

AUDITION SCENE #1

SHAW (*To audience.*) If Stella wanted to capture you, you might as well go willingly, for she is irresistible. All of London knew her charms from across the footlights, but I was learning them from a much different perspective. I would not have believed I had that left in me (*To CAMPBELL.*)

Dear Stella:

Many thanks for Friday; and for a Saturday of delightful dreams back up in the clouds. I am all right now though, down on earth again with all my cymbals and side drums and "blaring vulgarities" in full blast; but it would be meanly cowardly to pretend that you are not a very wonderful lady, or that the spell did not work most enchantingly on me for fully twelve hours...G.B.S.

CAMPBELL. Shall we keep to business, Mr. Shaw? ... I have made a formal offer for the theatre and have let the world know that I am going into management and that I may act in Mr. Shaw's Eliza. Perhaps you have already seen it in the papers. Who will play the part opposite to me of--who is it?

SHAW. Henry Higgins!

CAMPBELL. Yes, Henry Higgins, I don't know yet, but never mind. We will find someone. For—Higgins.

SHAW. We cannot have "someone" to play Higgins. It's just as important a part as Eliza. Stella, beware! If you attempt management on the one-star system, nothing, not even my genius added to your own, can save you from final defeat. "Male and female created He them." Your

public is more than half feminine. You cannot satisfy their longing for a male to idealize. And how could they idealize a poor salaried supporting actor, pushed into a corner and played off the stage? Do you want to be Eleanora Duse: a hammer without an anvil?

No, Stella, no no no. I must have a heroic Higgins, not just "anyone" and I will not let you ruin me nor yourself. I could not love thee, dear, so much loved I not money more. (*Obstinately turns his back to her.*)

CAMPBELL. Oh, Mr. Shaw, you're such a clown! I think I'll call you "Joey"—"Joey the Clown." One knows only too well that a two star show is better than a one star and that an all star show is fit only for Kings and Queens.

SHAW. If you know that, why are you being so difficult?

CAMPBELL. I'm not being difficult. If you don't care if I'm happy in my work, there are many that do. James Barrie has a new play for me and Chas. Frohman offers me a fortune to take it to America!

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SHAW. Yes, yes, I know all about that but for the love of God, Stella, you must be reasonable.

CAMPBELL. I feel thoroughly unreasonable and uncomfortable haggling with you this way. If Higgins is a more important part than Eliza, then get a male star and some "little actress" and I'll step out.

SHAW. Stella, talk sense! You an established star, a veteran, in fact, must have an established star to play opposite you.

CAMPBELL. A veteran! How dare you! I'm not a veteran. Veteran! That makes me feel like the horse that once won the Derby and has been put out to pasture ever since. A veteran! One would think that my hair's a wig, my eyes are glass, and my legs wooden. Well, I've got my eyes, my hair's my own and my legs are as good as the best. And I *won't* be a day over thirty-nine! Of course, I do have a daughter who's twenty-eight, but what of that? It happens in India all the time.

SHAW. Have you finished?

CAMPBELL. No I have not. I was told today that you only wanted me to play Eliza for the joy of making a fool of me, so everyone can say "the joke, the enormous joke" of my playing a girl! Well we'll see who has the last laugh. I wonder what your nonsensical play would be without me!

SHAW. But I want my Liza and no other Liza. I wrote the play to have my Liza. And I must have a proper Higgins *for* my Liza.

CAMPBELL. Then you listen to reason.

SHAW. I won't listen to reason! I'll sit here and howl. I can howl for twenty years, getting louder and louder all the time. All I ask is to have *my* own way in everything! (*He folds his arms.*)

CAMPBELL. Oh, darling!

SHAW. Mr. Shaw! If you please.

CAMPBELL. (*Mocking and tender.*) I call you "darling" because "dear Mr. Shaw" means nothing at all—whilst "darling" means most dear and most dear means a man, and a mind and a speaking—such as you and your mind and your speech! I long to get on with the whole thing and call rehearsals on Sept. 1st.

SHAW. September 1st is agreeable to me if we find the right Higgins. I will not budge from this position.