CHAPTER II
A DOLLS HOUSE
Farewell to Doll’s Demesne

One of the most significant social plays, A Doll’s House saw the light of the day on December 4, 1879. Its publication and consequent stage performances took the entire world by storm and made Ibsen internationally famous. It is borne out by the fact that, to a lay-reader across the world, Ibsen is still known as the writer of A Doll’s House, despite a number of powerful plays like Brand, Peer Gynt, Ghosts, The Wild Duck, Rosmersholm, The Lady From the Sea and The Master Builder as glittering feathers in his dramatic cap. The sole reason behind the phenomenal success of A Doll’s House lies in its explosive material and startling unconventionality. The unending and raving controversies which this play aroused, have divided the literary world in two camps-those for Nora and those against Nora. Those who stand for Nora describe the play as a theatrical ‘sensation’, ‘thrilling to the very ‘marrow’, ‘Magna-Carta of feminism’ and those who disapprove of Nora’s door-slam label the play as a ‘sociological pamphlet’ with lights focused on the social system, ‘strong meat indeed and not fit for babes’, ‘misleading and mischievous in drift’ and ‘unquestionably the weakest of Ibsen’s plays in which series of conversations are terminated by accident’. Similarly those who appreciate the bold stand taken by Nora describe Ibsen as a social prophet and a social preacher while the others describe him as a ‘lover of the repulsive’, ‘a dour dogmatist’ and a coarse writer with morbid love for using theatre as a physiological lecture room. While the English press objected to its thematic content, Germans vociferously asked for a conciliatory ending and as such compelled Ibsen to commit ‘the barbaric outrage’ in the shape of a new ending in which Nora is shown as standing helplessly looking towards her children. Whatever the accolades or condemnations of the play, the fact can not be denied that no other play in Scandinavia or Norway exploded like a bomb in contemporary life and contributed momentously to the social debate as A Doll’s House did. A few
reactions of the contemporary press are in order in this context. The Times comments as, "By the new school of theorists the genre ennuyeux is assigned a place of distinction; for A Doll's House with its almost total lack of dramatic action, is certainly not an enlivening spectacle." The Standard writes with a sigh, "It would be a misfortune were such a morbid and unwholesome play to gain the favour of the public." The Referee brushes aside the play as, "Of no use—as far as England's stage is concerned." The People bursts out as, "Unnatural, immoral, and in its concluding scene, essentially undramatic." The Observer castigates play with such remarks as, "Strained deductions, lack of wholesome human nature, pretentious in conclusiveness... Cannot be allowed to pass without a word of protest against the dreary and sterilizing principle which it seeks to embody." But the literary criticism over the last hundred years or so is not on the same lines as is evident from the opinions of Ibsen's prominent critics. A number of critics have found the play a classic illustration of Ibsen's dramatic skill on the one hand and moral courage on the other. Eva Le Gallienne is very candid in stating that Ibsen is not taking sides with the cause of women. Instead he shows the situations and leaves us to judge it as we choose. There is nothing dated in the play. There is a lot of humour and high-comedy and as such it is a mistake to play him in macabre ghoulish manner. Gallienne does not agree with critics who state that the play is about women's emancipation. Instead, "the theme in the play that interested Ibsen most was not that of woman's freedom—her so called emancipation—but that of different ethical codes by which man and woman live." G.B. Shaw views both Nora and Helmer as victims of a number of illusions about themselves. And when all her illusions about herself are shattered, she sees herself as an ignorant and a silly woman, a dangerous mother and a wife kept for her husband's pleasure only and Helmer, "At first can't see what has happened and flourishes the shattered ideals over her as if they were as potent as ever." However finally both of them, stand alone, one in search for freedom and the other 'to wonder whether that more honourable relation can ever come to pass between them. Allardyce Nicoll dwells at length on the
technical niceties of the play and finds it as taut in construction and character-
revealing in its subtly framed dialogue. While the scenes display a masterly hand at work, there is skill in the use of words, language being natural and dramatically appropriate. In addition Ibsen has learnt how to modify the Scribe formula so as to retain the thrilling effect and at the same time to hide the presence of the machinery. Regarding the theme of the play, Nicoll states "In France the playwright could not go beyond the theme of marriage and money, conceived in conventional terms; to the question of marriage and money Ibsen gives a startlingly new interpretation." Michael Meyer, one of the most seminal biographers and critics on Ibsen laughs at those who regard the play as a document on woman's rights and says that such an attitude is largely conditioned by G.B. Shaw's misleading book 'The Quintessence of Ibsenism'. In his opinion:

Its theme is the need of every individual to find out the kind of person he or she really is and to strive to become that person. Ibsen knew what Freud and Jung were later to assert, that liberation can only come from within; which was why he had expressed to Georg Brandes his lack of interest in 'special revolutions, revolutions in externals', and had declared that 'what is really wanted is a revolution of the spirit of man'.

Besides, Meyer applauds the technical advances which Ibsen made in the construction of the play. He wonders at the grand effect of tragedy without any drop of blood or tear. Desmond MacCarthy described the play as a masterpiece in its own line as it transcends all the barriers of time and space. He agrees with Miss Robins's comments, "the famous lines, 'millions of women have done so' and '... it burst on me that I had been living here these eight years, with a strange man and had borne him three children--' for all time they should be said just as they were first said and by just that person." However MacCarthy can't resist asking a few questions like, "Did the squirrel escape from its cage?", "Was the childish, coquettish, fibbing, sweet eating miracle-expecting Nora really changed by her disillusionment?" and, "Did Ibsen intend her to be at the close of the story in both senses of the phrase a "new woman"?
Finally MacCarthy states that it is hard to imagine Nora earning a living. While in Thomas E. Sander’s opinion, “*A Doll’s House* seems pallid stuff in our age when women have achieved a place in society.” F.L. Lucas makes a very exhaustive analysis touching almost all the aspects of the play. He traces the genesis of the characters of Nora and Helmer to Ibsen’s real life acquaintances Laura Kieler and her husband Victor Kieler. Making a survey of critical opinions, Lucas highlights some of the mistaken notions about the play like it is ‘dated’, ‘Ibsen is feminist to the core’, ‘the play is a mere melodramatic comedy’, ‘the conversions of Krogstad and Nora are all too sudden and therefore unconvincing’ and finally ‘immorality of Nora’s desertion of her children’. But Lucas dismisses all these objections as minor flaws. Finally equating Nora to David Copperfield’s Dora, he states that Nora is an infantile child-wife who has failed to grow up. For him the whole theme of the play boils down to the statement:

> The ideal of marriage is not for either partner to keep the other as a pet, nor for both to become competitors (which was the curse of Strindberg). True marriage is partnership and comradeship. But that, of course, becomes more difficult if people marry too soon, before both are fully grown-up; and much more difficult still, if they do not have children.

For G. Wilson Knight, the play is a logical sequel to the *Pillars of Society* in which Ibsen sees Lona Hesse! who insists on truth and freedom as the true pillars of society. Therefore, “...if women are to be our pillars we must respect their rights,” he opines. Wilson Knight states that the dramatic force of the play lies in its detonating quality expressed through the door-slam, a direct consequence of Nora’s realization that her husband is concerned with nothing else but his own good name. Hans Heiberg refers to Ibsen’s own notes for the modern tragedy to disagree with the contention that Norwegian-Danish authoress Laura Kieler is the real-life model for Nora. He states that Mrs. Helmer has no characteristics in common with what we know of Laura Kieler. Instead, “*A Doll’s House* is an elaboration of two minor elements in *The League*
of Youth – Old Bratsberg’s mental crisis when he hears of his son’s forgery and the character of Bratsberg’s daughter-in-law, Selma who dislikes being nothing but a pampered family pet.”

Appreciating Ibsen’s perception and strength of his creative genius, Heiberg opines that the success of A Dolls House is due to, “that the mental conflicts the play propounds are universal and timeless and the taut dramatic simplification is achieved without any of the human beings being simplified away.”

Errol Durbach reads romantic meanings in Nora’s attempt to become free. In his opinion, “Nora who takes off her doll’s dress, transfigures herself from a toy into a woman, is an heroic paradigm of the liberated spirit in Ibsen—the self-creating being who discovers in her own capacity for change the god within, the vivifying force which Ovid called Venus.”

Disagreeing with William Archer’s analysis of Nora that she is like all cabbage at heart in the beginning and a mass of aggregate conceit and self-sufficiency in the end. J.D. Dhingra views the play as a fine illustration of what he conceptualises as “The Ibsenic Woman”. Making an in depth study of Nora’s mind, Dhingra opines:

The Ibsenic woman shines brightly in the act of self-sacrifice for the greater glory of her companion. The woman’s revolt against masculine world, as Ibsen saw it, was not intended to gain supremacy over man but to create new harmony. Hence Ibsen’s glorification of woman. He exulted in nobility, greatness and grandeur of her soul, in her dedication and devotion, in her voluntary preparedness to be submerged in her partner’s ideal, in her furtherance of the cause of her husband as a coadjutant.

Gail Finney a professor of German and comparative literature at the University of California, seeks to find an answer to the question of Ibsen’s relationship to feminism both as an ideology and as women’s movement. Notwithstanding all the denials and speeches to the contrary , there is no denying the fact that, “In closing the door on her husband and children, Nora opened the way to the turn-of-the-century women’s movement.”

Bjorn Hemmer scrutinises the preliminary notes for the play and feels that Ibsen sees the position of women
as a dominant social problem. Ibsen’s ideas bear the clear stamp of the liberal thinking of the age and are strongly reminiscent of the ideas in John Stuart Mill’s *The Subjection of Women*. Therefore “The women problem is society’s problem and Ibsen sheds light on this through individual destinies and confrontations.”

