

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 1 – Henry Higgins - MEN (Act One Scene 1)

PICKERING May I ask, sir, do you do this sort of thing for a living on the music halls?

HIGGINS I have thought of that. Perhaps I will someday.

ELIZA He's no gentleman, he ain't, to interfere with a poor girl.

PICKERING How do you do it, if I may ask?

HIGGINS Simple phonetics. The science of speech. That's my profession, also my hobby. Anyone can spot an Irishman or a Yorkshireman by his brogue. I can place a man within six miles; I can place him within two miles in London. (Indicating ELIZA) Sometimes within two streets.

ELIZA Ought to be ashamed of himself, unmanly coward!

PICKERING But is there a living in that?

HIGGINS Oh, yes. Quite a fat one.

ELIZA Let him mind his own business and leave a poor girl -

HIGGINS (Explosively) Woman! Cease this detestable boo-hooing instantly or else seek the shelter of some other place of worship.

ELIZA (With feeble defiance) I've a right to be here if I like, same as you.

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; that your native language is the language of Shakespeare and Milton and the Bible; and don't sit there crooning like a bilious pigeon.

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 2 –Eliza – WOMEN

(Act One Scene 3)

HIGGINS Why, this is the girl I jotted down last night. She's no use: I've got all the records I want of the Lisson Grove lingo, and I'm not going to waste another cylinder on it. Be off with you: I don't want you.

ELIZA Don't be so saucy. You ain't heard what I come for yet. (To MRS. PEARCE) Did you tell him I come in a taxi?

MRS. PEARCE Nonsense, girl! What do you think a gentleman like Mr. Higgins cares what you came in?

ELIZA Oh, we are proud! He ain't above giving lessons, not him: I heard him say so. Well, I ain't come here to ask for any compliment; and if my money's not good enough I can go elsewhere.

HIGGINS Good enough for what?

ELIZA Good enough for ye-oo. Now you know, don't you? I'm come to have lessons, I am. And to pay for 'em too: make no mistake.

HIGGINS (Stunned) Well!!! (Recovering his breath with a gasp) What do you expect me to say to you?

ELIZA Well, if you was a gentleman, you might ask me to sit down, I think. Don't I tell you I'm bringing you business?

HIGGINS Pickering, shall we ask this baggage to sit down, or shall we throw her out of the window?

ELIZA (Running away in terror) Ah-ah-oh-ow-ow-ow-oo! (Wounded and whimpering) I won't be called a baggage when I've offered to pay like any lady!

PICKERING (Gently) What is it you want, my girl?

ELIZA I want to be a lady in a flower shop stead of selling at the corner of Tottenham Court Road. But they won't take me unless I can talk more genteel. He said he could teach me. Well, here I am ready to pay him – not asking any favour - and he treats me as if I was dirt. I know what lessons cost as well as you do; and I'm ready to pay.

HIGGINS How much?

ELIZA (Coming back to him, triumphant) Now you're talking! I thought you'd come off it when you saw a chance of getting back a bit of what you chucked at me last night. (Confidentially) You'd had a drop in, hadn't you?

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 3 – Alfred P Doolittle - MEN

(Act One Scene 5)

HIGGINS (Recovering) Alfred, you sent her here on purpose?

DOOLITTLE So help me, Governor, I never did.

HIGGINS Then how did you know she was here?

DOOLITTLE I'll tell ya, Governor, if you'll only let me get a word in. I'm willing to tell ya. I'm wanting to tell ya. I'm waiting to tell ya.

HIGGINS Pickering, this chap has a certain natural gift of rhetoric. Observe the rhythm of his native woodnotes wild: "I'm willing to tell you; I'm wanting to tell you; I'm waiting to tell you." That's the Welsh strain in him. (To DOOLITTLE) How did you know Eliza was here if you didn't send her?

DOOLITTLE She sent back for her luggage, and I got to hear about it. She said she didn't want no clothes. What was I to think from that, Governor. I ask you as a parient, what was I to think?

HIGGINS So you came to rescue her from worse than death, eh?

DOOLITTLE (Relieved at being so well understood) Just so, Governor. That's right.

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

DOOLITTLE (Desperately) Now wait a minute, Governor, wait a minute. You and me is men of the world, ain't we?

HIGGINS Oh! Men of the world, are we? You'd better go, Mrs. Pearce.

MRS. PEARCE I think so indeed, sir! (She goes with dignity)

DOOLITTLE Governor, I've taken a sort of fancy to you. (Again he wheezes in HIGGINS' face, causing the latter almost to lose balance) And if you want the girl I'm not so set on havin' her back home again, but what I might be open to is an arrangement. All I ask is my rights as a father; and you're the last man alive to expect me to let her go for nothing; for I can see you're one of the straight sort, Governor. Well, what's a five-pound note to you? And what's Eliza to me?

PICKERING I think you ought to know, Doolittle, that Mr. Higgins' intentions are entirely honorable.

DOOLITTLE (To PICKERING) Of course they are, Governor. If I thought they wasn't, I'd ask fifty.

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 4 – Mrs Higgins – WOMEN

(Act One Scene 6)

MRS. HIGGINS Colonel Pickering, I don't understand. Do you know that my son is coming to Ascot today?

