

Pygmalion

An Abridged Text

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Pygmalion
By George Bernard Shaw

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Introduction

In this abridged version of 'Pygmalion', the basic storyline has been kept and no important events left out. Everything, including the stage directions, has been downsized to a quarter of the play's original length. In the script that remains, most of Shaw's words remain the same: changes have only been made when archaic or overly complex writing may interrupt the smooth flow. Prior to each act is a concise summary of events and following each act is a set of review questions. A character guide also features.

George Bernard Shaw believed everyone should have the same opportunities in life despite their colour, class, age, or the way they speak. 'Pygmalion' is the story of the flower girl from the gutter, Eliza Doolittle, who proves she can become as beautiful and well-spoken as a Duchess within six months with the help of speech expert Professor Henry Higgins who makes a bet with his friend Pickering.

Higgins' mother and Mrs. Pearce see the potential problems of this project. They are concerned about what will happen to Eliza when six months are over. She will be different. Will she be able to go back to her life on the street? Higgins and Pickering, despite being middle-aged, are immature and don't wish to think ahead.

Eliza proves to be an excellent mimic, like a parrot! When the six months are up, Higgins wins his bet but Eliza is unhappy about the idea of being thrown away.

The play's title is taken from a Greek myth. Pygmalion was a king who was also a sculptor of beautiful statues. He didn't like the women in his city and he asked the goddess of love Aphrodite to bring his favourite statue to life. Pygmalion then married her. The play is similar to the myth in the following ways: Higgins is like Pygmalion in that he creates a beautiful Eliza. (She is described as quite ugly and rude at the start of the play when she's a flower girl, in addition to making awful noises.) When his work with Eliza is finished, he realizes he is very fond of her and doesn't want her to go after all. A change, therefore, takes place in Higgins too: he goes from cold-hearted to warm-hearted.

Character Guide

Eliza Doolittle: Eliza is an eighteen-year-old girl who sells flowers on the street. She is ambitious: she wants to improve the way she speaks so she can get a better job in a flower shop. Eliza quickly changes her voice because she is an excellent mimic, but finds it hard to change her unladylike behaviour.

Professor Higgins: Higgins is a middle-aged professor of phonetics (the study of speech). Higgins shows little care for the feelings of others. Eliza is a bet between him and Pickering: can he teach her to speak like a lady in six months? Higgins doesn't consider what will happen to Eliza when the six months are over when she will be somewhat changed. He seems to think it will be alright to put her back on the street.

Pickering: Pickering, like Higgins, is an expert on language. He is much nicer to Eliza than Higgins, but like Higgins, he is rather irresponsible when it comes to thinking about what will happen to Eliza when the bet is won.

Mrs. Pearce: Mrs. Pearce is Higgins' housekeeper (she cooks and cleans for him). She doesn't like his insensitive behaviour towards Eliza and advises him to be more thoughtful. She is worried about Higgins' plan to have Eliza live there for six months as it is England in 1912: there were stricter codes of conduct then when it came to something like a young single woman living with two unmarried men.

Alfred Doolittle: Eliza's father, Alfred Doolittle, is a rubbish collector who is always looking for a bit of extra money to spend down at the pub. He has been married many times and isn't particularly interested in his daughter. Towards the end of the play, Doolittle becomes rich due to Higgins telling an acquaintance about him: the acquaintance leaves him his money when he dies. Doolittle is unhappy with his new wealth, however, and longs for his uncomplicated former life.

Mrs. Higgins: Higgins' mother is a woman in her sixties who, like Mrs. Pearce, does not approve of the Eliza project and thinks her son and Pickering are behaving in an immature way. Like Mrs. Pearce, she is a sensible person who believes in considering the consequences of actions.

The Elynsford-Hill Family: Mrs. Elynsford-Hill, Clara and Freddy are acquaintances of Mrs. Higgins, and are first seen at the start of the play sheltering from the rain. Later in the play, Freddy falls in love with Eliza.

Whiskers: Whiskers is a foolish former pupil of Higgins with a huge beard. He believes himself to be an expert on European accents which clearly isn't the case because he tells everyone that Eliza is a Hungarian Princess!

Summary of Act One

It is a rainy night in London. A mother and her daughter are standing under a shelter. They have just been to the theatre and are waiting for a cab to take them home. The mother has sent her son Freddy to get it. Behind them, a man is writing in his notebook. (We will find out what he's doing later.)

Freddy returns and tells his mother and sister that he can't find a cab. They are angry and send him out in the rain again telling him he cannot come back until he has got a cab. As he is walking away, he bumps into a street girl and she drops her basket which contains the flowers that she sells. Freddy rushes off, but the girl asks his mother if she can pay for the flowers that have fallen into the mud. The mother does this, but the daughter tells her she has given the girl too much money.

An old gentleman rushes under the shelter and the flower girl tries to sell him a flower. He doesn't want a flower but gives her a couple of coins. A bystander warns the girl that he should give the gentleman the flower for the money because a man is writing down everything she says and he could be a policeman. The flower girl panics! The man with the notebook tells her to calm down: he is not a policeman. He explains that he is a professor of phonetics: he can identify every different accent and therefore knows where you come from. The note taker discovers that the old gentleman also works with language. Both men have written books about language: they have even read each other's book! The note taker talks in a rude way about the flower girl's accent which he says is awful. He tells the old gentleman that he could make her speak like a duchess in a few months and she would be able to get a better job.

The rain stops and everyone except the flower girl leaves. Freddy arrives with the cab and he is fed up that his mother and his sister have gone. The flower girl decides she will take the cab. At first, the cab driver doesn't want to let her inside, but when she shows him the money, he agrees to take her home.

Act One

Covent Garden, a square in London at 11.15pm. Heavy rain. A woman and her daughter are under a shelter in front of a church. They are waiting for a cab. They have just been to the theatre and are wearing long silk dresses. Near them is a man with his back turned, writing in a notebook.

The Daughter. I'm so cold! Where is Freddy? He's been gone twenty minutes.

The Mother. Yes, he should have got us a cab by now. We can't stand here until half-past eleven!

Freddy rushes into the shelter and closes a dripping umbrella. He is very wet.

The Daughter. Where's the cab?

Freddy. There are none.

The Mother. Oh, Freddy, there must be one. You haven't tried.

The Daughter. Do you expect us to go and get one ourselves?

Freddy. There aren't any! I've walked all over London trying to find one!

The Mother. You really are hopeless, Freddy. Look again and don't come back until you have found a cab.

Freddy. I shall get soaked for nothing!

The Daughter. And what about us? Are we to stay here all night in this cold place without our coats?

Freddy. Oh, very well. I'll go. *(He opens his umbrella and dashes off, but bumps into a flower girl, who is hurrying into the shelter, knocking her basket out of her hands.)*

The Flower Girl. Look out, Freddy! Look where you're going!

Freddy. Sorry. *(He rushes off.)*

The Flower Girl. *(Picks up her flowers and puts them in her basket.)* He doesn't have good manners! All these flowers trod in the mud!

The Mother. How did you know my son's name is Freddy?

The Flower Girl. Oh, he's your son? You should pay for all these flowers he spoilt.

The Daughter. She certainly will not!

The Mother. Clara, give her some pennies.

The Daughter. No!

The Mother. Give me the purse, Clara. (*She gives it to her mother reluctantly. The mother hands the girl some coins.*) This is for your flowers.

The Flower Girl. Thanks a lot, lady.

The Daughter. Mother, you gave her too much!

The Mother. Now tell me how you know that young gentleman's name.

The Flower Girl. I didn't.

The Mother. I heard you call him Freddy.

The Flower Girl. I call all men Freddy or Charlie. Just to be friendly. (*She sits by her basket.*)

An old gentleman rushes into the shelter and closes a dripping umbrella.

The Gentleman. Phew!

The Mother. (*To the man.*) Oh, sir, do you think the rain will stop soon?

The Gentleman. I don't think so. It's getting worse.

The Mother. Oh, dear!

