

A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2

Performance dates - May 19, 20, 21, 22

AUDITION SIDES

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p. 52 - (Nora) *Alright Anne Marie, this is the point where I need your help.*

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Nora, pgs. 59-60

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Emmy & Nora, pgs. 64-70

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p. 70 - (Emmy) *I feel bad for the kids who growing up had the usual life. I feel special.*

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p. 75 - *Torvald did something really stupid.*

p.77 - *It's a problem. You being here, doing what you're doing.*

Torvald & Nora, pgs. 90-100

p. 90 - (Torvald) *Anne Marie told me that you - you write these little books-*

p. 100 - (Nora) *Yes.*

Nora, pgs. 105-106

pg. 105 - *15 years ago...*

pg.106 - *So I find that I'm best - that I'm my best self if I'm by myself.*

NORA.
yes, but—

ANNE MARIE.
he's great, he's good—

NORA.
He never remarried

ANNE MARIE.
no

NORA.
no, I didn't think so.

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

...



ANNE MARIE.
—but I do think he should get a dog.
I think if he had a dog he'd be happier,
not that he's not happy, I don't mean that but
he just likes dogs so much.
I see him—he'll see a dog
and he'll get so happy,
and likes to pet the dogs
and he lets them lick his face
and he holds them close.

I told him to get a dog and he said no and I said why,
and he said that dogs die.
Dogs die. They get sick, their bodies break, they hurt, and
when that happens he'd have to put the thing out of its misery:
cut its throat or break its neck or pelt its head with a rock,
and he doesn't want to come to love something

only to have to kill it.

I sort of wanted to say but didn't say but wanted to say that—
I think he's at a point where the dog will probably outlive him.
I think that's pretty optimistic to think that he'll be around to put
the dog down.

NORA.

...

ANNE MARIE.

But what about you, tell me about you,
what's happened to you?

NORA.

I'll tell you what: I'm not the same person
who left through that door.
I'm a very different person

ANNE MARIE.

yes, I'd imagine—

NORA.

you really want to know?

ANNE MARIE.

Yes I do, I know nothing!

NORA.

Guess.

ANNE MARIE.

Guess?

NORA.

You want to know what I've been up to,
but I want to know what you thought I was doing—
what did you imagine—?

NORA.

and you can't say that they wouldn't be.

ANNE MARIE.

If marriage were so bad do you really think people would still be—
after all this time of people living on this earth—
would people still be getting married?



NORA.

We do a lot of things that aren't good for us—
this we do because our parents tell us
from an early age—our parents,
our churches,
our leaders—
everyone
tells us that we need it, so we believe it,
and the idea gets etched inside our skulls
but you only think you need it because it's all you've ever
been told.

They tell us: "It's an expression of love,
the ultimate expression of love,
the one that we're all working towards"
—but how does that make any sense—?
to say "I love you, therefore
you should tie yourself to me,
and you can never leave me,
you can never love anyone else,
you're off limits, I own you."

I own you.

That's what marriage says—to me that sounds more cruel than kind—
also, also—

When people marry,
they say, "I choose you,
and I choose you forever,"
but who is this "you" that they're choosing?

Because people change, over time
people change into different people,
so how can you say that "I want
to be with this person"
when "this person" is not
going to be "this person"
3 or 5 or 10 years from now,
but there you are committed,
forever
till death
stuck,
stuck either with a person you don't want to be with
or with a person pretending to be a person they no longer are.
I mean, I'd even go so far as to say that marriage
makes a person change for the worse.

Because, before marriage, before marriage
you're wooing the other person,
wooing—what does that mean—that means always putting your best,
your kindest, your most attractive side forward,
and you woo and you woo until
you can convince the other person
to commit to marriage.

And then what happens?
What happens when there's
no more reason to woo—?
to put your best side forward?
Marriage tells us that you're committed,
you're bound
to this other person
regardless of how you're treated.
Think about it:
Don't you think that that encourages
couples to treat each other
however they want—? to be as awful as you want—
it doesn't matter,
because you're in it until death.

This happens.
All the time.
And people are miserable.

Yes, yes, we want to be intimate with another person,
to know another person,
to love that person deeply,
and to be naked with that person—

but why do we need a marriage for that?

And why does it need to be with just one person
and for the rest of your life?

Seems so sad.

And we know it's sad—we *know* it—
we know it and we feel it
and we go and we *reach*
outside that contract of marriage,
all the time it happens,
men and women—
we fail to be faithful because deep down we ache for more,
because this ache is in the core of who we are—
but we stomp it out,
and we beat ourselves up
for failing to be something we never were to begin with.

And so I say, well just end it.
End marriage.