Thus, the whole range of critical survey reveals that so far the play has been viewed, analysed and interpreted in terms of social, moral, ethical and technical aspects. Such aspects have given rise to a number of opinions that Ibsen is a feminist, modifier of French craftsmanship and a champion of liberated spirit. However, there are critics who have seen great psychological insights of Ibsen in the play but their attempts are either vague or feeble. No systematic and full scale attempt has been made to highlight the mental agony, pain and struggle for freedom in respect of Ibsen’s characters using concepts from humanistic psychology. In my opinion, the intricate aspects of the struggle and search for freedom can be more convincingly and illuminatingly analysed in the light of Existential thought, Gestalt psychology and transactional analysis as enunciated by Jean Paul Sartre, Fritz Perle and Eric Berne respectively. Moreover a minute study of Ibsen’s own preliminary jottings and pronouncement about the play reveals that the play is not so much about the position of women in the contemporary society or about double-code of conduct as it is about the theme of human freedom which each of Ibsen’s characters seeks to attain one way or the other. Within three weeks of his arrival in Rome, on 19.10.1878, Ibsen wrote in his diary ‘Notes for the modern tragedy’ which read as under:

There are two kinds of moral law, two kinds of conscience, one for men and one, quite different, for women. They don’t understand each other; but in practical life, woman is judged by masculine law, as though she weren’t a woman but a man.

A woman cannot be herself in modern society. It is an exclusively male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine stand-point.
Reading these notes in the light of consequent denials from time to time through his speeches, it becomes apparent that Ibsen was not interested in emancipation of woman only as many critics believe but he was a lot more interested in the overall search for freedom in respect of human beings. His search for freedom, it may be said at the outset does not move towards the mere act of breaking away from or breaking off physically but it moves towards what present day psychologists call self-realization and self-actualization. His search for freedom stands for the courage 'to be and to become oneself' in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. In case of Nora, basically, it is the male dominated society with all its absolute standards and respect for conformity to social convention which stands as a hostile force. It is the 'notion' that one must live up to the expectations of others that does not let Torvald Helmer realise himself and attain freedom. In Mrs. Linde's case, economic compulsions play havoc with her life while Dr. Rank has to struggle with passive resignation against hereditary forces because he knows that hereditary influences are too powerful to fight against.

Before I begin with the actual analysis of the search for freedom in respect of Nora, Helmer and others, it will be worthwhile to briefly state the tenets and formulations of Existentialism, Fritz Perle's gestaltian five layered model of personality and Eric Berne's transactional analysis. To begin with, existentialism, be it of Jean Paul Sartre, Gabriel Marcel or Karl Jasper, places freedom in the dead centre of their 'weltanschauung.' They argue, one and all without exception, that a person can't be free till he gives up bag and baggage, the belief in the pre-fabricated meanings. These pre-fabricated meanings may come from religion, idealogies or from parental, social and cultural conditioning. In existentialism, one must start with the assumption that one is free and one has to confront that freedom through choosing out one's life to carve a meaning for oneself and with full responsibility. There is no gilt-edged guarantee for that meaning to be valid for others.
Gestaltists believe that human beings work for wholeness and completeness in life. Each person has a self-actualizing tendency that emerges through personal interaction with the environment and the beginning of self-awareness. Self-actualization is centered in the present. It “is the process of being what one is and not a process of striving to become.” The Gestalt view of human nature is one that places trust on the inner wisdom of people. Each person seeks to live integratively and productively, striving to co-ordinate the various parts of the person in to a healthy unified whole. From a gestalt perspective, “persons are more than a sum of their parts.” The Gestalt view is anti-deterministic; each person is able to change and become responsible. Individuals are thus actors in the events around them and not just reactors to the event. Overall Gestalt point of view takes a position i.e. existential, experiential and phenomenological; the ‘now’ is what really matters. One discovers different aspects of one’s self through experience. Healthy individuals are those who are most – aware. In order to be mature in the ‘now’, a person must shed neurotic tendencies.

Fritz Perls identifies five layers of neurosis that potentially interfere with one’s being authentically in touch with oneself: the phony, the phobic, the impasse, the implosive and the explosive. The phony layer, consists of pretending to be something what one is not. At this, there is a lot of game playing and fantasy enactment, trying to act as if one were something one is not. In this layer one attempts to project a particular image of oneself in the eyes of others. Pascal, the 17th century French philosopher also states that we lead our lives in the imagination of others and we persevere relentlessly to sustain our image in the eyes of others. We can never come to our authenticity as long as we are enmeshed in the phony layer of our personality. Phobic layer is composed of small anxieties, fears, stigmas, apprehensions and we are guided and controlled according to those fears. There is always an obsessive concern with phobias. In fact, phobic layer is an attempt to avoid recognising those aspects of self that the person would prefer to deny. People who
experience this layer of awareness are afraid if they acknowledge who they are and present it to others, they will be rejected. Below this layer is the impasse layer, where individuals wonder how they are going to make it in the environment because "there is no sense of direction at this level and the person is adrift in a sea of helplessness and dread." It is a state of mind when one feels benumbed. Then comes the implosive layer which is that part of personality where one's own ideas and reactions begin to emerge and one begins to realise one's reality but does not express oneself. However at this layer, a person is frequently vulnerable to feelings. Finally there is the explosive layer. It is a state of mind when one is able to express oneself fully and with fullest rage i.e. with anger, laughter, grief and orgiastic sexuality. As one "peels back layers of defensiveness built over the years (i.e. implosiveness), he or she becomes alive in an explosion of joy, sorrow, or pain that leads to being authentic. When a person reaches this point, the now can be experienced most fully." It is like Wordsworthian concept of rebirth of primal feelings and emotions when one's real self begins to assert. Akin to this situation is what Aldous Huxley postulates as one's primary personality and secondary personality. He defines one's primary personality as one's own real self, free from acquired influences, the natural self. Secondary personality, on the other hand, is acquired as a result of conditioning through education, culture etc. More often than not, unfortunately secondary personality begins to dominate primary personality. The secondary personality aims at winning public esteem. But according to Huxley there has to be a balance between the two. The secondary personality should not be allowed to injure the primary personality.

In transactional analysis, which started with Eric Berne, the basic assumption is that people can change despite any unfortunate events of the past. Transactional analysis is anti-deterministic in believing that people have choices in their lives and that what was decided can be re-decided at a later date. All individuals can learn to trust themselves, think for themselves, make
their own decisions and express their feelings. Berne focuses on four methods of understanding and predicting human behaviour namely: structural analysis which aims at understanding what is happening within the individual, transactional analysis which describes what happens between two or more people, games analysis, which aims at understanding transactions between individuals that lead to bad feelings and finally the script analysis which focuses on understanding the life plan that an individual is following. In structural analysis, each person is considered to have three functional ego states: Child, Parent and Adult, Eric Berne, defines an ego state as "a consistent pattern of feeling and experience directly related to corresponding consistent pattern of behaviour." The child ego state is characterised by child like behaviour and feelings. The parent ego state incorporates the attitudes and behaviours – the dos, the shoulds and the oughts – of parental figures. It consists of two sub divisions: the Nurturing parent and the Critical parent. The Adult – ego state is rational and organised. Some times the different ego states operate simultaneously. Although transactional analysis does not favour one ego state over the other, the theory stresses the importance of being able to balance responses when necessary and appropriate. In the opinion of Samuel T. Gladding, a leading clinical counsellor of the present times, "those who constantly exhibit just one ego state do not function as well as those who are more flexible." It is out of three ego states that three types of social relationship emerge namely – parent: parent, child: child and parent : child. In Berne's analysis, these ego states transact on three levels: complementary, crossed or ulterior. In a complementary transaction, both persons operate either from the same ego state or from complimentary ego state. Responses are predictable and appropriate. In a crossed ego-state, an inappropriate ego-state is activated producing an unexpected response. Crossed transactions hurt. When they occur, persons tend to withdraw from each other of switch topics. An ulterior is one in which two ego states operate simultaneously and one message disguises the other. Berne's games analysis states that life is a series of games which people continue to play to prevent intimacy. Since
intimacy involves risks, games keep people safe from exposing their thoughts and feelings. In the long run, "Those who play games are losers because they are avoiding meaningful and healthy human interaction." And finally comes the script analysis, "a life script involves the ability to get strokes (i.e. verbal or physical recognition) for certain behaviour." Berne believes that everyone makes a life script or life plan early in childhood. These scripts which determine how one interacts with others are based on interpretation of external events. Positive messages given to the child function as permissions and do not limit people in any way. Negative messages or injunctions are more powerful and may become basis for destructive scripts. Unless a person makes a conscious attempt to overcome such injunctions, the result may be a miserable life. Although there is a number of scripts in one's life yet the ideal script in transactional analysis is formed by 'get on with' position described 'as I am Ok, you are Ok'. According to Berne, life scripts can be re-written if a person becomes more conscious of what he or she thinks and makes concerted efforts to change. It is by restoring the distorted or damaged ego states, developing a capacity to use all ego states, utilising the adult ego state with its reasoning powers, altering appropriate life-scripts and adopting position of 'I am Ok, you are Ok', that one can achieve spontaneity, to realize one self so as to walk on the road to freedom authentically.

The above all-too-brief paradigms of Existentialism, Gestalt psychology and Transactional Analysis have been given for the reader to understand their applications in Nora's search for freedom which can be analysed in five different stages. Stage one deals with her pre-freedom state of mind when she has no firm idea of what freedom is.