The Flower Girl. Cheer up, sir, and buy a flower from a poor girl.

The Gentleman. I'm sorry, I haven't any change.

The Flower Girl. I can give you change, sir.

The Gentleman. Now don't make trouble. (*Feels in his pockets.*) I really haven't any change - wait - here are a couple of coins. (*He drops the coins into her lap and moves away a little.*)

The Flower Girl. Thank you, sir.

The Bystander. *(To the girl.)* You be careful! Give him a flower for it. There's a bloke behind you writing down every word you're saying.

The Flower Girl. *(Jumping up. Terrified.)* I haven't done anything wrong by speaking to the gentleman. I can sell flowers if I like. I'm a respectable girl!

The Note Taker. *(Coming forward.)* There, there, there! Who's hurting you, you silly girl?

The Bystander. She thought you were a policeman, sir.

The Note Taker. Do I look like a policeman?

The Flower Girl. No, but what were you writing? *(The note taker opens his book and holds it under her nose.)* What's that? That aint proper writing. I can't read that.

The Note Taker. I can. *(Reads, copying her voice exactly.)* "Cheer ap, sur n' baw ya flahr from a pore gel." I know exactly where in London you come from by the awful way you speak - Lisson Grove.

The Flower Girl. *(Very upset.)* I mean no harm. *(To the gentleman.)* Oh, sir, don't let him put me in jail!

The Gentleman. Jail! You won't go to jail! *(To the note taker.)* Really, sir, the girl meant no harm.

The Flower Girl. *(Sadly.)* I'm a good girl, I am.

The Bystander. Do you know where / come from?

The Note Taker. Hoxton.

The Bystander. *(Amazed.)* You know everything, you do. *(Pointing at old gentleman.)* Where does he come from then?

The Note Taker. Cheltenham, Harrow, Cambridge and India.

The Old Gentleman. Quite right! Do you do this for your living in the theatre?

The Note Taker. No, but I've thought of that. Perhaps I shall some day.

The Flower Girl. Aw! He aint to interfere with a poor girl.

The Daughter. What on earth is Freddy doing? I shall catch a cold if I stay out any longer.

The Note Taker. (*Writing in his notebook.*) "I shall cat-ch a cooold". Earls court.

The Daughter. (*Violently.*) Will you please keep your rude remarks to yourself?

The Note Taker. Did I say that out loud? I didn't mean to. I beg your pardon. Your mother's Epsom, unmistakably.

The Mother. Quite right! I was brought up in Large Lady Park near Epsom.

The Note Taker. Ha! Ha! What a silly name! Excuse me, (*to the daughter*) did you say you wanted a cab?

The Daughter. Don't you dare speak to me!

The Mother. Oh, please, please, Clara. We should be grateful to you, sir, if you found us a cab. (*The note taker takes a whistle out of his pocket and blows it at a passing cab.*) Oh, thank you.

The Note Taker. I don't know whether you noticed it, but the rain stopped about two minutes ago.

The Flower Girl. Frightening people like that! How would he like it?

The Mother. It's quite fine now, Clara, come along. (*They lift their dresses above their ankles and get into the cab.*)

The Gentleman. How do you do it, if I may ask?

The Note Taker. Simply phonetics. The science of speech. That's my profession, also my hobby.

The Flower Girl. Ought to be ashamed of himself.

The Gentleman. But is there a living in that?

The Note Taker. Oh yes. Quite a good one.

The Flower Girl. Let him mind his own business and leave a poor girl -

The Note Taker. (*Shouting.*) Woman! Stop feeling sorry for yourself. Go away!

The Flower Girl. I've a right to be here if I like, same as you.

The Note Taker. A woman who utters such disgusting sounds has no right to be anywhere - no right to live.

The Flower Girl. Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-ow-oo!

The Note Taker. Heavens! What a sound! (*Writes in his notebook, reading as he writes. He sounds like the flower girl.*) Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-ow-oo!

The Flower Girl. (*Laughing.*) Garn!

The Note Taker. You see this creature in the gutter? Well, sir, in six months I could make her speak like a duchess. I could even get her a job as a lady's maid or a shop assistant.

The Gentleman. I am myself a student of Indian dialects.

The Note Taker. Are you? Do you know Colonel Pickering, the author of Spoken Sanscrit?

The Gentleman. I am Colonel Pickering! Who are you?

The Note Taker. Henry Higgins, author of Higgin's Universal Alphabet.

Pickering. I came from India to meet you!

Higgins. I was going to India to meet you!

Pickering. Where do you live?

Higgins. 27A Wimpole Street. Come and see me tomorrow.

Pickering. I'm at the Carlton Hotel. Come with me now and let's have a chat over some supper.

The Flower Girl. (*To Pickering as he passes.*) Buy a flower, kind gentleman.

Pickering. I really haven't any change. I'm sorry. (*Exit.*)

As Higgins leaves, he throws a handful of coins into her basket. Enter Freddy.

Freddy. I've got a cab, Mama! Clara! (*To the girl.*) Where are the two ladies that were here?

The Flower Girl. They went home ages ago.

Freddy. But I've brought a cab!

The Flower Girl. Never mind, young man, I'm going home in it. (*She strolls to the cab. The driver holds the door firmly shut. She shows him her handful of money.*) Eight pence aint no problem for me, Charlie. (*He opens the door.*) Angel Court, Drury Lane. (*She gets in and the cab drives away.*)

Freddy. She's taken my cab!

Review of Act One

- 1) What do you think of the way the mother and daughter treat Freddy?**

- 2) Why does the bystander think the note taker is a policeman and why does the flower girl think she may be in trouble?**

- 3) What exactly is the note taker's profession?**

- 4) How do the daughter and the flower girl respond to the note taker?**

- 5) Is the note taker respecting the privacy of the people around him?**

- 6) What is unattractive about the flower girl's character?**

Summary of Act Two

Pickering is visiting Higgins when Eliza Doolittle comes to call. She wants to pay him to teach her to speak better so she might get a job in a flower shop. Pickering wants Higgins to take on the challenge and even offers to pay for Eliza's lessons. Higgins makes fun of Eliza and her accent, and even threatens to throw her out of the window. Eliza takes his silly threats seriously and shouts and screams. Mrs. Pearce, the housekeeper, doesn't like all the fuss that is being made and tells both Eliza and Higgins to stop it. She warns Higgins that he has to be careful: he cannot change Eliza and then throw her back onto the street. Higgins decides that he can teach Eliza perfect English in three to six months if she lives at his house. He insists that Mrs. Pearce burns her street clothes and gives her a bath. She goes out with Mrs. Pearce to get cleaned up.

Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father, turns up at the house and asks Higgins to give him some money in return for his daughter! Higgins tells Doolittle he can take his daughter home because he doesn't want her. Doolittle finally persuades him to give him a little money and then, having got what he came for, leaves. As he is leaving, however, he sees Eliza who is now clean and wearing a new dress. He doesn't recognize her.

Act Two

Next day at 11am in the sitting room of Higgin's flat in Wimpole Street. There are some strange pieces of equipment that Higgins uses for studying the way people speak.

Higgins. (*Shutting a drawer.*) Well, I think that's everything.

Pickering. It's really amazing. You know so much about phonetics.

Higgins. Would you like to hear about any of it again?

Pickering. Oh, not now. I'm quite exhausted.

Mrs. Pearce. (*Entering.*) A young woman wants to see you, sir.

Higgins. A young woman! What does she want?

Mrs. Pearce. Well, sir, she says you'll be glad to see her when you know what she's come about. She's quite a common girl, sir. I should have sent her away, only I thought perhaps you wanted her to talk into your machines. I hope I've not done wrong.

Higgins. Oh, that's all right, Mrs. Pearce. Has she an interesting accent?

Mrs. Pearce. Oh, dreadful, sir, really. I don't know how you can take an interest in it.

Higgins. (*To Pickering.*) Let's see her. Show her up, Mrs. Pearce. (*He rushes to his equipment.*)

Mrs. Pearce. Very well, sir. I'll bring her up. (*She goes downstairs.*)

Higgins. This is rather a bit of luck. I'll show you how I make recordings.