And it will end. I know it.
In the future,
20, 30 years from now,
marriage will be a thing of the past,
and those in the future
will look back on us,
and they'll be in shock,
in total—just awe—
at how stupid we are,
how backwards our thinking,
how sad it is

NORA.

I didn't believe it at first either,
so I got someone I knew—a lawyer—to look into it, and
it turns out that yes, Torvald never filed for the divorce,
and that, yes, he and I are still married.

Did you know—?

ANNE MARIE.

no, no of course not.

 NORA.

This judge—he says that unless I publicly retract everything I've
said in my books,
write a letter and have it published in all of the newspapers,
apologize for what I wrote
apologize for encouraging women to leave bad marriages,
and say that what I said was wrong and dangerous—

that unless I do that,

he will expose me:

expose my real name,

expose me as a married woman

who claims to be unmarried—

I've signed contracts, done business, had lovers—all sorts of things
that a married woman isn't allowed to do, that are illegal, that amount
to fraud—This judge could make a lot of trouble for me.

ANNE MARIE.

So *that's* why you're here

NORA.

I do plan on seeing Torvald,
tomorrow I will see him,
and I will ask him for the divorce—
to simply send a letter to local clerk,
just clear up any confusion,
and let everyone know that

we haven't been "man and wife" for the past 15 years—
The clerk files the divorce—it's done. Crisis averted.

It's so easy for him to do it—easier for him than me—
the way they have the laws the man can get a divorce for no reason
at all
but a woman has to prove the man did something horrible to her—
threatened her life, committed incest, gave her syphilis.
Hopefully he'll just file the divorce and we can get it done before
the judge tries to follow through on those threats

ANNE MARIE.
and my role in all of this?

NORA.
Based on even the little you said earlier,
it sounds like he's still upset about what happened between us,
and I might need your help.

(Anne Marie has a handkerchief out, wiping her eyes.)

ANNE MARIE.
Oh well shit. Shit Nora shit.

NORA.
Are you crying?

ANNE MARIE.
I think you've gone and misinterpreted what I said—
was it what I said about the dogs?—
and now you have this picture in your head of him being spiteful
and sad and broken and obsessed and—
I just wanted—oh fuck it all—I just thought it would be nice
if after all these years, you two could
sit together
and have a nice talk
and have things be normal
and nice
and maybe even, who knows—but you read too much into the things
I say.

NORA.

Anne Marie. You didn't do anything wrong.
I might need a little more help,
we're allies,
we go way back,
you're like a mother to me,
you were practically my mother,
you raised me

ANNE MARIE.

yes and I also raised your children.

NORA.

And I'm like a daughter to you,
yes?
Isn't that true?
Before Torvald, there was you and there was me and that was it.

ANNE MARIE.

I don't like being in the middle of things—allies?—that sounds like war.
I like everybody just fine—

NORA.

yes, yes, but
I am in a precarious position right now—

ANNE MARIE.

so am I, Nora, so am—

NORA.

yes, but if you—

(The door opens.)

(It's Torvald.)

ANNE MARIE.

...



TORVALD.

You left.

You left me.

You walked out this door
and you left me
and you left the kids
and when I think back on what happened
I think to myself that I have one
big
regret:

I wish *I* left *you*.

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

I should have left you
long before you left me I should have—I think back
to all these moments where I should have left you—there are so
many—

NORA.

are there—

TORVALD.

—every time you chastised me for being too serious or being too
worried about small things, never taking seriously the things that *I*
cared about

—and every time you asked me for money—and every time you
asked me for money by first telling me how much you love me as if
by telling me that you love me would make me give you the money—
that's really manipulative by the way

—every time you'd ask me to do a favor for a friend of yours—you
had all of these friends, and always it became my responsibility to
fix their problems as if the only value I had in your life was either

my ability to give you money and find your friends a job or a place to live—never considering the possibility that maybe I didn't have time to help everyone you thought needed help, or—

and you could tell that the favors you were asking me made me uncomfortable, but you pushed and you pushed and you'd say things to make me feel like I was being a wimp or weak every time you talked down / to me—

NORA.

you were the one who talked down to me

TORVALD.

every time you flirted with other men—

NORA.

I never—

TORVALD.

yes, and every time you made fun of me in front of other men, every time you rolled your eyes at me or—

NORA.

you did that to me too, all the time you—

TORVALD.

and when you told me that I was kind but being kind wasn't enough to make you want to be with me —and the moment when you told me that your own needs were more important than taking care of your kids, your own kids who needed you, who missed you, who wanted you —and then the moment you told me you didn't love me anymore—that moment that was maybe a minute before you walked out of here—but I wish—I wish I didn't take it like I took it.

