

Iolanthe

or, The Peer and the Peri

An Entirely Original Fairy Opera in Two Acts

Written by W. S. Gilbert

Composed by Arthur Sullivan

*First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London on Saturday 25th November, 1882
under the management of Mr. Richard D'Oyly Carte*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE LORD CHANCELLOR

EARL OF MOUNTARARAT

EARL TOLLOLLER

PRIVATE WILLIS (of the Grenadier Guards)

STREPHON (an Arcadian Shepherd)

QUEEN OF THE Fairies

IOLANTHE¹ (a Fairy, Strephon's Mother)

Fairies:

CELIA

LEILA

FLETA

PHYLLIS (an Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward of Chancery)

ACT I:- An Arcadian Landscape

ACT II:- Palace Yard, Westminster

¹ The title of the opera and therefore the name of this character changed between 'Iolanthe' and 'Perola' on a number of occasions before the opening night. There are rehearsal and licensing texts bearing both titles.

ACT I

SCENE. - An Arcadian Landscape. A river runs around the back of the stage. A rustic bridge crosses the river.

Enter FAIRIES, led by LEILA, CELIA, and FLETA. They trip around the stage, singing as they dance.

No:1 - OPENING CHORUS OF FAIRIES – SOLI – (Celia & Leila.)

Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must dance and we must sing
Round about our fairy ring!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must dance and we must sing
Round about our fairy ring!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must dance and we must sing
Round about our fairy ring!

SOLO - CELIA.

We are dainty little fairies,
Ever singing, ever dancing;
We indulge in our vagaries
In a fashion most entrancing.
If you ask the special function
Of our never-ceasing motion,
We reply, without compunction,
That we haven't any notion!

Chorus.

No, we haven't any notion!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must dance and we must sing
Round about our fairy ring!

SOLO - LEILA.

If you ask us how we live,
Lovers all essentials give -
We can ride on lovers' sighs,
Warm ourselves in lovers' eyes,
Bathe ourselves in lovers' tears,
Clothe ourselves with lovers' fears,
Arm ourselves with lovers' darts,
Hide ourselves in lovers' hearts.

When you know us, you'll discover
That we almost live on lover!

Chorus.

Yes, we live on lover!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must dance and we must sing
Round about our fairy ring!
We are dainty little fairies,
Ever singing, ever dancing;
We indulge in our vagaries
In a fashion most entrancing -
Most entrancing -
Most entrancing.
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither.

(At the end of Chorus, all sigh wearily.)

Celia. Ah, it's all very well, but since our Queen banished Iolanthe, fairy revels have not been what they were!

Leila. Iolanthe was the life and soul of Fairyland. Why, she wrote all our songs and arranged all our dances! We sing her songs and we trip her measures, but we don't enjoy ourselves!

Fleta To think that five-and-twenty years have elapsed since she was banished! What could she have done to have deserved so terrible a punishment?

Leila. Something awful! She married a mortal!

Fleta Oh! Is it injudicious to marry a mortal?

Leila. Injudicious? It strikes at the root of the whole fairy system! By our laws, the fairy who marries a mortal dies!

Celia. But Iolanthe didn't die!

(Enter FAIRY QUEEN.)

Queen. No, because your Queen, who loved her with a surpassing love, commuted her sentence to penal servitude for life, on condition that she left her husband and never communicated with him again!

Leila. That sentence of penal servitude she is now working out, on her head, at the bottom of that stream!

Queen. Yes, but when I banished her, I gave her all the pleasant places of the earth to dwell in. I'm sure I never intended that she should go and live at the bottom of a stream! It makes me perfectly wretched to think of the discomfort she must have undergone!

Leila. Think of the damp! And her chest was always delicate.

Queen. And the frogs! Ugh! I never shall enjoy any peace of mind until I know why Iolanthe went to live among the frogs!

Fleta Then why not summon her and ask her?

Queen. Why? Because if I set eyes on her I should forgive her at once!

Celia. Then why not forgive her? Twenty-five years - it's a long time!

Leila. Think how we loved her!

Queen. Loved her? What was your love to mine? Why, she was invaluable to me! Who taught me to curl myself inside a buttercup? Iolanthe! Who taught me to swing upon a cobweb? Iolanthe! Who taught me to dive into a dewdrop - to nestle in a nutshell - to gambol upon gossamer? Iolanthe!

Leila. She certainly did surprising things!

Fleta Oh, give her back to us, great Queen, for your sake if not for ours!

(All kneel in supplication.)

Queen. *(irresolute)*. Oh, I should be strong, but I am weak! I should be marble, but I am clay! Her punishment has been heavier than I intended. I did not mean that she should live among the frogs - and - well, well, it shall be as you wish - it shall be as you wish!

No:2 - INVOCATION – (Queen, Iolanthe, Celia, Leila, & Chorus of Fairies.)

Iolanthe!
From thy dark exile thou art summoned!
Come to our call -
Come, come, Iolanthe!

Celia. Iolanthe!

Leila. Iolanthe!

All. Come to our call, Iolanthe!
Iolanthe, come!

(IOLANTHE rises from the water. She is clad in water-weeds. She approaches the QUEEN with head bent and arms crossed.)

Iolanthe. With humbled breast
And every hope laid low,
To thy behest,
Offended Queen, I bow!

Queen. For a dark sin against our fairy laws
We sent thee into life-long banishment;

But mercy holds her sway within our hearts -
Rise - thou art pardoned!

Iol. Pardoned!

All. Pardoned!

(Her weeds fall from her, and she appears clothed as a fairy. The QUEEN places a diamond coronet on her head, and embraces her. The others also embrace her.)

Chorus.

Welcome to our hearts again,
Iolanthe! Iolanthe!
We have shared thy bitter pain,
Iolanthe! Iolanthe!
Every heart and every hand
In our loving little band
Welcomes thee to Fairyland,
Iolanthe! Iolanthe!

Sops. Iolanthe! | Alto. Welcomes thee to Fairyland

All. Iolanthe! Iolanthe!

Queen. And now, tell me, with all the world to choose from, why on earth did you decide to live at the bottom of that stream?

Iol. To be near my son, Strephon.

Queen. Bless my heart, I didn't know you had a son.

Iol. He was born soon after I left my husband by your royal command - but he does not even know of his father's existence.

Fleta How old is he?

Iol. Twenty-four.

Leila. Twenty-four! No one, to look at you, would think you had a son of twenty-four! But that's one of the advantages of being immortal. We never grow old! Is he pretty?

Iol. He's extremely pretty, but he's inclined to be stout.

ALL *(disappointed)*. Oh!

Queen. I see no objection to stoutness, in moderation.

Celia. And what is he?

Iol. He's an Arcadian shepherd - and he loves Phyllis, a Ward in Chancery.

Celia. A mere shepherd! and he half a fairy!

Iol. He's a fairy down to the waist - but his legs are mortal.

All. Dear me!

Queen. I have no reason to suppose that I am more curious than other people, but I confess I should like to see a person who is a fairy down to the waist, but whose legs are mortal.

Iol. Nothing easier, for here he comes!

(Enter STREPHON, singing and dancing and playing on a flageolet. He does not see the Fairies, who retire up stage as he enters.)

No:3 – Entrance of Strephon. SOLO. (Strephon, & Chorus of Fairies.)

