

7th Lecture

ACT III

Gregers rented a room in Hialmar's house. Hialmar wants to welcome Gregers. In his generosity, He invited Gregers and someone else for lunch. It is not easy for Hialmar's family to arrange lunch for three people. It is Gina who realizes that. Hialmar has no idea how he will arrange the lunch. He did not think of the expenses or the means to arrange lunch.

He has to tell Gina. Like a good wife she says that is okay, she will find something to cook.

Gina. So I heard. You've asked him to lunch.

Hialmar. Just to a little bit of early lunch, you know. It's his first day -- we can hardly do less. You've got something in the house, I suppose?

Gina. **I shall have to find something or other.**

Hialmar. **And don't cut it too fine, for I fancy Relling and Molvik are coming up**, too. I just happened to meet Relling on the stairs, you see; so I had to --

Gina. Oh, **are we to have those two as well?**

Hialmar. Good Lord -- **a couple more or less can't make any difference.** Old Ekdal (opens his door and looks in). I say, Hialmar -- [(*Sees GINA.*)] Oh!

He tells her that he has invited two more persons. He simply sends a message that he has invited two more people without saying it directly. He does not say that he invited- he said "I fancy" I dream- I imagine. He indirectly informs her . He had no choice.

She expects that Hialmar will be apologetic, giving excuses. They are just two- very limited.

He wonders as she is worried for arranging lunch for just two people.

She never objects openly.

Hialmar considers himself the bread winner of the family.

Hialmar is more interested in the attic than in his job that helps them survive. This is a hobby, not a job. He does not get anything out of it. We realize that Gina does most of the job. People who are supposed to work, they busy themselves with something else.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hjalmar is supposed to work in the photo's job but he is more interested in the attic. At least, in the presence of Gina he would not go to the attic. He would try to find time that Gina is not there to go to the attic. In the presence of Gina, he should try to be interested in his job. The old man realizes and he also knows that. He comes and asks his son to go to the attic. He wants to say something but Gina was there so he thinks that it is not a good time.

Old Ekdal (opens his door and looks in). I say, Hjalmar -- [(Sees GINA.)]Oh!

Gina. Do you want anything, grandfather?

Ekdal. Oh, no, it doesn't matter. H'm! [Retires again.]

Gina [(takes up the basket).] **Be sure you see that he doesn't go out.**

Hjalmar. All right, all right. And, Gina, **a little herring-salad wouldn't be a bad idea**; Relling and Molvik were out on the loose again last night

She asks Hjalmar to make sure that the old man does not go out. Hjalmar asks Gina to add herring- fish salad to lunch.

Gina. If only they don't come before I'm ready for them --

Hjalmar. No, of course they won't; take your own time.

Gina. Very well; **and meanwhile you can be working a bit.**

Hjalmar. **Well, I am working! I am working as hard as I can!**

Gina. Then you'll have that job off your hands, you see.

She wants to be ready for the guests and then the guests come. She always doubts that he does not work.

Gina. Then you'll have that job off your hands, you see.

[She goes out to the kitchen with her basket. **HIALMAR sits for a time pencilling away at the photograph, in an indolent and listless manner.**

Indolent= without activeness

Listless= without interest

Ekdal [(peeps in, looks round the studio, and says softly): **Are you busy?**

Hjalmar. Yes, **I'm toiling at these wretched pictures --**

Ekdal. Well, well, never mind, -- **since you're so busy -- h'm!** [He goes out again; the door stands open.]

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hialmar [*(continues for some time in silence then he lays down his brush and goes over to the door).*
Are you busy, father?

Ekdal [*(in a grumbling tone, within).* **If you're busy, I'm busy, too.** H'm!

Hialmar. Oh, very well, then. [*[Goes to his work again.]*

Ekdal [*(presently, coming to the door again).*

H'm; I say, **Hialmar, I'm not so very busy, you know.**

Gina is away. It is good time for the father to speak to his son.

Toil= working hard

Look at the words he is using to describe how he is working. He says that he is toiling- instead of working. Toiling means working hard in a job that is not interested.

He describes the pictures as being wretched = miserable.

Hialmar. I thought you were writing.

Ekdal. Oh, devil take it! **can't Graberg wait a day or two? After all, it's not a matter of life and death.**

Hialmar. No; **and you're not his slave either.**

Ekdal. **And about that other business in there --**

Hialmar. Just what I was thinking of. Do you want to go in? Shall I open the door for you?

Ekdal. **Well, it wouldn't be a bad notion.**

Hialmar [*(rises).*] Then we'd have that off our hands.

