

ARMS AND THE MAN BY SHAW: IMPORTANT QUOTATIONS

ACT ONE

1. ***"I am sorry I frightened you. [She takes up the pistol and hands it to him.] Pray take it to protect yourself against me."* (Page 25)**

This moment marks a turning point in Raina's perception of the intruder. Initially, she is terrified of the enemy soldier, but after realizing his helplessness, she adopts a condescending and ironic tone. The act of handing him the pistol—knowing it is empty—demonstrates her growing confidence and superiority. Her sarcasm also hints at her disillusionment with traditional ideals of masculinity and heroism. This exchange sets the stage for her evolving understanding of war and courage.

2. ***"Chocolate! Do you stuff your pockets with sweets like a schoolboy even in the field?"* (Page 25)**

This line exposes Raina's romanticized view of war, contrasting sharply with the soldier's pragmatic survival instincts. Her disbelief at the idea of a soldier carrying chocolate instead of ammunition highlights her naive expectations of heroism. Meanwhile, the soldier's practical attitude challenges her ideals, underscoring Shaw's critique of glorified military values. The humor in this moment also adds to the play's satirical tone.

3. ***"That is a photograph of the gentleman, the patriot and hero to whom I am betrothed."* (Page 28)**

Raina presents the image of Sergius with pride, believing him to embody noble bravery. However, the soldier's reaction—recognizing him as the reckless cavalry leader who foolishly led his men into disaster—shatters her illusion. This moment foreshadows Raina's eventual realization that Sergius is not the flawless hero she imagined. The photograph serves as a symbol of her outdated romantic ideals, which will be challenged throughout the play.

4. ***"Oh, you are a very poor soldier—a chocolate-cream soldier!"* (Page 29)**

This phrase encapsulates Shaw's satire of military glory. Raina's initial insult—mocking the soldier's reliance on chocolate rather than bullets—ironically turns into an affectionate term by the play's end. The phrase symbolizes the contrast between real survival instincts and empty heroics. Instead of condemning him, Raina gradually comes to appreciate his honesty and practicality, showing her growth from blind admiration of conventional bravery to a more nuanced understanding of human nature.

5. ***"A great battle at Slivnitsa! A victory! And it was won by Sergius."* (Page 16)**

This line establishes the patriotic and romanticized perception of war in *Arms and the Man*. Catherine's enthusiastic announcement sets the tone for how the Bulgarian characters—especially Raina—view military glory. The exclamation marks and dramatic excitement reflect the idealistic nationalism that Shaw critiques throughout the play. However, as the play unfolds, the audience sees that war is not as noble and heroic as Raina believes.

6. ***"Oh, if you have a drop of Bulgarian blood in your veins, you will worship him when he comes back."* (Page 17)**

Catherine's words reveal the nationalist fervor in the household, reinforcing the belief that heroism is tied to one's identity and patriotic duty. The phrase "you will worship him" suggests that soldiers like Sergius are glorified beyond reason, elevating them to almost divine status. This foreshadows Raina's eventual realization that Sergius is not the flawless war hero she imagines but a man with weaknesses and contradictions.

8. ***"I wish our people were not so cruel. What glory in killing wretched fugitives?"* (Page 18)**

This quote marks a significant moment where Raina begins to show a more humane and critical perspective on war. Unlike Catherine and Louka, who focus on victory, Raina sympathizes with the fleeing enemy soldiers. The rhetorical question challenges the traditional glorification of war, aligning with Shaw's satirical critique of romanticized militarism. This moment of compassion foreshadows her later decision to help Bluntschli, a supposed enemy, instead of blindly following nationalist ideals.

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ACT TWO

- 13. "Madam, it was the cradle and the grave of my military reputation." (Sergius)
p.41**

In this line, Sergius reflects on the irony of his military career. His victory in battle is tainted because he achieved it in a way that contradicted the Russian military's principles. Instead of being celebrated for tactical brilliance, his success wounded the pride of his superiors. This statement exposes Sergius' cynicism and self-awareness, acknowledging the fragility of his status and the hollowness of his triumph. It also highlights the themes of honor and reputation, which are prevalent in the play, and sets the tone for Sergius' disillusionment.

- 14. "I won the battle the wrong way when our worthy Russian generals were losing it the right way." (Sergius)
p.41**

This is another example of Sergius' sardonic reflection on his military career. He acknowledges that, despite winning the battle, he did so in a manner that went against the proper strategy. This reflects the absurdity of war and the unpredictability of human outcomes. It also reveals Sergius' sense of frustration with the Russian military's standards, suggesting that the victory was more a matter of luck or circumstances than military excellence. This can be seen as a comment on the futility of war and the absurdity of military hierarchy.

