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## Realism And Feminism In A Doll's House By Henrik Ibsen

At first glance, Ibsen's *A Doll's House* seems to allude to feminism, speaking of the differences in the roles of men and women. The surges in feminism and the subjective perception of readers resulted in many people drawing feminist motifs from the text as they were more inclined to relate the play to personal experiences. In reality, ADH was merely a tributary realist play depicting the story of his lifelong friend Laura. Ibsen's play stands as an example of realism rather than feminism because it portrays truthfully the characters and its conflicts. Everything is presented realistically for what it is, and this is demonstrated in various aspects of *A Doll's House*.

Nora and Torvald's marriage serves as just one of the examples of realism Ibsen depicts. Despite the frequent use of nicknames and friendly teasing, Nora's deception and secrecy of her illegal bank loan contrast that of a "loving" partner. She even goes so far as to convince Christine and Dr. Rank to assist her in keeping the secret after they have found out. Similarly, upon realizing what Nora had done, Torvald's one and only concern were of his own reputation and job. He lashes out at Nora calling her a "miserable creature" and exclaiming "Now you have destroyed all my happiness", unable to fathom any worthy reasoning for her actions. As a result, both their marriage and Torvald's true character are revealed for what they truly are: simply a pretense. Nora points this out herself in the play's conclusion, proclaiming, "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. . . That is what our marriage has been, Torvald. "

Ibsen does not attempt to glorify their relationship and simply states facts. Nora and Helmer have been "playing" at a marriage rather than living in an authentic partnership between husband and wife. Ibsen also treats Torvald's character realistically as his vanity and selfishness are revealed over the course of the play. His concern for Nora is not out of love, but rather a result of him treating Nora as his inferior. Since she cannot make reasoned judgements herself, he must look out for her and tell her what to do. "You have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me. " As Nora points out, Torvald never really loved her for who she was, he only found amusement in the idea of having a subservient wife to do his bidding.

As a genre, though it is common, realism does not specifically demand an unhappy conclusion. Rather, it is more important that the conclusion stays consistent and reasonable given the circumstances presented. In fact, Nora's leaving Torvald is consistent in the way that her character has been developed throughout the play. Unlike Laura Kieler's ending, Nora does not have such a "happy" ending with her and Torvald embracing each other as wife and husband.

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Even when Torvald swears that he will change and begs Nora to stay, she rejects his promises, unable to place any faith in his integrity. Ibsen does not attempt to romanticize Nora's leaving either. She is leaving behind her children who she loves and has to face the cruelty of the world by herself. Her future will not be easy, but nevertheless, she must still go.

The realism built over the course of the plot results in this moment of final suspense, devoid of sentimentality or sympathy, only painful choices. It is evident through his writing that Ibsen never intended to write *A Doll's House* as a feminist work meant to further advocate for women's rights. Ibsen was neither interested in politics nor wanted anything to do with the feminist movements occurring at the time. On the contrary, Ibsen's ultimate philosophy was to do with the description of humanity itself and in order to achieve a greater consistency of realism in *A Doll's House*, Ibsen created the very ending that we know of today.

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