Ekdal. Yes, exactly. It's got to be ready first thing to-morrow. It is to-morrow, isn't it? H'm?

Hialmar. Yes, of course it's to-morrow.

[*HALMAR and EKDAL push aside each his half of the sliding door. The morning sun is shining in through the skylights; some doves are flying about; others sit cooing, upon the perches; the hens are heard clucking now and then, further back in the garret.*

Hialmar. There; now you can get to work, father.

Ekdal [*(goes in).* Aren't you coming, too?

Hialmar. Well, really, do you know -- ; **I almost think -- [(Sees GINA at the kitchen door.)]**

I? **No; I haven't time; I must work. -- But now for our new contrivance --**

He pulls a cord, a curtain slips down inside, the lower part consisting of a piece of old sailcloth, the upper part of a stretched fishing net. The floor of the garret is thus no longer visible.

Hialmar [*(goes to the table).* So! Now, perhaps I can sit in peace for a little while.

Gina. Is he rampaging in there again?

Hialmar. Would you rather have had him slip down to Madam Eriksen's? [*(Seats himself.)*]

Do you want anything? You know you said --

Gina. I only wanted to ask if you think we can lay the table for lunch here?

Hialmar. Yes; we have no early appointment, I suppose?

Gina. No, I expect no one to-day except those two sweethearts that are to be taken together.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hialmar. Why the deuce couldn't they be taken together another day!

Gina. Don't you know, I told them to come in the afternoon, when you are having your nap.

Hialmar. Oh, that's capital. Very well, let us have lunch here then.

Gina. All right; but there's no hurry about laying the cloth; you can have the table for a good while yet.

Hialmar. **Do you think I am not sticking at my work? I'm at it as hard as I can!**

Gina. Then you'll be free later on, you know. [*Goes out into the kitchen again. Short pause.*]

Ekdal [*in the garret doorway, behind the net.*] *Hialmar!*

Ekdal. Afraid we shall have to move the water-trough, after all.

Hialmar. What else have I been saying all along?

Ekdal. H'm -- h'm -- h'm.

[*Goes away from the door again. HIALMAR goes on working a little; glances towards the garret and half rises. HEDVIG comes in from the kitchen.*]

Hialmar [*sits down again hurriedly.*] **What do you want?**

Hedvig. **I only wanted to come in beside you, father. Hialmar**(after a pause). **What makes you go prying around like that? Perhaps you are told off to watch me?**

Hedvig. **No, no.**

Hialmar. **What is your mother doing out there?**

Hedvig. **Oh, mother's in the middle of making the herring-salad. (Goes to the table). Isn't there any little thing I could help you with, father?**

Hialmar. Oh, no. **It is right that I should bear the whole burden -- so long as my strength holds out.**

Set your mind at rest, Hedvig; if only your father keeps his health --

Hedvig. Oh, no, father! You mustn't talk in that horrid way.

He thinks that his daughter spies on him- that she is the spy of her mother to tell her whether he is working or not. The daughter tells him that her mother is in the middle of cooking. She has not finished it. He can take rest that she will not come soon. The daughter offers to help him. He tells her that he has to bear the whole burden and do the whole job as it is his own responsibility.

[*She wanders about a little, stops by the doorway and looks into the garret.*]

Hialmar. **Tell me, what is he doing?**

Hedvig. **I think he's making a new path to the water-trough.**

Hialmar. **He can never manage that by himself! And here am I doomed to sit -- !**

Hedvig [*goes to him.*] Let me take the brush, father; I can do it, quite well.

Hialmar. Oh, **nonsense; you will only hurt your eyes.**

Hedvig. Not a bit. Give me the brush.

The father is working hard and the son cannot help. It is his fate to sit there without helping his father. The granddaughter offers to help her grandfather but he is afraid that it will hurt her eyes.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hjalmar [*rising*]. Well, it won't take more than a minute or two.

Hedvig. Pooh, what harm can it do then? [*Takes the brush.*] There! [*Seats herself.*]
I can begin upon this one.

Hjalmar. **But mind you don't hurt your eyes! Do you hear? I won't be answerable; you do it on your own responsibility -- understand that.**

Hedvig [*retouching*]. Yes, yes, I understand.

Hjalmar. You are quite clever at it, Hedvig. Only a minute or two, you know.

[*He slips through by the edge of the curtain into the garret. HEDVIG sits at her work. HIALMAR and EKDAL are heard disputing inside.*]

While he is working there, Gregers come. He is invited to lunch. He has time to speak to the daughter.

She wants to go to tell her father that he is there but he stops here because he needs to talk to her. He comes to know that she usually helps her father.

