

For centuries people have been striving for wealth and prosperity. Countless masses endeavor for this perfection and foresee that it holds a secret key granting acceptance from the society that surrounds them. They frantically hope day after day that it will enrich their life in ways they cannot imagine, but unfortunately they most often find that standard is filled with empty promises and shallow schemes. In *A Doll House*, Henrik Ibsen displays a woman's challenged identity and morals regarding wealth through the symbolism of her doll-like lifestyle.

This woman, a naive housewife— Nora, is one of the many people searching for this happiness, but unknowingly finds herself stuck amongst the plastic walls she calls home. This home is shared with her flawless doll family: her husband, three children, and maid. The characterization of Nora's family adds to her doll-like life by adding the factor of an ideal sustained family— three children and a prospering husband, Torvald. Nora's home is beautifully furnished and well kept by her maid. She enjoys lavish macaron treats. She plays games of hide and seek with her children, but couldn't teach them a life lesson if she tried— that was the commission of the maid. These aspects all constructed a life complementary to Barbie's plastic walls. This unrealistic aim for perfection leaves Nora hollow and takes her much courage and many struggles to break free from. Through this quixotic image, Ibsen creates the symbolism of *A Doll House*, hence the title of the work. It will take a vast collection of hardships for Nora to finally recognize her flaws engulfed in wealth and break away; even if that means leaving her husband and children with nothing but a door in the face.

Nora was the perfect trophy wife. She stayed home, ran errands, sewed. She was the perfect doll wife; and it was all a result of her doll-house environment. The environment Nora was surrounded by left her frivolous and careless. With Torvald constantly handing over money

whenever requested, Nora never worried herself with learning how to manage money. She constantly bought unnecessary luxuries for herself and children. With this constant striving to meet society's ideas, she lost touch to all the roots she had, like her best friend who came for a visit. Years and years of this go by and Nora is still lost, still wanting more. Nora believes that this luxurious life will glaze over her artificial happiness and bring her a true sense of bliss, as long as she is persistent and faithful to her pursuit. Ibsen shows this chase through the symbolism and perpetual discontentment that settles within Nora during her chase. Luckily, although not until seven years later, Nora realizes her aimless endeavor and leaves her confinement within the plastic walls. Through this leaving, Ibsen shows that even the most bound and hopeless people are capable of change: capable of breaking away. A lesson anyone could take away. A lesson strengthened by the symbolism of the doll house that Nora, and many people in today's society are compassed to.

Nothing in life is free— especially not Nora's little doll house. This sense of a doll house life all points back to money. A theme the reader can trace throughout the entire piece; a burden that makes rounds in everyone's life at some point. The symbolized doll house truly reflects Nora's negligent dance with money, exposing her through her apparent "need" for a materialistic status. A theme that wouldn't have been as easy to stress without the desire for perfection and acceptance from society that Nora strives for; the need for perfection and acceptance society strives for within itself. Although a common challenge within society, Ibsen stresses it because of its commonality, he realizes that many people in society become victim to it. Although it is just a play, people can connect to Nora and her story a significant deal more because they are experiencing it with her in their everyday life, not watching from the outside the plastic

windows. They aren't watching her cry, they are crying her tears. With the chains finally broken from Nora's plastic walls, she was capable of idealistic change within herself that she wasn't able to achieve in the confinement of her plastic standards: the repression of that fantasized house. The breakage of that impractical symbolism highlighted a compelling character evolution within Nora that left the reader galvanized for change within their own confined walls, whatever they might be.

Although society is still constantly striving for that perfection, and probably always will be— change is possible— you can break the spell; Nora shows this through her final words to her husband before she leaves forever. The symbolized dollhouse allowed Nora to create change within her life by showing that all she had to do was simply open those plastic doors and leave; shed her plastic skin, leave her frivolous and inadvertent ways, and evolve into who she was truly meant to be. With Nora being confined to the house (not necessarily its physical existence), but rather the idea of it, she created invisible bindings that limited herself from ripening into her apical being. It wasn't until she fully comprehended her unhappiness in what she was longing for that she rightly found the strength to break away from it.