

AUDITION SCENE #2

SHAW. Stella, as you approach— (*She begins to pantomime selling violets.*) coming in out of the rain, a slovenly, bedraggled flower girl, Eliza Doolittle.

CAMPBELL. (*As ELIZA*) Baw ya flab orf a por gal!

SHAW. Higgins springs to attention and whips out his pencil!

CAMPBELL. (*As ELIZA*) Voylets ... Voylets ... who'll buy my voylets?

SHAW. You drop a bunch in the muddy street and seeing them ruined, cry . . .

CAMPBELL. (*As ELIZA. She pantomimes dropping bunch and picking it up.*) Ah-ah-aw -aw-oooo ...

SHAW. Higgins writes furiously, "What a sound! What a delicious sound!"

CAMPBELL. (*As ELIZA*) 'Ere now! Watcher tiken dawn...I'm a good gal, I am—I ain't done nuffink.

SHAW. No, no—Stella—"I ain't done nuffink" Read it as if you think you're talking to a policeman, not a doctor—try it again.

BOTH. I ain't done nuffink.

SHAW. That's better.

CAMPBELL. I shall die over this accent, anyway—You wrote her a cockney just to torment me.

SHAW. Stella!

CAMPBELL. Oh very well . . . (*As ELIZA truculently.*) 'Ere now. Watcher takin' down-I'm a good gal, I am. (*She stops.*)

SHAW. Well, go on.

CAMPBELL. Go on what?

SHAW. You have a cry.

CAMPBELL. What for?

SHAW. Because Higgins has a reply.

CAMPBELL. (*Obliging him.*) Ah-ah-ah-oooo.

SHAW. Thank you. (*As HIGGINS*) Woman! Cease this detestable boohooing instantly or else seek shelter elsewhere.

CAMPBELL. (*As ELIZA*) I've a right to be here if I like, same as you. (*She sits on the chair he has placed s.c.*)

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SHAW. *(As HIGGINS)* A woman who utters such depressing and disgusting sounds has no right to be anywhere—no right to live. Remember that you are a human being with a soul and the divine gift of articulate speech; and that your native language is the language of Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible. *(CAMPBELL is making cooing sounds, as if whimpering.)* And don't sit there crooning like a bilious pigeon.

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* Ah-ah-aw-aw-oooo...

SHAW. *(As HIGGINS)* You see this creature with her kerbstone English! Well, sir, in six months, I could pass that girl off as a duchess at an ambassador's garden party.

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* What's that you say?

SHAW. *(As HIGGINS)* Yes, you squashed cabbage leaf, you incarnate insult to the English language: I could pass you off as the Queen of Sheba.

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA. Happily)* Ah-ah-aw-aw-oooo. *(She relapses into d. c. chair.)*

SHAW. Well, now, that's not so hard is it, Stella? We might begin to get it in a month or so. *(crossing back to his desk)* I am amazed you find it so be difficult to be common.

CAMPBELL. Well! You've already made me feel thoroughly uncomfortable and this is only the fourth day—you'd better let Charlotte know you are going to make silk purses out of a sow's ears... I'm sorry if I'm difficult... *(Crosses to her desk.)* But you must admit Eliza is a little more of a lady at the tea scene than you seem to allow.

SHAW. Exactly—what I have written is one-half a lady and one-half a slut, but you are trying to look a slut and play a lady...It simply won't work. And what is the reason for that new “turn away” that's been sneaking in lately?

CAMPBELL, Sneaking in? I like that! I've got to do something...All that business you've given Tree simply won't hold up, that's all.

SHAW. And neither will your smile...Why do you think I gave Tree the apple in the first place?

CAMPBELL. Tree takes five minutes between each word and each bite of that apple! I have a facial paralysis from trying to express any sort of intelligent feeling. That's why I turn away...I'm simply hiding my face till it's well again. *(She turns and walks u. s.)*

SHAW. Then that is why your face looks like a burst paper bag! *(He crosses away.)*

CAMPBELL. Don't think you're hurting me—not at all...What you think of me and my poor talent, I am not concerned with now.

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SHAW. The "at home" scene still worries me a little—I'll come over to your house in Kensington Square tonight and go over it with you—you still make it too much like a music-hall turn.

CAMPBELL. You've written a music-hall turn!

SHAW. Thank you!

CAMPBELL. And you need all the laughs you can get in your play.

SHAW. Now, then—we'll start after you've arrived and sat down ... *(He takes her chair and moves it to c. so the two chairs are now side by side.)* The others are on each side of you—Mrs. Eynsford Hill here, Freddy here, Mrs. Higgins there... *(She walks in.)* Mrs. Higgins says..."Will it rain, do you think?" *(They both sit.)*

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA. Enunciating.)* The shallow depression in the west of these islands moves slowly in an easterly direction—there are no indications of any great change in the barometrical situation.

SHAW. *(As FREDDIE)* Oh, I say! Ha! Ha!

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* What are you sniggering about, young man? I bet I got it right...

SHAW. *(As MRS. HIGGINS)* I do hope it won't turn cold. There's so much influenza about.

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* My aunt died of influenza, so they said.

SHAW. *(As MRS. HIGGINS)* Really!

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* But, it's my belief, they done the old woman in.

SHAW. *(As MRS. HIGGINS)* Done her in!

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* Ye-e-s, Lord love you! Why should she die of influenza? She come through diphtheria right enough, the year before... Fairly blue with it, she was. They all thought she was dead...But my father, he kept ladling gin down her throat till she come to so sudden that she bit the bowl off the spoon. What call would a woman with that strength in her have to die of influenza? And what become of her new straw hat that should have come to me? Somebody pinched it; and what I say is, them as pinched it, done her in.

SHAW. *(As MRS. EYNSFORD HILL)* You surely don't believe that your aunt was killed?

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* Do I not? Them she lived with, would have killed her for a hat-pin, let alone a hat.

SHAW. *(As MRS. HIGGINS)* But it can't have been right for your father to pour spirits down her throat like that. It might have killed her.

CAMPBELL. *(As ELIZA)* Not her. Gin was mother's milk, to her. Besides, he'd poured so much down his own throat, that he knew the good of it.

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SHAW. (As MRS. HIGGINS) Good Heavens!

CAMPBELL. (As ELIZA) It never did him no harm, what I could see. But then he did not keep it up regular. On the burst as you might say...

SHAW. Cheerfully, Stella, cheerfully..."On the burst!"

BOTH. On the burst, as you might say, from time to time. And always more agreeable when he had a drop in!

CAMPBELL. (As ELIZA) Well, I'm afraid I must be going. Goodbye, Mrs. Higgins.

SHAW. (As MRS. HIGGINS.) Goodbye.

CAMPBELL. (As ELIZA) Goodbye, Mrs. Eynsford Hill.

SHAW. (As MRS. EYNSFORD HILL) Goodbye.

CAMPBELL. (As ELIZA) Goodbye, all.

SHAW. (As FREDDIE) If you are walking across the Park, Miss Doolittle, may I ...

CAMPBELL. (As ELIZA) Walk!? Not bloody likely! I'm going home in a taxi.

SHAW. By George, Stella, we've got it. ... You can be wonderful when you really try. Goodnight! (*He puts his chair back in place at end of this speech.*)