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

Alright Torvald—I see that you see me as some kind of monster, but you're not totally clean here either.

You've changed what really happened, in your mind.

You make yourself into the victim, the blameless, the right, the better one of the two.

That's you. That's how you are—you have to be right and superior.

This thing you do—this thing that men do of standing in front of women

and looking down at them, telling them how the world works, educating them, us, me

about how things should be

as if you were some kind of expert.

TORVALD.

And what would happen if we—men—if we didn't—I wonder sometimes about this—yeah, I won't disagree—it happens—we do this, okay,

but I wonder if women don't ask that men behave the way we behave, in some ways

NORA.

really

TORVALD.

if we didn't project some kind of confidence—an assuredness in what we know or think we know—would women even be attracted to men—?

NORA.

confidence is different from—

TORVALD.

to stand up straight and lead—

NORA.
that's different from talking down to me.

TORVALD.
How.
Explain the difference.

NORA.
Also.
Also.

Here's another thing that bothers me:
You don't get angry.

TORVALD.
Of course I do.

NORA.
Maybe once you've ever gotten—

TORVALD.
right now. I feel angry.

NORA.
Right now.
You feel angry

TORVALD.
damn right I—

NORA.
I don't believe that you *are* angry, that you're in it, that you're inside
of that feeling of feeling angry right—no, I think you're just outside
of it, looking at it like it's some interesting thing.
You don't act.

You're constipated.

You're scared.

I don't like that you're scared—
it's a really big turn off

TORVALD.

sorry, I'm not trying to turn you on right now

NORA.

and there it is

TORVALD.

what.

NORA.

That tone

TORVALD.

of

NORA.

condescension

TORVALD.

not standing up for myself?

NORA.

Yeah, I don't read that as standing up for yourself at all.

TORVALD.

Then what is it?

What is the difference between being
condescending and standing up for myself?

You won't say, even though I've asked you twice to show me—

NORA.

so that you can just disprove me

TORVALD.
so you can educate me

NORA.
oh!

TORVALD.
I would like to learn

NORA.
you'd like to be right

TORVALD.
I'd like you to stand up and take the lead and teach me something

NORA.
I did. 15 years ago, right here, I did that

TORVALD.

No.

No.

What happened 15 years ago—if you'd like to talk about that—okay
let's talk about that—

is that you stood here and had your big epiphany,
and you know, I think—I thought then and I think now—
that a lot of things you said had a lot of validity.

You said that we never had a serious conversation in
8 years of marriage,

and yeah, I think that there was some truth to that.

We'd both been avoiding things,

avoiding hurting the other,

and all of that avoiding of stuff made us liars.

And yes, we have to tell the truth.

We have to stick our noses in some shit—

we have to—you talk about a true marriage,

you talked about how what we needed was a true marriage—

well, I think sticking our faces in the shit
is a really big part of that.

But listen, Nora, here's where you're wrong.
At the very moment that you realized the problem with our marriage

NORA.
let's be real, there was more than one problem

TORVALD.
no, I get that—I'm not saying there wasn't—but the moment you
brought the problems to light,
you walked out the door.

That's shitty if you ask me

NORA.
how is it—?

TORVALD.
shitty—? because having epiphanies is easy,
but actually doing something about it is—

NORA.
my "doing something" was leaving, that was "doing" and that sure
as hell wasn't easy

TORVALD.
easier than staying and trying to tough it out with me—us toughing
it out together—instead you run off and pretend that this is the
same thing as being strong.

And I look at you and I...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.
...I think—

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

I did so much for you.

I loved you.

And you threw it away.

NORA.

But who did you love really?

Because who I was when I was last here—that wasn't me.

You liked that, but what I was doing—that was just for show.

All the flitting around, the whole "oh Torvald, oh help me,

I can't figure out this or that, I can't do anything myself, oh help me"

—that's not me. That was a thing I was doing, because if I didn't do it, then you wouldn't have paid attention to anything that was important to me.

I don't think you'd like what I'm actually like.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

I hurt you.

I know that.

Don't think that I don't know.

And I knew what I was doing when I left you, and I knew what I was doing was very cruel—very harsh. But staying would have been cruel to me—

TORVALD.

and our kids?

NORA.

Don't bring up the children

as though that drowns out anything I have to say
about why I did what I did and whether what I did was right.

Do I wish I'd done it differently?: oh who knows.

Would I *not* do what I did?: absolutely not.

No regrets, Torvald.

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

I'm not playing around.

It's out of kindness that I'm asking you to file for the divorce and not me. It's easier for a man, the courts don't care about the reason, but for a woman to do it, the law asks me to prove that I deserve the divorce, and in order to deserve the divorce I have to make you look really bad—I have to ruin you—your reputation—in public record—I have to—I have to—Do you want that?