Nora is introduced in the play as a young woman married to a barrister named Torvald Helmer. In the first stage, she does not know anything of freedom because she is so firmly conditioned through parental and social values that she considers adherence to traditional social and moral ethics as
pre-requisite to a happy living. Her personality, as it comes before us in this stage is that of an indulgent woman, fully conversant with social, familial and cultural taboos. She starts living with her husband with a set of pre-fabricated meanings deeply rooted in her being. For her, it is obligatory on the part of a wife to look after all the interests of her husband like marketing for him, looking after his children, performing all domestic chores, celebrating festivals etc. Always looking forward to husband for all that is required in life, Nora understands her place in the husband wife relationship. The opening of the play shows how enthusiastic is she when she goes to the market to buy things for Christmas eve, gift for every one in the family and how happily does she look forward to a hike in the salary of her husband. However the relationship between the two never becomes transactional despite their being adults, looking after and shouldering the responsibility of grooming their three children. The set of preconceived ideas which she has in mind converts the interaction between the two into parent-child relationship in which the question of freedom just does not arise. On the one hand she does not argue over the basic issues of the family, on the other Helmer does not permit her to raise any question. His tendency to snub her and her habit of agreeing to him makes her develop a mode of personality which Erich Fromm calls 'Receptive Orientation.' In such a relationship there is no question of autonomy and initiative. It is out of this orientation that she feels elated when addressed by various titles as 'little lark', 'little squirrel', 'little spendthrift', 'little feather head', 'little song bird' and 'little miss obstinate'. A number of instances emerge before us during the course of the play when she is always on toes to win the love and attention of Helmer. Well in keeping with her doll like image, she prefers to please Helmer by dancing, dressing and reciting. She shows a lot of enthusiasm in decorating her home, playing child-child with her sons and daughter, buying new dresses for them. She loves her children so much that she calls them sweet blessings. Despite the presence of the maids in the house, she loves to take off their clothes, put new ones, play hide and seek with them, hide herself under the table, crawl on the ground to frighten them and she does it with total sincerity
and child-like desire to have fun and frolic. A very strong maternal instinct comes before us when she buys a suit and a sword for Ivar, a horse and a trumpet for Bob, (her sons) a doll and doll’s bed stead for Emmy (her daughter), dress lengths and handkerchiefs for maids. As for her relationship with her husband Helmer is concerned, she never regards him her equal partner. In fact if we delve deep into her childhood, we find that her childhood is spent in exceptionally pampering environment and that is why she carries the childhood script to her life after marriage, treating her husband not as a friendly partner but as a surrogate father. She herself describes her childhood:

> When I was at home with papa, he told me his opinion about everything, and so I had the same opinion; and if I differed from him I concealed the fact, because he would not have liked it. He called me his doll-child, and he played with me just as I used to play with my dolls. And when I came to live with you—.  

Unable to part with the residue of the childhood script, she makes no effort to establish any mutually satisfying relationship. She simply forsakes the privileges which are associated with the better-half since times immemorial and makes no serious attempt at the mental level to understand that as a human being she has her own identity, own uniqueness and own individuality. Rather she fits herself well in the role model which her father has carved for her. She looks towards her husband as a substitute father and therefore feels herself bounden to him with a feeling of filial gratitude. No where does she ever express resentment at Helmer’s chiding her for her macaroon-eating habit. Far from objecting to it, she goes on with this habit and wipes her mouth when she confronts him. Stealthily she keeps on eating macaroons, of course in full fear of Helmer. Similarly she never objects to Helmer’s keeping the keys of the letterbox with him. How painful it is that she has to use her hair pins to open the letterbox! No where do we find her raising eye brows at Helmer’s moralising, dictatorial style of life in his dealing with her. No doubt this is father fixation but she is a spouse as well as the mother of his children. In other words, she is happy to live in ‘archaeopsychic ego state’ to play the child and he is happy to be in ‘psychic ego state’ to play the parent and the two pull on
seemingly very well. Eric Berne states that the people who live fixed in one ego state to the exclusion of others can not be on road to self-actualization and therefore free. But this is not to say that she is a naïve-child or naïve wife. Her affection for Helmer is so strong that she can surrender her total self before him and for him under all circumstances. There is no question of her freedom because it is in Helmer's happiness that she is lost. This is born out by the fact that during the first year of their marriage, she falls in a three-fold implex situation: While she is pregnant with Ivar in her womb, Helmer becomes jobless. Due to excessive hard work to pull on his family, he falls seriously ill. This happens exactly at a time when her father is already on the death bed. In any normal situation, a pregnant woman has to take an adequate care of herself and her husband has to look after her but in this case, things become topsy-turvy. Instead she has to attend to her ailing husband as also she has to worry herself over the deteriorating condition of her father, who may be having his own expectations from his daughter. And the crash falls when the doctors tell her that Helmer will remain irretrievably ill if he is not taken to the South for change of climate. Poor Nora has no money. She finds her self sandwiched between loyalties towards her father and loyalty towards her husband, simply ignoring the claims of her son in the womb. However she acts very boldly and begins to devise of some strategy for crisis-management. But here again it must be noted that she remains glued to her ego-state of childhood "which is intuitive, creative and full of spontaneous drive."35 She contemplates on all the possibilities of arranging money to take Helmer to Italy for her recovery but each possibility has its own limitations. The first obstacle before her is Helmer's own stiff, strict, straight disposition. He is not that sort of man who likes to receive favours from some one. He does not believe in borrowing money from any one, he is an egoist who will not like to yield even before his wife. He can't bear any sort of humiliation that he is under some one's obligations. Therefore instead of further aggravating his illness, she takes upon her self, with all her image of a skylark and an indulgent child, the responsibility of saving Helmer's life. She makes him believe that it is for her sake that they should go to the
south. In her own words “I told him how much I love to travel abroad like other young wives. I tried tears and entreaties with him. I told him that he ought to remember the conditions that I was in and he ought to be kind and indulgent to me” (DH.p.17). This is how she convinces him of the necessity of going abroad and no wonder she succeeds within no time. But more than this is the tough task of arranging money. Here again she weighs the pros and cons of various possibilities. Her father is there from whom she can legitimately ask for money but then he is already on the death bed. Even if she asks him, she will have to tell him the purpose of the amount to be borrowed. And if she tells him about Helmer’s illness, that may hasten his death which she, at no cost, will like. In the frame work of Jungian psychology, here in she sees herself, and behaves like an archetypal mother. In order to come out of this problem of ‘double bind,’ she meets an old acquaintance named Mr. Krogstad, who is a bank employee. She is able to get money from him but then she has to sign a legal bond in the shape of a promissory note that she will return the money. She also has to produce the testimony of some guarantor. Since she does not want to tell her husband or her father, she herself puts her father’s signatures on the bond in the most naive manner. Again she does this out of an ego-state of childhood. She can not and does not foresee that legal bonds are very risky documents. How innocent is she to put the date under the signatures after her father has died i.e. her father dies on 29th of September and she puts her father’s signature dated 2nd of October. Not that she does not understand the wily ways of the world, not that she does not know that law does not care for the best of intentions but that the ego-state of childhood has always a tendency to look up to parental models for help at the time of crisis. This is borne out by the fact that she looks upon Helmer as a man who will take the blame upon himself, if need be. It is with the borrowed money of 250 pounds, she takes Helmer to Italy and gets him cured. Her labour is amply rewarded when she brings Helmer back perfectly healthy, as sound as a ‘bell’. She is happy and proud of her act because all this she has done out of love for her husband and with the best of intentions. Even when she dreams of better days she never
loses sight of Helmer's happiness and superior position and plans to do every thing "just as Torvald likes it" (DH.p.19). It is again like a child that she looks forward to going abroad once again, "And think of it, soon the spring will come and the big blue sky! Perhaps we will be able to take a little trip – perhaps I shall be able to see the sea again! Oh, it is a wonderful thing to be alive and happy" (DH.p.19). Not only she loves Helmer in all its totality but there is also another aspect of that love. And that is, she can't listen to any derogatory remarks against Helmer even if it is made by the person who is significantly instrumental in saving his life by helping her. For instance, when Krogstad tells her that he knows her husband since student days and that he is not unassailable, Nora at once threatens him, "If you speak slightingly of my husband, I shall turn you out of my house" (DH.p.28). Such is the deep layered relationship between the two but cast in the mode of 'receptive orientation'.

While Nora has embraced the phony layer of Helmer's personality, it becomes very difficult for her to remain in happy spirits. And therefore she has to enter into the phobic layer of personality. Having come from Italy is no doubt a rewarding experience but running the household is no easy task. Helmer is a barrister but he does not take up unsavoury cases. So the family earnings are not much. Other than spending on daily needs of the family, she has also to pay back the monthly instalments of the borrowed money along with interest. Honest and sincere as she is, she does not shirk or run away from her responsibilities and therefore starts looking for work here and there. She knows that a rupee saved is also a rupee earned. Therefore whatever money Helmer gives her for her daily needs, she sees to it that some saving is certainly done. She saves every penny. While she buys dresses and other necessary things for every body in the family including the servant, she simply does not buy any thing for herself. Instead of buying decorative gifts for Christmas or other festivals, she spends hours and days on manually decorating her house so that she does not have to spend hard money. Paying off the debt and that too stealthily is not an easy task. Like Mrs. Loisel in Guy de Maupassant's story
The Diamond Necklace, she busies herself in whatever work she can lay her hands on. Despite being naturally inclined to extravagance, she earns through needle work, crochet work, embroidery and that sort of things. She gets copying work to do, keeps on writing until late at night. In her own words, “Many a time I was desperately tired but all the same it was a tremendous pleasure to sit there working and earning money. It was like being a man” (DH.p.18). This speaks volumes of Nora’s brave and bold nature which is likely to come very handy at the time of her decisive door slam. No doubt both, the ego state of childhood and the archetypal mother are always at work in her psyche yet when the two work together, the result is such-like bold stands. Keeping a secret is one thing, fulfilling all the transactional obligations with others is another. She herself tells Mr. Linde:

It has been by no means easy for me to meet my engagements punctually. I may tell you that there is something that is called, in business, quarterly interest, and another thing called payment in instalments, and it is always so dreadfully difficult to manage them. I have had to save a little here and there, where I could, you understand. I have not been able to put aside much from my housekeeping money, for Torvald must have a good table. I couldn’t let my children be shabbily dressed; I have felt obliged to use up all he gave me for them, the sweet little darlings! (DH.p.18).

