

1 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

1

A room furnished comfortably and tastefully, but not extravagantly. A living room split into three areas. A den, a entry, and a dining room/kitchen. Outside, through a sliding door, a porch. It is winter in Burbank.

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*
*

A hand starts a record, a carol plays.

2 EXT. OUTSIDE - EVENING

2

INSERT:

*

House after house in the Burbank suburbia. The car passing by.

3 INT. CAR - EVENING

3

ON:

*

A woman's face. She taps the wheel as she drives.

*

Presents, unwrapped, in the back seat.

SUPER:

"I'm a little afraid of the past and I have a great hunger to see things that are about the world I live in."

- Wallace Shawn

TITLE:

A DOLL'S HOUSE

TITLE:

I. CHRISTMAS TIME IS HERE.

The car pulls into the drive.

4 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

4

The front door opens. Enter NORA Moderately dressed, without much fuss. A sweater with some decorative patterns. She hauls in gifts.

The carol continues to play, drowning out all the sound -- except for a man's voice singing along.

Nora's caught up in the Christmas spirit, hums and smiles to herself. She takes a packet of macaroons from her pocket and eats one or two and then hides them. *

TORVALD, the man who is singing, and Nora's husband, is preparing dinner. She peaks in on him time and again, never really getting a good look at him.

Nora looks out the door and the tree -- wants to interrupt Torvald -- decides not to. Closes the door.

She makes her way to a closet and grabs some wrapping paper.

INSERT:

The record ending.

Nora closes the door --

Torvald's cooking can be hear.

TORVALD

Is that my little lark twittering out there?

NORA

Yes, it is!

TORVALD

Is it my little squirrel bustling about?

NORA

Yes!

TORVALD

When did my squirrel come home? *

NORA

Just now. Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.

TORVALD

Bought? You said *bought*? Has my little spendthrift wasted our money?

NORA

Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.

TORVALD

You know, we can't spend money recklessly.

NORA

Yes, Torvald, we may be a wee bit more reckless now, mayn't we? Just a tiny wee bit! You are going to have a big salary and earn lots and lots of money.

TORVALD

Yes, after the New Year; but then it will be a whole quarter before the salary is due.

NORA

We can borrow until then.

Torvald stops moving around in the kitchen. Let's it hang in the air...

TORVALD

...borrow. Suppose what would happen if I borrowed money today and was killed in some spectacular fashion.

NORA

Not sure what the spectacle would matter.

TORVALD

Still, suppose that happened,—what then?

NORA

If that were to happen, I don't suppose I should care whether I owed money or not.

TORVALD

Yes, but what about the people who had lent it?

NORA

They? Who would bother about them? I should not know who they were.

TORVALD

Seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle.

NORA

As you like.

Footsteps running in the house above--children's voices and laughter.

Then Torvald is standing in front of her.

TORVALD

Nora, what do you think I have got here?

NORA

Money!

Torvald gives her a few hundred dollars.

TORVALD

Do you think I don't know what a lot is wanted for housekeeping at Christmas-time?

NORA

Thank you, thank you, Torvald; that will keep me going for a long time.

TORVALD

Indeed it must.

NORA

Yes, yes, it will. But come here and let me show you what I have bought. And all so cheap! Look, here is a new suit for Ivar, and a sword; and a horse and a trumpet for Bob; and a doll and dolly's bedstead for Emmy,—they are very plain, but anyway she will soon break them in pieces.

TORVALD

And what is in this bag?

NORA

No, no! you mustn't see that until this evening.

TORVALD

Alright, alright! But now tell me, you extravagant little person, what would you like for yourself?

NORA

For myself? Oh, I am sure I don't want anything.

TORVALD

Yes, but you must. Tell me something reasonable that you would particularly like to have.

NORA

No, I really can't think of anything—unless, Torvald—

TORVALD

Well?

NORA

(playing with his shirt, and without raising her eyes to his)

If you really want to give me something, you might—you might—

TORVALD

Well, out with it!

NORA

(speaking quickly)

You must give me money, Torvald Only just as much as you can afford; and then one of these days I will buy something with it.

TORVALD

But, Nora—

NORA

Oh, do! dear Torvald; please, please do! Then I will wrap it up in beautiful gilt paper and hang it on the Christmas Tree. Wouldn't that be fun?

TORVALD

What are little people called that are always wasting money?

NORA

Spendthrifts—I know. Let us do as you suggest, Torvald, and then I shall have time to think what I am most in want of. That is a very sensible plan, isn't it?

TORVALD

(smiling)

Indeed it is—that is to say, if you were really to save out of the money I give you, and then really buy something for yourself. But if you spend it all on the housekeeping and any number of unnecessary things, then I merely have to pay up again.

NORA

Oh but, Torvald—

TORVALD

You can't deny it, my dear little Nora.

(Puts his arm round
her waist)

She's a sweet little spendthrift, but she uses up a great deal of money. One would hardly believe how expensive such little persons are!

NORA

It's a shame to say that. I do really save all I can.

TORVALD

That's very true,—all you can.

NORA

(smiling quietly and
happily)

You haven't any idea how many expenses we skylarks and squirrels have, Torvald

TORVALD

You are an odd little soul. Very like your father. You always find some new way of wheedling money out of me, and, as soon as you have got it, it seems to melt in your hands. You never know where it has gone. Still, one must take you as you are.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

It is in the blood; for indeed it is true that you can inherit these things, Nora.

*

NORA

Ah, I wish I had inherited many of papa's qualities.

TORVALD

And I would not wish you to be anything but just what you are, my sweet little skylark. But, do you know, it strikes me that you are looking rather-what shall I say-rather uneasy today?

NORA

Do I?

TORVALD

You do, really. Look straight at me.

NORA

Well?

TORVALD

Hasn't Miss Sweet Tooth been breaking rules in town today?

NORA

No; what makes you think that?

TORVALD

Hasn't she paid a visit to the confectioner's?

NORA

No, I assure you, Torvald-

*

TORVALD

Not been nibbling sweets?

NORA

No, certainly not.

TORVALD

Not even taken a bite at a macaroon or two?

NORA

No, Torvald, I assure you really-

TORVALD
(incredulous)
I'm joking, I'm only joking

NORA
I should not think of going against
your wishes.

TORVALD
No, I am sure of that; besides, you
gave me your word—
(Going up to her.)
Keep your little Christmas secrets to
yourself, my darling. They will all
be revealed tonight when the
Christmas Tree is lit, no doubt.
Nora, you can't think how I am
looking forward to this evening.

*
*

NORA
So am I! And how the children will
enjoy themselves, Torvald!

TORVALD
It is splendid to feel that one has a
perfectly safe appointment, and a big
enough income. It's delightful to
think of, isn't it?

NORA
It's wonderful!

TORVALD
Do you remember last Christmas? For a
full three weeks beforehand you shut
yourself up every evening until long
after midnight, making ornaments for
the Christmas Tree, and all the other
fine things that were to be a
surprise to us. It was the dullest
three weeks I ever spent!

NORA
I didn't find it dull.

TORVALD
This time I needn't sit here and be
dull all alone, and you needn't ruin
your dear eyes and your pretty little
hands—

*

NORA
No, Torvald, I needn't any longer,
need I!

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)
It's wonderfully lovely to hear you
say so! Now I will tell you how I
have been thinking we ought to
arrange things, Torvald As soon as
Christmas is over—

A knock at the door.

A shared look between the two, something between relief they
don't have to keep up their energies and anger their moment
has been spoiled.

TORVALD
If it's for me, I'm not here.

Torvald exits through the kitchen to a back patio.

5 EXT. BACK PORCH - EVENING

5

Torvald closes the back sliding door.

There's someone already sitting outside.

They light a cigarette.

TORVALD
What do you want?

KROGSTAD
Sit down, Torvald You and I are due a
chat.

6 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

6

Nora opens the door revealing KRISTINE LINDE (30s).

KRISTINE
Merry Christmas, Nora.

*
*

NORA
Merry Christmas... Can I help you?

*

KRISTINE
Ah... you don't remember?

*

NORA
I don't think so... a memory...

KRISTINE

A ghost of Christmas past to you, I suppose.

NORA

...Can I-

(suddenly)

Yes! Kristine! Is it really you?

KRISTINE

Yes, it's me.

NORA

(with an air of good fortune)

Just my luck for some help then.

KRISTINE

I'm sorry.

NORA

The tree.

7 EXT. GARAGE - EVENING

7

A garage door rises and Nora searches through the garage for the Helmer Christmas tree.

NORA

Kristine! To think of my not recognizing you! And yet how could I-
(In a gentle voice.)

If I can say it... you're different.
That's why I couldn't see it before,
a different woman all together.

KRISTINE

Yes, I have indeed. In ten long years-

NORA

Is it so long since we met? I suppose it is. The last eight years have been a happy time for me, I can tell you. And so now you have come into the town.

KRISTINE

I arrived this morning.

NORA

To have some fun at Christmas-time,
of course. How delightful! We will
have such fun together!

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)
We'll talk and drink and see some
sights -- you'll meet my children,
three of them now -- happy years,
Kristne, so very happy.

Nora locates the tree and Kristine and her drag it out. *

NORA (cont'd)
She smiles! Now you look like your
old self again; it was only the first
moment--You are a little paler,
Kristine, and perhaps a little
thinner.

KRISTINE
And much, much older, Nora.

They carry the tree-box into the house. *

NORA
Perhaps a little older; very, very
little; certainly not much.

8 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

8

They set the tree-box down. It hits Nora. *

NORA
What a thoughtless creature I am,
chattering away like this. My poor,
dear Kristine, do forgive me.

KRISTINE
What do you mean, Nora?

NORA
Poor Kristine, you are a widow.

KRISTINE
Yes; it is three years ago now.

NORA
Yes, I knew; I saw it in the papers.
I assure you, Kristine, I meant ever
so often to write to you at the time,
but I always put it off and something
always prevented me.

KRISTINE
I quite understand, dear.

NORA

It was very bad of me, Kristine. Poor thing, how you must have suffered. And he left you nothing?

KRISTINE

No.

NORA

And no children?

KRISTINE

No.

NORA

Nothing at all, then.

KRISTINE

Not even any sorrow or grief to live upon.

NORA

(looking
incredulously at her)

But, Kristine, is that possible?

KRISTINE

It sometimes happens, Nora.

NORA

So you are quite alone. How dreadfully sad that must be. You must tell me all about it.

KRISTINE

No, no; I want to hear about you.

NORA

No, you must begin. I mustn't be selfish today; today I must only think of your affairs.

*

A beat. Nora waits to see if Kristine speaks, Kristine does the same.

*

*

NORA

But there is one thing I must tell you. Do you know we have just had a great piece of good luck?

KRISTINE

Nora, dear, if I'm being completely -

*

*

*

KRISTINE (cont'd)

No, what is it?