PICKERING Yes, he is, Mrs.Higgins. As a matter of fact, he's here!

MRS.HIGGINS (Dismayed) What a disagreeable surprise. Ascot is usually the one place I can come to with my friends and not run the risk of seeing my son, Henry. Whenever my friends meet him, I never see them again.

PICKERING He had to come, Mrs. Higgins. You see, he's taking the girl to the annual Embassy Ball, and he wanted to try her out first.

MRS. HIGGINS (Blank bewilderment) I beg your pardon?

PICKERING (Clearing it up) You know, the annual Embassy Ball.

MRS. HIGGINS Yes, I know the Ball; but what girl?

PICKERING Oh, didn't I mention that?

MRS. HIGGINS No, you did not.

PICKERING Well, it's quite simple, really. One night I went to the Opera at Covent Garden to hear one of my favourite operas, Aida; and as I was coming out incidentally, they didn't do Aida that night. No, they did Gotterdammerung instead. I'd never heard Gotterdammerung. By George, that's a rackety one! When the tenor chap.....

MRS. HIGGINS (Impatiently) What about the girl, Colonel?

PICKERING Oh, yes. As I was coming out, I met your son, Henry, who, in turn, met Miss Doolittle, who now lives with Henry.

MRS. HIGGINS Lives with Henry? (Hopefully) Is it a love affair?

PICKERING Heaven's no! She's a flower girl. He picked her up off the kerbstone.

MRS. HIGGINS A flower girl!

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 5 – Zoltan Karpathy

(Act Two Scene 10)

KARPATHY Ah, Maestro! Maestro! (He kisses HIGGINS on both cheeks)

HIGGINS (surprised, annoyed and wounded by the whiskers) Oh! Oh!

KARPATHY You remember me?

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

KARPATHY I am your pupil, your first, best, and greatest pupil. I am Zoltan Karpathy, that marvellous boy. You teach me phonetics. You cannot forget me.

HIGGINS Why don't you shave?

KARPATHY I have not your imposing appearance; your figure, your brow. Nobody notice me when I shave.

HIGGINS (noticing his chest full of medals) Where did you find all those old coins?]
KARPATHY (not at all offended – he can't be) Decorations for language, The Queen of Transylvania is here this evening. I am indispensable to her at these international parties. I speak thirty- two languages. I know everybody in Europe. No imposter escape my detection. And now, Professor, you must introduce me to this glorious creature you escort this evening. She fascinate everyone. Not since Mrs Langtry came to London

FOOTMAN His Excellency Dr Thermistocles Stephanos

KARPATHY (lowering his voice) This so-called Greek diplomat pretends he cannot speak English. But he does not deceive me. He is the son of a Yorkshire watchmaker. He speaks English so villainously that he dare not utter a word of it without betraying hi origin. I help him to pretend, but I make him pay through the nose. I make them all pay. (He irritatingly strokes Higgins's lapel) I look forward to meeting your lady. (He bows, a bit too low, and rejoins his group.)

AODS – MY FAIR LADY - AUDITION PIECES

Audition 6 – Mrs Pearce

(Act One Scene 3)

PICKERING I say Higgins, couldn't we turn on the lights?

HIGGINS Nonsense you hear much better in the dark.

PICKERING But it's a fearful strain listening to all these vowel sounds. I'm quite done up for this morning.

[Mrs Pearce enters. She is Higgins's housekeeper.]

MRS PEARCE Mr Higgins are you there?

HIGGINS What is it, Mrs Pearce? *[He turns down the volume of the machine]*

MRS PEARCE A young woman wants to see you, sir

HIGGINS *[turning the machine off]* A young woman! What does she want? *[He switches on the light.]* Has she an interesting accent? *[To Pickering]* Let's have her up. Show her up, Mrs Pearce.

MRS PEARCE Very well sir. It's for you to say. *[She goes into the hall]*

HIGGINS This is rather a bit of luck. I'll show you how I make records. We'll set her talking; and I'll take her down in Broad Romic; and then we'll get her on the phonograph so that you can turn her on as often as you like with the written transcript before you.

MRS PEARCE This is the young woman, sir.

[Eliza enters in a state. She has a hat with three ostrich feathers, orange, skye-blue and red. She has a nearly clean apron, and the shoddy coat has been tidied a little. The pathos of this deplorable figure with its innocent vanity and consequential air, touches PICKERING, who has already straightened himself in the presence of MRS PEARCE. But as to HIGGINS, the only distinction he makes between men and women is that when he is neither bullying nor exclaiming to the heavens against some featherweight cross, he coaxes women as a child coaxes its nurse when it wants to get anything out of her.]

HIGGINS *[brusquely, recognizing her with unconcealed disappointment, and at once, babylike, making an intolerable grievance of it]* Why, this is the girl I jotted down last night. She's no use: I've got all the records I want of Lisson Grove lingo, and I'm not going to waste another cylinder on it. *[To the girl]* Be off with you: I don't want you.

ELIZA Don't be so saucy. You ain't heard what I come for yet. *[To MRS PEARCE, who is waiting At the door for further instructions]* Did you tell him I come in a taxi?

MRS PEARCE Nonsense girl! What do you think a gentleman like Mr Higgins cares what you came in?