Good morrow, good mother!
Good mother, good morrow!
By some means or other,
Pray banish your sorrow!
With joy beyond telling
My bosom is swelling,
So join in a measure
Expressive of pleasure,
For I'm to be married to-day - to-day -
Yes, I'm to be married to-day!

Chorus. *(aside)*. Yes, he's to be married to-day - to-day -
Yes, he's to be married to-day!

Iol. Then the Lord Chancellor has at last given his consent to your marriage with his beautiful ward, Phyllis?

Streph. Not he, indeed. To all my tearful prayers he answers me, "A shepherd lad is no fit helpmate for a Ward of Chancery." I stood in court, and there I sang him songs of Arcadee, with flageolet accompaniment - in vain. At first he seemed amused, so did the Bar; but quickly wearying of my song and pipe, bade me get out. A servile usher then, in crumpled bands and rusty bombazine, led me, still singing, into Chancery Lane! I'll go no more; I'll marry her to-day, and brave the upshot, be it what it may! *(Sees FAIRIES.)* But who are these?

Iol. Oh, Strephon! rejoice with me, my Queen has pardoned me!

Streph. Pardoned you, mother? This is good news indeed.

Iol. And these ladies are my beloved sisters.

Streph. Your sisters! Then they are - my aunts!

Queen. A pleasant piece of news for your bride on her wedding day!

Streph. Hush! My bride knows nothing of my fairyhood. I dare not tell her, lest it frighten her. She thinks me mortal, and prefers me so.

- Leila. Your fairyhood doesn't seem to have done you much good.
- Streph. Much good! My dear aunt! it's the curse of my existence! What's the use of being half a fairy? My body can creep through a keyhole, but what's the good of that when my legs are left kicking behind? I can make myself invisible down to the waist, but that's of no use when my legs remain exposed to view! My brain is a fairy brain, but from the waist downwards I'm a gibbering idiot. My upper half is immortal, but my lower half grows older every day, and some day or other must die of old age. What's to become of my upper half when I've buried my lower half I really don't know!
- Fairies. Poor fellow!
- Queen. I see your difficulty, but with a fairy brain you should seek an intellectual sphere of action. Let me see. I've a borough or two at my disposal. Would you like to go *into Parliament?
- Iol. A fairy Member! That would be delightful!
- Streph. I'm afraid I should do no good there - you see, down to the waist, I'm a Tory of the most determined description, but my legs are a couple of confounded Radicals, and, on a division, they'd be sure to take me into the wrong lobby. You see, they're two to one, which is a strong working majority.
- Queen. Don't let that distress you; you shall be returned as a Liberal-Conservative, and your legs shall be our peculiar care.
- Streph. (*bowing*). I see your Majesty does not do things by halves.
- Queen. No, we are fairies down to the feet.

No:4 – Exit of Fairies. SOLO – (Queen & Chorus of Fairies.)

- Queen. Fare thee well, attractive stranger.
- Fairies. Fare thee well, attractive stranger.
- Queen. Shouldst thou be in doubt or danger,
Peril or perplexitee,
Call us, and we'll come to thee!
- Fairies. Aye! Call us, and we'll come to thee!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
Nobody knows why or whither;
We must now be taking wing
To another fairy ring!
Tripping hither, tripping thither,
We must now be taking wing
To another fairy ring!

(FAIRIES and QUEEN trip off, IOLANTHE, who takes an affectionate farewell of her son, going off last.)

(Enter PHYLLIS, singing and dancing, and accompanying herself on a flageolet.)

No:4a – Entrance of Phyllis. SOLI – (Phyllis & Strephon.)

Good morrow, good lover!
Good lover, good morrow!
I prithee discover,
Steal, purchase, or borrow
Some means of concealing
The care you are feeling,
And join in a measure
Expressive of pleasure,
For we're to be married to-day - to-day!
Yes, we're to be married to-day!

Both. Yes, we're to be married, etc.

Streph. *(embracing her)*. My Phyllis! And to-day we are to be made happy for ever.

Phyl. Well, we're to be married.

Streph. It's the same thing.

Phyl. I suppose it is. But oh, Strephon, I tremble at the step I'm taking! I believe it's penal servitude for life to marry a Ward of Court without the Lord Chancellor's consent! I shall be of age in two years. Don't you think you could wait two years?

Streph. Two years. Have you ever looked in the glass?

Phyl. No, never.

Streph. Here, look at that *(showing her a pocket mirror)*, and tell me if you think it rational to expect me to wait two years?

Phyl. *(looking at herself)*. No. You're quite right - it's asking too much. One must be reasonable.

Streph. Besides, who knows what will happen in two years? Why, you might fall in love with the Lord Chancellor himself by that time!

Phyl. Yes. He's a clean old gentleman.

Streph. As it is, half the House of Lords are sighing at your feet.

Phyl. The House of Lords are certainly extremely attentive.

Streph. Attentive? I should think they were! Why did five-and-twenty Liberal Peers come down to shoot over your grass-plot last autumn? It couldn't have been the sparrows. Why did five-and-twenty Conservative Peers come down to fish your pond? Don't tell me it was the gold-fish! No, no - delays are dangerous, and if we are to marry, the sooner the better.

No:5 - DUET – (Phyllis & Strephon.)

Phyl. None shall part us from each other,
 One in life and death are we:
 All in all to one another -
 I to thee and thou to me!

Both. Thou/I the tree and I /thou the flower -
 Thou/I the idol; I/thou the throng -
 Thou/I the day and I/thou the hour -
 Thou/I the singer; I/thou the song!

Streph. All in all since that fond meeting
 When, in joy, I woke to find
 Mine the heart within thee beating,
 Mine the love that heart enshrined!

Both. Thou/I the stream and I/thou the willow -
 Thou/I the sculptor; I/thou the clay -
 Thou/I the Ocean; I/thou the billow -
 Thou/I the sunrise; I/thou the day!

Phyl. Thou the stream and I the willow - Thou the sculptor; I the clay –		Streph. I the Stream and Thou the Willow
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Both. Thou/I the ocean; I/thou the billow -
 Thou/I the sunrise; I/thou the day!

(Exeunt STREPHON and PHYLLIS together.)

(March. Enter Procession of PEERS.)

No:6 – Entrance and March of the Peers (Tenors & Basses.)

All. Loudly let the trumpet bray!

Tenors. Tantantara! Tantantara!

All. Proudly bang the sounding brasses!

Basses. Tzing! Boom!

All. As upon its lordly way
 This unique procession passes,

Tenors. Tantantara!

Basses. Tzing! Boom!

Tenors. Tantantara!

Basses.	Tzing!		
Tenors.	Tantantara! Tantara! Ra! Tantara! Tantara! Ra! Tantara! Tantara! Ra! Tantara! Tantara! Ra!		Basses. Boom!Tzing!Boom!Tzing! Boom!Tzing!Boom!Tzing! Boom!Tzing!Boom!Tzing! Boom!Tzing!Boom!Tzing! Boom!
All.	Tantara! Tantara! Tzing! Boom!		
Tenors.	Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes! Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses! Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses! Tantantara! Tzing! Boom!		
Basses.	Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes! Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses! Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses!		
Tenors.	Tantantara! Tantara! Ra! Tantara! Tantara! Ra! Tantara!		Basses. Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom!
All.	Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom!		
Tenors.	We are peers of highest station, Paragons of legislation, Pillars of the British nation!		
Basses.	Tantantara! Tantara! Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom! Tantara! Tzing! Boom!		
Tenors.	We are Peers of Highest Station, Paragons of Legislation, Pillars Of the British Nation.		Basses. We are peers of Highest station, Paragons of Legislation, Pillars of the British nation, Pillars of the British nation, We are peers of Highest station, Paragons of Legislation,
All.	Tantantara! Tantara! Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom! Tantara! Tantara! Tzing! Boom!		

Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes!
Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses!
Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses!
Tantantara! Tzing! Boom!
Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes!
Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses!
Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses!

Tenors. Tantantara!

Basses. Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom!

Tenors. Tantantara!

Basses. Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom!

Tenors. Tantantara!

Basses. Tzing! Boom! Tzing! Boom!

All. Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses!
Blow the trumpets, bang the brasses!
Blow the trumpets!
Blow the trumpets!

Tenors. Tantara, ta ta ta ta ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta ta ta ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta ta ta ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta ta ta ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta, Tantara, ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta, Tantara, ta ta,
Tantara, ta ta ta ta ta ta,
Ta,

Basses. Bang, bang the
Brasses, boom!
Bang, bang the
Brasses, boom!
Tzing! Boom!

Tzing! Boom!

Tzing! Boom! Tzing!
Boom!

All. Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes!
Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses!
Bow, bow, ye lower middle classes!
Bow, bow, ye tradesmen, bow, ye masses!
Tantantara! Tantantara!
Tantantara! Tantara! Tantara! Tantara! Tantara!
Ra, ra, ra, ra! Tantara! Tantara!

(Enter the LORD CHANCELLOR, followed by his train-bearer.)

No:6a – ENTRANCE OF THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

No:7 - SONG – (Lord Chancellor and Chorus of Peers.)

The Law is the true embodiment
Of everything that's excellent.
It has no kind of fault or flaw,
And I, my Lords, embody the Law.
The constitutional guardian I
Of pretty young Wards in Chancery,
All very agreeable girls - and none
Are over the age of twenty-one.
A pleasant occupation for
A rather susceptible Chancellor!

All. A pleasant occupation for
A rather susceptible Chancellor!

But though the compliment implied
Inflates me with legitimate pride,
It nevertheless can't be denied
That it has its inconvenient side.
For I'm not so old, and not so plain,
And I'm quite prepared to marry again,
But there'd be the deuce to pay in the Lords
If I fell in love with one of my Wards!
Which rather tries my temper, for
I'm such a susceptible Chancellor!

All. Which rather tries his temper, for
He's such a susceptible Chancellor!

And every one who'd marry a Ward
Must come to me for my accord,
And in my court I sit all day,
Giving agreeable girls away,
With one for him - and one for he -
And one for you - and one for ye -
And one for thou - and one for thee -
But never, oh, never a one for me!
Which is exasperating for
A highly susceptible Chancellor!

All. Which is exasperating for
A highly susceptible Chancellor!

(Enter LORD TOLLOLLER.)

Lord T. And now, my Lords, to the business of the day.

Lord Ch. By all means. Phyllis, who is a Ward of Court, has so powerfully affected your Lordships, that you have appealed to me in a body to give her to whichever one of you she may think proper to select, and a noble Lord has just gone to her cottage to request her immediate attendance. It would be idle to deny that I, myself, have the misfortune to be singularly attracted by this young person. My regard for her is rapidly undermining my constitution. Three months ago I was a stout man. I need say no more. If I could reconcile it with my duty, I should unhesitatingly award her to myself, for I can conscientiously say that I know no man who is so well fitted to render her exceptionally happy.

Peers. Hear, hear!

Lord Ch. But such an award would be open to misconstruction, and therefore, at whatever personal inconvenience, I waive my claim.

Lord T. My Lord, I desire, on the part of this House, to express its sincere sympathy with your Lordship's most painful position.

Lord Ch. I thank your Lordships. The feelings of a Lord Chancellor who is in love with a Ward of Court are not to be envied. What is his position? Can he give his own consent to his own marriage with his own Ward? Can he marry his own Ward without his own consent? And if he marries his own Ward without his own consent, can he commit himself for contempt of his own Court? And if he commit himself for contempt of his own Court, can he appear by counsel before himself, to move for arrest of his own judgement? Ah, my Lords, it is indeed painful to have to sit upon a woolsack which is stuffed with such thorns as these!

(Enter LORD MOUNTARARAT.)

Lord M. My Lord, I have much pleasure in announcing that I have succeeded in inducing the young person to present herself at the Bar of this House.

(Enter PHYLLIS.)

No:8 – TRIO AND CHORUS OF PEERS – (Phyllis, Lord Tol and Lord Mount A.)

Phyl. My well-loved Lord and Guardian dear,
You summoned me, and I am here!

Chorus. Oh, rapture, how beautiful!
How gentle - how dutiful!

SOLO - LORD TOLLOLLER.

Of all the young ladies I know
This pretty young lady's the fairest;
Her lips have the rosiest show,
Her eyes are the richest and rarest.

Her origin's lowly, it's true,
But of birth and position I've plenty;
I've grammar and spelling for two,
And blood and behaviour for twenty!

Chorus. Ah!

Lord T. Her origin's lowly, it's true,
I've grammar and spelling for two;

Chorus. Of birth and position he's/I've plenty,
With blood and behaviour for twenty!

Lord T. Of
Birth and position I've
Plenty, with blood and be-
haviour

Chorus. With.
Blood and be-
haviour

All. Twenty!

SOLO - LORD MOUNTARARAT.

Though the views of the House have diverged
On every conceivable motion,
All questions of Party are merged
In a frenzy of love and devotion;
If you ask us distinctly to say
What Party we claim to belong to,
We reply, without doubt or delay,
The Party I'm singing this song to!

SOLO - PHYLLIS.

I'm very much pained to refuse,
But I'll stick to my pipes and my tabors;
I can spell all the words that I use,
And my grammar's as good as my neighbours'.
As for birth - I was born like the rest,
My behaviour is rustic but hearty,
And I know where to turn for the best,
When I want a particular Party!

All. Ah!

Phyl., Lord T., Lord M. Though my/her station is none of the best,
I suppose I/she was born like the rest.

All. I/she know(s) where to look for my/her hearty,
When I/she want(s) a particular party.

PHYLLIS, Lord T., and Lord M.

Though my/her station is none of the best,
I suppose I/she was born like the rest;
And I know/she knows where to look for her hearty,
When I want/she wants a particular Party!

No:9 – RECIT – (Phyllis.)

Nay, tempt me not.
To rank I'll not be bound;
In lowly cot
Alone is virtue found!

Chorus. No, no; indeed high rank will never hurt you,
The Peerage is not destitute of virtue.

No:10 – CHORUS OF PEERS & SONG – (Lord Tol.)

Spurn not the nobly born
With love affected,
Nor treat with virtuous scorn
The well-connected.
High rank involves no shame -
We boast an equal claim
With him of humble name
To be respected!
Blue blood! blue blood!
When virtuous love is sought
Thy power is naught,
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood! Ah, blue blood!

Chorus. When virtuous love is sought
Thy power is naught,
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood! Ah, blue blood!

Spare us the bitter pain
Of stern denials,
Nor with low-born disdain
Augment our trials.
Hearts just as pure and fair
May beat in Belgrave Square
As in the lowly air
Of Seven Dials!
Blue blood! blue blood!
Of what avail art thou
To serve us now?
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood! Ah, blue blood!

