



A Doll's House

Henrik Ibsen (1828 - 1906)

Read by:	Multiple readers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	2 hours 30 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1157
Language:	English	UPC:	0683422134722
Style:	Dramatic reading	MSLP:	\$9.99
Genre:	Drama		

A Doll's House aroused a great deal of controversy when it premiered at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen in 1879. At a time when strict social conventions (and gender roles) were sacrosanct, Ibsen dared to have the central character, Nora Helmer, leave her suffocating marriage and her children to “find herself”. In spite of the scandal (or because of it), the production sold out every performance and was quickly followed by equally successful runs in Stockholm, Sweden and in Christiania (Oslo) and Bergen, Norway. The play is a domestic drama that takes place over several days during Christmas in which the delicate balance of the household is disrupted by the gradual exposure of secrets and lies. Nora secretly (and illegally) borrowed

money to finance her banker husband's recuperation from overwork from a man her husband is about to fire, himself a forger. Naturally, he resorts to blackmail, but eventually relents when he reconciles with his beloved, a former nanny to the family recently freed of a loveless marriage of necessity. Nora is exposed nonetheless and disowned by her husband before the threat is defused. Relieved when the incriminating note is destroyed, he forgives her, thinking her mistake a simple product of her daffy femininity. But the damage is done. He is not the man she thought he was and she is not the doll he so often calls her. She has to go. No good deed goes unpunished. It is no wonder *A Doll's House* is the most performed play in the entire world.

Henrik Ibsen (March 20, 1828 – May 23, 1906) is widely regarded as the most important playwright since William Shakespeare. His best known works include *A Doll's House*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Ghosts*, *Peer Gynt*, *The Wild Duck* and *An Enemy of the People*, and he is the most frequently performed dramatist after Shakespeare. He is often called “the father of realism” and is one of the founders of Modernism in the theatre. He was born into a well-connected merchant family in the seaport town of Skien, Norway that experienced serious financial difficulties when he was a young boy. Much of his work is shaped by the dark secrets and moral conflicts of families keeping up appearances, with a particular focus on the suffering of women. He left school at age 15, apprenticed as a pharmacist for a time, fathered an illegitimate child, and moved to Oslo, where he tried unsuccessfully to enter the university. He began writing plays in his early 20's, moving to Bergen, where he became deeply involved in all aspects of the theatre and began to write, achieving recognition with *Brand* in 1865 and *Peer Gynt* in 1868. He left Norway in 1864 and spent 27 years in Italy and Germany during his most productive years, returning to Norway in 1891. As he matured his work generated considerable controversy for its exposure of hypocritical social values, but he went beyond these concerns in his late period with more complex and introspective works. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature in 1902, 1903, and 1904.