Mrs. Pearce. (*Returning.*) This is the young woman, sir.

The flower girl enters. She wears a hat with three brightly coloured feathers and a fairly clean apron. She takes off her hat and puts it on the table.

Higgins. This is the girl I saw last night. She's no use: I've got all the records I want of the Lisson Grove accent. I'm not going to waste my time on it. (*To the girl.*) Go home: I don't want you.

The Flower Girl. Don't be rude. You aint heard what I come for yet. Did you tell him I come in a taxi?

Mrs. Pearce. Nonsense, girl! What do you think a gentleman like Mr. Higgins cares how you came here?

The Flower Girl. I've come to have lessons. And to pay for 'em too.

Higgins. Well? What do you expect me to say?

The Flower Girl. If you was a gentleman, you might ask me to sit down, I think.

Higgins. Pickering, shall we ask her to sit down or shall we throw her out of the window?

The Flower Girl. (*Running away in terror, hiding behind the piano.*) Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-ow-oo! I've offered to pay like a lady.

Pickering. (*Gently*) What is it you want, my girl?

The Flower Girl. I want to be a lady in a flower shop instead of selling flowers on the street, but they won't take me unless I can talk proper. He said he could teach me. Well, here I am ready to pay him - and he treats me as if I was dirt.

Mrs. Pearce. How can you be such a foolish girl? You can't afford to pay Professor Higgins!

The Flower Girl. I know what lessons cost as well as you do and I'm ready to pay.

Higgins. How much?

The Flower Girl. (*Happy*) Now you're talking!

Higgins. Sit down.

The Flower Girl. Don't you order me about!

Higgins. (*Shouting*) Sit down!

Mrs. Pearce. (*Severely*) Sit down, girl. Do as you're told!

The Flower Girl. Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-oo! (*She won't sit.*)

Pickering. (*Very politely*) Won't you sit down?

The Flower Girl. Very well. (*She sits*)

Higgins. What's your name?

The Flower Girl. Eliza Doolittle.

Higgins. (*Laughing*) Eliza, Elizabeth, Betsy and Bess.

Eliza. Oh, don't be silly.

Mrs. Pearce. You mustn't speak to the gentleman like that.

Eliza. Well, why won't he speak sensible to me?

Higgins. Come. Back to business. How much do you propose to pay me for lessons?

Eliza. A friend of mine gets French lessons for eighteen pence an hour from a *real* French gentleman. You're teaching me my own language so I won't give you more than a shilling.

Higgins. I won't accept a penny less than sixty pounds.

Eliza. (*Starting to cry*) But I aint got sixty pounds. Oh -

Mrs. Pearce. Don't cry, you silly girl. Sit down. Nobody is going to touch your money.

Eliza. Ah-ah-ah-ow-oo-o!

Higgins. Here. (*He offers her his silk handkerchief*)

Eliza. What's this for?

Higgins. To wipe your eyes. To wipe any part of your face that feels moist. Remember: that's your handkerchief and that's your sleeve. Don't mistake the one for the other if you wish to become a lady in a shop.

Mrs. Pearce. It's no use talking to her like that, Mr. Higgins: she doesn't understand you. (*She takes the handkerchief.*)

Eliza. (*Snatching it back.*) Here! You give me that handkerchief. He gave it to me.

Pickering. (*Laughing*) He did. I think it must be hers, Mrs. Pearce. Higgins, I'm interested. Whoever teaches Eliza Doolittle to speak is the greatest teacher alive. Will you take on this challenge, Higgins? I'll pay for the lessons.

Eliza. Oh, thank you, sir.

Higgins. She's horribly dirty -

Eliza. Ah-ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-oo-oo!!! I aint dirty! I washed my face and hands this morning, I did.

Higgins. (*Excited*) In six months - in three if she works hard. We'll start today - now! Take her away and clean her, Mrs. Pearce. Is there a good fire in the kitchen?

Mrs. Pearce. But -

Higgins. Take all her clothes off and burn them. Order some new ones. Wrap her up in brown paper until they come or use one of those Japanese dressing gowns.

Eliza. You're not nice. I'm a good girl, I am.

Higgins. You've got to learn to behave like a duchess. Take her away, Mrs. Pearce. If she gives you any trouble, hit her.

Eliza. No! I'll call the police, I will.

Mrs. Pearce. But I've no place to put her.

Higgins. Put her in the dustbin.

Eliza. Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-oo!

Pickering. Oh come, Higgins, be reasonable.

Higgins. My dear Pickering, I just want to be kind to this poor girl. We must prepare her for her new role in life.

Mrs. Pearce. But sir, you can't take a girl up like that as if you were picking up a pebble on the beach.

Higgins. Why not?

Mrs. Pearce. Why not! But you don't know anything about her. She may be married.

Eliza. Garn! Who'd marry me?

Higgins. Eliza, the streets will be full of men wanting to marry you before I've finished with you.

Mrs. Pearce. Nonsense, sir. You mustn't talk like that to her.

Eliza. I'm going. He's mad, he is.

Higgins. Oh, indeed! I'm mad, am I? Very well, Mrs. Pearce: you needn't order the new clothes for her. Throw her out.

Mrs. Pearce. You see now what comes of being cheeky. (*Points to the door.*) This way, please.

Eliza. (*Almost in tears.*) I didn't want no clothes. I wouldn't have taken them. (*She throws away the handkerchief.*) I can buy my own clothes.

Higgins. You're an ungrateful girl. This is all the thanks I get for offering to take you off the street and dress you beautifully and make a lady of you.

Mrs. Pearce. Go home to your mother, girl, and tell them to take better care of you.

Eliza. I aint got no mother.

Higgins. You can adopt her, Mrs. Pearce. Take her downstairs and -

Mrs. Pearce. But what's to become of her? Is she to be paid anything while she's here?

Higgins. What on earth would she want with money? She'll have her food and her clothes. She'll only buy beer if you give her money.

Eliza. It's a lie! Nobody ever saw me drink!

Pickering. Does it occur to you, Higgins, that the girl has some feelings?

Higgins. Oh no, I don't think so. Not any feelings that we need bother about. (*Cheerfully*) Have you, Eliza?

Eliza. I got my feelings same as anyone else.

Mrs. Pearce. What is going to happen to her when you've finished your teaching? You must think about the future.

Higgins. Well, when I've done with her, we can throw her back onto the street.

Eliza. Oh, you've no feelings. You don't care for nothing but yourself. I've had enough of this. I'm going. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, you ought. (*Starts walking to the door.*)

Higgins. (*Picks up a chocolate cream from the piano.*) Have some chocolate, Eliza.

Eliza. (*Stops suddenly.*) How do I know it's not poisoned?

Higgins whips out his penknife, cuts the chocolate in two, puts one half into his mouth and offers her the other half.

Higgins. I eat one half: you eat the other. (*Eliza opens her mouth to say something but he pops the half chocolate into it.*) You shall have boxes of them. You shall live on them.

Eliza. I wouldn't have ate it, only I'm too ladylike to take it out of my mouth.

Higgins. I think you said you came in a cab?

Eliza. Well, what if I did? I've a right to take a cab, as anyone else has.

Higgins. In future, Eliza, you can take a cab every day and have all the chocolates you can eat. You shall marry an officer in the guards with a beautiful moustache.

Mrs. Pearce. Don't tempt the girl, sir, it's not right.

Pickering. Excuse me, Higgins, if this girl is to put herself into your hands for six months for an experiment in teaching, she must understand what she's doing.

Higgins. How can she? She's incapable of understanding anything.

Eliza. (*Starting to cry.*) Ah-ah-ow-oo!

Higgins. There! That's all you get out of Eliza. Ah-ah-ow-oo! Eliza: you are to live here for the next six months, learning to speak beautifully like a lady in a flower shop. If you are a good girl, you shall sleep in a proper bedroom, have lots to eat and money to buy chocolates and take rides in cabs. If you are bad, your head will be cut off as a warning to other flower girls.