Torvald?

TORVALD.

Do it.

Do it.

I'm not giving you a divorce because you don't deserve for this to be easy.

If you're going to ruin me, I want you to do it.

I want you to decide to do it.

I want you to do it so you have to think about what you're doing.

You say you'll ruin me,
you already did that,
except it happened while you were far far away.

This time if you're going to do it,
you're going to have to be part of it.

NORA.

...

ANNE MARIE

(Anne Marie and Nora.)



NORA.

Alright Anne Marie, this is the point where I need your help. Torvald won't give me the divorce himself, so now I have limited options for how to get it.

Option #1 is the option where I make up a story that says that Torvald did something awful to me, threatened my life or something and you corroborate that story. Option 1 would work, but I would never do option 1, because option 1 is wrong and weak and it's just ugly and wrong and—

Option #2, I give in to the judge's demand, I retract all my writings, everything I've ever publicly said about—everything—no, I'd rather die before taking it all back—Option 2 is also not an option.

So what I need is an option 3.

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

Do you know of an option 3?

ANNE MARIE.

I'm still really pissed at you.

I think you should go.

He's gone, it's not appropriate for you to be here.

You've put me in a bad spot, you've put me in a...

Torvald is all I have in this world, my only family.

He takes care of me.

He supports me.

Do you know why?

He doesn't have to do it, the children are grown up, but he does it because he's grateful to me for sticking around after

you ran off—
for staying with him through a very difficult time—taking care of
the kids—raising the kids—and looking after him—oh he was mess!
You have no idea, you can't even begin to imagine.

The silence.
The not-eating.
The very dark thoughts he'd think.
The shame—

And how this must've looked to him—the thoughts he must've
thought when he saw us together, conspiring behind his—

NORA.
we weren't

ANNE MARIE.
I want you to go.
Just go.
Leave.
There's the door,
I know you know how to use it.

NORA. (*About to say something.*)

ANNE MARIE.

NORA.

ANNE MARIE.

NORA.
No, I'm not leaving.
I'm staying.

Get a room ready for me

ANNE MARIE.
you're being selfish

NORA.
it's my legal right / if I'm—

ANNE MARIE.
No. No, / you're—

NORA.
married to Torvald, I'm married to Torvald—I'm married to Torvald
then this is my house just like it's his house, I deserve to be here,
and this is where I'll stay until we're no longer married.

ANNE MARIE.
Just take option 2


NORA.
never

ANNE MARIE.
so what—the judge wants you to write a letter taking back some
things you said that you probably shouldn't have said in the first
place—so what—it makes you feel bad, / just get over it

NORA.
it's not about feelings—

ANNE MARIE.
you don't have to run with every feeling you have, you don't have to
indulge—because some feelings make trouble—and here I am—forget
how I feel—I have feelings too, but also my livelihood is at stake

NORA.
so is mine—on paper we're married,
and that means as my husband



he has claim to all of it—
all the money that I've earned for myself

ANNE MARIE.
he wouldn't

NORA.
what

ANNE MARIE.
take your money

NORA.
maybe, maybe not, I don't know.
He was always very weird about money,
very controlling, very—

ANNE MARIE.
you can trust him

NORA.
but I don't want to have to trust him—that's my point—
I can't be tied to him.
I can't be always looking over my shoulder, worrying about—
That's what I left.
That's what I ended by walking out this door

ANNE MARIE.
and what about me—?

NORA.
what about you—?

ANNE MARIE.
you're saying—what, that I don't matter—?

NORA.
no, I'm—of course you—

ANNE MARIE.
he'll kick me out

NORA.
no he won't

ANNE MARIE.
here I am, the one total innocent in all of this

NORA.
is that so

ANNE MARIE.
I think—

NORA.
what makes you innocent—?

ANNE MARIE.
aren't I—?

NORA.
you're saying you have nothing to do with this problem?

ANNE MARIE.
You're saying I—

NORA.
you're not doing anything to help fix the problem.

ANNE MARIE.
After all the problems I've already fixed for you
I have to fix this too?

Is that what you're really saying?

Fuck you, Nora.

Fuck you.

You have zero gratitude.
I raised your kids.
You should be coming in here—first words out of your mouth should
have been:
Thank you Anne Marie.
Thank you for abandoning your own life, your own child
and raising mine, so that I could go off to do my little thing.

NORA.
I didn't ask you to do that.
I didn't make you stay.
I left.
You decided to stay.
I'm thankful that you stayed,
but that was not your responsibility

ANNE MARIE.
but—

NORA.
—was your choice, not—

ANNE MARIE.
how could I leave

NORA.
just like I did

ANNE MARIE.
I'm not as cold as you.