NORA

My husband has been made manager of the Bank!

KRISTINE

Your husband? What good luck!

NORA

Yes, tremendous! A barrister's profession is such an uncertain thing, especially if he won't undertake unsavoury cases; and naturally Torvald has never been willing to do that, and I quite agree with him. You may imagine how pleased we are! He is to take up his work in the Bank at the New Year, and then he will have a big salary and lots of commissions. For the future we can live quite differently—we can do just as we like. I feel so relieved and so happy, Kristine! It will be splendid to have heaps of money and not need to have any anxiety, won't it?

KRISTINE

Yes, it would be delightful to have what one needs.

NORA

No, not only what one needs, but heaps and heaps of money.

KRISTINE

Nora, Nora, haven't you learned sense yet? In our schooldays you were a great squanderr.

*

NORA

Yes, that is what Torvald says now.

(Wags her finger at her)

But "Nora, Nora" is not so silly as you think. We have not been in a position for me to waste money. We have both had to work. odds and ends, needlework, crotchet-work, embroidery, and that kind of thing.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)
(Dropping her voice.)
And other things as well.

Voices from outside.

9 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

9

Nora hands Kristine boxes filled with ornaments from a closet.

NORA
You know Torvald left his office when we were married? There was no prospect of promotion there, and he had to try and earn more than before. But during the first year he overworked himself dreadfully. You see, he had to make money every way he could, and he worked early and late; but he couldn't stand it, and fell dreadfully ill, and the doctors said it was necessary for him to go south.

KRISTINE
You spent a whole year in Italy, didn't you?

NORA
Yes. It was no easy matter to get away, I can tell you. It was just after Ivar was born; but naturally we had to go. It was a wonderfully beautiful journey, and it saved Torvald's life. But it cost a tremendous lot of money, Kristine.

KRISTINE
So I should think.

NORA
It cost about fifty thousand dollars. That's a lot, isn't it?

*

KRISTINE
Yes, and in emergencies like that it is lucky to have the money.

NORA
I ought to tell you that we had it from papa.

KRISTINE

It was just about that time that he died, wasn't it?

NORA

Yes; and, just think of it, I couldn't go and nurse him. I was expecting little Ivar's birth every day and I had my poor sick Torvald to look after. My dear, kind father—I never saw him again, Kristine. That was the saddest time I have known since our marriage. Happier only because we had money then, and the doctors insisted on our going, so we started a month later.

10 INT. HOUSE - EVENING

10

The two unpack ornaments. Kristine sits on a sofa, and Nora sits on the ground, crossed-leg.

KRISTINE

And your husband came back quite well?

NORA

I brought him back from the dead.

KRISTINE

You?

NORA

In some way or another a wife is always responsible for her husband's fate.

(claps her hands)

Kristine! Kristine! it's good to be alive and happy!—But how horrid of me; I am talking of nothing but my own affairs.

(puts her head on
Kristine's knees)

You mustn't be angry with me. Tell me, is it really true that you did not love your husband? Why did you marry him?

KRISTINE

My mother was alive then, and was bedridden and helpless, and I had to provide for my two younger brothers; so I did not think I was justified in refusing his offer.

*

NORA

No, perhaps you were quite right. He was rich at that time, then?

*

KRISTINE

I believe he was quite well off. But his business was a precarious one; and, when he died, it all went to pieces and there was nothing left.

*

NORA

And then?—

*

KRISTINE

Well, I had to turn my hand to anything I could find—first a small shop, then a small school, and so on. The last three years have seemed like one long working-day, with no rest. Now it is at an end, Nora. My poor mother needs me no more, for she is gone; and the boys do not need me either; they have got situations and can fend for themselves.

*

NORA

What a relief you must feel if—

KRISTINE

No; I only feel my life unspeakably empty. That was why I could not stand the life in my little backwater any longer. I hope it may be easier here to find something which will busy me and occupy my thoughts. If only I could have the good luck to get some regular work—office work of some kind—

*

*

NORA

But, Kristine, that is so frightfully tiring, and you look tired out now. You had far better go away to some watering-place.

KRISTINE

I have no father to give me money for a journey, Nora.

NORA

(rising)

Oh, don't be angry with me!

*

KRISTINE

It is you that must not be angry with me, dear. The worst of a position like mine is that it makes one so bitter. No one to work for, and yet obliged to be always on the lookout for chances.

*

(with no small inference)

*

One must live, and so one becomes selfish.

*

*

*

NORA

How do you mean?—Oh, I understand. You mean that perhaps Torvald could get you something to do.

KRISTINE

Yes, that was what I was thinking of.

NORA

He must, Kristine. Just leave it to me; I will broach the subject very cleverly—I will think of something that will please him very much. It will make me so happy to be of some use to you.

KRISTINE

How kind you are, Nora, to be so anxious to help me! It is doubly kind in you, for you know so little of the burdens and troubles of life.

NORA

I—? I know so little of them?

*

KRISTINE

(smiling)

My dear! Small household cares and that sort of thing!—You are a child, Nora.

*

NORA

You ought not to be so superior.

*

KRISTINE

No?

*

NORA

You are just like the others. They
all think that I am incapable of
anything really serious—

*

KRISTINE

Come, come—

NORA

—that I have gone through
nothing in this world of
cares.

*

KRISTINE

But, my dear Nora, you have just told
me all your troubles.

*

NORA

Those!—those were trifles.
(Lowering her voice)
I have not told you the important
thing.

*

KRISTINE

The important thing? What do you
mean?

NORA

You look down upon me altogether,
Kristine—but you ought not to. You
are proud, aren't you, of having
worked so hard and so long for your
mother?

KRISTINE

Indeed, I don't look down on anyone.
But it is true that I am both proud
and glad to think that I was
privileged to make the end of my
mother's life almost free from care.

NORA

And you are proud to think of what
you have done for your brothers?

KRISTINE

I think I have the right to be.

NORA

I think so, too. But now, listen to
this; I too have something to be
proud and glad of.

KRISTINE

I have no doubt you have. But what do you refer to?

NORA

Speak low. Suppose Torvald were to hear! He mustn't on any account--no one in the world must know, Kristine, except you.

KRISTINE

But what is it?

NORA

Come here.

(Pulls her down on
the sofa beside her)

Now I will show you that I too have something to be proud and glad of. It was I who saved Torvald's life.

KRISTINE

"Saved"? How?

11 EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

11

At the front door, Nora and Kristine continue their conversation.

NORA

I told you about our trip to Italy. Torvald would never have recovered if he had not gone there--

KRISTINE

Yes, but your father gave you the necessary funds.

NORA

Yes, that is what Torvald and all the others think, but--

KRISTINE

But--

NORA

Papa didn't give us a shilling. It was I who procured the money.

KRISTINE

You? All that large sum?

NORA

Fifty thousand dollars. What do you think of that?

*

KRISTINE

But, Nora, how could you possibly do it? Did you win a prize in the Lottery?

NORA

(contemptuously)

In the Lottery? There would have been no credit in that.

KRISTINE

But where did you get it from, then?

Nora hums and smiles and kicks her feet.

KRISTINE (cont'd)

Because you couldn't have borrowed it.

NORA

Couldn't I? Why not?

KRISTINE

No, a wife cannot borrow without her husband's consent.

NORA

Oh, if it is a wife who has any head for business—a wife who has the wit to be a little bit clever—

KRISTINE

I don't understand it at all, Nora.

NORA

There is no need you should. I never said I had borrowed the money. I may have got it some other way. Perhaps I got it from some other admirer. When anyone is as attractive as I am—

*

KRISTINE

You are a mad creature.

NORA

Now, you know you're full of curiosity, Kristine.

KRISTINE

Listen to me, Nora dear. Haven't you been a little bit imprudent?

NORA

Is it imprudent to save your husband's life?

KRISTINE

It seems to me imprudent, without his knowledge, to—

NORA

But it was absolutely necessary that he should not know! My goodness, can't you understand that? It was necessary he should have no idea what a dangerous condition he was in. It was to me that the doctors came and said that his life was in danger, and that the only thing to save him was to live in the south. Do you suppose I didn't try, first of all, to get what I wanted as if it were for myself? I told him how much I should love to travel abroad like other young wives; I tried tears and entreaties with him; I told him that he ought to remember the condition I was in, and that he ought to be kind and indulgent to me; I even hinted that he might raise a loan. That nearly made him angry, Kristine. He said I was thoughtless, and that it was his duty as my husband not to indulge me in my whims and caprices—as I believe he called them. Very well, I thought, you must be saved—and that was how I came to devise a way out of the difficulty—

KRISTINE

And did your husband never get to know from your father that the money had not come from him?

NORA

No, never. Papa died just at that time. I had meant to let him into the secret and beg him never to reveal it. But he was so ill then—alas, there never was any need to tell him.

KRISTINE

And since then have you never told
your secret to your husband?

NORA

Good Heavens, no! How could you think
so? A man who has such strong
opinions about these things! And
besides, how painful and humiliating
it would be for Torvald, with his
manly independence, to know that he
owed me anything! It would upset our
mutual relations altogether; our
beautiful happy home would no longer
be what it is now.

*

KRISTINE

Do you mean never to tell him about
it?

NORA

(meditatively, and
with a half smile)

Yes--someday, perhaps, after many
years, when I am no longer as nice-
looking as I am now. Don't laugh at
me! I mean, of course, when Torvald
is no longer as devoted to me as he
is now; when my dancing and dressing-
up and reciting have palled on him;
then it may be a good thing to have
something in reserve--

(Breaking off)

What nonsense! That time will never
come. Now, what do you think of my
great secret, Kristine? Do you still
think I am of no use? I can tell you,
too, that this affair has caused me a
lot of worry. It has been by no means
easy for me to meet my engagements
punctually. I may tell you that there
is something that is called, in
business, quarterly interest, and
another thing called payment in
installments, and it is always so
dreadfully difficult to manage them.
I have had to save a little here and
there, where I could, you understand.
I have not been able to put aside
much from my housekeeping money, for
Torvald must have a good table.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

I couldn't let my children be shabbily dressed; I have felt obliged to use up all he gave me for them, the sweet little darlings!

KRISTINE

So it has all had to come out of your own necessities of life, poor Nora?

NORA

Of course. Besides, I was the one responsible for it. Whenever Torvald has given me money for new dresses and such things, I have never spent more than half of it; I have always bought the simplest and cheapest things. Thank Heaven, any clothes look well on me, and so Torvald has never noticed it. But it was often very hard on me, Kristine—because it is delightful to be really well dressed, isn't it?

KRISTINE

Quite so.

NORA

Well, then I have found other ways of earning money. Last winter I was lucky enough to get a lot of copying to do; so I locked myself up and sat writing every evening until quite late at night. Many a time I was desperately tired; but all the same it was a tremendous pleasure to sit there working and earning money. It was like being a man.