Mrs. Pearce. I think you'd better let me speak to the girl properly in private. Come with me, Eliza.

Higgins. Thank you, Mrs. Pearce. Take her off to the bathroom.

Exit Mrs. Pearce and Eliza. Mrs. Pearce re-enters a few moments later.

Mrs. Pearce. If you please, sir, there's a dustman downstairs, Alfred Doolittle. He wants to see you. He says you have his daughter here.

Higgins. Send him up.

Exit Mrs. Pearce.

Pickering. He may not be pleasant, Higgins.

Higgins. Nonsense. It will be fun listening to his accent.

Mrs. Pearce brings in Alfred Doolittle, an elderly but lively dustman.

Doolittle. Professor Higgins?

Higgins. Yes. Please sit down. (*To Pickering.*) Brought up in Hounslow. His mother was Welsh. (*To Doolittle.*) What do you want, Doolittle?

Doolittle. I want my daughter.

Higgins. Of course you do. You're her father. She's upstairs. Take her away.

Doolittle. What?

Higgins. Take her. I don't want her. Your daughter came to my house and asked me to teach her to speak properly so she could get a job in a flower shop. Are you asking for money? Did you send your daughter here on purpose?

Doolittle. No!

Higgins. How else could you know she was here?

Doolittle. I asked the cab driver where he brought her.

Enter Mrs. Pearce.

Higgins. Mrs. Pearce, Eliza's father has come to take her away. Give her to him.

Mrs. Pearce. He can't take her away, Mr. Higgins: you told me to burn her clothes.

Higgins. Take your daughter. If she has no clothes, go and buy her more.

Doolittle. But you burnt them, not her!

Mrs. Pearce. I have sent for some clothes for your girl. When they come you can take her away. You can wait in the kitchen. This way, please.

Doolittle. Just a moment! The truth is, I don't want to take her with me but I can't let her go for nothing. What about a five pound note?

Higgins. Do you mean to say you would sell your daughter for five pounds?

Doolittle. I'm a poor man. If Eliza is going to have some of your money, why not me too?

Higgins. I suppose we must give him a fiver.

He hands Doolittle a note from his wallet.

Doolittle. Thank you, sir. Good morning. *(He turns to leave just as Eliza enters the room. She is clean and in a new dress, looking beautiful.)* Pardon me.

Eliza. Garn! Don't you know your own daughter?

Doolittle. It's Eliza! I never thought she could look so fine!

Eliza. It's lovely here. Just as much hot water as you like. Woolly towels and soap smelling of primroses. Have you come for some money for your drinking?

Doolittle. What else would I want money for? Good luck to you, sir. Give her a beating if she disobeys. *(He turns to go.)*

Higgins. Stop! You will come here once a week to see your daughter. It's your duty as a father.

Doolittle. Certainly. But not this week. Good afternoon, gentlemen. *(Exit)*

Eliza. He's always getting money out of other people's pockets.

Mrs. Pearce. *(Entering)* Come, Eliza, you need to try on your other dresses.

Eliza. Oooooohhhh! *(Exit)*

Mrs. Pearce. Don't rush about like that, girl. *(Exit)*

Higgins. Pickering, we have taken on a stiff job.

Pickering. Higgins, we have.

Review of Act Two

- 1) Why does Eliza want to have speaking lessons?**

- 2) What does Mrs. Pearce think of Eliza?**

- 3) How does Higgins treat Eliza?**

- 4) Pickering asks “Does it occur to you, Higgins, that the girl has some feelings?” Are there any other times when Pickering shows he is much kinder than Higgins?**

- 5) List the problems Eliza might face when she returns to the street in six months?**

Summary of Act Three

It is a few months later. Higgins surprises his mother with a visit. He tells her that Eliza will be arriving soon so she can practice speaking. Mrs. Higgins is already expecting guests and is unhappy that Eliza has been invited without an invitation from her. Mrs. Higgins is also unhappy that Eliza was a flower seller on the street a few months ago.

Mrs. Higgins' guests arrive and they are the mother, daughter and Freddy who we saw at the start of the play waiting for a cab. Pickering and Eliza arrive. Eliza looks and talks beautifully. Higgins has asked her to talk only about the weather and enquire about people's health. She does stick to these topics but unfortunately not in the way he hoped: she talks about a drunken aunt and uses common expressions. Higgins tells everyone it's the "new small talk" and very soon the daughter is trying out a few phrases because she wants to be fashionable. The son, Freddy, thinks Eliza is magnificent and falls in love with her.

When Eliza and the family have left, Mrs. Higgins has a serious talk with Higgins and Pickering who she describes as children playing with a doll (Eliza is like the doll). She repeats Mrs. Pearce's point: What will happen to Eliza at the end of the six months? Neither of the men wants to think about this and they quickly leave.

The second half of this act is four months later. It is therefore six months since he started teaching Eliza and Higgins hopes to win his bet on this day. Eliza, Higgins and Pickering attend a ball. At the ball is a former student of Higgins, Whiskers, who believes he is an expert on speech and even thinks he is better than Higgins. He meets Eliza and claims she is a Hungarian Princess, which everyone at the ball believes. Higgins wins his bet!

Act Three

A few months later, in the elegant home of Mrs. Higgins (Professor Higgins' mother). Mrs. Higgins, a lady in her sixties, is sitting writing a letter at a table. Professor Higgins suddenly enters still wearing his hat and coat.

Mrs. Higgins. Henry! What are you doing here today? I am about to receive visitors and you always upset my visitors. Go home at once!

Higgins. But I have a job for you. I've found a girl.

Mrs. Higgins. (*Surprised*) Have you fallen in love?

Higgins. Certainly not! I can't be bothered with women! They're all idiots, except you, mother.

Mrs. Higgins. Now, Henry, stop fidgeting, take your hands out of your pockets and tell me about the girl.

Higgins. She's coming to see you.

Mrs. Higgins. I don't remember inviting her.

Higgins. You didn't. I invited her. If you knew her, you wouldn't have invited her. She's a common flower girl. I found her on the street.

Mrs. Higgins. And invited her to my house?!

Higgins. Oh, it'll be alright! I've taught her to speak properly! And she is only allowed to talk about the weather and everybody's health: "fine day" and "how do you do?" It wouldn't be safe if she started talking about anything else.

Mrs. Higgins. The weather? Everybody's health?

Higgins. Well, she has to talk about something! Oh, she'll be alright! Don't fuss! Pickering is in it with me. I've a sort of bet that I'd make everyone think she's a duchess in six months. She's done wonderfully. I think I shall win my bet.

The Maid enters with two guests.

The Maid. Mrs and Miss Eynsford Hill. (*She leaves.*)

Mrs and Miss Eynsford Hill are the mother and daughter who sheltered from the rain at the start of the play. Higgins is leaning on the wall, unenthusiastic about meeting the new people.

Mrs. Higgins. My son, Henry.

Mrs. E.H. Ah, the famous Professor Higgins! I'm so pleased to meet you.

Miss E.H. How do you do?

Higgins. I've seen you before somewhere. I've heard your voice. Now where was it? Never mind!

Mrs. Higgins. I'm sorry that my famous son has no manners. Please sit down.

Higgins. Have I been rude? I didn't mean to be. *(He goes to the window to look out, showing the women his back.)*

The maid returns with Pickering.

Maid. Colonel Pickering. *(She leaves.)*

Pickering. How do you do, Mrs. Higgins?

Mrs. Higgins. I'm so glad you've come. Do you know Mrs. and Miss Eynsford Hill? *(They shake hands and sit down.)*

Pickering. Has Henry told you why we've come?

Higgins. Yes, and then they turned up!

Mrs. E.H. *(Starts to stand up.)* Are we in the way?

Mrs. Higgins. No, no. You have come at just the right time: we want you to meet a friend of ours.

Maid returns with Freddy.

Maid. Mr. Eynsford Hill. *(She leaves.)*

Higgins. More of them! Well, here we all are. What the devil are we going to talk about until Eliza arrives?

