

ANNE MARIE

(*Anne Marie and Nora.*)

NORA.

Alright Anne Marie, this is the point where I need your help. Torvald won't give me the divorce himself so now I have limited options for how to get it.

Option #1 is the option where I make up a story that says that Torvald did something awful to me, threatened my life or something and you corroborate that story. Option 1 would work, but I would never do option 1, because option 1 is wrong and weak and it's just ugly and wrong and—

Option #2, I give in to the judge's demand, I retract all my writings, everything I've ever publicly said about—everything—no, I'd rather die before taking it all back—Option 2 is also not an option.

So what I need is an option 3.

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

Do you know of an option 3?

ANNE MARIE.

I'm still really pissed at you.

I think you should go.

He's gone, it's not appropriate for you to be here.

You've put me in a bad spot, you've put me in a...

Torvald is all I have in this world, my only family.

He takes care of me.

He supports me.

Do you know why?

He doesn't have to do it, the children are grown up, but he does it because he's grateful to me for sticking around after

you ran off—

for staying with him through a very difficult time—taking care of the kids—raising the kids—and looking after him—oh he was messy! You have no idea, you can't even begin to imagine.

The silence.

The not-eating.

The very dark thoughts he'd think.

The shame—

And how this must've looked to him—the thoughts he must've thought when he saw us together, conspiring behind his—

NORA.

we weren't

ANNE MARIE.

I want you to go.

Just go.

Leave.

There's the door,

I know you know how to use it.

NORA. (*About to say something.*)

...

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

...

ANNE MARIE.

...

NORA.

No, I'm not leaving.

I'm staying.

Get a room ready for me

ANNE MARIE.
you're being selfish

NORA.
it's my legal right / if I'm—

ANNE MARIE.
No. No, / you're—

NORA.
married to Torvald, I'm married to Torvald—
I'm married to Torvald then this is my house
just like it's his house, I deserve to be here,
and this is where I'll stay until we're no longer married.

ANNE MARIE.
just take option 2

NORA.
never

ANNE MARIE.
so what—the judge wants you to write a letter
taking back some things you said that you probably
shouldn't have said in the first place—so what—it
makes you feel bad, / just get over it

NORA.
it's not about feelings—

ANNE MARIE.
you don't have to run with every feeling you have,
you don't have to indulge—because some feelings
make trouble—and here I am / forget how I feel—I
have feelings too, but also my livelihood is at stake

NORA.
so is mine—on paper we're married,
and that means as my husband

54

he has claim to all of it—
all the money that I've earned for myself

ANNE MARIE.
he wouldn't

NORA.
what

ANNE MARIE.
take your money

NORA.
maybe, maybe not, I don't know.
He was always very weird about money,
very controlling, very—

ANNE MARIE.
you can trust him

NORA.
but I don't want to have to trust him—that's my point—
I can't be tied to him.
I can't be always looking over my shoulder,
worrying about—
That's what I left.
That's what I ended by walking out this door

ANNE MARIE.
and what about me—?

NORA.
what about you—?

ANNE MARIE.
you're saying—what, that I don't matter—?

NORA.
no, I'm—of course you—

55

ANNE MARIE.
he'll kick me out

NORA.
no he won't

ANNE MARIE.
here I am, the one total innocent in all of this

NORA.
is that so

ANNE MARIE.
I think—

NORA.
what makes you innocent—?

ANNE MARIE.
aren't I—?

NORA.
you're saying you have nothing to do with this problem?

ANNE MARIE.
You're saying I—

NORA.
you're not doing anything to help fix the problem.

ANNE MARIE.
After all the problems I've already fixed for you
I have to fix this too?

Is that what you're really saying?
Fuck you, Nora.
Fuck you.

56

You have zero gratitude.
I raised your kids.
You should be coming in here—first words out of your mouth should
have been:
Thank you Anne Marie.
Thank you for abandoning your own life, your own child
and raising mine, so that I could go off to do my little thing.

NORA.
I didn't ask you to do that.
I didn't make you stay.
I left.
You decided to stay.
I'm thankful that you stayed,
but that was not your responsibility

ANNE MARIE.
but—
NORA.
—was your choice, not—

ANNE MARIE.
how could I leave

NORA.
just like I did

ANNE MARIE.
I'm not as cold as you.

NORA.
You had even less reason to stay.
It should have been easier for you than me.

ANNE MARIE.
It was my job, Nora, and if I didn't do what I did, three very young
children—were going to be left alone—

57