

Men are so decent, such regular chaps.
Ready to help you through any mishaps.
Ready to buck you up whenever you are glum.
Why can't a woman be a chum?

Why is thinking something women never do?
Why is logic never even tried?
Straightening up their hair is all they ever do.
Why don't they straighten up the mess that's inside?

Why can't a woman be more like a man?
If I were a woman who'd been to a ball,
Been hailed as a princess by one and by all;
Would I start weeping like a bathtub overflowing?
And carry on as if my home were in a tree?
Would I run off and never tell me where I'm going?
Why can't a woman be like me?

(He clamps his hat on his head and stalks off)

Scene 5

The conservatory of MRS. HIGGINS' house.

TIME: *Shortly after.*

AT RISE: *MRS. HIGGINS and ELIZA are having tea.*

MRS. HIGGINS

And you mean to say that after you did this wonderful thing for them without making a single mistake, they just sat there and never said a word to you? Never petted you, or admired you, or told you how splendid you'd been?

ELIZA

Not a word.

MRS. HIGGINS

That's simply appalling. I should not have thrown the slippers at him, I should have thrown the fire irons.

(ELIZA smiles, but the smile is short-lived as HIGGINS is heard thundering from the entrance hall)

HIGGINS

(Off) Mother! Mother!

(ELIZA looks fearful and rises to leave)

MRS. HIGGINS

(Staying her) I thought it wouldn't be long. Stay where you are, my dear.

HIGGINS

(Off) Mother, where the devil are you?

MRS. HIGGINS

Remember, last night you not only danced with a prince, but you behaved like a princess.

(ELIZA collects herself as HIGGINS charges into the room)

HIGGINS

Mother, the damndest . . . ! *(He sees ELIZA. Amazed. Angry)* You!

ELIZA

(Giving a staggering exhibition of ease of manner) How do you do, Professor Higgins? Are you quite well?

HIGGINS

(Choking) Am I . . . *(He can say no more)*

ELIZA

But of course you are. You are never ill. Would you care for some tea?

HIGGINS

Don't you dare try that game on me! I taught it to you! Get up and come home and don't be a fool! You've caused me enough trouble for one morning!

MRS. HIGGINS

Very nicely put, indeed, Henry. No woman could resist such an invitation.

HIGGINS

How did this baggage get here in the first place?

MRS. HIGGINS

Eliza came to see me, and I was delighted to have her. And if you don't promise to behave yourself, I shall have to ask you to leave.

HIGGINS

You mean I'm to put on my Sunday manners for this thing I created out of the squashed cabbage leaves of Covent Garden?

MRS. HIGGINS

(Calmly) Yes, dear, that is precisely what I mean.

HIGGINS

I'll see her damned first! *(He walks to the rear of the conservatory and paces back and forth noisily)*

MRS. HIGGINS

(To ELIZA) How did you ever learn manners with my son around?

ELIZA

(Sweetly, but making certain her voice carries) It was very difficult. I should never have known how ladies and gentlemen behave if it hadn't been for Colonel Pickering. He always showed me that he felt and thought about me as if I were something better than a common flower girl. You see, Mrs. Higgins, apart from the things one can pick up, the difference between a lady and a flower girl 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 as a flower girl and always will. But I know that I shall always be a lady to Colonel Pickering because he always treats me as a lady, and always will.

(There is a strange gnashing noise from the rear of the conservatory)

MRS. HIGGINS

Henry, please don't grind your teeth.

(The PARLOR MAID enters)

MAID

The Vicar is here, madam. Shall I show him into the garden?

MRS. HIGGINS

(Horried) The Vicar, and the Professor? Good Heavens, no! I'll see him in the library.

(The MAID goes. MRS. HIGGINS rises to follow)

Eliza, if my son begins to break things, I give you full permission to have him evicted. *(At the door, she turns*