Gregers [*turning towards the garret*]. **It looks quite different by day from what it did last night in the moonlight**

Hedvig. **Yes, it changes ever so much. It looks different in the morning and in the afternoon; and it's different on rainy days from what it is in fine weather.**

Gregers. Have you noticed that?

Hedvig. **Yes, how could I help it?**

Gregers. Are you, too, fond of being in there with the wild duck?

Gregers mentions that the scene in the attic is different during day time from the night.

Gregers. But I suppose you haven't much spare time; you go to school, no doubt.

Hedvig. No, not now; father is afraid of my hurting my eyes.

Gregers. Oh; then he reads with you himself?

Hedvig. Father has promised to read with me; but he has never had time yet.

Hedvig. **And there's an old bureau with drawers and flaps, and a big clock with figures that go out and in. But the clock isn't going now.**

Gregers. **So time has come to a standstill in there -- in the wild duck's domain.**

Hedvig. Yes. **And then there's an old paint-box and things of that sort; and all the books.**

Gregers. **And you read the books,** I suppose?

Hedvig. Oh, yes, when I get the chance. **Most of them are English though, and I don't understand English.** But then I look at the pictures. -- There is one great big book called "Harrison's History of London."* It must be a hundred years old; and there are such heaps of pictures in it. At the beginning there is Death with an hour-glass and a woman. I think that is horrid. But then there are all the other pictures of churches, and castles, and streets, and great ships sailing on the sea.

Time has stopped.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

These old things belong to an old sailor.

Gregers. **Tell me now -- when you are sitting in there looking at the pictures, don't you wish you could travel and see the real world for yourself?**

Hedvig. Oh, **no! I mean always to stay at home and help father and mother.**

Gregers. To retouch photographs?

Hedvig. No, not only that. **I should love above everything to learn to engrave pictures like those in the English books.**

Gregers. H'm. **What does your father say to that?**

Hedvig. **I don't think father likes it; father is strange about such things. Only think, he talks of my learning basket-making, and straw-plaiting! But I don't think that would be much good.**

Gregers. Oh, no, I don't think so either.

Hedvig. **But father was right in saying that if I had learnt basket-making I could have made the new basket for the wild duck.**

Gregers. So you could; and it was you that ought to have done it, wasn't it?

Hedvig. **Yes, for it's my wild duck.**

Gregers. Of course it is.

Hedvig. **Yes, it belongs to me.** But I lend it to father and grandfather as often as they please.

She does not know that she is going to lose her eyesight. But she knows that she is taken away from school. She is deprived from the entertainment of the outer world. She keeps at home and she is up to her promise but they are not up to their promise. Still, she feels contented, satisfied, and happy with her life. She is always trying to find a positive side in everything. She has a sense of possession. She says that the wild duck is hers. She thinks that it belongs to her but she lent it to her father and her grandfather.

Gregers. **Indeed? What do they do with it?**

Hedvig. **Oh, they look after it, and build places for it, and so on.**

Gregers. I see; for no doubt **the wild duck is by far the most distinguished inhabitant of the garret?**

The life in Hjalmar's house is a world of make-belief, not a world of reality, like drama. We believe that it is reality. They make themselves busy in the attic and believe that they are doing a job. In the attic, the family has created a fake forest- not real. They enjoy that kind of life believing that they have a real forest. They emerge in all activities related to it. They get real satisfaction from fake things. They make fake forest and they indulge – make themselves busy in their activities to get real satisfaction. In that forest of make-belief, they have all domestic animals which are kept at home. They do not give us an impression of the

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

forest. Only the wild duck is the only wild animal that might give us an idea that it might be a real forest.

Hedvig. Yes, indeed she is; for she is a real wild fowl, you know. And then **she is so much to be pitied; she has no one to care for, poor thing.**

Gregers. **She has no family**, as the rabbits have --

Hedvig. No. The hens too, many of them, were chickens together; but **she has been taken right away from all her friends.** And then **there is so much that is strange about the wild duck. Nobody knows her, and nobody knows where she came from either.**

Gregers. **And she has been down in the depths of the sea.**

Hedvig [*(with a quick glance at him, represses a smile and asks)*: **Why do you say "depths of the sea"?**

She pities the wild duck as she has no family, no friends. She has taken away from all her friends. She has no one to care for her. Nobody knows her and nobody knows where she came from. The duck has no companion to care for him or she does not have a family depending on her that she should care for. She has no mission in life. She is out of her natural habitat. There is no companion. She has to companion to take care for. All other birds and animals have a family. She is alone among other birds and animals which have families.

Mission is a very important motif in the play.