Maid enters with Eliza, dressed beautifully.

Maid. Miss Doolittle.

Higgins. Here she is, mother.

Eliza. *(She speaks very differently from before and gasps her H.)* How do you do, Mrs. Higgins?

Pickering. How do you do, Miss Doolittle?

Eliza. Colonel Pickering, is it not?

Mrs. E.H. Have we met before, Miss Doolittle? I remember your eyes.

Eliza. How do you do? *(She sits elegantly.)*

Mrs. E.H. My daughter Clara and my son Freddy.

Eliza. How do you do?

Clara. How do you do?

Clara sits next to Eliza and looks at her enviously. Freddy bows and stares in wonder.

Higgins. Now I remember where I saw you! Covent Garden!

They all stare at him. They don't know what he means. He sits on a table.

Mrs. Higgins. Don't sit on my writing table! You'll break it!

Higgins sits clumsily on the couch which nearly breaks. Mrs. Higgins looks at him but decides not to say anything.

Higgins. Do you think it will rain, Miss Doolittle?

Eliza. There are no indications of any great change in the barometrical situation.

Freddy. How awfully funny!

Eliza. What is wrong with that, young man? I bet I got it right.

Mrs. E.H. I hope it won't turn cold. There's so much flu about.

Eliza. My aunt died of flu, they said. But it's my belief they done the old woman in.

Mrs. Higgins. *(Confused)* Done her in?

Eliza. Yes! Why would she die of the flu? She'd had more serious illnesses! She could survive anything! My father kept spooning gin down her throat until she bit the spoon in two!

Mrs. E.H. Dear me!

Eliza. She was pinched, I tell you.

Mrs. E.H. What does she mean?

Higgins. Oh, that's the new small talk. To do a person in means to kill them. To pinch them means to poison them.

Mrs. E.H. Do you mean your aunt was killed?

Eliza. Certainly! Those that she lived with would have killed her to get her hat!

Mrs. E.H. But it can't be right for your father to pour gin down her throat like that. It might have killed her.

Eliza. Not her! Gin was like milk to her!

Mrs. E.H. Do you mean she drank?

Eliza. Drank! My word, she surely did!

Mrs. E.H. How dreadful for you!

Eliza. Oh, drink's not all bad! When my father lost his job, my mother used to give him fourpence to go out and get drunk so he was fit to live with! It made the miserable old git happy. (*To Freddy.*) What are you laughing at?

Freddy. The new small talk! You do it so well!

Higgins coughs, rises and looks at his watch. This is a sign and Eliza notices.

Eliza. Well, I must go. So pleased to have met you. Goodbye.

Freddy. May I walk you across the park, Miss Doolittle?

Eliza. Walk? Not bloody likely. I am going in a taxi. (*She leaves importantly.*)

Mrs. E.H. Well! I don't think I'll get used to this new small talk.

Miss E.H. Mama! You are so old-fashioned!

Mrs. E.H. Come Freddy, Clara, we have to continue with our visits. Thank you so much, Mrs. Higgins.

Higgins. Goodbye. Be sure to try out that small talk on your other visits.

Miss E.H. I certainly bloody will!

Mrs. E.H. Clara!

Miss E.H. Ha ha! (*She goes out laughing, her mother and brother following.*)

Higgins. Well? What do you think of Eliza? Is she presentable?

Mrs. Higgins. You are a silly boy! Of course she's not presentable! She looks beautiful but she gives her identity away when she speaks.

Pickering. She just needs to remember to only talk about the weather and health.

Mrs. Higgins. Colonel Pickering, where does this girl live?

Pickering. With us, of course. Where should she live?

Higgins. And she's so useful! She always knows where my things are and always remembers my appointments.

Mrs. Higgins. How does your housekeeper get on with her?

Higgins. Mrs. Pearce? Oh, she's jolly glad Eliza is there to find my things and remember my appointments, but she tells me I don't know the consequences of taking on this bet.

Mrs. Higgins. You certainly are a pair of babies playing with your live doll.

Higgins. Playing! This is the hardest job I've ever had! Mother, you have no idea how difficult it is to take a human being and change her into a different person.

Pickering. Mrs. Higgins, we take Eliza very seriously. We keep records of everything.

Higgins. But she is absolutely fascinating.

Pickering. We're always talking about Eliza.

Higgins. Teaching Eliza.

Pickering. Dressing Eliza.

Mrs. Higgins. What!

Higgins. Inventing a new Eliza.

Pickering. She mimics like a parrot!

Mrs. Higgins. Do you realize that when Eliza walked into your house on Wimpole Street, something walked in with her?

Pickering. Her father did. But Henry soon got rid of him.

Mrs. Higgins. No, something else: a problem. You stupid male creatures! The problem is: what are you going to do with her afterwards?

Higgins. She can do what she wants with all the advantages I have given her.

Mrs. Higgins. Advantages? With her manners nobody will believe she is a fine lady.

Pickering. *(He rises to leave. He looks guilty.)* Oh, it'll be alright Mrs. Higgins.

Higgins. *(Rising also.)* We'll find her a little job.

Pickering. She's happy enough.

Higgins. No use bothering now. The thing's done. Goodbye mother.

Pickering. Goodbye.

Higgins. *(As he leaves with Pickering.)* Let's take her to the Shakespeare exhibit at Earl's Court: her remarks will be hilarious. She'll mimic all the people for us when we get home.

Exit Higgins and Pickering. Mrs. Higgins crumples up a paper on her writing table and throws it at the door.

The next half of this act takes place a month later. It is set at a ball with many Dukes, Duchesses and other titled people. This is the moment where Higgins will see if he will win his bet: will everyone think Eliza is a Duchess? While Eliza is putting her coat away, Higgins and Pickering are approached by a young man with a very hairy face.

Whiskers. Professor! Professor! *(He embraces Higgins and kisses him on both cheeks.)* You remember me?

Higgins. No I don't. Who the devil are you?

Whiskers. I am your pupil: your first pupil, your best, your greatest pupil! I now work for kings and queens throughout Europe: helping them with the English. You cannot forget ME!

Higgins. Why don't you shave?

Whiskers. My chin is small and insignificant. With a beard, it is huge! Nobody notices me when I shave. Now I am famous: they call me Hairy Faced Dick!

Higgins. And what are you doing here at this ball?

Whiskers. I am here to accompany the Greek diplomat. I am interpreter. I speak 32 languages. You know all about London accents, but I can place any man in Europe. Excuse me. My Greek diplomat is waving to me. I must go; he pays me a huge wage. Are you jealous? (*He bows and moves away.*)

Pickering. Is he really an expert? Can he find out who Eliza really is?

Higgins. We shall see. If he finds out, I lose my bet.

Eliza joins them looking stunning in a long dress with jewels.

Higgins. Ready?

Eliza. Ready.

Footman. (*Announcing them.*) Miss Doolittle, Colonel Pickering, Professor Higgins.

They walk through the crowds, Eliza saying "How do you do?" Everyone is stunned by her beauty. People at the back stand on chairs to get a better look at her. Higgins moves away to be out of the spotlight.

Lady. Tell us about this wonderful young lady, Professor Higgins.

Whiskers. I know all about her! She is a fraud.

Lady. A fraud?

Whiskers. Yes, yes, she cannot deceive me. Her name cannot be Doolittle.

Higgins. Why?

Whiskers. Because Doolittle is an English name and she is not English.

Lady. Nonsense! She speaks English perfectly.

Whiskers. Too perfectly. Only foreigners who have been taught to speak it speak it so well. She is Hungarian and of royal blood!

Higgins. Did you speak to her in Hungarian?

Whiskers. I did. She was very clever. She said “Please speak to me in English: I do not understand French.” French! She pretends not to know the difference between Hungarian and French! Impossible! She knows both!

Higgins. And the royal blood? How did you find that out?

Whiskers. Instinct, professor! Her eyes. She is a princess!

Lord. What do you say, Professor?