The outpourings of her psychic anguish reveal that she has already entered into neo-psychic ego state because she is able to understand, analyse, and forbear every thing in fully conscious state of mind. It is an illustration of adult behaviour at its best because if we anticipate Nora’s comparison with Mrs. Alving of Ibsen’s Ghosts, it comes out that Mrs. Alving, despite taking control of every thing of her husband’s estate in her hands, does not develop that type of clarity of thought as Nora does. Mrs. Avling could very well run away to come out of her nerve-breaking woes. On the other hand, Nora throws away her child mode and begins to feel that she has her own independent power to decide what to state and what to hide, how much to express and how much to steal. She has now achieved wisdom which Mrs. Alving does not have. To me,
it appears that she has reached the stature of a 'Shaivian Woman' corresponding to the portrayal of Lord Shiva in Hindu scriptures. In Hindu mythology, Lord Shiva is shown in five different moods, namely The Creator (when He creates a new thing), Preserver (when He sustains his own creation), Destroyer (of what has already outlived its utility), Revealer (when He reveals some new reality) and Veiler (when He indulges in the act of Tirobhav Veiling). Seen in this context, Nora has created a situation with an avowed aim to save her husband's life and preserve that in all possible ways till Helmer gets well and before finally destroying, indulges in partly revealing to Mrs. Linde and even giving hints to Dr. Rank, and veiling, most of the time and then finally indulges in the act of destroying whatever happy illusion she has created both for her self as well as for Helmer. While this is a perfectly adult behaviour in Shaivian strain, the fact remains that she never loses her essential femininity as is evident from her revelations to Mrs. Linde, with whom she develops sister like relationship. Other than making sacrifices here and there, the biggest sacrifice she makes is that she has to suppress her instinctual desires for good dresses unlike Mr. Loisel who invites ruin both upon herself and also upon her family by succumbing to her craze for good-dresses. On the contrary, she buys simpler and cheaper ones to save money to pay off her instalments on time and contends herself with the happy notion, "thank Heaven, any clothes look well on me, and so Torvald has never noticed it" (DH.p.18). In the same breath, she can't suppress her agony, "But it was often very hard on me Christine-because it is delightful to be really well dressed, isn't it?" (DH.p.18). Her agony is heightened by the fact that the person for whom she is undergoing all this remains so phony that he just does not have the eyes to see such changes in Nora. Therefore some times, to relieve herself of the agony, here again in the ego state of a child, she dreams of some rich admirer who may come to her help. In her own words, "Then I used to sit here and imagine that a rich old gentleman had fallen in love with me" (DH.p.19) and after his death his will might contain the words, "The lovely Mrs. Nora is to have all I possess paid over to her at once in cash" (DH.p.19). Psychologically speaking, her fantasy
about the rich old man is nothing but an emotional expression of her suppressed instincts. It is an acknowledged psychological fact that many a time human beings achieve maturity and mental growth by indulging in fantastical dreams because such dreams come very handy in coping with the unbearable anxiety. In fact these dreams provide a sort of relief to the anguished psyche and therefore must not be brushed aside as neurotic expressions.

Her phobias begin to take the shape of real anxieties when Krogstad comes to seek her help in retaining his job in the bank of which her husband is the manager designate. Since Krogstad stands suspended from the bank for an act of forgery, he knows that Helmer, the new manager will definitely dismiss him from his service. She is caught in a fix because she has already pleaded her widow friend Mrs. Linde's case to her husband for a job. Krogstad's entry in her house is a cause of worry because if Helmer comes to know of him and the secret that he has lent money to Nora, "It would upset our mutual relations altogether, our beautiful happy home would no longer be what it is now" (DH.p.17). She shudders at the thought if Krogstad acquaints Helmer with the truth, "To think of his learning my secret, which has been my joy and pride, in such an ugly, clumsy way—that he should learn it from you! And it would put me in a horribly disagreeable position—" (DH.p.29). She loses her concentration and peace of mind. She can't resume her hide and seek with children as promised earlier to them. Krogstad's warnings haunt her and find forcible expression in her repeated utterances, "No, no! it is quite impossible" (DH.p.33). Instead of decorating the Christmas tree with her previous gusto and enthusiasm as she had planned earlier, she stands pale and pallid and speaks to herself, "I will do everything I can think of to please you, Torvald I will sing for you, dance for you" (DH.p.34). Such is her mental agony that she finds relief in reverting to child ego state and child-parent relationship with Helmer. It is out of inexpressible fear and bewildered state of mind that she becomes indulgent to reassure herself of Helmer's love. She tells Helmer to decide for her which dress she will wear at the fancy dress ball at Stenborgs, "I can't get along a bit
without your help" (DH.p.35). In Berne’s perspective, she wants the interaction with Helmer to remain complementary as far as possible. So much so that in her obsession that the interaction may not become crossed, immediately after the Christmas eve, she even falls in a hallucinatory state of mind about the impending crisis. It is out of the onslaught of anxiety that she sees her fragile universe breaking into smithereens by the threatened cruel act of Krogstad. Her hallucinatory state of mind has been described by Ibsen in a very forceful way when she hears sound of some one’s footsteps:

*(Drops the cloak).* Someone is coming now! (Goes to the door and listens.) No-it is no one. Of course, no one will come today, Christmas Day—nor tomorrow either. But, perhaps — *(opens the door and looks out).* No, nothing in the letter-box; it is quite empty. (Comes forward.) What rubbish! Of course he can't be in earnest about it. Such a thing couldn't happen; it is impossible — I have three little children. (DH.p.38).

She begins to see a very frightening picture of her dark days ahead when she is thrown into such a situation where in she is separated from her children. She tries to understand the psychology of the mother who is without children, as also the plight of the children without mother. She asks such answers from her servant Anne who had to sacrifice the love and company of her daughter due to pressing problems created by her husband. It is therefore to hide and runaway from her anxiety that she dresses up fancily as a Neapolitan fisher girl for the ‘Tarantella’ dance. She assures herself by repeatedly asking Helmer, "Don't you think it is nice of me to do as you wish?" (DH.p.44) and tells him "you will see I shall look quite smart" (DH.p.44). All her life she goes on running about, doing all her tricks like a skylark chirping about, in every room with her song, playing the fairy and dance for him in the moonlight. And when her anxiety becomes unbearable, she feebly musters up courage to entreat Helmer, "You must do as I ask, you must let Krogstad keep his post in the bank" (DH.p.45). On learning that it was Krogstad's post in the bank that he has already arranged for Mrs. Linde, she loses her sense of proportion and judiciousness, "But you could just as well dismiss some other clerk instead of Krogstad" (DH.p.45).
very pitiable condition indeed. However when she finds Helmer unwilling to oblige, she inches towards making Helmer aware of the dangers involved. She warns him of Krogstad's nuisance value. "It is for your own sake. This fellow writes in the most scurrilous newspapers; you have told me so yourself. He can do you an unspeakable amount of harm. I am frightened to death of him" (DH.p.45).

When Helmer hands over to the maid the letter of Krogstad's dismissal for despatch, she entreats him a great deal not to post it, but does not succeed. Although Helmer does not oblige her, yet she is able to extract an assurance for Helmer (of course false one) that he will face the consequences like a brave and bold man. Frightened like a dove, bewildered with anxiety, she stands as rooted to the spot and whispers to herself, "He was capable of doing it. He will do it in spite of everything-No, not that ! Never, never! And anything rather than that. Oh, for some help. Come way out of that" (DH.p.48). So burdening is her mental agony that she attempts to relieve herself from that agony by talking a great deal about different things with Dr. Rank, with whom she has fullest sympathies and whom she considers her the most intimate friend. She shows him her silk stockings, fish-coloured ones to be worn by her for the great tarantella dance. She develops an extreme liking for Dr. Rank because he is the person who fills the 'voids and holes' in her psyche created by Helmer's overly strict and always moralising disposition. What she can't realise through Helmer, she attempts to attain through Dr. Rank. It is with him that she shares small bits of nasty jokes and even creates in Dr. Rank's heart feelings of being wanted and loved. Dr. Rank, too on his part, is willing to do everything at any time for her. After the death of her father, Helmer couldn't fill the vacuum and it is Dr. Rank who meets her needs of surrogating. That is why she is always tremendously pleased when Dr. Rank visits her house. Such a close intimacy creates in Dr. Rank's heart an impression that he can't resist confessing and expressing, "It is just that you put me on the wrong track. You are always a riddle to me. I have often thought that you would almost as soon be in my
company as in Helmer” (DH.p.54). Realising that Dr. Rank’s overtures may not create further misunderstanding and make her phobic layer thicker, she very intelligently sets the record straight, “Yes—you see some people one always loves best and others one would almost rather have as companions” (DH.p.54). Such a mild but intelligent rebuff to Dr. Rank is an indication enough that she is no longer in the archaeopsychic ego-state. She has begun to understand things in their proper perspective.