Hedvig. **Yes; but it sounds so strange to me when other people speak of the depths of the sea.**

Gregers. Why so? Tell me why?

Hedvig. No, I won't; it's so stupid.

Using the word “depth of the sea” is more poetic than using the word “bottom of the sea”

Depth may have many meaning. The girl is clever at getting the other meanings of words.

She is always trying to get the other meaning.

Gregers. Oh, no, I am sure it's not. **Do tell me why you smiled.**

Hedvig. Well, this is the reason: **whenever I come to realise suddenly -- in a flash -- what is in there, it always seems to me that the whole room and everything in it should be called "the depths of the sea." But that is so stupid.**

Gregers. You mustn't say that.

That is the mysterious thought that came to her mind. She always feels double meaning in everything. She has a sense of mystery. She always feels what is behind.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Gregers. I hear you can retouch, Mrs. Ekdal.

Gina [*with a side glance*].] Yes, I can.

Gregers. That was exceedingly lucky.

Gina. How -- lucky?

Gregers. Since Ekdal took to photography, I mean.

Hedvig. **Mother can take photographs, too.**

Gina. Oh, yes; **I was bound to learn that.**

Gregers. **So it is really you that carry on the business, I suppose?**

Gina. **Yes, when Ekdal hasn't time himself --**

Gregers. **He is a great deal taken up with his old father,** I daresay.

Gina. Yes; **and then you can't expect a man like Ekdal to do nothing but take car-de-visits of Dick, Tom and Harry.**

Gregers. **I quite agree with you; but having once gone in for the thing --**

Gina. You can surely understand, Mr. Werle, that Ekdal's not like one of your common photographers.

Gregers. Of course not; but still

Gina does not present her husband as a fellow who is difficult to tackle with. She shows her satisfaction for her husband. She always defends him. She says that her husband is taken up by his father- has to take care of his father.

[*A shot is fired within the garret.*]

Gregers [*starting up*]. What's that?

Gina. Ugh! now they're firing again!

Gregers. Have they firearms in there?

Hedvig. **They are out shooting.**

Gregers. What! (At the door of the garret.) Are you shooting, Hialmar?

Hialmar [*inside the net*]. Are you there? I didn't know;

I was so taken up -- [*To HEDVIG.*]

Why did you not let us know? [*Comes into the studio.*]

Gregers. Do you go shooting in the garret?

Hialmar [*showing a double-barrelled pistol*]. Oh, only with this thing.

Gina. Yes, you and grandfather **will do yourselves a mischief some day with that there pigstol.**

Hialmar [*with irritation*]. I believe I have told you that this kind of firearm **is called a pistol.**

Gina. Oh, **that doesn't make it much better, that I can see.**

Gregers. So you have become a sportsman, too, Hialmar?

Hialmar. **Only a little rabbit-shooting now and then.** Mostly to please father, you understand.

She pronounces words in a wrong way. He corrects her mistakes of pronunciation. It is only pronunciation that he is better in. in all other jobs Gina is better than Hialmar.

Gina. **Men are strange beings; they must always have something to pervert themselves with**

Hialmar [*snappishly*]. Just so; **we must always have something to divert ourselves with.**

Gina. Yes, that's just what I say.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hjalmar. H'm. [*(To GREGERS).* You see the garret is fortunately so situated that no one can hear us shooting. [*(Lays the pistol on the top shelf of the bookcase.)*]
Don't touch the pistol, Hedvig! One of the barrels is loaded; remember that.

Pervert= to do something wrong and bad.

He corrects her words. She means **divert** to **pervert**.

Divert= to do something different.

Gregers [*(looking through the net).* You have a fowling-piece too, I see.

Hjalmar. **That is father's old gun. It's of no use now; something has gone wrong with the lock. But it's fun to have it all the same; for we can take it to pieces now and then, and clean and grease it, and screw it together again. -- Of course, it's mostly father that fiddle-faddles with all that sort of thing.**

It is a world of make-belief. It satisfies his sense of possession that they also have a gun. They can separate the gun into pieces, grease it and fix it again. They feel that they are doing an important job. He puts the blame on the father who makes this. They do it and get satisfaction from it.

Hedvig [*(beside GREGERS).* Now you can see the wild duck properly.

Gregers. I was just looking at her. **One of her wings seems to me to droop a bit.**

Hedvig. Well, no wonder; her wing was broken, you know.

Gregers. And she trails one foot a little. Isn't that so?

Hjalmar. Perhaps a very little bit.