Higgins. I say an ordinary London girl out of the gutter can be taught to speak by an expert. I place her in Drury Lane.

Whiskers. Ha ha ha! Oh, professor, you are obsessed with London accents! The London gutter is the whole world for you.

Lord. I agree. She must be a princess at least.

Higgins goes to Eliza and Pickering.

Higgins. They think you are a Hungarian princess! I’ve won! Ten times over! Let’s get away from these chattering fools.

Higgins, Pickering and Eliza leave.

Review of Act Three

- 1) List two things Higgins does in this act that show he is immature.**

- 2) List two things Higgins does in this act that show he is antisocial.**

- 3) What aspects of Eliza's behaviour make Mrs. Higgins think that no one will believe she is a fine lady?**

- 4) Higgins tells his mother Eliza is 'useful'. What useful things does Eliza do?**

- 5) List three things about Whiskers that make him a foolish character.**

Summary of Act Four

It is midnight. Higgins, Pickering and Eliza return home after the ball. Higgins has won his bet and Pickering is congratulating him. Eliza isn't joining in with the jolly mood. She seems unhappy. She sits in silence giving angry looks. She fetches Higgins' slippers and he doesn't thank her, as usual. Pickering goes up to bed followed by Higgins. Eliza's anger bursts out when she is left alone in the room, but Higgins has forgotten his slippers so he comes back and he is very confused by her behaviour. She tells him that he doesn't care about her future, and that, now he has won his bet, he will carelessly throw her back on the street. She is angry, sad and worried at the same time. Higgins gets angry too and tells her she is ungrateful for all he has done. He then goes to bed and Eliza changes out of her clothes and leaves the house.

Out on the street she sees Freddy. Freddy has been hanging around Higgins' house every night with the hope of seeing Eliza. He asks her why she wants to leave the house so late and she tells him she wants to jump into the river. He confesses to her that he loves her and they embrace, but they are interrupted by a policeman. They move on, only to be interrupted by another policeman when they embrace again. They decide to get into a cab and drive about until the morning when Eliza will visit Mrs. Higgins and ask her what to do.

Act Four

Later that night, in Higgins' sitting room. Higgins and Pickering enter the room, followed by Eliza still dressed in her beautiful gown and jewels. She switches on the lights, puts her coat, fan and gloves on the piano, and sits down. She looks sad. At the same time, Higgins drops his coat and hat on the floor.

Higgins. I wonder where my slippers are.

Eliza looks at him angrily then stands up suddenly and leaves the room. She re-enters a moment later and puts the slippers in front of him. She sits.

Higgins. Oh lord, what a night! (*He notices the slippers next to him.*) Oh, there they are!

Pickering. Well, you've won your bet, Higgins. Eliza did a grand job.

Higgins. Thank God it's over!

Pickering. Eliza wasn't a bit nervous. I was!

Higgins. I wasn't nervous, just tired. This whole business has been a bore.

Pickering. But the Garden Party was exciting, wouldn't you say?

Higgins. Yes, for the first three minutes, but when I had to sit for an hour talking to that foolish fashionable woman I felt trapped like a bear in a cage. I tell you, Pickering, never again will I take on a bet like this. No more artificial duchesses.

Pickering. Anyhow, it was a great success. Eliza did it so well. She's a professional.

Higgins. Well, it's over and done with and now I can go to bed without dreading tomorrow.

Eliza looks at him with fury.

Pickering. I think I shall go to sleep too. It's been a great occasion: a triumph for you. Goodnight. (*He goes.*)

Higgins. Goodnight. (*He yawns and starts to leave.*) Put the lights out, Eliza, and tell Mrs. Pearce not to make coffee for me in the morning: I'll take tea. (*He goes out.*)

Eliza is very angry. She throws herself onto the floor and flings her arms and legs about. Higgins comes back in looking around for his slippers. He sees her and stares. Eliza jumps up, grabs the slippers and throws them at him.

Eliza. There are your slippers. Take them!

Higgins. What's the matter? Anything wrong?

Eliza. Nothing's wrong. I've won your bet for you, haven't I? That's enough for you. I don't matter, I suppose.

Higgins. You won my bet? You? Insolent insect! I won it! What did you throw those slippers at me for?

Eliza. Because I wanted to smash your face! Why didn't you leave me in the gutter? You thank God it's all over, and now you can throw me back there, don't you? *(She leaps at his face.)*

Higgins. *(Holding her wrists.)* Put your claws away, you cat! Sit down and be quiet! *(He throws her into a chair.)*

Eliza. *(Sad)* What's to become of me?

Higgins. How do I know what's to become of you? What does it matter what becomes of you?

Eliza. You don't care. You wouldn't care if I was dead! I'm nothing to you.

Higgins. Why are you being like this? Has anyone here ever treated you badly?

Eliza. No.

Higgins. I'm glad to hear it. Perhaps you're tired. Would you like a glass of champagne?

Eliza. No. Thank you.

Higgins. You must have been anxious today. There's nothing more to worry about.

Eliza. Oh God! I wish I was dead!

Higgins. Why?! You're just tired. Go to bed.

Eliza. What am I fit for? Where am I to go? What am I to do?

Higgins. Oh, that's what's worrying you. (*He puts his hands in his pockets and walks about nervously.*) You won't have much trouble finding something. What about that idea of a flower shop? Pickering could buy you one. You might marry, you know. You're not bad looking, except now, of course, because you've been crying. You go to bed and have a nice rest. You'll look a lot better in the morning. I must go to bed. What did I come in here for?

Eliza. Your slippers.

Higgins. Oh yes, of course. You threw them at me.

Eliza. Before you go, I'd like to ask you something: do my clothes belong to me or to Colonel Pickering?

Higgins. What use are they to Pickering?

Eliza. He might want them for the next girl you pick up to experiment on.

Higgins. Is that the way you feel towards us?

Eliza. All I want to know is whether anything belongs to me. My own clothes were burnt. I want to know what I can take with me. I don't want to be accused of stealing. I'm just a common girl.

Higgins. Stealing! You shouldn't have said that, Eliza. You may take the whole houseful, if you like. Except the jewels. They're hired. Does that satisfy you?

Eliza. (*Takes off the jewels and hands them to him.*) Will you take these to your room and keep them safe? I don't want to get the blame if they go missing.

Higgins. (*Angry*) if these belonged to me instead of the jeweler, I'd ram them down your ungrateful throat, you heartless guttersnipe.

Eliza. (*Taking off a ring.*) This ring isn't the jeweler's: it's the one you bought for me in Brighton. I don't want it now. (*Higgins throws the ring into the fireplace.*) Don't hit me!

Higgins. Hit you? How could you accuse me of such a thing? You have wounded me to the heart. You have caused me to lose my temper: a thing that has hardly ever happened to me. I prefer to say nothing more tonight. I am going to bed. (*He leaves.*)

Eliza goes down on her knees and gets the ring. She looks at it for a moment, then puts it on the piano. She goes upstairs. In Eliza's bedroom, there is a huge wardrobe of clothes and a large mirror. She opens the wardrobe and takes out a dress, a hat and a pair of shoes which she changes into. She picks up a little bag

and leaves the house. Freddy is standing outside. Eliza is surprised to see him there.

Eliza. What are you doing here?

Freddy. I spend most of my nights here. It's the only place I'm happy.

Eliza. Freddy, you don't think I'm a heartless guttersnipe, do you?

Freddy. Oh no! Darling, you are the loveliest, dearest- *(He suddenly kisses her.)*

1st Policeman. *(Approaches)* Now then! Now then! Now then!

Freddy. Sorry, constable, we've just become engaged.

They run away.

Eliza. *(Stopping)* He gave me such a fright! But you answered him proper!

Freddy. Where were you going?

Eliza. To throw myself in the river.

Freddy. Eliza, darling, what do you mean? What's the matter?

Eliza. It doesn't matter now. *(She embraces him.)*

2nd Policeman. *(Approaches)* Now then, you two! What's this? Move along quickly!