But with changing circumstances, her phobic layer gets thicker and thicker and she begins to find herself unequal to the task. She has to writhe under the growing pressure of Krogstad on the one hand and the horror of dark future on the other. She stands torn between too opposing realities. She has already promised to help a widow in the person of her childhood friend Mrs. Linde and now Krogstad comes her with a hand written letter containing all the details of Nora’s conduct which places Nora exactly in the same situation as Krogstad is. However she does face him with abundant resistance but when Krogstad becomes impatient to the extent of issuing threats, she too becomes restless. She does not come up to the image of ‘fine spoilt lady’ as Krogstad had thought. Therefore he leaves Nora’s house with the threat, “And be sure you remember it to your husband himself who has forced me into such things again. I will never forgive him for that. Good bye Mrs. Helmer” (DH.pp.58-59). With these words Krogstad drops the letter in the letter box.

Such is her agony that she even plans to run away from her home lest people should sling mud on Helmer by involving him directly with the forged signatures. She wants to efface herself by committing suicide but before any such thing happens, she seeks Mrs. Linde’s help in setting the record straight. Like Hamlet’s last words spoken to Horatio, she tells Mrs. Linde, “I forged a name. I only want to state this to you Christine. You must be my witness” (DH.p.59). She entreats to Mrs. Linde if any thing happens to her or her mind, she should tell the public that the entire responsibility of the act was
that of Nora and no one else’s, "I and I alone did the whole thing" (DH.p.60). While in existential perspective, it is a very significant trait of Nora’s present state of mind that she is taking full existential responsibility for her actions, it will be worthwhile here to anticipate a comparison and contrast with Mrs. Beata (Rosmer’s wife in Rosmersholm) and Mrs. Wangle in The Lady From The Sea. Nora could very easily go the way Beata went without setting the record straight. While Beata drowns herself at the mill race out of sheer frustration, depression and despair leaving a lot many questions to be answered by her husband Rosmer at a later stage, Nora wants to see to it that Mrs. Linde is there to answer any such questions because she knows that Helmer will not be trusted that authentically as Mrs. Linde. While Mrs. Alving (Captain Alving’s wife in Ibsen’s Ghosts) levels all blame on her mentor Pastor Manders and his teachings, Nora does no such thing. In case of Mrs. Wangel, it is her husband Dr. Wangel who finally acquaints her with the inextricable bond of freedom with responsibility, here in this context, it is Nora who takes upon her self the task of owning responsibility and therefore it is but natural for her to have a glimpse of the road to freedom. Once a person is mentally prepared to own responsibility, the task of becoming free to take decisions for one self becomes much easier and healthier. However, with letter in the box which "lies like a bomb ticking towards its explosion," she looks tired, agitated, frightened and worn out but not entirely pessimistic because Mrs. Linde has already run to Krogstad to ask him to withdraw his letter. Her departure gives her some hope and solace. It is out of this hope that she makes small attempts to delay the impending doom. At first she becomes indulgent before Helmer and like a child implores him, "I can’t get on a bit without you to help me" (DH.p.62) And gets a promise from him, “This evening I will be wholly at your service, you helpless little mortal” (DH.p.62). The moment he goes to open the letter box out of his daily routine, she stops him with all her vehemence that she can’t dance tomorrow if she does not practice with him. She asks him to sit down and play for her, “Torvald dear, criticise me, correct me as you play” (DH.p.62). She seeks to arrest Helmer’s attention in all possible ways so that Helmer delays the
opening of the letter box. She goes in for a rehearsal of the dance. With Helmer on the piano, she dances so fast and violently that she forgets to comply with the instructions passed on to her by Helmer time to time. Such is the force, fury and the content of the dance that every one stands spell bound. Helmer cannot resist giving the description of the dance, "My dear Nora you are dancing as if your life depended on it" (DH.p63). Prior to this, she has already made attempts to open the letter box with her hair pins but without any success. Therefore she gives a physical resistance by standing in between the letter box and Helmer, of course very politely because, "Nothing horrid must come between us till this is all over" (DH.p.64). For Nora the moments are very intense, for Helmer it is nothing more than childish nervousness. She counts time by hours and learns that 31 hours are left for her hope to materialise. Mrs. Linde has told her that Krogstad has gone out of the city and he is likely to come back after 24 hours. This is how she describes her agony, "31 hours to live" (DH.p.65). It is out of this tension that she continues to dance for hours and hours. In her Italian costume, looking wonderfully charming, she wants to dance her agony out. Despite suffering the onslaught of bad-cold, she insists on dancing beautifully, capriciously and a trifle too realistically that Helmer feels impelled to make the remark, "The chief thing is that she had made a success—she had made a tremendous success" (DH.p.72). So feverishly does she dance that Helmer has to catch hold of her arm as if to drag her out.

Such is her hypertension that any other woman in her place would have gone mad or lost her senses but Nora still retains her balance of mind. It is because despite all her fears and phobias, she still has hope and faith in Helmer. However her mind shuttles between fear and hope. It is also because she always looks upon Helmer in parental image. Herself being in the ego-state of childhood, she is naturally inclined towards the magic help of the parent. There are a number of instances which clearly throw light on her positive thinking about the future turn of events. When Krogstad threatens her of dire consequences, she tells him, "Well do it now: And it will be the worst for
you. My husband will see for himself what a blackguard you are and you
certainly won’t keep your position then” (DH.p.29). Her confidence springs
from the fact, “I did it for love’s sake” (DH.p.33). Furthermore she tells Dr. Rank
about Helmer, “You know how devotedly, how inexpressibly deeply Torvald
loves me; He would never for a moment hesitate to give his life for me”
(DH.p.52). There is yet another reason, of course, very innocent one that she
hopes to win over Helmer’s affections and love when she is no longer
physically charming. When her bodily charms have begun to lose their sheen,
she plans to share her secrets with him. Therefore she keeps this treasure in
reserve at an appropriate time. She herself tells Mrs. Linde that she will fling
the secret as a surprise on Helmer when, “Torvald is no longer devoted to me
as he is now, when my dancing and dressing up and reciting have palled on
him, then it may be good thing to have something in reserve” (DH.p.17).

In parent-child relationship, since it is predominantly the parent who
decides the matters, Helmer goes to the letter box and comes back with a
bundle of letters. To Nora’s horror, he opens the letters one by one. She
stands fully awakened to the implications and makes a quick, hoarse,
spasmodic, whisper to her self.

Never to see him again. Never! Never! Never! (Puts her shawl over her
head.) Never to see my children again either—never again.
ever! Never!—Ah! The icy, black water — the unfathomable
depths — If only it were over! He has got it now—now he is
reading it Good-bye, Torvald and my children!(DH.p.80).

This is how all her phobias assume the shape of actual nightmarish
experiences.

In the death of Dr. Rank, her ego-state of child-hood ends because it
was he who offered Nora the most intimate companion, when it came to the
sharing of the most intimate thoughts. His sufferings at the hands of his
hereditary spinal problem directly correspond to Nora’s sufferings at the hands
of parental upbringing in tyrannically rotten social conventions. Just as Dr. Rank has met with physical death, Nora's ego-state of childhood ends and she enters into the impasse layer of her personality. When Helmer begins to lambast at her after reading Krogstad's letter, she stands motionless. With a cold set face, she listens to everything whatever Helmer utters in respect of her father, whom he describes as a man with dubious character. He even reminds her how he had once saved her father's reputation from being sullied by becoming favourably inclined towards him as an inquiry officer. Helmer utters a number of invectives much to her astonishment and horror and traces the genesis of this forgery to her father's influence:

All your father's want of principle- be silent!- all your father's want of principle has come out in you. No religion, no morality, no sense of duty-. How I am punished for having winked at what he did! I did it for your sake, and this is how you repay me. (DH.p.81).

Such an accusation, no doubt, is painful and traumatic but the bigger trauma she has to experience comes before her when Helmer denies the most sacred right which a woman has in respect of being privileged with motherhood. Helmer pronounces like a judge:

You will still remain in my house, that is a matter of course. But I shall not allow you to bring up the children; I dare not trust them to you. To think that I should be obliged to say so to one whom I have loved so dearly, and whom I still---. No, that is all over. From this moment happiness is not the question; all that concerns us is to save the remains, the fragments, the appearance--(DH.pp.81-82).

She listens, cold like a stone all dirt and filth from the mouth of Helmer and begins to feel the jerks of implosions in her psyche. Already a number of implosions have entered her psyche but now when she reflects, she finds a yawning gap between what she had imagined and thought about Helmer and what actually all have come to. All her implosions become so heavy that they
develop the potential to explode with the force of a dynamite. These implosions are not only in regard to her husband but also in regard to her father. She develops a number of ideals and perceptions about various things out of her encounters with the reality of life vis-à-vis opinion of others. While she tells with pride to Mrs. Linde, “Papa didn’t give a shilling. It was I who procured money” (DH.p.15). Mrs. Linde advises her that a wife cannot borrow without her husband’s consent and describes her deed as an act of imprudence. Nora sits up straight to ask, “Is it imprudent to save your husband’s life? (DH.p.16). Again when Krogstad threatens her with what she has actually done in terms of law, she faces him very boldly and even makes certain very significant observations about intensely human situations and mechanically blind law which just does not evaluate motives behind the commission of something unlawful. The conversation between Krogstad and Nora is revealing and heart-shaking. It is here that we get full view of the implosive layer of her personality, through which she has come to acquire the strength to challenge the basic tenets of inhuman law which goes against the ethos of basic human emotions:

Krogstad. The law cares nothing about motives.
Nora. Then it must be a very foolish law.
Krogstad. Foolish or not, it is the law by which you will be judged, if I produce this paper in court.
Nora. I don’t believe it. Is a daughter not to be allowed to spare her dying father anxiety and care? Is a wife not to be allowed to save her husband’s life? I don’t know much about law, but I am certain that there must be laws permitting such things as that. Have you no knowledge of such laws-you who are a lawyer? You must be a very poor lawyer, Mr. Krogstad.

