

NORA. . . . Where we could make a real marriage out of our lives together. Goodbye. [*Begins to go.*]

HELMER. Go then! [*Seizes her arm.*] But first you shall see your children for the last time!

NORA. Let me go! I will not see them! I cannot!

HELMER [*draws her over to the door, left*]. You shall see them. [*Opens the door and says softly.*] Look, there they are asleep, peaceful and carefree. Tomorrow, when they wake up and call for their mother, they will be—motherless.

NORA [*trembling*]. Motherless. . . !

HELMER. As you once were.

NORA. Motherless! [*Struggles with herself, lets her travelling bag fall, and says.*] Oh, this is a sin against myself, but I cannot leave them. [*Half sinks down by the door.*]

HELMER [*joyfully, but softly*]. Nora!

[*The curtain falls.*]

For an insight into what eventually persuaded Ibsen to commit this 'barbaric outrage'—as he himself called it—see his letters to a Copenhagen newspaper of 17 Feb. 1880, to Heinrich Laube of 18 Feb. 1880, and to Moritz Prozor of 23 Jan. 1891 * * *