Chorus. Of what avail art thou
To serve us now?
Though dating from the Flood,
Blue blood! Ah, blue blood!

**No:11 – (Phyllis, Lord Tol., Lord Mount A., Strephon, Lord Chancellor, &
CHORUS OF PEERS.)**

Phyl. My Lords, it may not be.
With grief my heart is riven!
You waste your time on me,
For ah! my heart is given!

All. Given!

Phyl. Yes, given!

All. Oh, horror!!!

RECITATIVE - LORD CHANCELLOR.

And who has dared to brave our high displeasure,
And thus defy our definite command?

(Enter STREPHON.)

Streph. 'Tis I - young Strephon! mine this priceless treasure!
Against the world I claim my darling's hand!

(PHYLLIS rushes to his arms.)

A shepherd I -

All. A shepherd he!

Streph. Of Arcady-

All. Of Arcadee!

Streph. Betrothed are we!

All. Betrothed are they -

Streph. And mean to be-

All. Espoused to-day!

A shepherd I/he,
Of Arcady/dee,
A shepherd I/he,
Of Arcady/dee,
Betrothed are we/they,
Betrothed are we/they,

And mean to be
Espoused today!

ENSEMBLE.

DUET - LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER

(aside to each other).

'Neath this blow,
Worse than stab of dagger -
Though we mo-
Mentarily stagger,
In each heart
Proud are we innately -
Let's depart,
Dignified and stately!

All. Let's depart,
Dignified and stately!

Tenors. Dignified and stately!

Basses. Dignified and stately!

Tenors. Dignified and stately!

Basses. Dignified and stately!

All. Dignified and stately!

CHORUS OF Peers.

Though our hearts she's badly bruising,
In another suitor choosing,
Let's pretend it's most amusing,
Let's pretend it's most amusing.
Ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha! Ha! ha! ha!
Tan-ta-ra! Tan-ta-ra! Tan-ta-ra! Tan-ta-ra!
Ra, ra, ra, ra!
Tan-ta-ra!
Tan-ta-ra!

(Exeunt all the Peers, marching round stage with much dignity. LORD CHANCELLOR separates PHYLLIS from STREPHON and orders her off. She follows Peers. Manent LORD CHANCELLOR and STREPHON.)

Lord Ch. Now, sir, what excuse have you to offer for having disobeyed an order of the Court of Chancery?

Stroph. My Lord, I know no Courts of Chancery; I go by Nature's acts of Parliament. The bees - the breeze - the seas - the rooks - the brooks - the gales - the vales - the fountains and the mountains cry, "You love this maiden - take her, we command

you!" 'Tis writ in heaven by the bright barbèd dart that leaps forth into lurid light from each grim thundercloud. The very rain pours forth her sad and sodden sympathy! When chorused Nature bids me take my love, shall I reply, "Nay, but a certain Chancellor forbids it"? Sir, you are England's Lord High Chancellor, but are you Chancellor of birds and trees, King of the winds and Prince of thunderclouds?

Lord Ch. No. It's a nice point. I don't know that I ever met it before. But my difficulty is that at present there's no evidence before the Court that chorused Nature has interested herself in the matter.

Streph. No evidence! You have my word for it. I tell you that she bade me take my love.

Lord Ch. Ah! but, my good sir, you mustn't tell us what she told you - it's not evidence. Now an affidavit from a thunderstorm, or a few words on oath from a heavy shower, would meet with all the attention they deserve.

Streph. And have you the heart to apply the prosaic rules of evidence to a case which bubbles over with poetical emotion?

Lord Ch. Distinctly. I have always kept my duty strictly before my eyes, and it is to that fact that I owe my advancement to my present distinguished position.

No:12 – SONG – (Lord Chancellor.)

When I went to the Bar as a very young man,
(Said I to myself - said I),
I'll work on a new and original plan,
(Said I to myself - said I),
I'll never assume that a rogue or a thief
Is a gentleman worthy implicit belief,
Because his attorney has sent me a brief,

(Said I to myself - said I!).

Ere I go into court I will read my brief through
(Said I to myself - said I),
And I'll never take work I'm unable to do
(Said I to myself-said I),
My learned profession I'll never disgrace
By taking a fee with a grin on my face,
When I haven't been there to attend to the case
(Said I to myself - said I!).

I'll never throw dust in a juryman's eyes
(Said I to myself - said I),
Or hoodwink a judge who is not over-wise
(Said I to myself - said I),
Or assume that the witnesses summoned in force
In Exchequer, Queen's Bench, Common Pleas, or Divorce,

Have perjured themselves as a matter of course
(Said I to myself - said I!).

In other professions in which men engage
(Said I to myself said I),
The Army, the Navy, the Church, and the Stage
(Said I to myself - said I),
Professional licence, if carried too far,
Your chance of promotion will certainly mar -
And I fancy the rule might apply to the Bar
(Said I to myself - said I!).

(Exit LORD CHANCELLOR.)

(Enter IOLANTHE)

Streph. Oh, Phyllis, Phyllis! To be taken from you just as I was on the point of making you my own! Oh, it's too much - it's too much!

Iol. *(to STREPHON, who is in tears).* My son in tears - and on his wedding day!

Streph. My wedding day! Oh, mother, weep with me, for the Law has interposed between us, and the Lord Chancellor has separated us for ever!

Iol. The Lord Chancellor! *(Aside.)* Oh, if he did but know!

Streph. *(overhearing her).* If he did but know what?

Iol. No matter! The Lord Chancellor has no power over you. Remember you are half a fairy. You can defy him - down to the waist.

Streph. Yes, but from the waist downwards he can commit me to prison for years! Of what avail is it that my body is free, if my legs are working out seven years' penal servitude?

Iol. True. But take heart - our Queen has promised you her special protection. I'll go to her and lay your peculiar case before her.

Streph. My beloved mother! how can I repay the debt I owe you?

No:13 – FINALE – ACT 1. – (Phyllis, Iolanthe, Queen, Leila, Celia, Strephon, Lord Tol., Lord Mount A., Lord Chancellor, & Chorus of Fairies & Peers.)

(As it commences, the Peers appear at the back, advancing unseen and on tiptoe. LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER lead PHYLLIS between them, who listens in horror to what she hears.)

Streph. *(to IOLANTHE).* When darkly looms the day,
And all is dull and grey,
To chase the gloom away,
On thee I'll call!

Phyl. (*speaking aside to LORD MOUNTARARAT*). What was that?

Lord M. (*aside to PHYLLIS*). I think I heard him say,
That on a rainy day,
To while the time away,
On her he'd call!

Chorus. We think we heard him say
That on a rainy day,
To while the time away,
On her he'd call!

(PHYLLIS much agitated at her lover's supposed faithlessness.)

Iol. (*to STREPHON*). When tempests wreck thy bark,
And all is drear and dark,
If thou shouldst need an Ark,
I'll give thee one!

Phyl. (*speaking aside to LORD TOLLOLLER*). What was that?

Lord T. (*aside to PHYLLIS*). I heard the minx remark,
She'd meet him after dark,
Inside St James's Park,
And give him one!

Chorus. We heard the minx remark,
She'd meet him after dark,
Inside St James's Park,
And give him one!

Phyl.

The prospect's very bad.
My heart so sore and sad
Will never more be glad
As summer's sun.