KRISTINE

How much have you been able to pay off in that way?

NORA

I can't tell you exactly. You see, it is very difficult to keep an account of a business matter of that kind. I only know that I have paid every penny that I could scrape together. Many a time I was at my wits' end. Then I used to sit here and imagine that a rich old gentleman had fallen in love with me—

KRISTINE

What! Who was it?

NORA

Be quiet!—that he had died; and that when his will was opened it contained, written in big letters, the instruction: "The lovely Mrs Nora Torvald is to have all I possess paid over to her at once in cash."

KRISTINE

But, my dear Nora—who could the man be?

NORA

Good gracious, can't you understand? There was no old gentleman at all; it was only something that I used to sit here and imagine, when I couldn't think of any way of procuring money. But it's all the same now; the tiresome old person can stay where he is, as far as I am concerned; I don't care about him or his will either, for I am free from care now. My goodness, it's delightful to think of, Kristine! Free from care! To be able to be free from care, quite free from care; to be able to play and romp with the children; to be able to keep the house beautifully and have everything just as Torvald likes it! And, think of it, soon the spring will come and the big blue sky! Perhaps we shall be able to take a little trip. Oh, it's a wonderful thing to be alive and be happy.

*

*

From a side alley, Krogstad exits, still smoking. Nora is caught immediately off guard by his presence. Krogstad is annoyed at the silence that follows.

KROGSTAD

It's just me.

NORA

(in a strained, low voice)

You spoke to my husband?

*

KROGSTAD

Bank business—in a way. I hear your husband is to be our chief now—

(MORE)

KROGSTAD (cont'd)
(off Nora's worried
look)
Nothing but dry business matters,
Mrs. Helmer; absolutely nothing else.

*

Krogstad leaves the property.

KRISTINE
Nora—who was that man?

*

NORA
A lawyer, of the name of Krogstad

KRISTINE
Then it really was he.

NORA
Do you know him?

KRISTINE
I used to—many years ago. At one time
he was a solicitor's clerk in our
town.

NORA
That's him.

KRISTINE
He is greatly altered.

NORA
He made a very unhappy marriage.

KRISTINE
He is a widower now, isn't he?

NORA
With several children.

KRISTINE
They say he carries on various kinds
of business.

NORA
Really! Perhaps he does; I don't know
anything about it. But don't let us
think of business; it is so tiresome.

The door behind them opens and out steps DOCTOR RANK.

RANK
There she is.

*

NORA

Rank, how happy to see you. Where have you been?

RANK

In the back with your husband and that Krogstad. I told Torvald I'd prefer your company and here I am. I beg your pardon; I am afraid I am disturbing you too.

NORA

No, not at all.

(Introducing him)

Doctor Rank, Kristine Linde.

RANK

Ah, I have often heard Mrs Linde's name mentioned here. I believe we arrived at the same time.

KRISTINE

Yes. I was a bit slow getting out of my car.

RANK

Some slight internal weakness?

KRISTINE

No, the fact is I have been overworking myself.

RANK

Nothing more than that? Then I suppose you have come to town to amuse yourself with our entertainments?

KRISTINE

I have come to look for work.

RANK

Is that a good cure for overwork?

KRISTINE

One must live, Doctor Rank.

RANK

Yes, that seems to be the general opinion.

NORA

Rank—you know you want to live.

RANK

*

Certainly. However wretched I may feel, I want to prolong the agony as long as possible. All my patients are like that. And so are those who are morally diseased; that Krogstad is one of them.

NORA

What do you mean?

*

RANK.

It's not my place to tell the particulars, suffice it to say he suffers from a diseased moral character, Mrs. Helmer; but even he began talking of its being highly important that he should live.

*

NORA

Did he? How so?

RANK.

I have no idea; I only heard that it was something about the Bank before I tuned into my own thoughts. Banks are boring business.

*

KRISTINE

Is he really so bad?

*

*

RANK.

(To Kristine)

I don't know whether you find also in your part of the world that there are certain people who go zealously snuffing about to smell out moral corruption, and, as soon as they have found some, put the person concerned into some lucrative position where they can keep their eye on him. Healthy natures are left out in the cold.

KRISTINE

Still. Ought we take care of the sick?

RANK.
(shrugging his
shoulders)
Yes, there you are. That is the
sentiment that is turning Society
into a sick-house.

NORA, who has been absorbed in her thoughts, breaks out into
smothered laughter and claps her hands and goes back into
the house.

12 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

12

Throughout the sequence Nora sets up the Christmas tress.

Rank and Kristine enter after her.

RANK.
Why do you laugh at that? Have you
any notion what Society really is?

NORA
What do I care about tiresome
Society? I am laughing at something
quite different, something extremely
amusing. It's just struck me that all
the people at the bank are dependent
on Torvald

*

RANK.
Is that what you find so extremely
amusing?

NORA
(smiling and humming)
That's my affair! It's perfectly
glorious to think that we have—that
Torvald has so much power over so
many people.

Nora retrieves the macaroons she hid earlier.

*

NORA (cont'd)
Rank, what do you say to a macaroon?

RANK.
What, macaroons? I thought they were
forbidden here.

*

NORA
Yes, but these are some Kristine gave
me.

KRISTINE

What! I?—

*

NORA

Oh, well, don't be alarmed! You couldn't know that Torvald had forbidden them. I must tell you that he is afraid they will spoil my teeth. But, bah!—once in a way—That's so, isn't it, Doctor Rank? By your leave!

(Puts a macaroon into
his mouth)

You must have one too, Kristine. And I shall have one, just a little one—or at most two. I am tremendously happy. There is just one thing in the world now that I should dearly love to do.

*

RANK.

Well, what is that?

NORA

It's something I should dearly love to say, if Torvald could hear me.

RANK.

Well, why can't you say it?

NORA

No, I daren't; it's so shocking.

KRISTINE

Shocking?

RANK.

What is it you would so much like to say if Torvald could hear you?

NORA

I should just love to say—

Nora whispers it to Rank.

RANK.

Are you mad?

Nora whisper it to Kristine.

KRISTINE

Nora, dear—!

RANK.

Say it, here he is!

NORA

Torvald!

Nora turns to see Torvald standing in the kitchen. She clutches the macaroons in her hand.

TORVALD

Who is this?

NORA

This is Kristine, who has come to town.

TORVALD

Kristine—? Excuse me, but I don't know—

NORA

Kristine, dear; Kristine Linde.

TORVALD

(still doesn't know)

Of course. A school friend of my wife's, I presume?

KRISTINE

Yes, we have known each other since then.

NORA

And just think, she's visiting to see you.

*

TORVALD

What do you mean?

KRISTINE

No, really, I—

NORA

Kristine is tremendously clever at book-keeping, and she is frightfully anxious to work under some clever man, so as to perfect herself—

TORVALD

Very sensible, Kristine

NORA

And when she heard you had been appointed manager of the Bank—the news was telegraphed, you know—she travelled here as quick as she could. Torvald, I am sure you will be able to do something for Kristine, for my sake, won't you?

TORVALD

Well, it is not altogether impossible. I presume you are a widow, Kristine?

KRISTINE

Yes.

TORVALD

And have had some experience of book-keeping?

KRISTINE

Yes, a fair amount.

TORVALD

Well, it's very likely I may be able to find something for you—

NORA

(clapping her hands)

What did I tell you? What did I tell you?

TORVALD

You have just come at a fortunate moment, Kristine

KRISTINE

How am I to thank you?

TORVALD

There is no need.

(Puts on his coat)

But today you must excuse me— I forgot some of the items for dinner.

*
*

RANK.

Wait a minute; I will come with you.

NORA

Don't be long away, Torvald dear.

He and Rank are out the door.

NORA (cont'd)
Are you going too, Kristine?

KRISTINE
Yes, I must go and look for a room.
Goodbye, Nora dear, and many thanks.

Out the door as well.

Nora left in silence.

Running around upstairs, children laughing and shouting...
playing growing.

Nora loosens her grip.

INSERT:

The macaroons crushed.

Nora relaxes for the first time since Kristine arrived. The
sound of her children draws her up the stairs. *

She stops at the top of the stairs and listen to the
children playing. *

Nora takes a deep breath and puts on a big smile, she opens
the door and shouts in excitement at seeing her kids. *

She enters the playroom. *

CUT TO: *

13 EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

13

Nora sits on the back-porch, sipping on wine, a quiet
evening. *

KROGSTAD
Excuse me, Mrs. Helmer *

Nora's startled. Turns to Krogstad, who approaches from the
side.

NORA
What do you want?

No answer from Krgostad. *

NORA (cont'd)
My husband is out, Mr. Krogstad *

KROGSTAD

I know that.

*

NORA

What do you want here, then?

*

KROGSTAD

A word with you.

NORA

With me?--

Nora stands and heads to the sliding door.

NORA (cont'd)

This will have to wait, I should get my children ready for dinner.

*

*

KROGSTAD

It will only take a moment.

NORA

It is not the first of the month yet.

KROGSTAD

No, it is Christmas Eve, and it will depend on yourself what sort of a Christmas you will spend.

NORA

What do you mean? Today it is absolutely impossible for me--

KROGSTAD

This is something different. I presume you can give me a moment?

NORA

Yes--yes, I can--although--

KROGSTAD

Good. Ealier, when I left. Your friend. Was that Mrs. Linde?

NORA

It was.

KROGSTAD

Just arrived in town?

NORA

Yes, today.

KROGSTAD

She is a great friend of yours, isn't she?

NORA

She is. But I don't see—

KROGSTAD

Is Kristine to have an appointment in the Bank?

*

NORA

Yes, Kristine is to have an appointment. And it was I who pleaded her cause, Mr. Krogstad, let me tell you that. Sometimes one has a tiny little bit of influence, I should hope. Because one is a woman, it does not necessarily follow that—. When anyone is in a subordinate position, Mr. Krogstad, they should really be careful to avoid offending anyone who—who—

KROGSTAD

Who has influence?

NORA

Exactly.

KROGSTAD

Mrs. Helmer, you will be so good as to use your influence on my behalf.

*

NORA

What? What do you mean?

KROGSTAD

You will be so kind as to see that I am allowed to keep my subordinate position in the Bank.

NORA

What do you mean by that? Who proposes to take your post away from you?

KROGSTAD

Oh, there is no necessity to keep up the pretence of ignorance.

(MORE)

KROGSTAD (cont'd)

I can quite understand that your friend is not very anxious to expose herself to the chance of rubbing shoulders with me; and I quite understand, too, whom I have to thank for being turned out.

*

NORA

But I assure you—

KROGSTAD

Very likely; but, to come to the point, the time has come when I should advise you to use your influence to prevent that.

NORA

But, Mr. Krogstad, I have no influence.

KROGSTAD

Haven't you? I thought you said yourself just now—

NORA

Naturally I did not mean you to put that construction on it. I! What should make you think I have any influence of that kind with my husband?

