

Living in a doll world

Business



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When young girls play with Barbie dolls, they fantasize about living in a Barbie doll world with closets filled with an infinite wardrobe and a magical Barbie dream house.

They imagine their perfect, attractive, husband, Ken; and, to these girls, nothing would be better than to live in Barbie utopia. But, as these innocent girls grow up, their love of this world tends, and needs, to dissipate in order for them to move on, and mature into adults. After reading Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, it becomes apparent that the desire of girls to live in a Barbie doll world must fade because it is impossible to create an adult relationship with the naive qualities of Barbie and Ken. In *A Doll's House*, Nora and Torvald's actions and speech contain the simplicity and superficiality of Barbie and Ken, which prevent them from acting as mature individuals in the adult world. For Nora and Torvald, life is a game in which they exist to love and play with each other, like children. They avoid confronting their problems in a mature, adult manner, in order to pretend they live an utopian lifestyle.

At the beginning of the play, Nora begs for spending money from her husband. Torvald denies her, in order to save money, but then responds, "Who's hanging her head, is it my little skylark? She musn't. Who' sulking, is it my squirrel? Is it? Nora, look, what have I here? (4)" But inevitably, Torvald gives in, pulls out his wallet, and hands Nora spending money. By giving in to Nora's desire for money, Torvald avoids having an adult conversation with Nora about spending within their financial limits. Nora, as an adult, should reveal her financial debt to Torvald.

The couple needs to speak about their issues responsibly with each other rather than pretending the debt does not exist. Similarly, in Toy Story 3, Barbie and Ken demonstrate their inability to speak and confront each other as mature adults. Their relationship resembles children playing a game. When Barbie gets mad at Ken for not helping her, she tears his Nehru jacket, a sequined outfit, and his other fashionable clothing, until he agrees to help. Like Nora and Torvald, who constantly care about upholding their high society image, Barbies are also superficial.

Barbie tears Ken's clothes knowing that the only way to control him is to destroy his clothing. As Barbie rips Ken's Nehru jacket, he screams, " Barbie, those were vintage! It's okay! Go ahead, rip ' em! They're a dime a dozen! (IMDb. com)" Instead of persuading Ken with her words to do what she wants, Barbie tears his clothing until he resigns to give her her way. Barbie destroys Ken's valuable clothing in order to express her anger at Ken rather than engage in a rational adult conversation. Like Barbie, Nora also demonstrates her inability to have a reasonable conversation with her husband, Torvald. Nora lies to Torvald and claims she did not promise Krogstad that his job was safe at Torvald's bank.

The conversation between Nora and Torvald lacks mature honesty: Helmer: " You talk to a man like that and make him promises. Then, to top it all, you tell me a lie?" Nora: " Lie?" Helmer: (wags his finger) My singing bird must never again do that. This little bird must keep its beak pure. No false notes. (He puts his hands around her waist.

) That's so, yes? Yes, I thought so. (He lets her go.) So, no more about it. (37-38) This conversation illustrates simplistic, childlike behavior. Nora lies because she is fearful that her husband will yell and dislike her.

Torvald wags his finger at Nora as if he is scolding a child. Torvald speaks to Nora as if she is a doll to be played with and controlled, rather than as a freethinking woman. Torvald says what he wants to say, and then he unilaterally declares the issue resolved. He engages in a one-sided conversation where he speaks and controls his “doll” Nora. The conversation reveals Nora and Torvald's inability to have an interactive conversation with one another. Within days of Nora and Torvald's past conversation, Nora ultimately realizes her life and relationship with Torvald have been built on nothing, not even love for Torvald.

This is the turning point in the novel as Nora becomes a freethinking woman. She realizes her life is simplistic and superficial after her debt secret is revealed. Torvald's mad reaction instigates her realization that she can no longer live in a Barbie doll world. Nora decides she must leave her husband and children and begin facing the unknown world as a mature individual. Nora explains to Torvald, “I must stand on my own if I'm to make sense of myself and everything around me. That's why I can't live with you any longer.

(100)” Ibsen, Henrik. *A doll's house*. New York: Dover Publications, 1992.