Iol., Lord T., Stroph.

The prospect's not so bad,
My/Thy heart so sore and sad
May very soon be glad
As summer's sun;

Phyl, Iol., Lord T., Stroph., Lord M.

For when the sky is dark
And tempests wreck his/thy/my bark,
If he should/thou shouldst/I should need an Ark,
She'll/I'll give him/me/thee one!
Ah! Give him one,
Give him one!

Phyl. (*revealing herself*). Ah!

(IOLANTHE and STREPHON much confused.)

Phyl. Oh, shameless one, tremble!
Nay, do not endeavour
Thy fault to dissemble,
We part - and for ever!
I worshipped him blindly,
He worships another -

Streph. Attend to me kindly,
This lady's my mother!

Lord T. This lady's his what?

Streph. This lady's my mother!

Tenors. This lady's his what?

Basses. He says she's his mother!

(They point derisively to IOLANTHE, laughing heartily at her. She goes for protection to STREPHON.)

(Enter LORD CHANCELLOR. IOLANTHE veils herself.)

Lord Ch. What means this mirth unseemly,
That shakes the listening earth?

Lord T. The joke is good extremely,
And justifies our mirth.

Lord M. This gentleman is seen,
With a maid of seventeen,
A-taking of his dolce far niente;
And wonders he'd achieve,
For he asks us to believe
She's his mother - and he's nearly five-and-twenty!

Lord Ch. *(sternly)*. Recollect yourself, I pray,
And be careful what you say -
As the ancient Romans said, festina lente.
For I really do not see
How so young a girl could be
The mother of a man of five-and-twenty.

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Streph. My Lord, of evidence I have no dearth -
She is - has been - my mother from my birth!

BALLAD.

In babyhood
Upon her lap I lay,
With infant food

She moistened my clay;
Had she withheld
The succour she supplied,
By hunger quelled,
Your Strephon might have died!

Lord Ch. (*much moved*). Had that refreshment been denied,
Indeed our Strephon might have died!

All (*much affected*). Had that refreshment been denied,
Indeed our Strephon might have died!

Lord M. But as she's not
His mother, it appears,
Why weep these hot
Unnecessary tears?
And by what laws
Should we so joyously
Rejoice, because
Our Strephon did not die?
Oh rather let us pipe our eye
Because our Strephon did not die!

All. That's very true - let's pipe our eye
Because our Strephon did not die!

*(All weep. IOLANTHE, who has succeeded in hiding her face from LORD
CHANCELLOR, escapes unnoticed.)*

Phyl. Go, traitorous one - for ever we must part:
To one of you, my Lords, I give my heart!

All. Oh, rapture!

Streph. Hear me, Phyllis, ere you leave me.

Phyl. Not a word - you did deceive me.

All. Not a word - you did deceive her.

(Exit STREPHON.)

BALLAD - PHYLLIS.

For riches and rank I do not long -
Their pleasures are false and vain;
I gave up the love of a lordly throng
For the love of a simple swain.
But now that simple swain's untrue,
With sorrowful heart I turn to you -
A heart that's aching,
Quaking, breaking,
As sorrowful hearts are wont to do!

The riches and rank that you befall
Are the only baits you use,
So the richest and rankiest of you all
My sorrowful heart shall choose.
As none are so noble - none so rich
As this couple of lords, I'll find a niche
In my heart that's aching,
Quaking, breaking,
For one of you two-and I don't care which!

ENSEMBLE.

Phyl. (*to LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER*).

To you I give my heart so rich!

All. (*puzzled*). To which?

Phyl. I do not care!
To you I yield - it is my doom!

All. To whom?

Phyl. I'm not aware!
I'm yours for life if you but choose.

All. She's whose?

Phyl. That's your affair!
I'll be a countess, shall I not?

All. Of what?

Phyl. I do not care!

All. Lucky little lady!
Strephon's lot is shady;

Rank, it seems, is vital,
"Countess" is the title,
But of what I'm not aware!
Yes, countess, countess the title, the title,
But of what I'm not aware!
But of what I'm not aware!

(Enter STREPHON.)

Streph. Can I inactive see my fortune fade?
No, no!

Peers. Ho, ho!

Streph. No, no!

Peers. Ho, ho!

Streph. Mighty protectress, hasten to my aid!

(Enter FAIRIES, tripping, headed by CELIA, LEILA, and FLETA, and followed by QUEEN.)

Fairies. Tripping hither, tripping thither.
Nobody knows why or whither;
Why you want us we don't know,
But you've summoned us, and so
Enter all the little fairies
To their usual tripping measure!
To oblige you all our care is -
Tell us, pray, what is your pleasure!

Streph. The lady of my love has caught me talking to another -

Peers. Oh, fie! young Strephon is a rogue!

Streph. I tell her very plainly that the lady is my mother -

Peers. Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol lol lay!

Streph. She won't believe my statement, and declares we must be parted,
Because on a career of double-dealing I have started,
Then gives her hand to one of these, and leaves me broken-hearted -

Peers. Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol lol lay!

Queen. Ah, cruel ones, to separate two lovers from each other!

Fairies. Oh, fie! our Strephon's not a rogue!

Queen. You've done him an injustice, for the lady is his mother!

Fairies. Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol lol lay!

Lord Ch. That fable perhaps may serve his turn as well as any other.
(Aside.) I didn't see her face, but if they fondled one another,
And she's but seventeen - I don't believe it was his mother!
Taradiddle, taradiddle.

Fairies. Tol lol lay!

Lord T. I have often had a use
For a thorough-bred excuse
Of a sudden (which is English for "*repente*"),
But of all I ever heard
This is much the most absurd,
For she's seventeen, and he is five-and-twenty!

All. Though she is seventeen, and he is four or five-and-twenty!
 Oh, fie! our Strephon is a rogue!

Lord M. Now, listen, pray to me,
 For this paradox will be
 Carried, nobody at all *contradicente*.
 Her age, upon the date
 Of his birth, was minus eight,
 If she's seventeen, and he is five-and-twenty!

Peers and Fairies. If she is seventeen, and he is only five-and-twenty.²

All. To say she is his mother is an utter bit of folly!
 Oh, fie! our Strephon's not/young Strephon is a rogue!
 Perhaps his brain is addled, and it's very melancholy!
 Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol lol lay!
 I wouldn't say a word that could be reckoned as injurious,
 But to find a mother younger than her son is very curious,
 And that's a kind of mother that is usually spurious.
 Taradiddle, taradiddle, tol lol lay!

Lord Ch. Go away, madam;
 I should say, madam,
 You display, madam,
 Shocking taste.

 It is rude, madam,
 To intrude, madam,
 With your brood, madam,
 Brazen-faced!

 You come here, madam,
 Interfere, madam,
 With a peer, madam.
 (I am one.)

 You're aware, madam,
 What you dare, madam,
 So take care, madam,
 And begone!

² In some early editions of the libretto and vocal score this and other similar lines read as "If she is seventeen and he is **four or** five and twenty."

ENSEMBLE

Fairies. (*to QUEEN*).

Let us stay, madam;
I should say, madam,
They display, madam,
Shocking taste.

It is rude, madam,
To intrude, madam,
With your brood, madam,
Brazen-faced!

We don't fear, madam,
Any peer, madam,
Though, my dear madam,
This is one.

They will stare, madam,
When aware, madam,
What they dare, madam -
What they've done!