Hedvig. Yes, it was by that foot the dog took hold of her

Hjalmar. But otherwise she hasn't the least thing the matter with her; and that is simply marvellous for a creature that has a charge of shot in her body, and has been between a dog's teeth --

When Werle shot the duck, it hurt her wings. Her leg is also lame. When the dog went down to fetch the duck, the dog hurt her on the leg.

Hjalmar [*(in a low voice).*] I think you had better not stand there looking in at father; he doesn't like it. [*(GREGERS moves away from the garret door.)*]

Besides, I may as well shut up before the others come. [*(Claps his hands to drive the fowls back.)*]

Shh -- shh, in with you! [*(Draws up the curtain and pulls the doors together.)*]

All the contrivances are my own invention. It's really quite amusing to have things of this sort to potter with, and to put to rights when they get out of order. And it's absolutely necessary, too; for Gina objects to having rabbits and fowls in the studio.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Potter with= make oneself busy with.

This is the same motif of the world of make-belief. **It's really quite amusing to have things of this sort to potter with, and to put to rights when they get out of order**

They create jobs for themselves and make themselves busy with. They have a feeling of achievement.

Gina objects that rabbits and hens come to the studio.

Gregers. **To be sure; and I suppose the studio is your wife's special department?**

Hialmar. **As a rule, I leave the everyday details of business to her; for then I can take refuge in the parlour and give my mind to more important things.**

Gregers. **What things may they be,** Hialmar?

Hialmar. I wonder you have not asked that question sooner. But perhaps you haven't heard of the invention?

Gregers. The invention? No.

Hialmar. **It is not quite completed yet; but I am working at it. You can easily imagine that when I resolved to devote myself to photography, it wasn't simply with the idea of taking likenesses of all sorts of commonplace people.**

Gregers. No; your wife was saying the same thing just now.

Hialmar. **I swore that if I consecrated my powers to this handicraft, I would so exalt it that it should become both an art and a science. And to that end I determined to make this great invention.**

Gregers. **And what is the nature of the invention? What purpose does it serve?**

Hialmar. Oh, my dear fellow, you mustn't ask for details yet. It takes time, you see. And you must not think that my motive is vanity. It is not for my own sake that I am working. Oh, no; **it is my life's mission that stands before me night and day.**

Gregers. **What is your life's mission?**

Hialmar. **Do you forget the old man with the silver hair?**

Gregers. **Your poor father? Well, but what can you do for him?**

Hialmar. **I can raise up his self-respect from the dead, by restoring the name of Ekdal to honour and dignity.**

Gregers. Then **that is your life's mission?**

Hialmar. Yes. **I will rescue the shipwrecked man. For shipwrecked he was,** by the very first blast of the storm. **Even while those terrible investigations were going on, he was no longer himself. That pistol there -- the one we use to shoot rabbits with -- has played its part in the tragedy of the house of Ekdal.**

His life's mission is to restore the name of Ekdal to honor and dignity that is lost since he was imprisoned.

Modern Drama – Dr. Batool

Hialmar is always motivated by emotions and expectations. He speaks in figurative and rhetoric words. **I will rescue the shipwrecked man.** It is a metaphor. He is using the metaphor of the sea. He compares his father to a sailor- a captain of a ship- whose ship was drowned by a strong blast of the storm. It is Gregers' father who blew this wind.

His father is a very sensitive man. He could not stand being questioned. His honor is very sensitive. He was getting mad when he was questioned. His honor was injured. He was no longer himself. He is using a parody- taking a serious subject and dealing with it in a comic way. It is a parody of tragic scene. The pistol that they have has played a part in the tragedy of the house of the Ekdal. The pistol was in his hands when he was sent to prison.

He is making a very dramatic tragic scene.

Gregers. The pistol? Indeed?

Hialmar. **When the sentence of imprisonment was passed -- he had the pistol in his hand --**

Gregers. Had he -- ?

Hialmar. **Yes; but he dared not use it. His courage failed him. So broken, so demoralised was he even then! Oh, can you understand it? He, a soldier; he, who had shot nine bears, and who was descended from two lieutenant-colonels -- one after the other, of course. Can you understand it, Gregers?**

Gregers. Yes, I understand it well enough.

Hialmar. **I cannot. And once more the pistol played a part in the history of our house.** When he had put on the grey clothes and was under lock and key -- oh, that was a terrible time for me, I can tell you. I kept the blinds drawn down over both my windows. When I peeped out, I saw the sun shining as if nothing had happened. I could not understand it. I saw people going along the street, laughing and talking about indifferent things. **I could not understand it. It seemed to me that the whole of existence must be at a standstill -- as if under an eclipse.**

He was actually afraid but he did not want to show his fear. He was heartbroken.