NORA.
You had even less reason to stay.
It should have been easier for you than me.

ANNE MARIE.
It was my job, Nora, and if I didn't do what I did, three very young
children—were going to be left alone—

Do you think I wanted to leave my home and become a nanny?
My options were—what—working in a factory and wearing my
body down to the point of uselessness at an early age,
or I could go out and be a prostitute

NORA.

Yes. No, I— You're right.

ANNE MARIE.

I would have never, ever left my child if I didn't absolutely have to—

NORA.

But I did.

And you may not believe me but
I *had* to leave...

...and leaving my children was the hardest part—
it's the part of what I did that I hate the most,
that hurts, that still hurts—
don't you think there wasn't a moment
that I didn't think of sending them a little letter,
a little note saying "hello, mommy is thinking of you,
mommy loves you, mommy misses you very very much,"

or on a birthday or Christmas sending a gift—
I did—I bought them gifts, Anne Marie,
for the first couple of years—
I had a little pile of gifts for them sitting the corner of my room,
I'd buy these gifts and I'd be just about to send them—
and then I wouldn't because I knew
that sending them would make *me* feel very good,
but for them it could be—
because I thought about them thinking about me,
thinking that they must wonder about me,
and thinking that I wanted to answer all of their questions—

Better for there to be nothing,
for there to be silence,
than this thing that's somewhere halfway in between because

that—that Anne Marie—would be cruel.

A wound has to be allowed to heal,
no matter how much you have the desire,
the urge to touch it, to—

It's not good for the...the healing.
Do you understand?

Do you.

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

What I did wasn't easy.

It was hard.

It took discipline.

And I had to think past the feelings
and about what's best for everyone involved.

And yes, yes—! because of what you did,
because of what you gave up,
my children felt loved.

And I am grateful.

You say I'm not, but I am.

And I'm so sorry if

I did not make you feel that.

(A moment of silence.)

Anne Marie, I have money,
and I can give you a kind of freedom.

I can buy you your own house.

I can give you a lump sum of money so that—provided you invest
it wisely—you'll never need to work again. You're on some kind
of—I'm sure—tiny allowance, trickling out just enough money to
get you to the end of the month.

Isn't that true.

And I look at you, and you look so tired and worn,



EMMY.
It's very nice to meet you.

NORA.
You too.

EMMY.
...

NORA.
I hope you're alright with this

EMMY.
with this?

NORA.
Meeting me, I hope it isn't strange
or upsetting—

EMMY.
no, not at all

NORA.
good.
I was worried it would be.

EMMY.
Why?

NORA.
Well I've never been part of your life

EMMY.
this counts as being part of my life—?

NORA.
no but a little step towards—seems potentially,

I don't know, harmful,
I don't want to do any harm.

(Emmy thinks about this for a moment, like she's adding something up in her mind, and then...)

EMMY.

No I don't think us doing this—meeting—I don't think it does any harm

NORA.

okay, well—good—I hope—

EMMY.

and just so you know, I feel no animosity towards you.

NORA.

Oh that's—that's nice to hear

EMMY.

this is exciting!—meeting you is

NORA.

yes

EMMY.

I don't remember you at all

NORA.

I didn't think that you would.

You were very little, very—

EMMY.

for the longest time I thought you were dead

NORA.

well you're not the first person to tell me that

EMMY.
everyone thought you died,
everyone in town, everyone who—

NORA.
I didn't

EMMY.
except obviously
Torvald, Anne Marie,
my brothers—but I did for a long time—

NORA.
so when did you—?

EMMY.
when I was 7 or 8—

NORA.
I see

EMMY.
my brothers told me.
They remembered things that I didn't or couldn't,
and they told me about how you left.
I didn't believe them at first—sounded
like the kind of thing you say to
avoid telling a kid the harder truth,
but Iver said that if I didn't believe them,
that I could go down to the clerk's office
where they keep all the records—birth records, death records—
and he said that if I looked for your death certificate
there wouldn't be one

—and I went to school with a boy whose
father worked in the clerk's office,
and this boy liked me, so I acted like I liked him back,
and got him to let me into the office one night

And I looked through the records,
and there was no death certificate,
and then I knew, that
you weren't dead,
you just left.

Bob and Iver told me that someday maybe you'd come back
and that I should be ready for it, that you would come
and that you would take us with you,
and that you would be a lot more fun to live with than Torvald
who—
he's not bad—but fun isn't the word I'd use to describe—

NORA.
yes—

EMMY.
I mean I think it's kind of adorable—his sort of—I don't know what
to call it

NORA.
gloom—?