Peers.

Go away, madam;
I should say, madam,
You display, madam,
Shocking taste.

It is rude, madam,
To intrude, madam,
With your brood, madam,
Brazen-faced!

You come here, madam,
Interfere, madam,
With a peer, madam,
(I am one.)

You're aware, madam,
What you dare, madam,
So take care, madam,
And begone!

Queen. (*furious*). Bearded by these puny mortals!
I will launch from fairy portals
All the most terrific thunders
In my armoury of wonders!

Phyl. (*aside*). Should they launch terrific wonders,
All would then repent their blunders.
Surely these must be immortals.

(Exit PHYLLIS.)

Queen. Oh! Chancellor unwary
It's highly necessary
Your tongue to teach
Respectful speech -
Your attitude to vary!
Your badinage so airy,
Your manner arbitrary,
Are out of place
When face to face
With an influential Fairy.

Peers. (*aside*). We never knew
We were talking to
An influential Fairy!

Lord Ch. A plague on this vagary,
 I'm in a nice quandary!
 Of hasty tone
 With dames unknown
 I ought to be more chary;
 It seems that she's a fairy
 From Andersen's library,
 And I took her for
 The proprietor
 Of a Ladies' Seminary!

Peers. We took her for
 The proprietor
 Of a Ladies' Seminary!

Queen. When next your Houses do assemble,
 You may tremble!

Celia. Our wrath, when gentlemen offend us,
 Is tremendous!

Leila. They meet, who underrate our calling,
 Doom appalling!

Queen. Take down our sentence as we speak it,
 And he shall wreak it!

(Indicating STREPHON.)

Peers. Oh, spare us!

Queen. Henceforth, Strephon, cast away
 Crooks and pipes and ribbons so gay -
 Flocks and herds that bleat and low;
 Into Parliament you shall go!

All. Into Parliament he shall go!
 Backed by our/their supreme authority,
 He'll command a large majority!
 Into Parliament
 Into Parliament
 Parliament
 Parliament he shall go!
 Into Parliament he shall go!
 Into Parliament
 Into Parliament
 Parliament
 Parliament he shall go!
 Into Parliament he shall go!

Queen. In the Parliamentary hive,
Liberal or Conservative -
Whig or Tory - I don't know -
But into Parliament you shall go!

All. Into Parliament he shall go!
Backed by our/their supreme authority,
He'll command a large majority!
Into Parliament –

Peers. ³ **P A rliament,**

Fairies. **P A R Parliament,**

All. he shall go!
Into Parliament he shall go!
Into Parliament
Into Parliament
Parliament
Parliament he shall go!
Into Parliament he shall go!

Queen. (*speaking through music*). Every bill and every measure
That may gratify his pleasure,
Though your fury it arouses,
Shall be passed by both your Houses!

Peers. Oh!

Queen. You shall sit, if he sees reason,
Through the grouse and salmon season;

Peers. No!

Queen. He shall end the cherished rights
You enjoy on Friday⁴ nights:

Peers. No!

Queen. He shall prick that annual blister,
Marriage with deceased wife's sister:

Peers. Mercy!

Queen. Titles shall ennoble, then,
All the Common Councilmen:

Peers. Spare us!

³ Note that only the Chappell edition of the vocal score presents this section of the score correctly. All American editions (including Kalmus and Schirmer) use a straight repeat of the 1st verse chorus.

⁴ In Gilbert's original text, and in early performances, this was Wednesday.

Queen. Peers shall teem in Christendom,
And a Duke's exalted station
Be attainable by Com-
Petitive Examination!

Peers. Oh, horror!

Fairies & Phyl. Their horror
They can't dissemble
Nor hide the fear that makes them tremble!

ENSEMBLE.

Peers. Young Strephon is the kind of
lout
We do not care a fig about!
We cannot say
What evils may
Result in consequence.

But lordly vengeance will
pursue
All kinds of common people
who
Oppose our views,
Or boldly choose
To offer us offence.

He'd better fly at humbler
game,
Or our forbearance he must
claim,
If he'd escape
In any shape
A very painful wrench!

Your powers we dauntlessly
pooh-pooh:
A dire revenge will fall on
you.
If you besiege
Our high prestige -
(The word "prestige" is
French).

Fairies, Phyl. & Streph.

With Strephon for your foe,
no doubt,
A fearful prospect opens out,
And who shall say
What evils may
Result in consequence?

A hideous vengeance will
pursue
All noblemen who venture to

Oppose his views,
Or boldly choose
To offer him offence.

'Twill plunge them into grief
and shame;
His kind forbearance they
must claim,
If they'd escape
In any shape
A very painful wrench.

Although our threats you now
pooh-pooh,
A dire revenge will fall on
you,
Should he besiege
Your high prestige -
The word "prestige" is
French).

Peers. Our lordly style
You shall not quench
With base canaille!

Fairies. (That word is French.)

Peers. Distinction ebbs
Before a herd
Of vulgar plebs!

Fairies. (A Latin word.)

Peers. 'Twould fill with joy,
And madness stark
The οἱ πολλοί! ⁵

Fairies. (A Greek remark.)

Peers. One Latin word, one Greek remark,
And one that's French.

Fairies. Your lordly style
We'll quickly quench
With base canaille!

Peers. (That word is French.)

Fairies. Distinction ebbs
Before a herd
Of vulgar plebs!

Peers. (A Latin word.)

Fairies. 'Twill fill with joy
And madness stark
The οἱ πολλοί!

Peers. (A Greek remark.)

Fairies. One Latin word, one Greek remark,
And one that's French.

Peers. You needn't wait:
Away you fly!
Your threatened hate
We won't defy!

Fairies. We will not wait:
We go sky-high!
Our threatened hate
You won't defy!

(FAIRIES threaten PEERS with their wands. PEERS kneel as begging for mercy. PHYLLIS implores STREPHON to relent. He casts her from him, and she falls fainting into the arms of LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER.)

END OF ACT I

⁵ Pronounced 'hoi polloi' literally meaning 'the many'.

ACT II

*Scene. - Palace Yard, Westminster. Westminster Hall, L. Clock tower up, R.C. PRIVATE
WILLIS discovered on sentry, R. Moonlight.*

No:1 - SONG – (Sentry.)⁶

When all night long a chap remains
On sentry-go, to chase monotony
He exercises of his brains,
That is, assuming that he's got any.
Though never nurtured in the lap
Of luxury, yet I admonish you,
I am an intellectual chap,
And think of things that would astonish you.
I often think it's comical - Fal, lal, la!
How Nature always does contrive - Fal, lal, la!
That every boy and every gal
That's born into the world alive
Is either a little Liberal
Or else a little Conservative!
Fal, lal, la!

When in that House M.P.'s divide,
If they've a brain and cerebellum, too,
They've got to leave that brain outside,
And vote just as their leaders tell 'em to.
But then the prospect of a lot
Of dull M. P.'s in close proximity,
All thinking for themselves, is what
No man can face with equanimity.
Then let's rejoice with loud - Fal la - Fal la la!
That Nature always does contrive - Fal lal la!
That every boy and every gal
That's born into the world alive
Is either a little Liberal
Or else a little Conservative!
Fal lal la!

Enter FAIRIES, with CELIA, LEILA, and FLETA. They trip round stage.

No:2 – CHORUS OF FAIRIES AND PEERS.