KROGSTAD

I have known your husband since school. I don't suppose he is any more unassailable than other husbands.

NORA

It is time for you to leave my house.

*

KROGSTAD

Brave Mrs. Little Helmer

*

NORA

I am not afraid of you any longer. As soon as the New Year comes, I shall in a very short time be free of the whole thing.

KROGSTAD

(controlling himself)

Listen to me, Mrs. Helmer If
necessary, I am prepared to fight for
my small post in the Bank as if I
were fighting for my life.

*

NORA

So it seems.

*

KROGSTAD

It is not only for the sake of the
money; indeed, that weighs least with
me in the matter. There is another
reason—well, I may as well tell you.
My position is this. I daresay you
know, like everybody else, that once,
many years ago, I was guilty of an
indiscretion.

*

NORA

I think I have heard something of the
kind.

KROGSTAD

The matter never came into court; but
every way seemed to be closed to me
after that. So I took to the business
that you know of. I had to do
something; and, honestly, I don't
think I've been one of the worst. But
now I must cut myself free from all
that. My sons are growing up; for
their sake I must try and win back as
much respect as I can in the town.
This post in the Bank was the first
step up for me—and now your husband
is going to kick me downstairs again
into the mud.

*

NORA

But you must believe me, Mr.
Krogstad; it is not in my power to
help you at all.

KROGSTAD

Then it is because you haven't the
will; but I have means to compel you.

NORA

You don't mean that you will tell my
husband that I owe you money?

KROGSTAD

Hm!—suppose I were to tell him?

NORA

It would be perfectly infamous of you. And it would put me in a horribly disagreeable position—

KROGSTAD

Only disagreeable?

NORA

What do you mean?

KROGSTAD

The law Mrs. Helmer

*

NORA

Yes?

KROGSTAD

That a woman can't borrow money without her husband's signature?

NORA

My father signed for the loan.

KROGSTAD

Right — your ailing father. He signed on October 2nd.

NORA

Alright then, he signed on October 2nd.

KROGSTAD

Yes, but he died on September 29th.

A beat.

KROGSTAD (cont'd)

A death certificate is easy to find, Mrs. Helmer.

*

NORA

Yes. Alright. You got me. I wrote papa's name.

*

KROGSTAD

Are you aware that is a dangerous confession?

NORA

In what way? You shall have your money soon.

KROGSTAD

But did it never occur to you that you were committing a fraud on me?

*

NORA

I couldn't take that into account; I didn't trouble myself about you at all. I couldn't bear you, because you put so many heartless difficulties in my way, although you knew what a dangerous condition my husband was in.

*

KROGSTAD

Mrs. Helmer, you evidently do not realize clearly what it is that you have been guilty of. But I can assure you that my one false step, which lost me all my reputation, was nothing more or nothing worse than what you have done.

*

NORA

You? Do you ask me to believe that you were brave enough to run a risk to save your wife's life?

KROGSTAD

The law cares nothing about motives.

NORA

I don't believe it. Is a daughter not to be allowed to spare her dying father anxiety and care? Is a wife not to be allowed to save her husband's life? I don't know much about law; but I am certain that there must be laws permitting such things as that. Have you no knowledge of such laws—you who are a lawyer? You must be a very poor lawyer, Mr. Krogstad

KROGSTAD

Maybe. But matters of business—such business as you and I have had together—do you think I don't understand that? Very well. Do as you please.

(MORE)

KROGSTAD (cont'd)

But let me tell you this—if I lose my
position a second time, you shall
lose yours with me.

14 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

14

Nora sits in her house.

It's dark.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

(-) She finishes setting up the tree

(-) Strings the lights

(-) Turns the lights on.

(-) Ornament by ornament. All the same one. Just red and
gold. Nothing special. Nothing specific.

(-) a box marked 'Nora,' and the lid lifted off. A handful
of ratty old ornaments. Nora carefully rummages through and
finds one she'd like to hang.

(-) She places it as far towards the center of the tree as
possible.

*

Over:

NORA (V.O.)

Nonsense! Trying to frighten me like
that!—I am not so silly as he thinks.
And yet—? No, it's impossible! I did
it for love's sake.

(yelling)

Children, please keep it down, your
mother has a headache

(back to herself)

No! No, no! it is quite impossible!
The horrible man! It's all
nonsense—there's nothing wrong. I
will do everything I can think of to
please you, Torvald!—I will sing for
you, dance for you—

CUT TO:

15 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

15

Nora turns around from the tree and Torvald is standing
there with grocery bags.

*

NORA

Oh! are you back already?

TORVALD

Was Krogstad here?

NORA

Here? No.

TORVALD

Strange. I passed his car coming out
of the neighborhood.

*
*

NORA

Oh yes, I forgot, Krogstad was here
for a moment.

*

TORVALD

Nora, I can see from your manner that
he has been here begging you to say a
good word for him.

NORA

Yes.

TORVALD

Nora, Nora, and you would be a party
to that sort of thing? To have any
talk with a man like that, and give
him any sort of promise? And to tell
me a lie as part of the bargain?

NORA

A lie—?

TORVALD

Didn't you tell me no one had been
here? My little songbird must never
do that again. A songbird must have a
clean beak to chirp with—no false
notes!

(Puts his arm round
her waist)

That is so, isn't it? Yes, I am sure
it is.

(sees the box of
ornaments)

And that's two.

NORA

Two?

TORVALD

You said you got rid of your old things.

NORA

They make me happy, Torvald

TORVALD

I never told you to get rid of them.

NORA

You said they were to never be on the tree.

TORVALD

A tree should be ordered.

NORA

Yes.

TORVALD

Like a house. A family. Ordered.

NORA

Well, I was just looking at them.
They have memories attached to them.
Great memories. Of papa and me.

Nora removes the box.

NORA (cont'd)

What are all those papers?

TORVALD

Bank business.

NORA

Already?

TORVALD

I have got authority from the
retiring manager to undertake the
necessary changes in the staff and in
the rearrangement of the work; and I
must make use of the Christmas week
for that, so as to have everything in
order for the new year.

NORA

Then that was why this poor Krogstad—

TORVALD

Hm!

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

NORA

(changing the subject)

I am looking forward tremendously to the fancy-dress ball in our yard the day after tomorrow.

*
*
*
*

TORVALD

And I am tremendously curious to see what you are going to surprise me with.

NORA

It was very silly of me to want to do that.

TORVALD

What do you mean?

NORA

I can't hit upon anything that will do; everything I think of seems so silly and insignificant.

TORVALD

Does my little Nora acknowledge that at last?

NORA

There is no one has such good taste as you.

(adding on to the thought)

And I do so want to look nice at the fancy-dress ball. Torvald, couldn't you decide what I shall go as, and what sort of a dress I shall wear?

*

TORVALD

Aha! so my obstinate little woman is obliged to get someone to come to her rescue?

NORA

Yes, Torvald, I can't get along a bit without your help.

TORVALD

Very well, I will think it over, we shall manage to hit upon something.

NORA

That is nice of you.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)
(Goes to the
Christmas Tree. A
short pause)
How pretty the red looks.

She rests her head against Torvald's shoulder and grabs his
arm. Both look at the tree.

PUSH IN:

On the tree.

NORA (cont'd)
Was Krogstad really guilty of
something so bad?

TORVALD
He forged someone's name. Have you
any idea what that means?

NORA
Isn't it possible that he was driven
to do it by necessity?

TORVALD
Yes; or, as in so many cases, by
imprudence. I am not so heartless as
to condemn a man altogether because
of a single false step; after all,
many a man has been able to retrieve
his character, if he has openly
confessed his fault and taken his
punishment.

NORA
Punishment—?

TORVALD
But Krogstad did receive any
punishment; no he got himself out of
it by a cunning trick

NORA
But do you think it would—?

TORVALD
Just think how a guilty man
like that has to lie and
play the hypocrite with
every one, how he has to
wear a mask in the presence
of those near and dear to
him, even before his own
wife and children. And about
the children—that is the
most terrible part of it
all, Nora.

NORA

How?

TORVALD

Because such an atmosphere of lies infects and poisons the whole life of a home. Each breath the children take in such a house is full of the germs of evil.

NORA

Are you sure of that?

TORVALD

My dear, I have often seen it in the course of my life as a lawyer. Almost everyone who has gone to the bad early in life has had a deceitful mother.

NORA

Why do you only say the mother?

TORVALD

It seems most commonly to be the mother's influence, though naturally a bad father's would have the same result. Every lawyer is familiar with the fact. This Krogstad, now, has been persistently poisoning his own children with lies and dissimulation; that is why I say he has lost all moral character. That is why my sweet little Nora must promise me not to plead his cause. Give me your hand on it. Come, come, what is this? Give me your hand. There now, that's settled. I assure you it would be quite impossible for me to work with him; I literally feel physically ill when I am in the company of such people.

Nora and Torvald, on the couch together.

ON NORA: A dark storm setting over her eyes.

16 INT. HOUSE - DAY

16

Next day.

SUPER:

II. A Few of my Favorite Things

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

(-) Nora paces about, checking her phone, trying to relax

NORA (V.O.)

Someone is coming now! No-it is no one. Of course, no one will come today, Christmas Day-nor tomorrow either. What rubbish! of course he can't be in earnest about it. Such a thing couldn't happen; it is impossible-I have three little children. If only I could be sure nothing would happen here in the meantime. Stuff and nonsense! No one will come. Only I mustn't think about it.

A phone rings...

Someone answers. ANNE.

*

ANNE (V.O.)

My little Nora, how is my little darling?

NORA (V.O.)

Whatever happened to that dress of my mothers?

17 EXT. BACK PORCH - DAY

17

Nora's on the phone, drinking. Broad daylight.

ANNE (V.O.)

Hmmm. Which dress?

NORA

The fancy dress.

ANNE (V.O.)

Oh, I think I would have lost that. You don't have a dress?

NORA

Well, I have this one here --

On the table, a dress.

NORA (cont'd)

But it is very much in want of mending.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

(a beat)

I should like to tear it into a
hundred thousand pieces.

*

ANNE (V.O.)

What an idea! It can easily be put in
order—just a little patience. It
never killed anyone.

*

NORA

Quite the opposite...

ANNE (V.O.)

How are the children?

*

NORA

The poor little souls are playing
with their Christmas presents, but—

ANNE (V.O.)

Poor?

*

NORA

They are so accustomed to have their
mamma with them. I feel distant this
holiday.

ANNE (V.O.)

Oh well, young children easily get
accustomed to anything.

*

NORA

Do you think so? Do you think they
would forget their mother if she went
away altogether?

ANNE (V.O.)

Good heavens! Went away altogether?

*

NORA

I want you to tell me something I
have often wondered about—how could
you have the heart to put your own
child out among strangers?

*

ANNE (V.O.)

I was obliged to, if I wanted to be
little Nora's nurse.