EMMY.
no—that's not quite...

Bob remembered you best

NORA.
oh Bob.

EMMY.
Bob missed you the most.
Bob could draw.
I asked Bob if he would draw a picture of you—He wouldn't.
Iver said that it was probably because if he did,
Bob would start crying
and Bob never liked to be seen crying
because he thought crying made his face look fat.

NORA.

Yes,

I do remember that about Bob
about him—not the fat face thing—but the crying—he doesn't still
do that—?

EMMY.

he does

NORA.

poor Bob

EMMY.

Iver on the other hand—

NORA.

the opposite of Bob

EMMY.

in every way.

NORA.

Yes.

EMMY.

Now tell me something you remember about me

NORA.

you

EMMY.

yes!

NORA.

uhhhhh, what should I—well here's something:
When you were born

EMMY.
yes—?

NORA.
I had you very fast.
You came right out of me—like you were racing to get out into the
world—like you couldn't wait—The boys—they were very slow. I
was in labor for—oh god, it was terrible—
but you were very easy.

So. You can put that into your
book of memories.

EMMY.
And tell me something about you.

NORA.
Uh like what?

EMMY.
Oh I don't know—
Are you happy?

NORA.
Yes.
Very.

EMMY.
What makes you happy?

NORA.
My work makes me happy.
I like my house, I have a nice little house,
it's by a lake,
it's quiet.

EMMY.
That sounds nice...

NORA.
And are you happy, Emmy?

EMMY.
I am.

NORA.
What makes you happy.

EMMY.
All sorts of things:
I have enough money.
I have enough food.
Physically I'm
fine—there aren't problems
with my health.

NORA.
That's good.

EMMY.
I actually think in a lot of ways
things turned out better because you weren't around.

NORA.
...

EMMY.
I think I'm better at life because of it.
I had a lot more responsibility,
I had to deal with some difficult truths about life
at an earlier age than you usually have to deal with those types of things.
I feel bad for the kids who growing up had the usual life.
I feel special.

EMMY.

Did he propose a reconciliation?

NORA.

...

EMMY.

...

NORA.

...um—

EMMY.

No, see, I think you're very wrong,
and that you've made a lot of assumptions
and that you don't know what you're doing,
you think you do, but you—and it's not your fault,
but I need to correct you—

NORA.

correct me—?

A

EMMY.

Torvald did something really stupid.

I know that he's still, technically speaking, married to you.

And I'm not saying that none of this is his fault.

There's fault on his part, for sure.

But basically, what happened,

when you left, people noticed,

and of course they noticed,

and people would ask, "Where's Nora?"

And Torvald, I'm sure you could guess,

he was pretty upset about it, felt pretty private about it,

didn't want to talk about it—it was embarrassing—people ask him

where you are and he'd have to say you left him—it would be awkward,

both for him and for the person asking,

so at first when people asked, he'd say that you had gone away,

left town, visiting family,
something like that.

He really didn't say much about it, he didn't want to lie,
but then when about two or so months had gone by,
and you were still gone—I mean I don't know exactly how it happened,
obviously I was so little, I wasn't aware of what was happening—but
someone made the assumption that you weren't well,
that you had gotten sick,
and Torvald didn't say no,
so that's the story that went around—
that you were gone and you were sick
and recovering at a sanitarium.
And then another month or two passes,
and someone somewhere says something or makes the assumption
that it's worse than that,
and that you hadn't recovered
and you were
no longer alive.

And that's what people assumed,
and Torvald—now he's so far in
and to explain the truth—I know it's a weak thing he did
but he had his job at the bank and was
a very respected member of the community,
very well-liked, trusted,
to have to explain such an embarrassing set of
truths and misunderstandings and so on—
so he said nothing.
And by saying nothing
he was sort of saying something
which is that you
had died.

And once people came to think that,
that's when—well you know what happens when that happens—
there's an outpouring of affection and support,
people visited,

they brought food,
they really rallied around him
and us—the whole family.

And there's also some government support for the families,
there's that—some money you get—of course there was no death
certificate ever filed,

but these things happen, mistakes, oversights—
just because of the way people found out,

this gradual sort of realization that that's what was—and because
Torvald is well-respected, well-liked, and because he runs the bank—

You see?

It's a problem. You being here, doing what you're doing.

Do you—?

NORA.

No, I don't—

EMMY.

It's fraud, technically, it is—it's fraud, and Torvald could be tried—
he could lose everything—just like you, and that's why
he can't give you your divorce

NORA.

...

EMMY.

but...

there is another option:

NORA.

...

EMMY.