- 15. "It is too late. I have only waited for the peace to send in my resignation." (Sergius)
p.42.**

Here, Sergius expresses his decision to resign from the military, driven by the disillusionment that the war has caused him. This marks a turning point in his character, as it shows his loss of faith in the military institution. Sergius' sense of defeat is palpable, and his resignation is symbolic of the broader theme of disenchantment with ideals of honor, duty, and heroism in the play. He appears weary of the false promises and contradictions inherent in the military.

- 16. "Oh yes: quite a romance. He was serving in the very battery I so unprofessionally charged. Being a brave fellow, he escaped, and the rest of them, with his heels, fled from their attentions. To escape their attentions, he had the good taste to take refuge in the chamber of some patriotic young Bulgarian lady." (Sergius) p.44**

In this moment, Sergius tells a humorous but slightly bitter story of a Swiss officer who managed to escape after a battle, hiding in the home of a Bulgarian woman. The irony in this story is that the Swiss officer, who Sergius portrays as a coward and opportunist, is celebrated in contrast to Sergius himself, who faces the harsh realities of war and heroism. This reveals the tension between perception and reality, where those who appear heroic may not be so, and those who might be seen as less honorable, like the Swiss officer, might escape with their lives. Sergius' telling of the story also highlights his cynicism, as he reflects on the absurdity of heroism in wartime.

ACT THREE

- 17. "I believe you would rather be my servant than my husband. You make more out of me. Oh, I know that soul of yours" P. 68**

It reveals the complex dynamics between Nicola and Louka and their differing attitudes toward social status and ambition. Nicola, who is content with his role as a servant, recognizes that Louka is driven by a desire to rise above her station. His observation that she would "rather be my servant than my husband" underscores Louka's fierce independence and her refusal to settle for a life of subservience, even in marriage. Nicola's remark also highlights his own pragmatism and self-awareness. He understands that Louka's ambitions extend beyond him

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and that she sees him as a stepping stone rather than an equal partner. This moment exposes the tension between their worldviews: Nicola accepts his place in the social hierarchy, while Louka actively seeks to transcend it. Shaw uses this exchange to critique the rigid class structures of society, suggesting that individuals like Louka are constrained by their circumstances but not necessarily resigned to them.

Louka's response, "Oh, I know that soul of yours," further emphasizes her determination and her belief in her own worth. She refuses to be defined by her social status and rejects Nicola's pragmatic acceptance of his role. This line also reflects Louka's growing confidence and her willingness to challenge societal norms, even if it means alienating those closest to her.

Shaw uses this conversation to explore themes of class, ambition, and individuality. Nicola represents the resigned acceptance of social hierarchy, while Louka embodies the struggle for self-determination and upward mobility. Their contrasting perspectives highlight the play's broader critique of societal expectations and the limitations they impose on individuals, particularly women and those of lower social standing.

18. "No, but it does not matter. I did not ask the reason when you cried on, and I do not ask the reason now that you cry off. I am a professional soldier: I fight when I have to, and am very glad to get out of it when I haven't to. You are only an amateur: you think fighting is an amusement." Page 74.

It encapsulates Shaw's critique of romanticized notions of war and heroism. Bluntschli's statement highlights the stark contrast between his pragmatic, professional attitude and Sergius's amateurish, idealistic view of warfare. By describing himself as a "professional soldier," Bluntschli emphasizes his detachment from the emotional and ideological aspects of war. For him, fighting is a duty to be performed when necessary, not a source of glory or amusement. This pragmatic approach underscores Shaw's anti-romantic stance, as Bluntschli's focus on survival and efficiency exposes the absurdity of glorifying violence.

Sergius, on the other hand, is described as an "amateur" who views war as an "amusement." This characterization reveals Sergius's naivety and his detachment from the grim realities of combat. His romanticized view of war as a noble and chivalrous endeavor reflects the idealistic attitudes that Shaw critiques throughout the play. By contrasting Sergius's amateurism with Bluntschli's professionalism, Shaw highlights the disparity between illusion and reality, suggesting that true strength lies in practicality and survival rather than in reckless heroism.

Bluntschli's remark, "I did not ask the reason when you cried on, and I do not ask the reason now that you cry off," further underscores his detachment from the emotional and ideological aspects of war. His matter-of-fact approach contrasts sharply with Sergius's theatrical heroism, exposing the hollowness of Sergius's ideals. This line also reflects Bluntschli's professionalism and his focus on duty, as he prioritizes efficiency and survival over glory and honor.