*

NORA

Yes, but how could you be willing to
do it?

ANNE (V.O.)

*

What, when I was going to get such a good place by it? A poor girl who has got into trouble should be glad to. Besides, that wicked man didn't do a single thing for me.

NORA

But I suppose your daughter has quite forgotten you.

ANNE (V.O.)

*

No, indeed she hasn't. She wrote to me when she was confirmed, and when she was married.

NORA

Dear old Anne, you were a good mother to me when I was little.

ANNE (V.O.)

*

Little Nora, poor dear, had no other mother but me.

NORA

And if my little ones had no other mother, I am sure you would—What nonsense I am talking!

(looking at the dress)

You never did teach me how to sow.

KRISTINE (O.S.)

To sow?

Kristine approaches the deck.

NORA

We'll talk soon, Anne. Bye-bye.

Nora hangs up the phone.

NORA (cont'd)

Oh, Kristine! Merry Christmas morning! How good of you to come! You sow, yes?

*

*

KRISTINE

...yes.

*

18 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

18 *

Nora and Kristine sit at the table. Nora prepares snacks as Kristine sows.

KRISTINE

I have completely forgotten to thank
you for a delightful evening
yesterday.

*

NORA

Well, I don't think yesterday was as
pleasant as usual. You ought to have
come to town a little earlier,
Kristine. Certainly Torvald does
understand how to make a house dainty
and attractive.

KRISTINE

And so do you, it seems to me; you
are not your father's daughter for
nothing. But tell me, is Rank always
as depressed as he was yesterday?

NORA

No; yesterday it was very noticeable. I must tell you that he suffers from a very dangerous disease. He has consumption of the spine, poor creature. His father was a horrible man who committed all sorts of excesses; and that is why his son was sickly from childhood, do you understand?

KRISTINE

(dropping her sewing)

But, my dearest Nora, how do you know anything about such things?

NORA

When you have children, you get visits now and then from married women, who know something of medical matters, and they talk about one thing and another.

KRISTINE

(goes on sewing. A short silence)

Does Doctor Rank come here everyday?

NORA

Everyday regularly. He is Torvald's most intimate friend, and a great friend of mine too. He is just like one of the family.

KRISTINE

But tell me this—is he perfectly sincere? I mean, isn't he the kind of man that is very anxious to make himself agreeable?

NORA

Not in the least. What makes you think that?

KRISTINE

When you introduced him to me yesterday, he declared he had often heard my name mentioned in this house; but afterwards I noticed that your husband hadn't the slightest idea who I was. So how could Doctor Rank—?

NORA

That is quite right, Kristine. Torvald is so absurdly fond of me that he wants me absolutely to himself, as he says. At first he used to seem almost jealous if I mentioned any of the dear folk at home, so naturally I gave up doing so. But I often talk about such things with Doctor Rank, because he likes hearing about them.

KRISTINE

Listen to me, Nora. You are still very like a child in many things, and I am older than you in many ways and have a little more experience. Let me tell you this—you ought to make an end of it with Doctor Rank.

NORA

What ought I to make an end of?

KRISTINE

Of two things, I think. Yesterday you talked some nonsense about a rich admirer who was to leave you money—

NORA

An admirer who doesn't exist, unfortunately! But what then?

KRISTINE

Is Doctor Rank a man of means?

NORA

Yes, he is.

KRISTINE

And has no one to provide for?

NORA

No, no one; but—

KRISTINE

And comes here everyday?

NORA

Yes, I told you so.

KRISTINE

But how can this well-bred man be so tactless?

NORA

I don't understand you at all.

KRISTINE

Don't beat around the bush, Nora. Do you suppose I don't guess who lent you the fifty thousand dollars?

*

NORA

How can you think of such a thing! A friend of ours, who comes here everyday! Do you realize what a horribly painful position that would be?

KRISTINE

Then it really isn't he?

NORA

No, certainly not. It would never have entered into my head for a moment. Besides, he had no money to lend then; he came into his money afterwards.

KRISTINE

Well, I think that was lucky for you, my dear Nora.

NORA

No, it would never have come into my head to ask Doctor Rank. Although I am quite sure that if I had asked him—

KRISTINE

But of course you won't.

NORA

Of course not. I have no reason to think it could possibly be necessary. But I am quite sure that if I told Doctor Rank—

KRISTINE

Behind your husband's back?

NORA

I must make an end of it with the other one, and that will be behind his back too. I must make an end of it with him.

KRISTINE

Yes, that is what I told you
yesterday, but—

NORA

A man can put a thing like that
straight much easier than a woman.

KRISTINE

One's husband, yes.

NORA

Nonsense. When you pay off a debt you
get your bond back, don't you?

KRISTINE

Yes, as a matter of course.

NORA

And can tear it into a hundred
thousand pieces, and burn it up—the
nasty dirty paper!

KRISTINE

(looks hard at her,
lays down her sewing
and gets up slowly)

Nora, you are concealing something
from me.

NORA

Do I look as if I were?

KRISTINE

Something has happened to you since
yesterday morning. Nora, what is it?

Nora brings over snacks and wine. There's footsteps above
the kitchen. Nora looks up.

NORA

Shhs. I didn't know Torvald was
awake... do mind going on for the
present?

KRISTINE

Certainly. But I am not going away
from here until we have had it out
with one another.

19 INT. BED ROOM - DAY

19

Torvald dresses. Nora stands in the doorway watching him dress.

NORA

I have wanted you so much, Torvald dear.

TORVALD

Who were you talking to?

NORA

No, it was Kristine; she is helping me to put my dress in order. You will see I shall look quite smart.

TORVALD

Wasn't that a happy thought of mine, now?

*

NORA

Splendid! But don't you think it is nice of me, too, to do as you wish?

Nora walks out onto a balcony in the back of the room.

Down below, in the back yard, children play.

TORVALD

Nice?—because you do as your husband wishes? Well, well, you little rogue, I am sure you did not mean it in that way. But I am not going to disturb you; you will want to be trying on your dress, I expect.

*

NORA

I suppose you are going to work.

*

TORVALD

Yes.

NORA

On Christmas?

TORVALD

On Christmas.

*

NORA

Torvald.

TORVALD

Yes.

NORA

If your little squirrel were to ask
you for something very, very
prettily—?

TORVALD

What then? *

NORA

Would you do it? *

TORVALD

I should like to hear what it is,
first. *

NORA

Your squirrel would run about and do
all her tricks if you would be nice,
and do what she wants. *

TORVALD

Speak plainly.

NORA

Your skylark would chirp about in
every room, with her song rising and
falling— *

TORVALD

Well, my skylark does that anyhow. *

NORA

I would play the fairy and dance for
you in the moonlight, Torvald. *

TORVALD

Nora—you surely don't mean that
request you made to me this morning? *

NORA

Yes, Torvald. *

TORVALD

Have you really the courage to open
up that question again? *

NORA

Yes, dear, you must do as I ask; you
must let Krogstad keep his post in
the bank. *

TORVALD

My dear Nora, it is his post that I
have arranged Kristine shall have.

Torvald sits at this desk.

*

NORA

Yes, you have been awfully kind about that; but you could just as well dismiss some other clerk instead of Krogstad.

TORVALD

This is simply incredible obstinacy! Because you chose to give him a thoughtless promise that you would speak for him, I am expected to—

NORA

That isn't the reason, Torvald. It is for your own sake. This fellow writes in the most scurrilous newspapers; you have told me so yourself. He can do you an unspeakable amount of harm. I am frightened to death of him—

TORVALD

Ah, I understand; it is recollections of the past that scare you.

NORA

What do you mean?

TORVALD

Naturally you are thinking of your father.

A beat.

*

NORA

Yes—yes, of course. Just recall to your mind what these malicious creatures wrote in the papers about papa, and how horribly they slandered him. I believe they would have procured his dismissal if the Department had not sent you over to inquire into it, and if you had not been so kindly disposed and helpful to him.

TORVALD

My little Nora, there is an important difference between your father and me. Your father's reputation as a public official was not above suspicion.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

Mine is, and I hope it will continue to be so, as long as I hold my office.

NORA

You never can tell what mischief these men may contrive.

TORVALD

And it is just by interceding for him that you make it impossible for me to keep him. It is already known at the Bank that I mean to dismiss Krogstad. Is it to get about now that the new manager has changed his mind at his wife's bidding—

NORA

And what if it did?

TORVALD

Of course!—if only this obstinate little person can get her way! Do you suppose I am going to make myself ridiculous before my whole staff, to let people think that I am a man to be swayed by all sorts of outside influence? He would make my position in the Bank intolerable.

NORA

Torvald, I don't believe you mean that.

*

TORVALD

Don't you? Why not?

NORA

Because it is such a narrow-minded way of looking at things.

TORVALD

What are you saying? Narrow-minded? Do you think I am narrow-minded?

NORA

No, just the opposite, dear—and it is exactly for that reason.

*

TORVALD

It's the same thing.

Torvald sends an email.

*

TORVALD (cont'd)

Now then, little Miss Obstinate. It is done.

*
*

NORA

(breathlessly)

What is done?

*
*

TORVALD

Krogstad's dismissal. I've sent the message already.

*
*

NORA

You don't know what that can bring upon us.

*
*

TORVALD

It's too late.

*

NORA

Yes, it's too late.

*

TORVALD

My dear Nora, I can forgive the anxiety you are in, although really it is an insult to me. It is, indeed. Isn't it an insult to think that I should be afraid of a starving quill-driver's vengeance? But I forgive you nevertheless, because it is such eloquent witness to your great love for me.

Are you content now? There! There!—not these frightened dove's eyes! The whole thing is only the wildest fancy!—Now, you must go and play through the Tarantella and practise with your tambourine. I shall go into the inner office and shut the door, and I shall hear nothing; you can make as much noise as you please.

And when Rank comes, tell him where he will find me.

Torvald leaves the room.

Nora continues to watch her children from the balcony.

Off screen, a knocking at the door.

20 INT. HOUSE - DAY

20

Nora opens the door to Rank.

NORA

Good day, Doctor Rank. I knew it was you by your knock. You mustn't go in to Torvald now; I think he is busy with something.

*
*
*
*

RANK

And you?

*

NORA

Oh, you know very well I always have time for you.

*

RANK

Thank you. I shall make use of as much of it as I can.

*

NORA

What do you mean by that? As much of it as you can?

*

RANK

Well, does that alarm you?

*

NORA

It was such a strange way of putting it. Is anything likely to happen?

*

RANK

Nothing but what I have long been prepared for. But I certainly didn't expect it to happen so soon.

*

NORA

(gripping him by the arm)

What have you found out? Doctor Rank, you must tell me.

*

RANK

It is all up with me. And it can't be helped.

Kristine gets up from the kitchen table and exits to the back porch.

NORA

(with a sigh of relief)

Is it about yourself?

