



Critically Appreciating Character of Nora in ‘A Doll’s House ‘By Henrik Ibsen

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Abstract:

This paper shows how Nora is seen weak inside and strong outside in starting phase and when she is seen to be strong from inside, she is weak outside. Henrik Ibsen shows Nora as an exemplification for women of all time. Nora struggles in her life after taking extreme step to leave Helmer’s house but when she already gains courage from inner side of her she will overtake her weak part. Her strong portion from within is enough to showcase her weak part.

Keywords: Ibsen, Nora, Women, Strong woman

The late nineteenth century Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen both leaders and haunts the struggle for the liberation of women. His play A Doll's House remains after nearly one hundred years a most eloquent statement of the urge to stand free. Nora, the play's heroine, has inspired innumerable women in their fight for liberation. Henrik Ibsen once said: “A woman cannot be herself in contemporary society, it is an exclusively male society with laws drafted by men and with counsel and judges who judge feminine conduct from the male point of view,” It was also once said by Max Beerbohm that “the New Woman sprang fully armed from Ibsen's brain”. By many critics Nora is seen as the incarnation of the will to reach self-fulfillment through liberation from oppression and self-deceit.



Nora embodies the nonconformist alternative. In her, Ibsen shows the full glory of a woman who finally finds herself in opposition to all social norms. The play ends with the dramatic sound of a door slamming shut. Nora walks away from the security of her household and from all traditionally sacred values of marriage and motherhood. She leaves to face an uncertain but compelling future of self-becoming. She is going off to know her own responsibilities towards herself. This kind of self-realization, which usually leads to a new beginning, is one of Ibsen's main ideologies posed in his play.

Nora is the main protagonist of the story, is the wife of Torvald and a mother of three children. She lives like a doll in a doll-house, and her character serves as a symbol for every oppressed woman who is restricted from living a free life.

If a person is strong from outside than it is superficial thing. This thing is like that person wants to showoff that he/she is strong, but if a person is strong enough from inside then he/she doesn't need to showoff that he/she is strong. On a very first part it is seen that Nora is praising of Helmer to Mrs. Linde. Nora thinks that she will always have a support of Helmer throughout her life, but in reality, she also feels afraid of losing Helmer that if he comes to know about forgery incident then what will be happen next so basically tries to cover up her weak part within by overpraising him more and more.

Afterwards when Nora is seen to take extreme decision of leaving Helmer's house, she is seen to be an independent woman (by taking her own decision). She is seen stronger from within her inner part but weaker from outside. She is weaker from outside as the society of that time was not allowing woman to take such extreme decision. The society will not accept an independent woman so she is weak outside. Nora doesn't know about her future even then she gathers courage to leave from Helmer's house.

Nora is seen as a strong from outside and weak from inside while afterwards she is seen as weak from outside and strong from inside. Throughout the play, Nora proves her understanding of financial matters related to the debt she took on to protect Torvald's health, revealing her creativity and capability beyond typical female expectations. Her secret work to repay the debt and her willingness to commit forgery indicate her courage and determination.



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Although initially passive and accepting of her situation, Nora gradually rebels against the confines imposed upon her through subtle acts such as eating macaroons without permission and using profanity. These actions foreshadow her eventual decision to abandon her family and seek personal growth and liberation.

Despite appearing docile and obedient, Nora harbors a deep frustration with her role as Torvald's 'doll' and her perceived lack of agency. Her realization that she has been deceiving herself and others, including Torvald, prompts her to reject the false persona she has adopted and embrace her authentic self. By the end of the play, Nora transforms into a confident, assertive, and determined individual, leaving behind the trappings of domesticity and conventionality.

We as the readers of 'A Doll's House' find that Nora's situation is also seen in today's time. Time to time this type of situation takes new turn but it is same. The play is of 19th century and today is 21st century still it is seen that this topic is always a difficult for woman to take her stand. Mostly men tried to prove himself superior than woman. Helmer is seen as an example of superior man or he is seen as a male dominant figure. The society of 19th century was male dominant and this 21st century is also seen as male dominant society. Thus, Nora is a multifaceted character whose development highlights the challenges faced by women in late nineteenth century Scandinavia. Through her journey, Ibsen presents a powerful critique of patriarchal norms and offers a vision of emancipation for women striving for equality and self-realization.



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