Shaw uses this exchange to critique the romanticized notions of war that dominate society, suggesting that such ideals are not only unrealistic but also dangerous. Bluntschli's pragmatism serves as a foil to Sergius's idealism, highlighting the absurdity of glorifying violence and exposing the hypocrisy of those who view war as a noble endeavor. Through this contrast, Shaw challenges the audience to reconsider their own perceptions of heroism and honor, suggesting that true strength lies in practicality and survival rather than in reckless bravery.

19. Nicola: "We gave it out so, sir; but it was only to give Louka protection. She has a soul above her station; and I have been no more than her confidential servant. I intend, as you know, sir, to set up a shop later on in Sofia; and I look forward to her custom and recommendation should she marry into nobility." P.80

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It exposes Nicola's pragmatic and calculating nature. Unlike Louka, who is driven by a desire to transcend her social status through personal ambition and defiance, Nicola approaches social mobility with a businesslike mindset. His admission that their engagement was "only to give Louka protection" highlights his understanding of societal expectations and his willingness to manipulate appearances to achieve his goals. Nicola's pragmatism contrasts sharply with Louka's fiery independence, underscoring the different ways in which they navigate the rigid class hierarchy.

Nicola's description of Louka as having "a soul above her station" is both a compliment and a critique. On one hand, it acknowledges Louka's ambition and refusal to accept her lowly position. On the other hand, it subtly critiques her idealism, suggesting that her aspirations may be unrealistic or impractical. Nicola's self-description as her "confidential servant" further emphasizes his subservient role in their relationship, as well as his acceptance of his place in the social hierarchy. Unlike Louka, who actively resists her station, Nicola is content to work within the system to achieve his goals.

Nicola's revelation of his plans to open a shop in Sofia and his hope for Louka's "custom and recommendation" should she marry into nobility is a masterstroke of Shaw's satire. It highlights Nicola's shrewdness and his ability to turn even Louka's ambitions to his advantage. While Louka seeks to rise above her station through marriage, Nicola sees her potential success as an opportunity to further his own business interests. This moment underscores the play's critique of class mobility and the ways in which individuals navigate and exploit societal structures for personal gain.

Shaw uses Nicola's character to critique the hypocrisy and opportunism that underpin social hierarchies. Nicola's pragmatic approach to life contrasts sharply with the romanticized ideals of characters like Sergius and Raina, exposing the absurdity of such ideals. His willingness to manipulate appearances and exploit opportunities reflects the play's broader themes of realism and disillusionment. Through Nicola, Shaw suggests that true success in a rigid class system often requires compromise, calculation, and a willingness to play the game.

20. "I lied; I know it. But I did it to save your life. He would have killed you. That was the second time I ever uttered a falsehood." (Raina) p.62

Raina's confession to Bluntschli unveils the personal conflict at the heart of her character development. This statement not only highlights her willingness to deceive in a life-or-death situation but also shows her emotional complexity. Her expression of guilt over lying contrasts with her underlying motivations—her desire to protect Bluntschli and ultimately preserve her romantic ideals. This act of lying, which Raina considers noble, is a key moment where the play interrogates the morality of deception, the distinction between necessary lies and dishonesty, and the struggle between personal integrity and the need to protect loved ones.

21. "If you are incapable of gratitude, you are incapable of any noble sentiment. Even animals are grateful. Oh, I see now exactly what you think of me!" (Raina) p.62

Raina's indignation reveals her disappointment in Bluntschli's cynical view on gratitude. The quote underscores the conflict between idealism and realism, with Raina's romantic ideals clashing with Bluntschli's pragmatic outlook. Her belief in gratitude as a fundamental human quality shows her emotional and moral depth, while Bluntschli's response reveals his detachment and perhaps the emotional toll of being a soldier. Raina's perception of herself as noble and virtuous is challenged by Bluntschli's worldview, exposing the tension between her youthful idealism and his disillusioned pragmatism.

22. RAINA: "Next time, I hope you will know the difference between a schoolgirl of seventeen and a woman of twenty-three." P.82-83

This line is a pivotal moment in the play as Raina asserts her maturity and rejects Bluntschli's previous perception of her as a naive, romantic girl. It marks a transition in Raina's character, where she moves from being a sheltered,

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idealistic young woman to someone who is more self-aware and worldly. The contrast between her actual age and her previous portrayal of herself as a youthful, innocent girl also highlights the theme of personal growth and disillusionment.