RANK

Who else? It is no use lying to one's self. I am the most wretched of all my patients, Mrs. Helmer. Lately I have been taking stock of my internal economy. Bankrupt! Probably within a month I shall lie rotting in the churchyard.

*

NORA

What an ugly thing to say!

RANK

The thing itself is cursedly ugly, and the worst of it is that I shall have to face so much more that is ugly before that. I shall only make one more examination of myself; when I have done that, I shall know pretty certainly when it will be that the horrors of dissolution will begin. There is something I want to tell you. Torvald's refined nature gives him an unconquerable disgust at everything that is ugly; I won't have him in my sick-room.

NORA

Oh, but, Doctor Rank—

RANK

I won't have him there. Not on any account. I bar my door to him. As soon as I am quite certain that the worst has come, I shall send you my card with a black cross on it, and then you will know that the loathsome end has begun.

NORA

You are quite absurd today. And I wanted you so much to be in a really good humor.

RANK

With death stalking beside me?—To have to pay this penalty for another man's sin? Is there any justice in that? And in every single family, in one way or another, some such inexorable retribution is being exacted—

NORA

(putting her hands
over her ears)

Rubbish! Do talk of something
cheerful.

RANK

Oh, it's a mere laughing matter, the
whole thing. My poor innocent spine
has to suffer for my father's
youthful amusements.

NORA

I suppose you mean that he was too
partial to asparagus and pate de foie
gras, don't you?

*

RANK

Yes, and to truffles.

*

NORA

Truffles, yes. And oysters too, I
suppose?

*

RANK

Oysters, of course, that goes without
saying.

*

NORA

And heaps of port and champagne. It
is sad that all these nice things
should take their revenge on our
bones.

*

RANK

Especially that they should revenge
themselves on the unlucky bones of
those who have not had the
satisfaction of enjoying them.

*

NORA

Yes, that's the saddest part of it
all.

*

RANK

(with a searching
look at her)

Hm!—

*

NORA

(after a short pause)

Why did you smile?

*

RANK

No, it was you that laughed.

*

NORA

No, it was you that smiled, Doctor Rank!

*

RANK

You are a greater rascal than I thought.

*

NORA

I am in a silly mood today.

*

RANK

So it seems.

*

NORA

(putting her hands on
his shoulder)

Dear, dear Doctor Rank, death mustn't take you away from Torvald and me.

*

RANK

It is a loss you would easily recover from. Those who are gone are soon forgotten. People form new ties, and then--

Both you and Torvald, when I am gone. You yourself are already on the high road to it, I think. What did that Kristine want here last night?

NORA

You don't mean to say you are jealous of poor Kristine?

RANK

Yes, I am. She will be my successor in this house. When I am done for, this woman will--

NORA

Hush! don't speak so loud. She is just outside.

RANK

Today again. There, you see.

NORA

She has only come to sew my dress for me.

*

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

Bless my soul, how unreasonable you are! Be nice now, Doctor Rank, and tomorrow you will see how beautifully I shall dance, and you can imagine I am doing it all for you—and for Torvald too, of course. Rank, come and sit down here, and I will show you something.

*

Nora takes out a picture of her in the dress.

RANK

What is it?

NORA

Just look at me!

RANK

It beautiful dress.

NORA

Isn't it? It is so dark here now, but tomorrow—.

RANK

Hm!—

NORA

Why are you looking so critical? Do you think it won't fit the bill?

RANK

I have no means of forming an opinion about that.

NORA

(after a moment)

For shame!

(hits him lightly on the shoulder, and then snuggles her head onto his shoulder)

That's to punish you.

RANK.

And what other nice things am I to be allowed to see?

NORA

. . .

RANK

When I am sitting here, talking to you as intimately as this, I cannot imagine for a moment what would have become of me if I had never come into this house.

NORA

I believe you do feel thoroughly at home with us.

RANK

And to be obliged to leave it all—

NORA

Nonsense, you are not going to leave it.

RANK

And not be able to leave behind one the slightest token of one's gratitude, scarcely even a fleeting regret—nothing but an empty place which the first comer can fill as well as any other.

NORA

And if I asked you now for a—? No!

RANK

For what?

NORA

For a big proof of your friendship—

RANK

Yes, yes!

NORA

I mean a tremendously big favor—

RANK

Would you really make me so happy for once?

NORA

I really can't, Rank. It is something out of all reason; it means advice, and help, and a favor—

RANK

The bigger a thing it is the better. I can't conceive what it is you mean.

(MORE)

RANK (cont'd)

Do tell me. Haven't I your confidence?

NORA

More than anyone else. I know you are my truest and best friend, and so I will tell you what it is. Well, Doctor Rank, it is something you must help me to prevent. You know how devotedly, how inexpressibly deeply Torvald loves me; he would never for a moment hesitate to give his life for me

*
*
*

RANK

(leaning towards her)

Nora—do you think he is the only one—?

NORA

The only one—?

RANK

I was determined you should know it before I went away, and there will never be a better opportunity than this.

*

RANK (cont'd)

Nora!

NORA

This really horrid of you.

RANK

To have loved you as much as anyone else does? Was that horrid?

NORA

No, but to go and tell me so. There was really no need—

RANK

What do you mean? Did you know—?

Nora breaks away. Rank follows slowly after.

RANK.

Nora—Mrs. Helmer—tell me, had you any idea of this?

*

NORA

Oh, how do I know whether I had or whether I hadn't?

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

I really can't tell you--To think you could be so clumsy, Doctor Rank! We were getting on so nicely. . . I can't tell you anything now.

RANK

Yes, yes. You mustn't punish me in that way. Let me have permission to do for you whatever a man may do.

Nora sits down across from him -- buries her face in her hands -- then looks up at him. She fakes an air of confidence.

NORA

Well, a man should find the whole thing is merely a fancy on my part. You are a nice sort of man - don't feel ashamed on my part.

RANK

Not one bit. But perhaps I had better go. For...ever?

Nora's phone rings. She ignores it.

*

NORA

No, indeed, you shall not. Of course you must come here just as before. You know very well Torvald can't do without you.

*

*

RANK

Yes, but you?

NORA

You... You see when I was at home, of course I loved papa best. But I always thought it tremendous fun if I could steal down into the maids' room, because they never moralised at all, and talked to each other about such entertaining things.

*

RANK

I see--it is their place I have taken.

NORA

Oh, dear, nice Doctor Rank, I never meant that at all. But surely you can understand that being with Torvald is a little like being with papa--

Nora's phone rings again. She looks at it...

RANK

Who is it?

Is there anything wrong?

NORA

No, no, not in the least. It is only something—it is my new dress—

RANK

What? I thought Mrs. Linde was—

NORA

Oh, yes, that one; but this is another. I ordered it. Torvald mustn't know about it—

RANK.

Oho! Then that was the great secret.

Still ringing...

NORA

Of course. He's upstairs actually, keep him as long as—

RANK.

Make your mind easy; I won't let him escape.

Rank exits up the stairs. Nora waits until he's out of sight and answers the phone. She whispers.

NORA

Hello?

(listens)

I must whisper, my husband is at home. What do you want of me?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

An explanation of something.

NORA

Make haste then. What is it?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

You know, I suppose, that I have got my dismissal.

*

*

*

*

NORA

I couldn't prevent it, Mr. Krogstad. I fought as hard as I could on your side, but it was no good.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Does your husband love you so little, then? He knows what I can expose you to, and yet he ventures—

NORA

How can you suppose that he has any knowledge of the sort?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Then since you have kept the matter so carefully to yourself, I make bold to suppose that you have a little clearer idea, than you had yesterday, of what it actually is that you have done?

NORA

More than you could ever teach me.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Yes, such a bad lawyer as I am.

NORA

What is it you want of me?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Only to see how you were, Mrs. Helmer. I have been thinking about you all day long. A mere cashier, a quill-driver, a—well, a man like me—even he has a little of what is called feeling, you know.

*
*

NORA

Show it, then; think of my little children.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Have you and your husband thought of mine? But never mind about that. I only wanted to tell you that you need not take this matter too seriously. In the first place there will be no accusation made on my part.

NORA

No, of course not; I was sure of that.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

The whole thing can be arranged amicably; there is no reason why anyone should know anything about it. It will remain a secret between us three.

NORA

My husband must never get to know anything about it.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

How will you be able to prevent it? Am I to understand that you can pay the balance that is owing?

NORA

No, not just at present.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Or perhaps that you have some expedient for raising the money soon?

NORA

No expedient that I mean to make use of.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Well, in any case, it would have been of no use to you now. If you stood there with ever so much money in your hand, I would never part with your bond.

NORA

Tell me what purpose you mean to put it to.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

I shall only preserve it—keep it in my possession. No one who is not concerned in the matter shall have the slightest hint of it. So that if the thought of it has driven you to any desperate resolution—

NORA

It has.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

If you had it in your mind to run away from your home—

NORA

I had.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Or even something worse—

NORA

How could you know that?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Give up the idea.

(after a pause)

I have a letter for your husband that I'm ready to send.

NORA

Telling him?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

In as lenient a manner as I possibly could.

NORA

He mustn't get the letter. Destroy it. I will find some means of getting money.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Excuse me, Mrs. Helmer, but I think I told you just now—

*

NORA

I am not speaking of what I owe you. Tell me what sum you are asking my husband for, and I will get the money.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

I am not asking your husband for a penny.

NORA

What do you want, then?

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

I want to rehabilitate myself, Mrs. Helmer; I want to get on; and in that your husband must help me. I want to get into the Bank again, in a higher position. Your husband must make a place for me—

*

*

NORA

That he will never do!

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

He will; I know him; he dare not protest.

NORA

I won't make a request of it.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Do you mean that you will—?

NORA

I have courage enough for it now.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Oh, you can't frighten me. A fine, spoiled lady like you—

NORA

You will see, you will see.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Under the ice, perhaps? Down into the cold, coal-black water? And then, in the spring, to float up to the surface, all horrible and unrecognizable, with your hair fallen out—

NORA

You can't frighten me.

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Nor you me. People don't do such things, Mrs. Helmer. Besides, what use would it be? I should have him completely in my power all the same.

*

NORA

Afterwards? When I am no longer—

KROGSTAD (V.O.)

Have you forgotten that it is I who have the keeping of your reputation? Do not do anything foolish. When Torvald has had my letter, I shall expect a message from him. And be sure you remember that it is your husband himself who has forced me into such ways as this again. I will never forgive him for that. Goodbye, Mrs. Helmer.

*

Nora finds her breath...

NORA

Over.

Enter Kristine from the outside.

KRISTINE

There, I can't see anything more to mend now. Would you like to try it on—?

NORA

Kristine, come here.

KRISTINE

What is the matter with you? You look so agitated!

*

NORA

Come here. My husband has just received a letter from Krogstad.

KRISTINE

Nora—it was Krogstad who lent you the money!

