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How Patriarchal Control Shapes Female Identity and Freedom in *A Doll's House* and *Purple Hibiscus*

Two stories that show how a home may be a powerful kind of imprisonment are *Purple Hibiscus* and *A Doll's House*. However, this prison is not similar to the ones in movies, which often feature locks and keys. The daily actions of its inmates create this jail. *Doll's House* and *Purple Hibiscus* demonstrate how a home may become a prison through the way people interact with one another in their homes and act morally when others are there.

*Purple Hibiscus* and *A Doll's House* are attempting to convey to readers that their actions at home have the potential to trap them inside their own personal prison. Ibsen demonstrates Torvald's immense authority via his actions (22-28). Torvald speaks to Nora in an unpleasant manner. It is not harmless kindness to refer to Nora as his "little lark" or "squirrel" since it makes her controllable, little, and adorable. The line "I have been your doll-wife, just as at home I was Papa's doll-child" is a crucial realisation for Nora in *A Doll's House* (Ibsen 74). This increases her awareness of the power dynamics that have restricted her ability to perform in the household. In *Purple Hibiscus*, Kambili makes a comment about her father, Eugene, that may be used as a counterargument: "I have always wanted to please my father. I've always wanted him to say that I'm a good girl" (Adichie 45). Both women's indoctrination to see their value through the lens of male approval is connected to the idea that house is a prison.

Torvald's "power" also works because he presents his beliefs as common sense. As if a good wife should be guided and disciplined rather than just favoured, he views Nora's

immature conduct as acceptable and desirable (Ibsen 73-76). In this sense, the house becomes a training ground where Nora receives social and emotional punishment for leaving and rewards for her innocuous deeds. Instead of being only a personal interaction between two people, the audience is compelled to see that this is a mirror of a larger society framework in which femininity is connected with pleasing, dependence, and reputation and masculinity with power. In this case, money becomes crucial. In addition to love and emotional turmoil, the play examines the economic structures that facilitate marriage. Nora's actual lack of freedom becomes evident. Since the legal and financial institutions do not allow her to have an independent adult role, she must operate covertly in order to achieve anything significant.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie shows that power works in a way, but she uses religion to make her point. The fact that Jaja does not go to communion is a sign that obeying Eugene is what really matters in their house (Adichie 18-21). When Jaja throws away his prayer book, it shows that believing in God and being punished are basically the same thing. In the way Kambili tells the story, readers see that discipline is something that happens inside a person, and this is what Adichie is trying to say about power and religion, and how it affects people, like Jaja and Kambili. Being quiet is not something that is part of someone's personality. It is something that people learn to do. They do this so they can survive.

Fear is what controls what people can say. It also controls what people can think. People are afraid to speak up. Torvald tries to define love as obedience. Nora's insistence that she must "stand quite alone" rejects that definition (Ibsen 80). Kambili's freedom is slower, built through finding words and alternative models of family (Adichie 112). Still, the direction is the same: a self stops being explained by someone else's rules.

Thus, this essay is aimed to compare how Ibsen in *A Doll's House* and Adichie in *Purple Hibiscus* present the home as a place of patriarchal control. They explore how acts of

resistance shape female identity and freedom. Together, the texts suggest that resistance begins when patriarchal meanings are refused.

Works Cited

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Purple Hibiscus*. Algonquin Books, 2003.

Ibsen, Henrik. *A Doll's House*. Fingerprint Publishing, 2021.