You die.

if you didn't come here—I should have never answered your letter,
I should have never said it was alright for you to come here—

(Emmy reenters with supplies.)

TORVALD.

Anne Marie

why don't you—I don't know—take a walk.

ANNE MARIE.

...

(Anne Marie exits.)

(For a moment, Emmy dresses Torvald's wounds.)

(Then...)

TORVALD.

Emmy, you too.

(Emmy exits.)

(To Nora.) We should talk—

NORA & TORVALD

(Torvald produces a book.)

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

I see.

TORVALD.

Anne Marie told me that you—you write these little books—

NORA.

little—

TORVALD.

I didn't mean that in a—I meant—just she told me that that's what
you do now,

so I was curious,

and I walked into a bookstore.

I asked the man in the bookstore

what's the book that the women are reading,

I'd like to read that book,

and he said, well you must be thinking of this book,

and he handed me a book,

and it didn't have your name on it,

but I figured it was a uh—

NORA.

pseudonym

TORVALD.

Right. Yes.

And so I bought the book,

and I took it with me to the fjord,

and I sat on the rock,

and I read the book,

the whole thing,

from beginning to end.

And the book was about you,

and the book was about me,

and it was about all the things that happened between us.

It was hard for me to read it.

NORA.

It was hard for me to live it.

TORVALD.

...I'm sitting there reading

and thinking every so often,
oh I remember that or I forgot that or—
And some things made me really mad and—

NORA.
like what?

TORVALD.
I come off pretty badly in the book. I come off as a real—
I'm going to read some parts out loud

NORA.
just say what you—

TORVALD.
"He looked at me with a look of condescension"

(Turns a page.)

—you say things like that often—"He sneered,"
"He pontificated"...

but this is the one.
This one is the one that really—

(Turns to a page.)

"I lived in terror of my husband.
He didn't so much look *at* me, as much as he looked *through* me.
I didn't exist.
Yes, he doted on me,
but he only doted because the act of doting made him feel good.
But you could have substituted in for me
any woman. It didn't matter.

Once I asked him what he liked about me.
He told me he liked everything.
I pressed for more.
He said I was pretty.
He said I was his.
He said I was perfect.

This is why I lived in terror.
Not because he was violent—he wasn't—
not because he ever threatened my life—he never did—
unless you count living with someone who can't see you
as life-threatening—which in a way it is."

NORA.

...

TORVALD.
That hurts.

NORA.
Because...?

TORVALD.
I'm not like that—not *now*

NORA.
it's not about how you are now. It's about how—

TORVALD.
I think about dying.

I uh think about how when I die
which will be someday sooner than later—
and I think what it is I'm leaving behind—what mark I've made—
and I think about how this is it.

(To the book.)

This is the story that's told about me and that's it,
and I don't want that to be it,
and so—

NORA.

...

TORVALD.
I went to the clerk's office this morning

NORA.
you did

TORVALD.
told the clerk,
"I'm here to file a divorce—"

NORA.
oh Torvald—

TORVALD.
let me finish—he didn't understand because—

NORA.
he thought I was dead.

TORVALD.
Oh, you know about the—

NORA.
yes—

TORVALD.
he thought I was crazy,
he said, "Torvald, you think you've seen a ghost"
I said no, I said, I've been lying,
there's a pile of lies, I've been lying,
and that's done, I won't lie,
I'll face the consequences.

I even said, "If you don't believe me find the death certificate,"
and he said if there's no death certificate then
he should go ahead and make one.

And here he is taking out the papers to write up a death certificate,
and it was as if he was about to end your life in front my eyes—

NORA.
and did he?

TORVALD.

No, I grabbed the pen from his hand,
and in grabbing the pen, I knocked him to the ground,
and this clerk, he's not a small man—
he's younger than me, stronger than me—

and he grabs me, he holds me down,
and I—I'm just fighting back,
trying to break free of him.

And this fight—it's now—it's bigger than itself,
and I'm fighting for my life—
and he pushes me, and I fall...

my head hits the ground, where there's a bit of stone.
It cut into my head, I could hear the skull crack—

and he's now horrified, he backs away, I think he's even crying,
he says, "Torvald Helmer, what have you turned into,
what are you?"

And I said to him, said to the clerk,
"You will give me my divorce,"
and he nodded his head,
because he understood,
that this was about more than it was about.

He could have had me locked up,
but he understood, and—

(Torvald takes out a paper.)

This is it.

I did this for you.
I made everything right
by ruining myself,
by exposing a pile of lies that I've been hiding for 15 years,
and I'll probably lose my job
and lose my friends
and lose my savings,
but I did it

so hopefully I won't be remembered
the way you remember me
when I'm gone.