Fairies. Strephon's a Member of Parliament!
 Carries every Bill he chooses.
 To his measures all assent -
 Showing that fairies have their uses.
 Whigs and Tories
 Dim their glories,

⁶ Note that American vocal scores present this as No:13 and continue to increment through Act 2.

Giving an ear to all his stories -
Lords and Commons are both in the blues!
Strephon makes them shake in their shoes!

Sops. Shake in their shoes!

Altos. Shake in their shoes!

Sops. Shake in their shoes!

Altos. Shake in their shoes!

Fairies. Strephon makes them shake in their, shake in their shoes!

Enter PEERS from Westminster Hall.

Peers. Strephon's a Member of Parliament!
Running a-muck of all abuses.
His unqualified assent
Somehow nobody now refuses.
Whigs and Tories
Dim their glories,
Giving an ear to all his stories
Carrying every Bill he may wish:
Here's a pretty kettle of fish!

Tenors. Kettle of fish!

Basses. Kettle of fish!

Tenors. Kettle of fish!

Basses. Kettle of fish!

Peers. Here's a pretty kettle, a kettle of fish!

All. Strephon's a Member of Parliament!
Carries every Bill he chooses.
To his measures all assent -
Carrying every Bill he may wish,
Carrying every bill he may wish:
Here's a pretty kettle of fish!

Enter Lord Mountararat and Lord Tolloller from Westminster Hall.

Celia. You seem annoyed.

Lord M. Annoyed! I should think so! Why, this ridiculous protégé of yours is playing the deuce with everything! To-night is the second reading of his Bill to throw the Peerage open to Competitive Examination!

Lord T. And he'll carry it, too!

- Lord M. Carry it? Of course he will! He's a Parliamentary Pickford - he carries everything!
- Leila. Yes. If you please, that's our fault!
- Lord M. The deuce it is!
- Celia. Yes; we influence the members, and compel them to vote just as he wishes them to.
- Leila. It's our system. It shortens the debates.
- Lord T. Well, but think what it all means. I don't so much mind for myself, but with a House of Peers with no grandfathers worth mentioning, the country must go to the dogs!
- Leila. I suppose it must!
- Lord M. I don't want to say a word against brains - I've a great respect for brains - I often wish I had some myself - but with a House of Peers composed exclusively of people of intellect, what's to become of the House of Commons?
- Leila. I never thought of that!
- Lord M. This comes of women interfering in politics. It so happens that if there is an institution in Great Britain which is not susceptible of any improvement at all, it is the House of Peers!

No:3 - SONG – (Lord Mountararat, with Chorus.)

When Britain really ruled the waves -
 (In good Queen Bess's time)
 The House of Peers made no pretence
 To intellectual eminence,
 Or scholarship sublime;
 Yet Britain won her proudest bays
 In good Queen Bess's glorious days!

- Chorus. Yes, Britain won her proudest bays
 In good Queen Bess's glorious days!

When Wellington thrashed Bonaparte,
 As every child can tell,
 The House of Peers, throughout the war,
 Did nothing in particular,
 And did it very well:
 Yet Britain set the world ablaze
 In good King George's glorious days!

- Chorus. Yes, Britain set the world ablaze
 In good King George's glorious days!

And while the House of Peers withholds
Its legislative hand,
And noble statesmen do not itch
To interfere with matters which
They do not understand,
As bright will shine Great Britain's rays
As in King George's glorious days!

Chorus. As bright will shine Great Britain's rays
As in King George's glorious days!

Leila. (*who has been much attracted by the PEERS during this song*). Charming persons, are they not?

Celia. Distinctly. For self-contained dignity, combined with airy condescension, give me a British Representative Peer!

Lord T. Then pray stop this protégé of yours before it's too late. Think of the mischief you're doing!

Leila. (*crying*). But we can't stop him now. (*Aside to CELIA.*) Aren't they lovely! (*Aloud.*) Oh, why did you go and defy us, you great geese!

No:4 - DUET – (Leila, Celia, with Chorus of Fairies, Lord Mountararat, Lord Tolloller, & Chorus of Peers.)

Leila. In vain to us you plead -
Don't go!
Your prayers we do not heed -
Don't go!
It's true we sigh,
But don't suppose
A tearful eye
Forgiveness shows.
Oh, no!
We're very cross indeed -
Yes, very cross,
Don't go!

Fairies. It's true we sigh,
But don't suppose
A tearful eye
Forgiveness shows.
Oh, no!
We're very cross indeed -
Yes, very cross,
Don't go!

Celia. Your disrespectful sneers -
Don't go!
Call forth indignant tears -

Don't go!
You break our laws -
You are our foe:
We cry because
We hate you so!
You know!
You very wicked Peers!
You wicked Peers!
Don't go!

Fairies. You break our laws -
You are our foe:
We cry because
We hate you so!
You know!
You very wicked Peers!
You wicked Peers!
Don't go!

Lord M. & Lord T.
Our disrespectful sneers,
Ha, ha!
Call forth indignant tears,
Ha, ha!
If that's the case, my dears -

Fairies. Don't go!

Peers. We'll go!

Exeunt LORD MOUNTARARAT, LORD TOLLOLLER, and PEERS. FAIRIES gaze wistfully after them.

Enter FAIRY QUEEN.

Queen. Oh, shame - shame upon you! Is this your fidelity to the laws you are bound to obey? Know ye not that it is death to marry a mortal?

Leila. Yes, but it's not death to wish to marry a mortal!

Fleta. If it were, you'd have to execute us all!

Queen. Oh, this is weakness! Subdue it!

Celia. We know it's weakness, but the weakness is so strong!

Leila. We are not all as tough as you are!

Queen. Tough! Do you suppose that I am insensible to the effect of manly beauty? Look at that man! (*Referring to SENTRY.*) A perfect picture! (*To SENTRY.*) Who are you, sir?

Willis. (*coming to "attention"*). Private Willis, B Company, 1st Grenadier Guards.

Queen. You're a very fine fellow, sir.

Willis. I am generally admired.

Queen. I can quite understand it. *(To FAIRIES.)* Now here is a man whose physical attributes are simply godlike. That man has a most extraordinary effect upon me. If I yielded to a natural impulse, I should fall down and worship that man. But I mortify this inclination; I wrestle with it, and it lies beneath my feet! That is how I treat my regard for that man!

No:5 - SONG – (Queen, with Chorus of Fairies.)

Oh, foolish fay,
Think you, because
His brave array
My bosom thaws,
I'd disobey
Our fairy laws?
Because I fly
In realms above,
In tendency
To fall in love,
Resemble I
The amorous dove?

(Aside.) Oh, amorous dove!
Type of Ovidius Naso!
This heart of mine
Is soft as thine,
Although I dare not say so!

Chorus. Oh, amorous dove!
Type of Ovidius Naso!

Queen. This heart of mine
Is soft as thine,
Although I dare not say so!

On fire that glows
With heat intense
I turn the hose
Of common sense,
And out it goes
At small expense!
We must maintain
Our fairy law;
That is the main
On which to draw -
In that we gain
A Captain Shaw!

(Aside.) Oh, Captain Shaw!
Type of true love kept under!
Could thy Brigade
With cold cascade
Quench my great love, I wonder!

Chorus. Oh, Captain Shaw!
Type of true love kept under!

Queen. Could thy Brigade
With cold cascade
Quench my great love,

All. I wonder!

