

ELIZA

(*With sudden sincerity*) I don't care how you treat me. I don't mind your swearing at me. I shouldn't mind a black eye: I've had one before this. But I won't be passed over.

HIGGINS

Then get out of my way: for I won't stop for you. You talk about me as if I were a motor bus.

ELIZA

So you are a motor bus: all bounce and go, and no consideration for anyone. But I can get along without you. Don't think I can't.

HIGGINS

I know you can. I told you you could. (*Pause, seriously*) You never wondered, I suppose, whether I could get along without you.

ELIZA

Don't try to get around me. You'll have to.

HIGGINS

(*Arrogantly*) And so I can. Without you or any soul on earth. (*With sudden humility*) But I shall miss you, Eliza. I've learned something from your idiotic notions. I confess that humbly and gratefully.

ELIZA

Well, you have my voice on your gramophone. When you feel lonely without me you can turn it on. It's got no feelings to hurt.

HIGGINS

I can't turn your soul on.

ELIZA

Oh, you are a devil. You can twist the heart in a girl as easily as some can twist her arms to hurt her. What am I to come back for?

HIGGINS

(*Heartily*) For the fun of it. That's why I took you on.

ELIZA

And you may throw me out tomorrow if I don't do everything you want me to?

HIGGINS

Yes: and you may walk out tomorrow if I don't do everything you want me to.

ELIZA

And live with my father?

HIGGINS

Yes, or sell flowers. Or would you rather marry Pickering?

ELIZA

*(Fiercely)* I wouldn't marry you if you asked me; and you're nearer my age than what he is.

HIGGINS

*(Correcting her gently)* Than he is.

ELIZA

*(Losing her temper and walking away from him)* I'll talk as I like. You're not my teacher now. That's not what I want and don't you think it. I've always had chaps enough wanting me that way. Freddy Hill writes to me twice and three times a day, sheets and sheets.

HIGGINS

*(Coming to her)* Oh, in short, you want me to be as infatuated about you as he is. Is that it?

ELIZA

*(Facing him, much troubled)* No, I don't. That's not the sort of feeling I want from you. I want a little kindness. I know I'm a common ignorant girl, and you a book-learned gentleman; but I'm not dirt under your feet. What I done—*(Correcting herself)* What I did was not for the dresses and the taxis: I did it because we were pleasant together and I come—came to care for you; not to want you to make love to me, and not forgetting the difference between us, but more friendly like.

HIGGINS

Yes, of course. That's just how I feel. And how Pickering feels. Eliza, you're a fool.

ELIZA

That's not a proper answer to give me.