They run again. Then stop.

Freddy. We must go somewhere. We can't stay on the streets all night.

A cab stops next to them.

Eliza. Oh, Freddy, a cab!

Freddy. But I haven't any money!

Eliza. I have plenty. The Colonel thinks you should never go out without ten pounds in your pocket. Let's drive about all night and in the morning, I'll call on Mrs. Higgins and ask her what I should do.

Freddy. Wonderful! *(They get into the cab and drive off.)*

Review of Act Four

- 1) List three or more phrases that Higgins says in the first part of the act that give Eliza good reason to be angry and upset.**

- 2) During Eliza and Higgins' argument, Higgins shows he has little sensitivity towards her feelings. Give one or two examples of this.**

- 3) Considering this play was written in England in 1912, why do you think the policemen keep telling Freddy and Eliza to go away?**

- 4) Do you think Mrs. Higgins will be sympathetic to Eliza when she calls on her the next day? What might Mrs. Higgins say to Eliza?**

- 5) What do you think Higgins and Pickering will say to each other when they realize Eliza is gone the next day? Write a short dialogue of what you think they might say.**

Summary of Act Five

Higgins and Pickering barge into Mrs. Higgins' house to use the telephone. Eliza has gone and they are phoning the police. Little do they know, Eliza is upstairs and Mrs. Higgins has told her to stay up there until she is brought down by the maid. Mrs. Higgins gives Pickering and Higgins a serious talking to but only Pickering admits that they could have behaved better towards Eliza.

Alfred Doolittle arrives dressed in fine clothes. He is on the way to his own wedding. He is angry with Higgins because Higgins told a rich friend about him and the friend has left Doolittle lots of money. Doolittle doesn't like being rich because now people only want to be his friend so they'll get some money.

Eliza comes into the room and tells Pickering that it was he who really educated her as he taught her self-respect by always being so well-mannered with her. Higgins is angry because Eliza fails to thank him for anything.

Colonel Pickering goes off to the wedding with Doolittle and Mrs. Higgins goes upstairs to change for the wedding. Eliza and Professor Higgins are alone together. Higgins tells Eliza that he does appreciate her and she shouldn't have done so many things for him like finding his slippers. He wanted her to be a strong woman and to stand up to people like him who ordered her about. She has now proved to him she is strong and he likes her more. He asks her to come back to live at Wimpole Street, but she tells him she will marry Freddy. He is disappointed about this as he believes she is now fit to marry a king. Showing her strength further, Eliza tells Higgins that she will earn a wage by teaching phonetics.

As Eliza goes off to her father's wedding with Mrs. Higgins, Higgins, in a humorous mood, tells Eliza to get a load of shopping while she's out. Eliza asserts herself: she is a person not a slave! She points out how ridiculous he is and that he will always depend on her as she is wise and he is foolish.

Act Five

Mrs. Higgins' sitting room. Mrs. Higgins sits at her writing table. The maid comes in.

Maid. Your son, madam, is downstairs with Colonel Pickering.

Mrs. Higgins. Well, show them up.

Maid. They're using the telephone, madam. Telephoning the police, I think.

Mrs. Higgins. What!

Maid. Mr. Henry is in a state, madam. I thought I'd better tell you.

Mrs. Higgins. Tell them to come up when they've finished. I suppose he's lost something.

Maid. Yes, madam (*Going*).

Mrs. Higgins. And then go upstairs and tell Miss Doolittle that they are here. Ask her not to come down until I send for her.

Higgins bursts in.

Higgins. Mother! Something terrible has happened!

Mrs. Higgins. Good morning, dear. What is it?

Higgins. Eliza has gone!

Mrs. Higgins. You must have frightened her.

Higgins. Frightened her? Nonsense! She left last night. Her bed wasn't slept in. She then came back early this morning to collect her things. Mrs. Pearce let her in. What am I to do?

Mrs. Higgins. Do without her. She has a right to leave if she wants to.

Pickering. (*Comes in.*) Good morning, Mrs. Higgins. Has Henry told you?

Higgins. What did the policeman say? Did you offer a reward?

Mrs. Higgins. Have you sent the police after Eliza?

Higgins. Of course! What are police for?

Pickering. We want to find her.

Maid. (*Entering*) Mr. Henry, a gentleman called Mr. Doolittle wants to see you.

Pickering. Doolittle! Do you mean the dustman?

Maid. Dustman! Oh no, sir, a gentleman.

Higgins. Is this some relative of Eliza's we don't know about? Send him up, quick.

Maid. Yes, sir. (*She goes.*)

Alfred Doolittle walks in. He wears a silk hat, shiny shoes and a flower in his buttonhole.

Doolittle. Look what you've done to me!

Pickering. Has Eliza been buying you clothes?

Doolittle. Eliza? Why would she buy me clothes?

Mrs. Higgins. Good morning, Mr. Doolittle, won't you sit down.

Doolittle. (*He becomes polite when he notices a lady is in the room.*) I beg your pardon, madam. Thank you.

Higgins. What on earth has happened to you?

Doolittle. You have ruined my happiness! You wrote a letter to your millionaire friend in America because you thought I was so amusing. Then what does he do? He dies and leaves me all his money!

Higgins. What? How funny!

Doolittle. Now everyone wants to be my friend so they can get a bit of my money!

Mrs. Higgins. Why don't you give it back?

Doolittle. I couldn't do that! I've no money for my old age. I had to dye my hair black to keep my job as a dustman. What would become of me?

Mrs. Higgins. Well, that solves a problem: you can look after Eliza now.

Doolittle. Yes, Eliza and everyone else!

Higgins. Certainly not! I paid him five pounds for her! You took that money for the girl and you have no right to take her back!

Mrs. Higgins. Henry, don't be silly. If you want to know where Eliza is, she is upstairs.

Higgins. Upstairs!!! Then I shall fetch her down right now!

Mrs. Higgins. Sit down, Henry! Be quiet. Eliza came to me this morning. She told me of the brutal way you two treated her.

Higgins. What!

Pickering. Higgins, did you bully her after I went to bed?

Higgins. No! She bullied me! She threw my slippers in my face!

Pickering. But why? What did we do to her?

Mrs. Higgins. I think I know why. Is the girl affectionate, Mr. Doolittle?

Doolittle. Yes. She takes after me.

Mrs. Higgins. That's it: she has become attached to you both. She worked hard for you, Henry and when she performed brilliantly and you won your bet, you two sat there ignoring her. You said how you were glad it was all over and how you were bored with the whole thing. How could you be surprised when she threw slippers at you? I would have thrown bricks at you!

Higgins. We said nothing except we were tired and wanted to go to bed.

Mrs. Higgins. Are you sure about that?

Pickering. Absolutely.

Mrs. Higgins. Did you thank her or admire her or tell her how splendid she'd been?

Higgins. She knew all that already.

Pickering. Perhaps we were a little inconsiderate.

Mrs. Higgins. If you promise to behave yourself, Henry, I'll ask her to come down.

Higgins. Very well. Behave yourself, Pickering. Let us put on our best manners for this creature that we picked out of the mud.

Mrs. Higgins. Remember your promise, Henry. Mr. Doolittle, please step onto the balcony for a moment. I want her to make up with these gentlemen before she sees you in your new clothes.

Doolittle. As you wish, madam. (*He goes onto the balcony.*)

The maid enters.

Mrs. Higgins. Ask Miss Doolittle to come down, please.

Maid. Yes, madam. (*She goes out.*)

Mrs. Higgins. Now Henry, be good.

Higgins. I am behaving myself perfectly.

Pickering. He is doing his best, Mrs. Higgins.

Higgins stretches out on the couch and starts to whistle.

Mrs. Higgins. Henry, dearest, you don't look nice like that.

Higgins. (*Sitting up.*) I wasn't trying to look nice. Where is that girl? Do we have to wait all day?

Eliza enters carrying a sewing basket looking relaxed and calm. She sits as if she lives there.

Eliza. How do you do, Professor Higgins? So glad to see you, Colonel Pickering. Quite chilly this morning, isn't it?