You can even go
and write a new book
where I'm a better man.

(Nora looks at it.)

Here. Take it.

(Nora does not take it.)

You won't take it.

NORA.

Thank you.

Thank you, Torvald.

I appreciate that you did this...

but...

I don't need this anymore

TORVALD.

what

NORA.

the divorce, I don't need it.

But I really do appreciate that you—

TORVALD.

I CAN'T WIN WITH YOU!

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

I CAN'T WIN WITH YOU!

I CAN'T FUCKING WIN WITH YOU

NORA.

THERE'S NOTHING TO WIN!

STOP TRYING TO "WIN"!

TORVALD.

I'M JUST TRYING TO BE A GOOD GUY HERE

NORA.

YOU GO AND YOU MAKE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU—

YOU EVEN MADE MY BOOK ABOUT YOU.

TORVALD.

I'M IN THERE AREN'T I?

NORA.

IT'S MY BOOK, MY FEELINGS, MY THOUGHTS,
MY EXPERIENCE, MY LIFE—

TORVALD.

I GAVE YOU WHAT YOU WANTED!

NORA.

ONLY BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO LOOK GOOD

TORVALD.

YOU WERE IN TROUBLE!

NORA.

BECAUSE OF YOU—BECAUSE OF YOUR LIES, / YOUR
COWARDLY—

TORVALD.
YOU WERE IN TROUBLE AND I SAVED / YOU AND—

NORA.
I DON'T NEED A FUCKING SAVIOR—

TORVALD.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS COST ME—

NORA.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS COST ME!

TORVALD.
NOW I'M RUINED BECAUSE I TRIED TO DO THE RIGHT /
THING—

NORA.
I BET YOU WANTED TO BE RUINED.

TORVALD.
THAT'S INSANE!

NORA.
YOU LOVE IT WHEN PEOPLE FEEL BAD FOR YOU—

TORVALD.
/ AW FUCK YOU—

NORA.
HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU, NURSE YOU BACK TO
HEALTH—THAT'S YOUR WHOLE LIFE—EVERYONE GIVING
UP EVERYTHING FOR TORVALD—SAME THING AS ALWAYS—
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT.

(A long silence.)

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

(And then...)

TORVALD.

...I don't know what to do around you,
I don't know how to behave...

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

...

NORA.

...

(And then...)

TORVALD.

What happened—you used to be so—you were a different person
and I find it incredibly disturbing that when I look at you I can't
even see inside there to see
the person that I used to know.

(Silence, and then...)

I think I miss you, Nora.

NORA.

...

TORVALD.

You think I don't see you,
that I don't know who you are,
but I don't know—I think maybe the same way
I made assumptions about you,
you made assumptions about me.
And maybe I would like what you really are,
and maybe I didn't like the things you thought I liked,
and kind of found some of them pretty annoying.

I don't know.

It's just so hard

NORA.

what's so—?

TORVALD.

all of this.
Being with people.

NORA.

Yes.



15 years ago,
the first thing I did
—because I had nothing: no home, no family, no money—
was I went and lived in a boarding house.
And because I had no real skills other than I could sew things—
I did that—and made money sewing
and bit by bit saved up what I could—

Because what I really wanted to do was,
for the first time in my life,
be by myself.

So when I saved enough money,
I left the boarding house,
and went and lived up north.
I found what was basically an abandoned shack.

And even though I was living by myself—
for everything I did—
every decision I made,
from what I ate to when I went to bed—
I could hear a voice in the back of my head
that either sounded like you or my father or the pastor or
or any number of other people I knew—
I'd always in my head somehow manage to
check with that person
to see what he thought,
even though that person wasn't a person but
my thinking of that person.

And so, as long as that continued,
I'd decided that I'd live in silence,
not speaking and
avoiding the speaking of others—

and I'd live like this until
I couldn't remember what other people sounded like—
until I no longer heard a voice in my head
other than my voice
or what I was certain had to be my voice.

That was almost two years,
two years of silence.

And once I could hear my voice,
I could think of things that I wanted
that had nothing to do with what anyone else wanted.

It's really hard to hear your own voice,
and every lie you tell
makes your voice harder to hear,
and a lot of what we do is lying.
Especially when what we want so badly
from other people
is for them to love us.

So I find that I'm best—that I'm my best self if I'm by myself.

TORVALD.

...

NORA.
...but it's nice to sit with you.

TORVALD.

Yes.

It is.

*(Torvald gently squeezes Nora's hand.)
(And holds it there for a bit.)
(And then...)*

NORA.
Alright.

I'm ready.

TORVALD.
For what.

NORA.
I'm ready to go.