In terms of her inner bursts, she comes to view and review her relationship with Helmer. She reflects over her childhood vis-à-vis her present times with him. In her own words, “When I was at home, of course I loved papa best. But I always thought it tremendous fun if I could steal down into the maid’s room, because they never moralised at all, and talked to each other about such entertaining things” (DH.p.54).
Thus while, she has not been able to come out of parent-child mode of relationship in respect of Helmer, it becomes very difficult, rather impossible to realise her freedom.

However, the blows of time, Helmer's pronouncements and accusations, traditional wisdom of Mrs. Linde and compulsions of Krogstad have their own lasting impressions on her psyche. The arduous task and consequent pain in altogether different worlds of Helmer, her father, Krogstad, Dr. Rank and even Mrs. Linde as different from her own world of innocence and child-like expectations have brought her to such a point wherein the explosive layer of her personality comes to the fore. The doll Nora is transformed to steel-frame Nora. Her implosions become explosions when Helmer removes the basic props on which the "being" of a woman stands. As compared to man, a woman has to live in more ego-states. It is because before marriage she has to condition herself according to her parents and after marriage she has to programme herself according to her husband. While at parents home, she stays in the ego-state of child-hood, in the house of her husband, besides living in the ego-state of child-hood, she attains an ego-state of mother hood which is composed of self negating sacrifices and complete effacement of herself. But when both these ego-states stop giving her the required solace and strength, there is no other option left for her but to explode. It is in this context that Nora decides to remove her fancy dress, puts an end to all her different games in an attempt to come to her real self. She makes Helmer sit down and tell him, "Especially I have a lot to talk over with you... to settle the accounts" (DH.p.84). The first thing she tells him is, "you don't understand and I have never understood you either". The statement of Nora is extremely significant because all along both Helmer and Nora have been living in a world of make-believe. Their relationship had been cast in the mould of child-parent or parent-child relationship in which there is ample scope for self deception. There can never be a free flow of ideas. While parents behave in a traditionally dictatorial
manner, children have no option except to be receptive. The question of freedom just does not arise. Now when Nora has reached a stage where she really sees into the things, she at once moves into what Eric Berne calls Adult ego-state and attempts to develop Adult-Adult relationship with Helmer. Erich Berne dwells upon the significance of Adult ego-state:

The Adult is necessary for survival. It processes data and computes the probabilities which are essential for dealing effectively with the outside world. It also experiences its own kinds of setbacks and gratifications. Crossing a busy highway, for example, requires the processing of a complex series of velocity data; action is suspended until the computations indicate a high degree of probability for reaching the other side safely. The gratifications offered by successful computations of this type afford some of the joys of skiing, flying, sailing, and other mobile sports. Another task of the Adult is to regulate the activities of the Parent and the Child, and to mediate objectively between them.39

For the first time after 8 years of marriage, they sit before each other not as 'container and the contained'40 but as equal partners for serious concerns. Never before they have attempted to reach at the bottom of things as in this case when Nora tells him, "I have been greatly wronged, Torvald, first by papa and then by you" (DH p. 85). She states that he has never loved her, he had only thought it pleasant to be in love with her. She sums up her relationship with him:

I mean that I was simply transported from papa's hands into yours. You arranged every-thing according to your own taste, and so I got the same tastes as you—or else I pretended to, I am really not quite sure which – think sometimes the one and sometimes the other. When I look back on it, it seems to me as if I had been living here like a poor woman-just from hand to mouth. I have existed merely to perform tricks for you, Torvald. But you would have it so. You and papa have committed a great sin against me. It is your fault that I have made nothing of my life (DH p. 86).
Seen in the existential perspective of freedom, it appears that Nora is simply indulging in an act of bad faith because she is projecting her faults on Helmer. The reality of the matter is that she was free to choose and to decide at the most crucial moments. It is only that she chose to live in the parent-child mode whereas she could easily transcend that mode and enter into a maturer relationship i.e. Adult-Adult one. No doubt Helmer had a dominating and even domineering nature but at least she was free to accept or reject that disposition. Therefore it is but natural that in such an incompatible relationship, there can neither be joy nor freedom. She reflects over her relationship. Like a parent, he had always been kind to her and their home had been a play room in which:

I have been your doll-wife, just as at home I was papa's doll-child; and here children have been my dolls. I thought it great fun when you played with me, just as they thought it great fun when I played with them. That is what our marriage has been, Torvald. (DH.p.86).

It is therefore that she rejects whatever version of events Helmer offers. She snubs him that he is not the person to educate her into being a proper wife for him. She turns the tables against him and retaliates that she is not a fit person to bring up the children, “I must try and educate myself. And that is why I am going to leave you now” (DH.p.87). In existential ethos, she decides to take a big leap of faith and in the perspective of Eric Berne’s transactional psychology, she enters in to an Adult-Adult relationship and according to Gestaltian five layered model of personality, she enters into the explosive layer fully. She throws a bewildering decision on his face, “I must stand quite alone. If I am to understand myself and every thing about me. It is for this reason that I can’t remain with you any longer” (DH.p.87). At the dead of night, she decides to leave Helmer. This is a radical transformation of her psyche because she refuses to be cowed down by Helmer’s threats that he will not allow her to go. She tells him that there is no use forbidding her any longer because, “Tomorrow I shall go home—I mean to my old home. It will be easiest for me to do something” (DH.p.87). She decides to break all the bonds she had accepted for
her self out of adherence to dead convention and rejects all the entreaties and arguments of Helmer. For her, neither her children nor society is of any significance now because all along it is due to her social conditioning that she had been suppressing her inner urges. It is her servile obedience to the social laws that has blocked her way to freedom. The final conversation between Nora and Helmer is revealing because this exchange of dialogue gives us a glimpse of her new understanding and perception of life which she has been able to develop over the years:

_Helmer._ You blind, foolish woman!  
_Nora._ I must try and get some sense, Torvald.  
_Helmer._ To desert your home, your husband and your children! And you don't consider what people will say!  
_Nora._ I cannot consider that at all. I only know that it is necessary for me.  
_Helmer._ It's shocking. This is how you would neglect your most sacred duties.  
_Nora._ What do you consider my most sacred duties?  
_Helmer._ Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children?  
_Nora._ I have other duties just as sacred (DH.p.87).

From a point blank range, she declares that she has duties towards herself just as sacred as she has for others. She stands firm with Himalyan will and rejects all those outmoded theories which society has been bequeathing to individuals from generation to generation. No more does she believe in the theory that a woman is, first of all, a wife or a mother. She develops a firm conviction, “before all else, I am a reasonable human being... I can no longer content myself what most people say. I must think over things for myself and got to understand that” (DH.p.88). She enters in to the realm of existential freedom by freely choosing. She tells Helmer that from now onwards she is free to have a re-look at all social obligations created by morality, religion, law and world around her. In the past, she never exercised her choices even though there were a number of occasions. And the only choice exercised independently was to borrow money but this again was conditioned by her conventional adherence.
Now she comes to develop a very free attitude towards every thing she faced with. She decides to view and review like a free person, out of an adult-ego-state. It is out of this state of mind that she tells Helmer, "I only know that you and I look at it in quite different light. I find it impossible to convince my self that law is right according to which a woman has no right to spare her old dying father or to save her husband's life. I can't believe it" (DH.p.88). To Helmer's admonition that she does not know conditions of the world in which she lives, "No I don't know. But now I am going to try. I am going to see if I can make out who is right, the world or I" (DH.p.89). Being snubbed that she is in a delirious state of mind, she at once retorts, "I have never felt my mind so clear and certain as tonight"(DH.p.89). Out of clear conviction she reminds Helmer that he has forfeited his claim on her love because at the critical moment he had not turned upon as a magic helper, "It was tonight when the wonderful thing did not happen. Then I saw you were not the man I had thought of you" (DH.p.89). She pours out her anguish at the critical moment:

When Krogstad's letter was lying out there, never for a moment did I imagine that you would consent to accept that man's conditions. I was absolutely certain that you would say to him: Publish the thing to the whole world and when that was done----when that was done, I was absolutely certain you would come forward and take every thing upon yourself, and say: I am the guilty one (DH.p.90).

She had pinned her confidence and faith on Helmer out of conventional wisdom born out of the centuries old tradition which enjoins upon a woman to sacrifice every thing for her man's sake. That is why she utters, "It is a thing hundreds and thousands of women have done" (DH.p.90). Therefore an abyss has opened between them. The eight years she has spent with him appear to have become a sheer waste and therefore gruesome, "Oh, I can't bear to think of it ! I could tear myself into little bits" (DH.p.90). However before going, she frees Helmer from all his obligations towards her as he is no more than a stranger to her from now onwards and slams the door with a bang. Such is her journey to freedom.
Nora’s final quitting Helmer’s house has raised a number of objections. While critics like Clement Scott refuse to agree with the decisive step Nora has taken, his approach remains traditionally moralistic. Scott wonders if it could ever be possible for any woman with maternal instinct fully developed to desert her children. He bursts outs with disgust and sums up her entire life as:

She, a loving, affectionate woman, forgets all about the eight years happy married life, forgets the nest of the little bird, forgets her duty, her very instinct as a mother, forgets the three innocent children who are asleep in the next room, forgets her responsibilities, and does a thing that one of the lower animals would not do. A cat or dog would tear any one who separated it from its offspring, but the socialistic Nora, the apostle of the new creed of humanity, leaves her children almost without a pang. She has determined to leave her home.41

