

George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*

Characters

By

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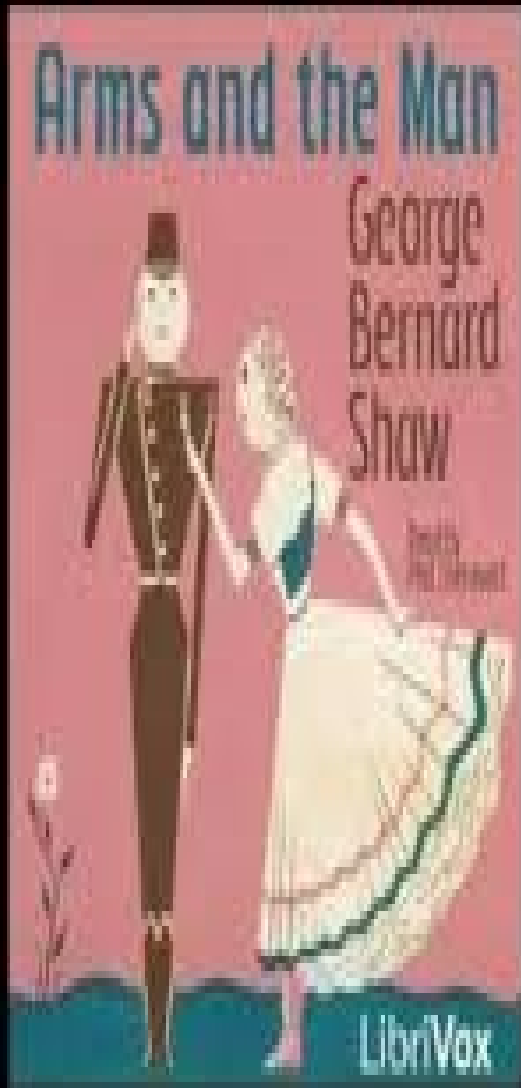
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Captain Bluntschli

Bluntschli is a realist who believes in adapting to a situation in order to survive. A professional soldier, he knows that he is only a tool and he has no illusions about war and the practical actions one must take to win battles and stay alive.





Bluntschli most famous feature is that he keeps chocolates in his cartridge belt rather than bullets. When Bluntschli takes refuge in Raina's bedroom, he starts a chain of events that changes his life and the lives of all those associated with the Petkoff family.

Bluntschli is a practical man, whose humanity and realistic vision represent the views of the playwright himself. He is the anti-heroic image of the down-to-earth soldier, lover, and later businessman.

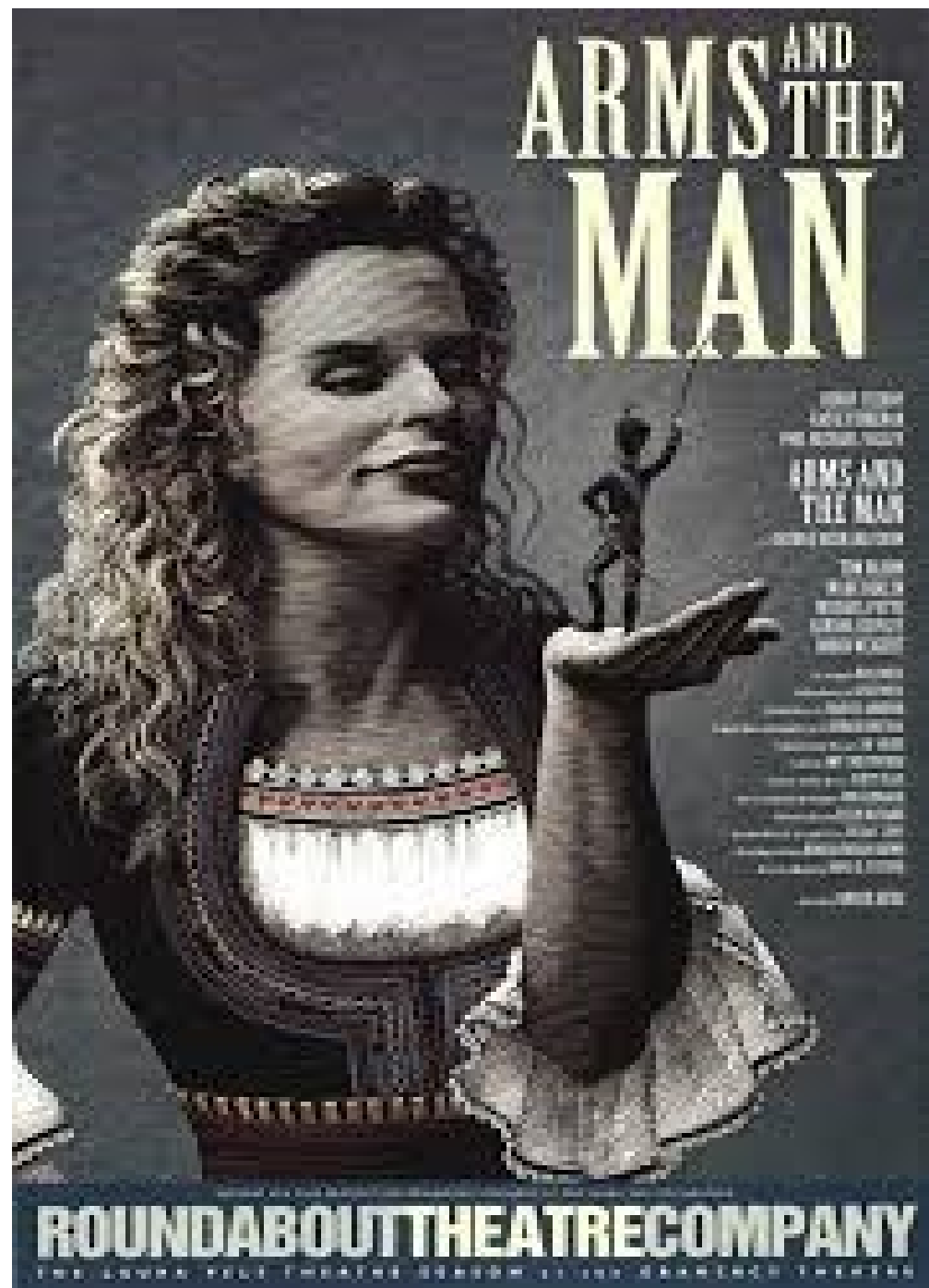


With his
experience and
objective
argument,
Bluntschli cures
Raina and Sergius
of their false views
of war and love.



Raina Petkoff

Raina learns to discard her foolish ideals about love in exchange for real love. At the beginning, Raina is romantic in her views of love and war, before Bluntschli comes through her window and begins to shatter her fairy-tale illusions with his realism.



Raina is unworldly and sometimes acts like a spoiled child to get her way. Nonetheless, Raina is intelligent. She is also honest enough with herself to realise that she is not truly in love with Sergius, but is just playing a role to meet social expectations.



Louka

An ambitious and sometimes spiteful maid who is desperate to rise above her station, Louka is attracted to Major Sergius, and he is attracted to her. However, Sergius is engaged to Raina, and he is socially superior to Louka, who is just a servant.



Louka shames Sergius about the hypocrisy of his behaviour. She tries to break up his relationship with Raina when Captain Bluntschli returns, knowing that Bluntschli is the enemy soldier who hid in Raina's bedroom.



Louka is herself
supposedly engaged to
another servant,
Nicola, who advises
her to accept her place
in life, but she rejects
his philosophy and
eventually wins her
man and a new life.