*

NORA

Yes, and now Torvald will know all about it.

*

KRISTINE

Believe me, Nora, that's the best thing for both of you.

*

NORA

You don't know all. I forged a name.

*

KRISTINE

Good heavens—!

*

*

NORA

I only want to say this to you, Kristine—you must be my witness. No one else has known anything about it; I, and I alone, did the whole thing. Remember that.

KRISTINE

I will, indeed. But I don't understand all this.

*

NORA

How should you understand it? A wonderful thing is going to happen!

KRISTINE

A wonderful thing?

NORA

Yes, a wonderful thing!—But terrible,
it mustn't happen, not for all the
world.

KRISTINE

I will go at once and see Krogstad.

NORA

Don't go to him; he will do you some
harm.

KRISTINE

Where does he live?

TORVALD (O.S)

Nora! Nora!

NORA

(cries out anxiously)

Oh, what's that? What do you want?

TORVALD

We are not coming down; are you
trying on your dress?

NORA

Yes, that's it. I look so nice,
Torvald.

KRISTINE

What is his number, Nora?

NORA

It's no use. It is hopeless. He's
already sent the letter.

*

*

KRISTINE

Krogstad must call at once for his
letter unread, he must find some
pretense—

*

NORA

But it is just at this time that
Torvald generally—

*

KRISTINE

You must delay him. I will come back
as soon as I can.

*

Exit Kristine.

*

Nora left alone spots Torvald's phone on a book shelf. She
moves to it and tries to unlock it. She tries time and again
until she's locked out of the phone.

*

*

*

*

NORA

Torvald!

*

TORVALD (O.S.)

*

Well? May I venture at last to come
into my own room again? Come along,
Rank, now you will see—

*

Torvald comes down the stairs and sees Nora standing
completely still.

TORVALD

But what is this?

NORA

What is what, dear?

TORVALD

Rank led me to expect a splendid
transformation.

RANK

I understood so, but evidently I was
mistaken.

NORA

Yes, nobody is to have the chance of
admiring me in my dress until
tomorrow.

*

TORVALD

But, my dear Nora, you look so worn
out. Have you been practicing too
much?

*

NORA

No, I have not practiced at all.

*

TORVALD

But you will need to—

*

NORA

Yes, indeed I shall, Torvald. But I
can't get on a bit without you to
help me; I have absolutely forgotten
the whole thing.

Help me, Torvald. Promise that you
will! I am so nervous about it—all
the people—. You must give yourself
up to me entirely this evening. Not
the tiniest bit of business—you
mustn't even take a pen in your hand.
Will you promise, Torvald dear?

*

TORVALD

I promise. This evening I will be
wholly and absolutely at your
service, you helpless little mortal.

Torvald's phone chimes. He reaches for it, Nora grabs it.

NORA

No, no! don't do that, Torvald!

TORVALD

Let me -- well, hullo, it's disabled.

NORA

... must have been one of the
children.

(tries to take it
away from him)

I can't dance tomorrow if I don't
practice with you.

TORVALD

Are you really so afraid of it, dear?

NORA

Let me practice at once; there is
time now, before we go to dinner. Sit
down and play for me, Torvald dear;
criticize me, and correct me as you
play.

TORVALD

With great pleasure, if you wish me
to.

Torvald moves to the record player as Nora wraps herself
hastily in a shawl.

NORA

Now play for me! I am going to dance!

Torvald plays a record and Nora dances.

TORVALD

Slower, slower!

NORA

I can't do it any other way.

TORVALD

Not so violently, Nora!

NORA

This is the way.

*

*
*
*
*
*

*

Torvald stops the music.

TORVALD

No, no—that is not a bit right.

NORA

(laughing)

Didn't I tell you so?

Torvald starts the music again.

Nora dances. Torvald has taken up a position near her, and during her dance gives her frequent instructions. She does not seem to hear him; her hair comes down and falls over her shoulders; she pays no attention to it, but goes on dancing.

TORVALD

My dear darling Nora, you are dancing
as if your life depended on it.

NORA

So it does.

TORVALD

Stop, Rank; this is sheer madness.
Stop, I tell you!

Rank stops the music.

TORVALD (cont'd)

I could never have believed it. You
have forgotten everything I taught
you.

NORA

There, you see.

TORVALD

You will want a lot of coaching.

NORA

Yes, you see how much I need it. You
must coach me up to the last minute.
Promise me that, Torvald!

TORVALD

You can depend on me.

NORA

You must not think of anything but
me, either today or tomorrow; you
mustn't open a single letter—

TORVALD

Ah, you are still afraid of that
fellow—

NORA

Yes, indeed I am.

TORVALD

You must be aware of a message
waiting for me.

NORA

I don't know; I think there is; but
you must not read anything of that
kind now. Nothing horrid must come
between us until this is all over.

Torvald looks to Rank, who offer s a sympathetic nod.

TORVALD

(taking Nora into his
arms)

The child shall have her way. But
tomorrow night, after you have
danced—

NORA

Then you will be free.

Torvald looks Nora up and down.

TORVALD

Where's my little skylark?

NORA

(looking at him)

Here she is.

FADE OUT:

21 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

21

III: It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

*

A table has been placed in the middle of the room, with
chairs around it. A lamp is burning on the table. The door
into the hall stands open. Dance music is heard outside in
the yard. Kristine is sitting at the table idly turning over
the leaves of a book; she tries to read, but does not seem
able to collect her thoughts. Every now and then she listens
intently for a sound at the outer door.

Her phone chimes -- she reads a message and then gets up
from the table, and crosses to the front door and opens it
for Krogstad.

KROGSTAD

I received your note. What does it mean?

KRISTINE

It means it is absolutely necessary that I should have a talk with you.

KROGSTAD

Really? And is it absolutely necessary that it should be here?

KRISTINE

It was more prudent and telling to than my own residence. Come in; we are quite alone. The Helmers are at the dance in their yard.

Krogstad enters reluctantly.

KRISTINE (cont'd)

Now, Nils, let us have a talk.

KROGSTAD

Can we two have anything to talk about?

KRISTINE

We have a great deal to talk about.

KROGSTAD

I shouldn't have thought so.

KRISTINE

No, you have never properly understood me.

*

KROGSTAD

Was there anything else to understand except what was obvious to all the world—a heartless woman jilts a man when a more lucrative chance turns up?

MRS LINDE.

Do you believe that I did it with a light heart?

KROGSTAD

Didn't you?

KRISTINE

Nils, did you really think that?

KROGSTAD

If it were as you say, why did you write to me as you did at the time?

KRISTINE

I could do nothing else. As I had to break with you, it was my duty also to put an end to all that you felt for me.

KROGSTAD

So that was it. And all this—only for the sake of money!

KRISTINE

You must not forget that I had a helpless mother and two little brothers. We couldn't wait for you, Nils; your prospects seemed hopeless then.

KROGSTAD

That may be so, but you had no right to throw me over for anyone else's sake.

KRISTINE

Indeed I don't know. Many a time did I ask myself if I had the right to do it.

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.

*

KRISTINE

But help may be near.

*

KROGSTAD

It was near; but then you came and stood in my way.

KRISTINE

Unintentionally, Nils. It was only today that I learned it was your place I was going to take in the Bank.

KROGSTAD

If you say so. But now that you know it, are you not going to give it up to me?

KRISTINE

No, because that would not benefit you in the least.

KROGSTAD

Oh, benefit, benefit—

KRISTINE

I have learned to act prudently. Life, and hard, bitter necessity have taught me that.

KROGSTAD

And life has taught me not to believe in fine speeches.

KRISTINE

Then life has taught you something very reasonable. But deeds you must believe in?

KROGSTAD

What do you mean by that?

KRISTINE

You said you were like a shipwrecked man clinging to some wreckage.

KROGSTAD

I had good reason to say so.

KRISTINE

Well, I am like a shipwrecked woman clinging to some wreckage—no one to mourn for, no one to care for.

KROGSTAD

It was your own choice.

KRISTINE

There was no other choice—then.

KROGSTAD

Well, what now?

KRISTINE

Nils, how would it be if we two
shipwrecked people could join forces?

KROGSTAD

What are you saying?

KRISTINE

Two on the same piece of wreckage
would stand a better chance than each
on their own.

KROGSTAD

Do you mean that you gave me a
thought?

KRISTINE

I could not endure life without work.
There is not the least pleasure in
working by one's self.

KROGSTAD

Could you really do it? Tell me—do
you know all about my past life?

KRISTINE

You seemed to me to imply that with
me you might have been quite another
man.

KROGSTAD

I am certain of it.

KRISTINE

Is it too late now?

KROGSTAD

Kristine, are you saying this
deliberately? Yes, I am sure you are.
I see it in your face. Have you
really the courage, then—?

KRISTINE

Nils, I have faith in your real
character—I can dare anything
together with you.

KROGSTAD

(grasps her hands)

Thanks, thanks, Kristine! Now I shall find a way to clear myself in the eyes of the world. Ah, but I forgot— But it is all no use. Of course you are not aware what steps I have taken in the matter of the Helmers.

KRISTINE

Yes, I know all about that.

KROGSTAD

And in spite of that have you the courage to—?

KRISTINE

I understand very well to what lengths a man like you might be driven by despair.

KROGSTAD

If I could only undo what I have done!

(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?

KRISTINE

Nils, a woman who has once sold herself for another's sake, doesn't do it a second time.

KROGSTAD

Then I will ask for the letter unread.

KRISTINE

No, no.

KROGSTAD

Yes, of course I will. I will wait here until Torvald 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—

*

KRISTINE

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?

KRISTINE

I have witnessed incredible things in this house. Torvald 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.

22 EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

22

The party is over. Torvald cleans. Nora paces.

NORA

(entering through)

I wish it wouldn't have ended.

TORVALD

But, my dearest Nora—

NORA

Only an hour more.

Kristine exits the house.

KRISTINE

Good evening.

NORA

Kristine!

TORVALD

You here, so late, Kristine?

KRISTINE

Yes, you must excuse me; I was so anxious to see Nora in her dress.

NORA

Have you been sitting here waiting for me?

KRISTINE

Yes, unfortunately I came too late, you had already gone upstairs; and I thought I couldn't go away again without having seen you.

TORVALD

Yes, take a good look at her. I think she is worth looking at. Isn't she charming, Kristine?

KRISTINE

Yes, indeed she is.

TORVALD

Doesn't she look remarkably pretty? 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 the part to an end by force.

NORA

Torvald, you will repent not having it on longer, even if it were only for half an hour.

TORVALD

(while he cleans, not
paying attention to
whether or not the
women are listening)

Listen to her, Kristine! 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—my capricious little Capri maiden, I should say—on my arm; took one quick turn round the room; a curtsy on either side, and, as they say in novels, the beautiful apparition disappeared.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

An exit ought always to be effective,
Kristine; but that is what I cannot
make Nora understand.