No doubt leaving the children is no easy task, yet when seen in the larger perspective of existential ethos which states, ‘I exist, therefore I am’, it is perfectly in order. Staying with Helmer is the very negation of her existence as a human being, not to talk of only mother-hood. A brief look at Nora’s life style reveals that whatever the hampering circumstances, she has always gone in for a solution whatever it may be. She has never taken things lying down as in case of Mrs. Alving (Ghosts) or Beata (Rosmersholm) or Ellida (The Lady From the Sea) or Mrs. Solness (The Master Builder). Beata simply goes to the mill race and drowns her self. Mrs. Alving joins the drinking bouts of her husband and even offers herself in a make-believe manner. Ellida shuts her self in her room for a long time. Mrs. Solness does not go beyond simple murmurs. Nor does Nora drift towards developing criminal tendencies like Rebecca West (Rosmersholm). Standing on the existential precipice, she has many options before her. Her ego has been hurt to an irreparable extent, she can easily go in for suicide. After all, the most significant cause of Beata’s suicide is that she comes to know that her place has been taken by Rebecca. Instead of fighting for her cause, she simply drowns herself. Like Rebecca Nora could eliminate
the most important impediment, in this case her husband Helmer. Like Mrs. Alving she could go in for surrendering herself to dance to Captain Alving's tunes or stay with him in a commanding position but she does not do so. Instead she chooses to slam the door to stand alone. One should not be surprised with Nora breaking through the doll's house and shattering picayunish personality of a squirrel and skylark imposed upon her by her husband because before her levelling explosively with her husband and showing him the mirror of what he is. She does tarantella dance, not that she knows what the dance means to her conscious state but the dance shows that the subliminal personality as opposite to the conscious personality 'cribbed, cabined and confined' is truly strong, vibrant and orgiastic. So it is not surprising that she breaks away. In cold print, the dance may not make an impact but in watching the play, it would have a profoundly visceral impact on the viewer and prepares him for the conscious change which comes over her. Moreover by now she has tested almost all the tenets of religion, morality and ethics. Therefore it is not unnatural or unusual event as seen by critics. Instead it is very natural thing for her.

Moreover, seekers of freedom do not look back, left or right, when determined to go ahead. The way Nora explodes and the way she argues her case speaks volumes of her attaining a stature which is highly becoming of a free person. A close look at her life reveals that she has been a doer through out her life rather than being a passive receiver of outside influences. To quote a few out of several instances will be enough to prove that Nora means business now. For example, she never stops eating macaroons despite her husband's dislike. She at once comes to help Helmer and arranges money by one way or the other. She pays off the instalments along with interest in the face of nerve-breaking experiences and hard work. She hides her secrets so well that she does not divulge them till they become apparent through other sources. She at once strives for finding a job for Mrs. Linde. She manages her house very well. She deliberately remains in the child-daughter mode before
Helmer and even suppresses her sexuality to feed to his ego. Since she has been a doer in all these respects, it is but natural that she will take longer strides in future. A number of options are there before her as a free person. She may come back to her home, she may call for her children, she may call her husband even. In all these respects, she is free to choose and decide.

As for Helmer's search for freedom is concerned, he is totally enmeshed in the 'shadow', in Jungian terminology. All along he has been trying to live in the imagination of society, to adapt an idea from 17th century French philosopher Pascal. Helmer sees himself in the idealistic image of a man in pursuit of strict moral discipline and above-board life, free from all kinds of stigmas. He tells Nora:

No debt, no borrowing. There can be no freedom or beauty about a home life that depends on borrowing and debt. We two have kept bravely on the straight road so far, and we will go on the same way for the short time longer that there need be any struggle (DH.p.5).

But Helmer simply forgets that the edifice of human relationships can't rest solely on the foundations of reason or intellect. Moreover, he does not understand that he is not dealing with a member of some tertiary social group. He fails to realise that his predicament directly relates to his family which is an institution with unique traits and characteristics. A present day psychologist Arthur Koestler underscores the unique nature of communication difficulty in the following words:

Family relations pertain to a plane where the ordinary rules of judgement and conduct do not apply. They are a labyrinth of tensions, quarrels and reconciliations, whose logic is self-contradictory, whose ethics stem from a cozy jungle, and whose values and criteria are distorted like the curved space of a self-contained universe. It is a universe saturated with memories—but memories from which no lessons are drawn; saturated with a past which provides no guidance to the future. For, in this
universe, after each crisis and reconciliation, time always starts afresh and history is always in the year zero.

The depths of human heart and warmth of relationship do make room for full play of emotive adjustments. Helmer's over-dependence on intellect has led to massive accumulation of shadow traits in the unconscious. C.G. Jung analyses such a state of mind as:

This Deesse Raison, emits a deceptive light which illuminates only what we know already but spreads a darkness over all those things which it would be most needful for us to know and become conscious of. The more independent "reason" pretends to be, the more it turns into sheer intellectuality which puts doctrine in place of reality and shows us man not as he is but how he wants to be.

Thus Helmer just can't come out of his shadow traits which block his vision to see into the reality of the situations. Defining shadow, Edward Whitmont writes:

The term shadow refers to that part of personality which has been repressed for the sake of the ego-ideal. Since every thing unconscious is projected, we encounter the shadow in projection— in our view of "the other fellow". As a figure in dreams or phantasies, the shadow represents the personal unconscious. It is like a composite of the personal shells of our complexes and is thus the doorway to all transpersonal experiences.

Helmer is always projecting his own shadow on Krogstad, whom he describes as a man wicked and beyond repair. The sole aim of his projection is to heighten his own image as a man above-board. According to Carl Jung, shadow is the outer most picture, public face or the outer layer of persona. This persona is necessary as it is situation bound, culture bound and role bound. Jung says that he who becomes a slave to this persona becomes rigid and one sided. And Helmer is a classic example of persona, as on the outer level, he wants to be clean and clear but on inner level, he is full of filth and dirt. This persona is the outer most layer of ego which is problem solver. Ego adapts to
reality, it is partly conscious and partly unconscious. It connects past, present and future. Shadow on the other hand is entirely unconscious. It is that part of personality which contains the suppressed, repressed and the ignored portion of personality. Jung divides shadow into three parts: Inferior shadow – which includes all fears, anxieties, unresolved questions, confusions i.e. negative aspects of personality. The first thing which ego does is to bring about a dialogue between persona and the shadow. Inferior shadow is always projected on others.

And a man with too much inferior shadow can’t connect with anima because such a man is always stiff to maintain the high profile of his virtuous personality. In terms of transpersonal relationships, if individuals in a close relationship have a tangle of unresolved misunderstandings and conflicts, they will likely have trouble communicating clearly and openly with each other. In fact, the final phase of failing marriage is often marked by complete inability of the couple to communicate or the closing of the communication channels altogether. In addition to establishing and maintaining effective communication, interpersonal communication involves meeting a number of other adjustive demands. Among these are role relationships, methods of resolving disagreements and conflicts, meeting the situational demand which may markedly influence the relationship—for better or for worse. Interpersonal accommodation is facilitated when the motives of the persons in the relationship are complementary, as when both persons are strongly motivated to give and receive affection. When interpersonal accommodation fails and the relationship does not meet the need of one or both partners, it is likely to be characterised by conflict and dissent and eventually to be ended. A person whose being is based on inferior shadow can not develop complimentary relationship as his motives are always pointing towards self gratification. Coming back to Jungian concept of anima, it is the female reality in man, contra sexual to male ego. That is why in the famous tarantella dance, Helmer begins to feel that Nora is his secret love. He is unable to connect sensual energies of Nora with delight.
He could very well enjoy the ravaging beauty of Nora but fails in that respect miserably because of his being totally enmeshed in inferior shadow. According to Jung, brighter the persona, darker the shadow. Second category of shadow is friendly shadow known as syn pados which contains friends who walk with us. Helmer could have been syn pados to Krogstad had he been free from his inferior shadow as he was known to him for long. And the third is the guiding shadow. This shadow connects us with our higher and deeper potentials and positives which have a way of projecting through dreams. This guiding shadow compensates for the deficiency of the ego. It enables us to achieve dreams which are unheard of. It transports us to a higher level.

There is yet another way through which we can analyse the personality of Helmer and that is Sri Aurobindo's concept of the frontal self. It will be worthwhile to understand the concept of the frontal self:

(a) Frontal self is the product of the vital ego.
(b) Vital ego is into self affirmation, self assertion, self enlargement, self aggrandisement which is legitimate but the frontal self fabricates itself in the superficial commerce with the outer reality.
(c) It goes about its business in a distorted way.
(d) It results, in the course of time it falls into false hood.
(e) It cuts itself off from its own reality and the reality of others.

In Sri Aurobindo's own words:

Our self-view is vitiated by a constant impact and intrusion of our outer-self, our vital-being------. Our vital being is not concerned with self-knowledge but with self-affirmation, desire, ego. It is, therefore, constantly acting on mind to build for it a mental structure of apparent-self that will serve these purposes, our mind is persuaded to present to us and to others a partly fictitious representative figure of ourselves which supports our self-affirmation, justifies our desires and actions, nourishes our ego.
The above outlining in enumerated form and a direct quote have been deduced from Sri Aurobindo’s concept of the frontal self to make its application to the character of Helmer. It is an acknowledged fact that a man entrapped in his frontal self can not be on road to freedom and self realisation. So long as Nora allows Helmer to take liberties in all domestic responsibilities, so long she feeds to his male ego of superiority, so long she continues to be called and described as squirrel or lark, Helmer remains in high spirits and strutting in his house and even in society. Sri Aurobindo sums up the situation:

Man desires self-expression, self-development, in other words, the progressive play in himself of the conscious force of existence; this is his fundamental delight. Whatever hurts that self-expression, self-development, satisfaction of his progressing self, is for him evil, whatever helps, confirms, raises, aggrandises, it is his good. 