Higgins. Stop playing silly games, Eliza. Get up and come home now, you fool.

Eliza takes a piece of cloth out of the basket and starts sewing without noticing Higgins' angry words.

Mrs. Higgins. How nice, Henry. I'm sure no woman could resist an invitation like that.

Higgins. (*Standing*) I have created this thing out of the squashed cabbage leaves of Covent Garden; and now she pretends to be a fine lady.

Eliza. Oh, I'm only a squashed cabbage leaf.

Pickering. No!

Eliza. (*To Pickering*) I owe you so much and I should be very sad if you forgot me. You see, when I was a flower girl, I used to be like Professor Higgins: I used bad language and couldn't control myself. I learnt how ladies and gentlemen behave from you, Colonel Pickering.

Higgins. Well!

Pickering. But he taught you to speak. I couldn't have done that you know.

Eliza. Learning to speak was as easy as learning to dance. But do you know what began my real education?

Pickering. What?

Eliza. When you called me Miss Doolittle on the day I first arrived at Wimpole Street. That was the beginning of self-respect for me. And there were so many other things that just came naturally to you, like standing up when I came into a room, taking off your hat and opening doors for me.

Pickering. Oh, that was nothing.

Eliza. You showed me I was something more than a flower girl. I'm not blaming Professor Higgins: it's his way, isn't it? The difference between a flower girl and a lady is not how she behaves, but how she is treated. I shall always be a flower girl to Professor Higgins because he always treats me like a flower girl, and always will. I can be a lady to you because you always treat me as a lady, and always will.

Pickering. Well, this is really very nice of you, Miss Doolittle.

Eliza. Please call me Eliza. I would like Professor Higgins to call me Miss Doolittle.

Higgins. Go and burn in hell!

Mrs. Higgins. Henry!

Pickering. Will you come back to Wimpole Street, Eliza? Will you forgive Higgins?

Higgins. Forgive! Let her go! Let her find out that she cannot survive without us. She will be back in the gutter in three weeks.

Pickering. You won't do that, will you Eliza?

Eliza. No. Not now. I have learnt my lesson. I have forgotten the old sounds I used to speak. (*Doolittle re-enters the room from the balcony, comes forward and touches her on the shoulder.*) A-a-a-a-ah-ow-oo!

Higgins. Ha! Forgotten the old sounds have you? A-a-a-aahowooh! A-a-a-aahowooh! A-a-a-a-aahowooh! Victory! Victory!

Doolittle. Don't look at me like that, Eliza. It isn't my fault. I've been left some money. I didn't even know the bloke that died. Now your stepmother wants to marry me.

Eliza. You're going to marry that common woman!

Doolittle. Won't you come to the wedding, Eliza?

Pickering. Eliza, you should go to your father's wedding.

Eliza. Oh well, I'll get my hat. I'll be back in a moment. (*She goes out.*)

Mrs. Higgins. May we all come to your wedding, Mr. Doolittle?

Doolittle. I would be honoured. Would you accompany me now, Colonel Pickering?

Mrs. Higgins goes out to get ready. Eliza re-enters with her hat on.

Pickering. Of course. Eliza, please forgive Higgins and come back to Wimpole Street. Do stay with us, Eliza. (*He goes out with Doolittle.*)

Higgins. Well, Eliza, are you going to be reasonable?

Eliza. You only want me back to pick up your slippers and put up with your tempers.

Higgins. I haven't said I want you back at all. And as for my manners, they are exactly the same as Colonel Pickering's.

Eliza. That's not true. He treats a flower girl as if she was a duchess.

Higgins. And I treat a duchess as if she was a flower girl.

Eliza. I don't care how you treat me. I don't mind your swearing at me. You're like a bus that bounces all about with no care for the people inside. I can do without you.

Higgins. I know you can.

Eliza. You wanted to get rid of me.

Higgins. You never asked yourself, I suppose, whether I could do without you.

Eliza. You'll have to do without me.

Higgins. I can do without anyone but I shall miss you, Eliza. I have learnt something from all your nonsense. And I have grown accustomed to your voice and appearance. I will miss them.

Eliza. Well, you have my voice on your gramophone and my picture in your book of photographs. When you feel lonely, you can turn the machine on.

Higgins. I can't turn your soul on. Leave me your feelings and you can take away the voice and the face. They are not you.

Eliza. Oh, you brute! You are twisting my heart.

Higgins. You call me a brute because you felt you always had to find my glasses and fetch my slippers. You were a fool: I think a woman fetching a man's slippers is a disgusting sight: did I ever fetch your slippers? I think more of you since you threw them in my face. If you come back and if you dare to start those little dog's tricks of fetching and carrying slippers, I'll slam the door in your face, Duchess Eliza.

Eliza. What would I come back for?

Higgins. For the fun of it! That's why I took you on in the first place. I could adopt you as my daughter and lavish money on you. Or would you rather marry Pickering?

Eliza. Oh, if only I could go back to my flower basket and be independent. I wouldn't even marry you and you're nearer to my age than what he is.

Higgins. Than he is, not "than what he is".

Eliza. (*Angry*) I'll talk as I like. You're not my teacher now. You boss me around and tell me to marry Colonel Pickering, but it's Freddy who really loves me. He writes to me two times a day. Didn't you even notice his letters on the table at breakfast? Every girl has a right to be loved!

Higgins. What? He's not rich and he's such a fool!

Eliza. Freddy's not a fool. What else am I to do? I can't go back to the gutter as you call it, and I have no real friends in the world but you and the Colonel. I'll marry Freddy as soon as I'm able.

Higgins. But Eliza, you could marry a king! Why marry Freddy?

Eliza. He's like a king to me and I will support him. I will teach phonetics. I'll offer myself as an assistant to that hairy-faced Hungarian.

Higgins. Oh no you won't! He'll steal my ideas! I'll wring your neck if you dare take one step in his direction!

Eliza. What do I care? I knew you'd try to hurt me one day. You can't take away the knowledge you gave me. I'll advertise in the newspapers that your duchess is really a flower girl that you taught, and that she'll teach anyone to be a duchess in just six months for a thousand guineas. I'm not afraid of you!

Higgins. Eliza, I said I'd make a woman of you, and I have. I like you like this. You're a tower of strength.

Mrs. Higgins returns, dressed for the wedding.

Mrs. Higgins. The carriage is waiting, Eliza. Are you ready?

Eliza. Yes. Is the Professor coming?

Mrs. Higgins. Certainly not. He can't behave himself in church.

Eliza. Then I shall not see you again, Professor. Goodbye.

Eliza and Mrs. Higgins go to the door.

Higgins. Goodbye mother. Oh, by the way, Eliza, order a ham and a stilton cheese, will you? And buy me a pair of leather gloves: size eight. And a tie to match that new suit of mine. You can choose the colour.

Eliza. Size eight is too small for you. You have three new ties that you have forgotten in the drawer in your bathroom. Colonel Pickering prefers cheddar to stilton and you don't notice the difference. I telephoned Mrs. Pearce this morning not to forget the ham. How ever will you manage without me! (*She leaves.*)

Mrs. Higgins. You or Pickering may want to consider proposing to Eliza: you're hopeless without her.

Higgins. Nonsense: she's going to marry Freddy. Ha ha! Freddy! Freddy! Ha ha ha ha ha!!!! (*He roars with laughter as the play ends.*)

Review of Act Five

- 1) Why do you think Higgins and Pickering are so eager to find Eliza?**

- 2) Why is Alfred Doolittle unhappy with his new wealth and why doesn't he get rid of it?**

- 3) Do you think Eliza has reason to still be angry at Higgins? Why? What is his attitude towards her now?**

- 4) What kind of relationship do you think Eliza will have with Higgins and Pickering in future?**

- 5) Do you think Eliza will avoid going back to the gutter? What do you think will happen in her life? Make a bullet point chronological list of the rest of Eliza's life.**

Name of Resource

Pygmalion An Abridged Text

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