moment did I imagine that you would say to him: Publish the thing to the whole world. And when that was done— HELMER: Yes, what then?—when I had exposed my wife to shame and disgrace? NORA: When that was done, I was so absolutely certain, you would come forward and take everything upon yourself, and say: I am the guilty one. HELMER: Nora—! NORA: You mean that I would never have accepted such a sacrifice on your part? No, of course not. But what would my assurances have been worth against yours? That was the wonderful thing which I hoped for and feared; and it was to prevent that, that I wanted to kill myself. HELMER: I would gladly work night and day for you, Nora—bear sorrow and want for your sake. But no man would sacrifice his honour for the one he loves. NORA: It is a thing hundreds of thousands of women have done HELMER: Oh, you think and talk like a heedless child. NORA: Maybe. But you neither think nor talk like the man I could bind myself to. As soon as your fear was over-and it was not fear for what threatened me, but for what might happen to you-when the whole thing was past, as far as you were concerned it was exactly as if nothing at all had happened. Exactly as before, I was your little skylark, your doll, which you would in future treat with doubly gentle care, because it was so brittle and fragile. [Getting up.] Torvald—it was then it dawned upon me that for eight years I had been living here with a strange man, and had borne him three children—. Oh, I can't bear to think of it! I could tear myself into little bits! HELMER: [sadly]. I see, I see, An abyss has opened between us-there is no denying it. But, Nora, would it not be possible to fill it up? NORA: As I am now, I am no wife for you. HELMER: I have it in me to become a different man. NORA: Perhaps-if your doll is taken away from you. HELMER: But to part!-to part from you! No, no, Nora, I can't understand that idea. NORA: [going out to the right]. That makes it all the more certain that it must be done. [She comes back with her cloak and hat and a small bag which she puts on a chair by the table.] HELMER: Nora, Nora, not now! Wait till to-morrow. NORA: [putting on her cloak]. I cannot spend the night in a strange man's room. HELMER: But can't we live here like brother and sister—? NORA: [putting on her hat]. You know very well that would not last long. [Puts the shawl round her.] Good-bye, Torvald. I won't see the little ones. I know they are in better hands than mine. As I am now, I can be of no use to them. HELMER: But some day, Nora—some day? NORA: How can I tell? I have no idea what is going to become of me. HELMER: But you are my wife, whatever becomes of you. NORA: Listen, Torvald. I have heard that when a wife deserts her husband's house, as I am doing now, he is legally freed from all obligations towards her. In any case, I set you free from all your obligations. You are not to feel yourself bound in the slightest way, any more than I shall. There must be perfect freedom on both sides. See, here is your ring back. Give me mine. HELMER: That too? NORA: That too? NORA: That too. HELMER: Here it is. NORA: That too? NORA: The maids know all about everything in the house—better than I do. Tomorrow, after I have left her, Christine will come here and pack up my own things that I brought with me from home. I will have them sent after me. HELMER: All over! All over! All over! All over! Nora, shall you never think of me again? NORA: I know I shall often think of you, the children, and this house. HELMER: May I write to you, Nora? NORA: No—never. You must not do that. HELMER: But at least let me send you— NORA: Nothing—nothing— HELMER: Let me help you if you are in want. NORA: No. I can receive nothing more than a stranger to you? NORA: [taking her bag]. Ah, Torvald, the most wonderful thing of all would have to happen. HELMER: Tell me what that would be! NORA: Both you and I would have to be so changed that—? NORA: That our life together would be a real wedlock. Good-bye. [She goes out through the hall.] HELMER: [sinks down on a chair at the door and buries his face in his hands]. Nora! [Looks round, and rises.] Empty. She is gone. [A hope flashes across his mind.] The most wonderful thing of all-? [The sound of a door shutting is heard from below.] please wait...

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