Nora’s passive and servile surrender before Helmer’s dictations help Helmer in self-affirmation, self-enlargement and self aggrandisement but it also makes Helmer look at everything in a distorted way. Helmer just can’t imagine sacrificing his honour for the sake of the one who has sacrificed so much for him and to save his life. He just can’t think that warmth and the needs of human relationships can sometimes ask for decisions which allow no room for running away. That is why Helmer falls into an abyss of falsehood. The decisions which Nora takes to save the agony of a dying father or the life of her dying husband simply do not fit in his scheme of things because those decisions are based on the understanding of reality whereas Helmer’s false way of living is utterly unreal. How distorted and false is his assertion that hence forth he will not allow her to mother their children lest they should also imbibe her habits. On the one hand, he traces the origin of Nora’s forgery to the unavoidable influences of her unscrupulous father, on the other, he wants to shut the doors of hereditary influences on the children. That way Helmer is cut off from his own real personality and also the reality of others. The straight
forward, domineering, philistine husband and egoistic moralist is knocked down by Nora’s frontal attack on him slowly. In the beginning, Helmer stands shocked at the revelation of Nora’s forgery and claims to know that he will still be able to keep up his public image and shadow by asking Nora to stay on into his house as he would desire. He still seems to be in control of the situation but when he finds Nora has made up her mind to leave him and his house once and for all, he attempts to change his strategies. He uses every possible means—from threats to entreaties to persuade Nora to stay on. But in all these situations, the self and the self interest of Helmer remains the centre of focus and does not let him come out of his shadow. In the Jungian terminology:

The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognising the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is essential for any kind of self-knowledge and therefore meets with considerable resistance.

He foolishly seeks to awaken the moral and religious sense of Nora by reminding of moral and social obligations:

Can you not understand your place in your own home? Have you not a reliable guide in such matters as that?—have you no religion... This is unheard of in a girl of your age! But if religion cannot lead you aright, let me try and awaken your conscience. I suppose you have some moral sense? Or — answer me — am I to think you have none?(DH.p.88).

Earlier he tries to convince Nora about her marital obligations towards husband and children but Nora knocks Helmer down under the weight of his own arguments.

Finally Helmer stands helpless and baffled. He loses his sense of mind and morality when his description of Nora, “You are ill, Nora; you are delirious; I almost think you are out of mind” (DH.p.88) aptly fits on his own self. How
delirious and mad he is when he makes a final entreaty to Nora, “But can’t we live here like brother and sister --?” (DH.p.91). Such is the whimpering degradation of Helmer. Here again Helmer is miles away from understanding the ground realities of life. It is very interesting that till the last moment, Helmer does not permit her to go on the road to freedom because Nora’s decision has simply benumbed him. On the other hand, Nora frees him of all obligations when she asks her marriage ring back:

Listen, Torvald. I have heard that when a wife deserts her husband’s house, as I am doing now, he is legally freed from all obligations towards her. In any case I set you free from all your obligations. You are not to feel yourself bound in the slightest way, any more than I shall. There must be perfect freedom on both sides. See here is your ring back. Give me mine (DH.p.91).

The entire situation of Helmer can be summed up in psychological terms in the words of Edward C. Whitmont:

In order to protect its own control and sovereignty the ego instinctively puts up a great resistance to the confrontation with the shadow; when it catches a glimpse of the shadow, the ego most often reacts with an attempt to eliminate it. Our will is mobilised and we decide, “I just won’t be that way any more!” Then comes the final shattering shock, when we discover that, in part at least, this is impossible no matter how we try.  

At the same time, the emptiness of Helmer’s home due to his own hard morality and illusory shadow does open his eye to what Ronald Gaskell states:

To be wholly oneself is to reject such illusions to get rid of the flattering image of the self, to find and develop what lies deepest in one’s nature. And the threat to this emergent self comes not just from within, from doubt or indolence.

Besides explaining Helmer’s inability to become free in terms of Jungian archetypes of the persona, the shadow, the anima and the self, it will not be out
of place to illustrate Helmer's incapacity to attain freedom in terms of Jungian archetype of mother-child relationship which is characterised by mother's protection of the child. Jung strongly feels that dissolution of this bond must ultimately occur to attain adulthood. "Those who fail to come out of their basic dependence on mothers, project the mother image on to their wives by acting in childish and dependent ways or they may react in an opposite manner by acting in hyper masculine ways by rejecting any offers of help from their spouse."  

Thus Helmer presents himself as a man with a very strong inferior shadow, apparent frontal self and an impermeable persona. Such a man can never relate himself to others even when others are related to him through primary bonds. There is no question of his attaining freedom in the sense in which humanistic psychologists view the ideal of freedom. Freedom does not mean the subjugation of the others through a set of centuries old dogmatic values which do not recognise the otherness of the others. Helmer's future is definitely a very dark one because he does not stand alone as Nora stands with a definite strength, rather he stands as a helpless individual weeping, crying and repenting over his past. No wonder, he may seek some room in lunatic asylum.

Clubbing together, the attempts of Nora and Helmer in their search of freedom to reach at some conclusive statement, it may safely be said that those who decide, choose and explode independently, out of neo-psychic ego state can have their freedom at their own doorsteps. Those who lie like leviathans with ambulance load of external codes on their backs in the shadow world, must suffer a state of inertia in their own homes, without any freedom at all. Those who fall in the first category are sure to make big in their lives and those in the second category, are condemned to rot. Existential leap of faith is a sine qua non for freedom.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 Michael Meyer, a famous biographer of Henrik Ibsen in his book titled "Ibsen" states that soon after Nora had been published, Ibsen received a report from his translator and theatrical agent in Germany saying that there were grounds for supposing that another translation or adaptation might appear with a different ending by which Nora does not leave because of her children. To forestall any such possibility of changed end by some less tender and competent hand, Ibsen himself sent to his translator and agent a drafted emendation in which Nora does not leave the house but is forced by Helmer to the doorway of the children's bed room. In an open letter dated 17 Feb., 1880 to a Danish News Paper National-tindnde, Ibsen states, "This emendation I have myself described to my translator as a 'barbaric outrage' on the play. However, the happy ending was never a success".


3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.


16 Ibid., p.208.


20 Bjorn Hemmer, "Ibsen and the realistic problem drama" in The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen, p.82.


22 Weltanschauung is a German term which refers to world-view of culture, which embraces everything in life from manners, customs, mores to art and culture. It is the inner attitude which manifests itself in a psychological orientation of an all-enveloping kind. Oswald Spengler, a German Philosopher of history, in his book The Decline of the West makes a pointed study of civilizations. Spengler's cultural morphology uncovers the existence of eight (or more) cultures-the Egyptian, The Chinese, The Ancient Semitic, The Indian, The Magian, The Appollonian or Greco-Roman, The Faustian or Western-----which mysteriously spring into being, grow, flower and decline. The total outlook of each culture is precisely what we understand by the term Weltanschauung.


25 Ibid., p.103.

26 Ibid.


29 Ibid, p.129.

30 Ibid., 130.

31 Erich Fromm, in his book Man for Himself, enumerates a number of traits in people with receptive orientation. He says that such people believe in receiving, they are best listeners, they are always in search of a magic helper, they are always afraid of losing what they have and they feel lost when alone because they feel that they can not do any thing without outside help. They tend to overcome anxiety and depression by eating and drinking. And they fall for any body who gives them love or what looks like love.

32 H.L. Menken, Intro., Eleven Plays of Henrik Ibsen (The Modern Library: New York, 1957), p.85. (All Subsequent quotations have been taken from this edition and they are indicated by page numbers and abbreviation DH given in parantheses).

33 Arechaeopsychic Ego-state: In Berne's terminology, each individual seems to have available a limited repertoire of such ego-states which are not roles but psychological realities. In layman's language, this state refers to what is fixed in early child-hood.

34 Psychic Ego-state refers to that which resembles that of a parental figure or figures.

36 James C. Coleman in his book *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life* (p.742), defines the concept of ‘double bind’ in terms of a situation in which, an individual will be disapproved for performing a given act and equally disapproved if he does not perform it.

37 *Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia* (1989) describes tarantella as a rollicking Italian Neapolitan folkdance in which a couple or several women, teasingly pursue and court one another twirling and capering with increasing speed to the music of a Mandolin, Guitar or Tambourine. Some authorities refer it to a mania called tarantism, allegedly caused by the bite of a venomous tarantula. Because the frenzied tarantella was thought to cure the delirium tremens or melancholia that the bitten victims suffered, the name of the dance may be derived from the spider. Tarantulas inject a paralysing venom into the prey with their large fangs. It is a dance of death origins. In Nora’s case, Krogstad has already thrown Nora in such fangs of Helmer that it is difficult for her to come out of the situation. Therefore, the tarantella dance is nothing but a visual expression of her attempts to come out of those fangs. Her frenzied dancing, no doubt is an escape mechanism, but to me the dance is a physical explosion, anticipating verbal explosion which is going to take Nora to the road to freedom.

38 F.L. Lucas,. *The Drama of Ibsen and Strindberg*, p.142.

39 Eric Berne, p.27.

40 These two concepts have been developed by Carl Jung in his essay “Marriage as a Psychological Relationship”. Jung differentiates between the container and the contained as:

The one who is contained feels himself to be living entirely within the confines of his marriage; this attitude to the marriage partner is undivided; outside the marriage there exists no essential obligations and no binding interest.

The container on the other hand, in accordance with his tendency to dissociation has a special need to unify himself in undivided love for another, will be left far behind in his efforts, which is naturally very difficult for him, by the simpler personality.


46 Ibid., p.97.


49 Edward C. Whitmont, p.167.
