

**ACT ONE**

**Scene 3**

*HIGGINS' STUDY*

*There is a staircase at one side leading up to a landing, a window looking out over the city, two downstairs doors, and much recording apparatus, including three turntables, a central switch for all three, large old-fashioned horns about, and a xylophone. There is a bird-cage UC.*

*TIME: The next day.*

*AT RISE: The room is in total darkness.*

*The vowel sounds into which the cries at DOOLITTLE in the preceding scene have segued, continue. After a bit more of these sounds, PICKERING's voice is heard, from the direction of the wing chair DR)*

**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 those vowel sounds. I'm quite done up for this afternoon.

*(MRS. PEARCE appears in the UC door)*

**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**

*(Turns machine off)*

A young woman!

*(X to light switch UC)*

What does she want?

*(Snaps on lights)*

Has she an interesting accent?

MRS. PEARCE

Oh, something dreadful, sir.

HIGGINS

*(To PICKERING)*

Let's have her up. Show her up, Mrs. Pearce.

MRS. PEARCE

Very well, sir. It's for you to say.

*(SHE Exits UC door)*

HIGGINS

*(Xes to desk, gets book and pencil)*

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 Bell's Visible Speech; then in Broad Romic;

*(X to C machine, gets cylinder and puts it in roller in machine)*

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.

*(HIGGINS Xes back to desk, PICKERING rises by R of wing chair waiting for the girl)*

MRS. PEARCE

*(Enters, stands by R of door)*

This is the young woman, sir.

*(ELIZA enters, nods to PICKERING, looks about room in awe as HIGGINS Xes to HER for a closer look)*

HIGGINS

Oh, no!... 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.

*(HE pulls the cylinder out of the machine, places it down, Xes to desk)*

Be off with you; I don't want you!

*(After throwing book and pencil on desk, HE Xes up into library, gets charts, and studies them)*

ELIZA

*(X to L of sofa)*

Don't you 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 givin' 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

*(Xing D to L of HER)*

Good enough for what?

## ELIZA

*(Turning to HIM)*

Good enough for you. Now you know, don't ya? I've come to have lessons, I have. And to pay for them, too, make no mistake.

## HIGGINS

*(X to behind desk, puts charts down, sits)*

Well!!! What do you expect me to say?

## ELIZA

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

*(Calling across room)*

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

## ELIZA

Aooooow! I won't be called a baggage when I've offered to pay like any lady.

## PICKERING

But what is it you want?

## ELIZA

*(X D to front of sofa. To PICKERING)*

I want to be a lady in a flower shop instead of sellin' flowers at the corner of Tottenham Court Road. But then won't take me unless I can talk more genteel. He said he could teach me. Well, here I am ready to pay – not askin' any favor – and he treats me as if I was dirt. I know what lessons cost, and I'm ready to pay.