NORA

(while Torvald is
going on)

Well?

KRISTINE

I have had a talk with him.

NORA

Yes, and—

KRISTINE

Nora, you must tell your husband all
about it.

NORA

I knew it.

KRISTINE

You have nothing to be afraid of as
far as Krogstad is concerned; but you
must tell him.

NORA

I won't tell him.

KRISTINE

Then the letter will.

NORA

Thank you, Kristine. Now I know what
I must do.

TORVALD

Well, Kristine, have you admired her?

KRISTINE

Yes, and now I will say goodnight.
Goodnight, Nora, and don't be self-
willed any more.

TORVALD

That's right, Kristine.

KRISTINE
Goodnight, Mr. Torvald.

Kristine goes around the corner.

TORVALD
(as she leaves)
Goodnight, goodnight. I hope you will
get home all right. Goodnight,
goodnight.
(hears a gate close)
Ah!—at last we have got rid of her.
She is a frightful bore, that woman.

Torvald goes into the house.

23 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

23

Nora follows Torvald inside.

NORA
Aren't you very tired, Torvald?

TORVALD
No, not in the least.

NORA
Nor sleepy?

TORVALD
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.

TORVALD
There, you see it was quite right of
me not to let you stay there any
longer.

NORA
Everything you do is quite right,
Torvald.

TORVALD
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.

TORVALD

Nor I. Except that he handed me these. -- Two cards of Rank's.

NORA

Is there anything written on them?

TORVALD

There is a black cross over the name. Look there-what an uncomfortable idea! It looks as if he were announcing his own death.

NORA

... if he were. It would be quite brave of him.

TORVALD

Or mad.

NORA

Or mad.

TORVALD

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.

Torval embraces her --

-- Nora's eyes are on --

-- those black crosses.

TORVALD

Why shouldn't I look at my dearest treasure?-at all the beauty that is mine, all my very own?

NORA

(pulling away)

You mustn't say things like that to me tonight.

TORVALD

You have still got the Tarantella in your blood, I see. And it makes you more captivating than ever.

(In a lower voice)

Nora - the whole house is quiet.

NORA

Yes, I hope so.

TORVALD

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 promised bride, 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.

TORVALD

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 into our home—to be alone with you for the first time—quite alone with my shy little darling! All this evening I have longed for nothing but you. When I watched the seductive figures of the Tarantella, my blood was on fire. My darling, 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
Do you mean that? Really mean that?

TORVALD
I do.

NORA
I think it is time you read your
messages, Torvald.

TORVALD
No, no; not tonight. I want to be
with you, my darling wife. -- You
must be thinking of Rank. We will see
him again, surely it is some terrible
joke.

NORA
(no)
Goodnight, Torvald.

TORVALD
(alright)
Good night my little song-bird.

Torvald goes upstairs and Nora is left alone

24 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

24

Nora takes down the Christmas tree and, until:

TORVALD
Nora!

Torvald comes down the stairs.

TORVALD (cont'd)
Do you know what is in this letter?

NORA
Yes, I know.

TORVALD
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.

TORVALD

Oh, don't let us have any silly excuses.

NORA

Torvald—!

TORVALD

Miserable creature—what have you done?

(a beat)

Answer me! 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.

*

TORVALD

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! For shame! 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.

TORVALD

Now you have destroyed 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

Then I shall remove myself and you
will be free.

TORVALD

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.

*

TORVALD

It is so incredible that I can't take
it in. But we must come to some
understanding. The matter must be
hushed up at any cost. And as for you
and me, it must 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—

Nora's phone rings. She looks at it. Doesn't want to answer
it.

*

*

Torvald takes the phone away and answers.

*

Nora calmly continues to take off the ornaments.

*

Torval's conversation doesn't last more than a minute. He hangs up the phone and looks to Nora, a certain soberness come over him.

TORVALD (cont'd)

I am saved! Nora, I am saved!

*
*

NORA

And I?

*
*

TORVALD

You too. He releases you from your bond. He says he regrets and repents—that a happy change in his life—never mind what he says... We are saved, Nora! No one can do anything to you. Oh, Nora, Nora! The whole thing shall be nothing but a bad dream to me. It doesn't exist any longer. He says that since Christmas Eve you—. These must have been three dreadful days for you, Nora.

*

NORA

I have fought a hard fight these three days.

*

TORVALD

And suffered agonies, and seen no way out but—. No, we won't call any of the horrors to mind. We will only shout with joy, and keep saying, "It's all over! It's all over!" Listen to me, Nora. You don't seem to realise that it is all over. What is this?—such a cold, set face! 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 everything. I know that what you did, you did out of love for me.

*

NORA

That is true.

*

TORVALD

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.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

But do you suppose you are any the less dear to me, because you don't understand how to act on your own responsibility? No, no; only lean on 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 anymore 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.

*

Nora goes up stairs.

TORVALD

No, don't go— what are you doing?

NORA

Taking off my fancy dress.

Torvald goes over to the Christmas tree and begins to redecorate it.

TORVALD

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. 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. Tomorrow 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 thing as repudiating you, or even reproaching you? You have no idea what a true man's heart is like, Nora.

(MORE)

TORVALD (cont'd)

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—.

Nora reenters in everyday dress.

TORVALD (cont'd)

You've changed?

NORA

Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now.

TORVALD

But what for?—so late as this.

NORA

I shall not sleep tonight.

TORVALD

But, my dear Nora—

NORA

(looking at her watch)

It is not so very late. Sit down here, Torvald. You and I have much to say to one another.

25 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

25

Nora sits down at the table.

TORVALD

Nora—what is this?—this cold, set face?

NORA

Sit down. It will take some time; I have a lot to talk over with you.

TORVALD

(sits down at the
opposite side of the
table)

You alarm me, Nora!—and I don't
understand you.

NORA

No, that is just it. You don't
understand me, and I have never
understood you either—before tonight.
No, you mustn't interrupt me. You
must simply listen to what I say.
Torvald, this is a settling of
accounts.

TORVALD

What do you mean by that?

NORA

Isn't there one thing that strikes
you as strange in our sitting here
like this?

TORVALD

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? We have never exchanged
a word on any serious subject.
That we have never sat down in
earnest together to try and get at
the bottom of anything.

TORVALD

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.

TORVALD

What! By us two—by us two, who have
loved you better than anyone else in
the world?

NORA

You have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me.

TORVALD

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—

TORVALD

What sort of an expression is that to use about our marriage?

NORA

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.

TORVALD

Nora... Have you not been happy here?

NORA

(thinks for a moment)

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.

(MORE)

*

NORA (cont'd)

I thought it great fun when you played with me, just as they thought it great fun when I played with them. That is what our marriage has been, Torvald.

TORVALD

It shall be different. Playtime shall be over, and lesson-time shall begin.

NORA

Whose lessons? Mine, or the children's?

*

TORVALD

Both yours and the children's, my darling Nora.

*

NORA

Alas, Torvald, you are not the man to educate me into being a wife.

*

TORVALD

And you are?

NORA

How am I fitted to bring up the children?

TORVALD

Nora!

NORA

Didn't you say so yourself a little while ago—that you dare not trust me to bring them up?

TORVALD

In a moment of anger! Why do you pay any heed to that?

NORA

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.

TORVALD

What?

NORA

I must stand quite alone, if I am to understand myself and everything about me. It is for that reason that I cannot remain with you any longer.

TORVALD

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.

TORVALD

What sort of madness is this!

NORA

Tomorrow I shall go home—I mean, to my old home. It will be easiest for me to find something to do there.

*

TORVALD

You blind, foolish woman! To desert your home, 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.

TORVALD

It's shocking. This is how you would neglect your most sacred duties.

NORA

What do you consider my most sacred duties?

TORVALD

Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children?

NORA

I have other duties just as sacred.

TORVALD

What duties could those be?

NORA

Duties to myself.

TORVALD

Before all else, you are a wife and a mother.

NORA

I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are— 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.

*

TORVALD

Am I to assume that you have no moral sense?

NORA

I really don't know. I thought I knew but I've not tested by any scientific mean the truth of it. And that perplexes me all together. I only know that you and I look at it in quite a different light. Tell me: is it moral for a woman to spare her dying father, or to save her husband, because according the law it is illegal. I am learning that the law is quite another thing from what I supposed; but I find it impossible to convince myself that the law is moral.

*

*

*

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*

TORVALD

You are ill, Nora; you are delirious; I almost think you are out of your mind.

NORA

I have never felt my mind so clear and certain as tonight.

TORVALD

And is it with a clear and certain mind that you forsake your husband and your children?

NORA

Yes, it is.

*

TORVALD

Then there is only one possible explanation.

*

NORA

What is that?

*

TORVALD

You do not love me anymore.

*

NORA

No, and that is just it. 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.

*

TORVALD

Is that a clear and certain conviction too?

*

NORA

Yes, absolutely clear and certain.

TORVALD

And can you tell me what I have done to forfeit your love?

*

NORA

Yes, indeed I can. It was tonight, when the wonderful thing did not happen; then I saw you were not the man I had thought you were.

*

TORVALD

I don't understand.

*

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 consent to accept this man's conditions.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

I was so absolutely certain that you would say to him: Publish the thing to the whole world. And when that was done—

TORVALD

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. But of course I wouldn't let you. And we'd be locked in a stalemate of doing what's best for the other.

*
*
*
*

TORVALD

Nora—!

NORA

That was the wonderful thing which I hoped for and feared.

TORVALD

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.

TORVALD

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.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)

(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!

TORVALD

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.

TORVALD

I have it in me to become a different man.

NORA

Perhaps— but only when your doll is taken away from you.

TORVALD

Nora, Nora, not now! Wait until tomorrow.

NORA

I cannot spend the night in a strange man's room. Goodbye, Torvald. I won't see the little ones. As I am now, I can be of no use to them.

TORVALD

But some day, Nora—some day?

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.

TORVALD

That too?

NORA

That too.

TORVALD

(handing over his
ring)

Nora, shall you never think of me
again?

NORA

I know I shall often think of you,
the children, and this house.

TORVALD

May I write to you, Nora?

NORA

No.

TORVALD

But at least let me send you—

NORA

No.

TORVALD

Let me help you if you are in want.

NORA

No. I can receive nothing from a
stranger.

TORVALD

Nora—can I never be anything more
than a stranger to you?

NORA

Ah, Torvald, the most wonderful thing
of all would have to happen.

TORVALD

Tell me what that would be!

NORA

Both you and I would have to be so
changed that—.

TORVALD

But I will believe in it. Tell me! So
changed that—?

*

NORA

That our life together would be a
real wedlock.

(MORE)

NORA (cont'd)
Oh, Torvald, I don't believe in
wonderful things any longer.

Nora leaves the house.

26 INT. CAR - NIGHT

26

Nora drives away.

The End