Exeunt FAIRIES and FAIRY QUEEN, sorrowfully.

Enter PHYLLIS.

Phyl. *(crying.)* I can't think why I'm not in better spirits. I'm engaged to two noblemen at once. That ought to be enough to make any girl happy. But I'm miserable! Don't suppose it's because I care for Strephon, for I hate him! No girl could care for a man who goes about with a mother considerably younger than himself!

Enter LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER.

Lord M. Phyllis! My darling!

Lord T. Phyllis! My own!

Phyl. Don't! How dare you? Oh, but perhaps you're the two noblemen I'm engaged to?

Lord M. I am one of them.

Lord T. I am the other.

Phyl. Oh, then, my darling! *(to LORD MOUNTARARAT).* My own! *(to LORD TOLLOLLER).* Well, have you settled which it's to be?

Lord T. Not altogether. It's a difficult position. It would be hardly delicate to toss up. On the whole we would rather leave it to you.

Phyl. How can it possibly concern me? You are both Earls, and you are both rich, and you are both plain.

Lord M. So we are. At least I am.

Lord T. So am I.

Lord M. No, no!

Lord T. I am indeed. Very plain.

Lord M. Well, well - perhaps you are.

Phyl. There's really nothing to choose between you. If one of you would forgo his title, and distribute his estates among his Irish tenantry, why, then, I should then see a reason for accepting the other.

Lord M. Tolloller, are you prepared to make this sacrifice?

Lord T. No!

Lord M. Not even to oblige a lady?

Lord T. No! not even to oblige a lady.

Lord M. Then, the only question is, which of us shall give way to the other? Perhaps, on the whole, she would be happier with me. I don't know. I may be wrong.

Lord T. No. I don't know that you are. I really believe she would. But the awkward part of the thing is that if you rob me of the girl of my heart, we must fight, and one of us must die. It's a family tradition that I have sworn to respect. It's a painful position, for I have a very strong regard for you, George.

Lord M. (*much affected*). My dear Thomas!

Lord T. You are very dear to me, George. We were boys together - at least I was. If I were to survive you, my existence would be hopelessly embittered.

Lord M. Then, my dear Thomas, you must not do it. I say it again and again - if it will have this effect upon you, you must not do it. No, no. If one of us is to destroy the other, let it be me!

Lord T. No, no!

Lord M. Ah, yes! - by our boyish friendship I implore you!

Lord T. (*much moved*). Well, well, be it so. But, no - no! - I cannot consent to an act which would crush you with unavailing remorse.

Lord M. But it would not do so. I should be very sad at first-oh, who would not be?-but it would wear off. I like you very much-but not, perhaps, as much as you like me.

Lord T. George, you're a noble fellow, but that tell-tale tear betrays you. No, George; you are very fond of me, and I cannot consent to give you a week's uneasiness on my account.

Lord M. But, dear Thomas, it would not last a week! Remember, you lead the House of Lords! On your demise I shall take your place! Oh, Thomas, it would not last a day!

Phyl. (*coming down*). Now, I do hope you're not going to fight about me, because it's really not worthwhile.

Lord T. (*looking at her*). Well, I don't believe it is!

Lord M. Nor I. The sacred ties of Friendship are paramount.

No:6 - QUARTET- (Phyllis, Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat, & Sentry.)

Lord T. Though p'r'aps I may incur your blame,
 The things are few
 I would not do
 In Friendship's name!

Lord M. And I may say I think the same;
 Not even love
 Should rank above
 True Friendship's name!

Phyl. Then free me, pray; be mine the blame;
 Forget your craze
 And go your ways
 In Friendship's name!

All. Oh, many a man, in Friendship's name,
 Has yielded fortune, rank, and fame!
 But no one yet, in the world so wide,
 Has yielded up a promised bride!

Willis. Accept, O Friendship, all the same,

All. This sacrifice to thy dear name!
 Accept this sacrifice to thy dear name!

*Exeunt LORD MOUNTARARAT and LORD TOLLOLLER, lovingly, in one direction, and
PHYLLIS in another. Exit SENTRY.*

Enter LORD CHANCELLOR, very miserable.

No:7 – RECITATIVE & SONG – (Lord Chancellor.)

Love, unrequited, robs me of my rest:
Love, hopeless love, my ardent soul encumbers:
Love, nightmare-like, lies heavy on my chest,
And weaves itself into my midnight slumbers!

SONG-LORD CHANCELLOR.

When you're lying awake with a dismal headache, and repose is taboo'd by
anxiety,
I conceive you may use any language you choose to indulge in, without
impropriety;
For your brain is on fire - the bedclothes conspire of usual slumber to plunder
you:
First your counterpane goes, and uncovers your toes, and your sheet slips
demurely from under you;
Then the blanketing tickles - you feel like mixed pickles - so terribly sharp is
the pricking,
And you're hot, and you're cross, and you tumble and toss till there's nothing

'twixt you and the ticking.
Then the bedclothes all creep to the ground in a heap, and you pick 'em all up
in a tangle;
Next your pillow resigns and politely declines to remain at its usual angle!
Well, you get some repose in the form of a doze, with hot eye-balls and head
ever aching.
But your slumbering teems with such horrible dreams that you'd very much
better be waking;

For you dream you are crossing the Channel, and tossing about in a steamer
from Harwich -
Which is something between a large bathing machine and a very small second-
class carriage -
And you're giving a treat (penny ice and cold meat) to a party of friends and
relations -
They're a ravenous horde - and they all came on board at Sloane Square and
South Kensington Stations.
And bound on that journey you find your attorney (who started that morning
from Devon);
He's a bit undersized, and you don't feel surprised when he tells you he's only
eleven.
Well, you're driving like mad with this singular lad (by the by, the ship's now a
four-wheeler),
And you're playing round games, and he calls you bad names when you tell
him that "ties pay the dealer";
But this you can't stand, so you throw up your hand, and you find you're as
cold as an icicle,
In your shirt and your socks (the black silk with gold clocks), crossing
Salisbury Plain on a bicycle:

And he and the crew are on bicycles too - which they've somehow or other
invested in -
And he's telling the tars all the particulars of a company he's interested in -
It's a scheme of devices, to get at low prices all goods from cough mixtures to
cables
(Which tickled the sailors), by treating retailers as though they were all
vegetables -
You get a good spadesman to plant a small tradesman (first take off his boots
with a boot-tree),
And his legs will take root, and his fingers will shoot, and they'll blossom and
bud like a fruit-tree -
From the greengrocer tree you get grapes and green pea, cauliflower,
pineapple, and cranberries,
While the pastrycook plant cherry brandy will grant, apple puffs, and three
corners, and Banburys -
The shares are a penny, and ever so many are taken by Rothschild and Baring,
And just as a few are allotted to you, you awake with a shudder despairing -

You're a regular wreck, with a crick in your neck, and no wonder you snore,

for your head's on the floor, and you've needles and pins from your soles to your shins, and your flesh is a-creep, for your left leg's asleep, and you've cramp in your toes, and a fly on your nose, and some fluff in your lung, and a feverish tongue, and a thirst that's intense, and a general sense that you haven't been sleeping in clover;

But the darkness has passed, and it's daylight at last, and the night has been long - ditto ditto my song - and thank goodness they're both of them over!

LORD CHANCELLOR falls exhausted on a seat. Enter LORDS MOUNTARARAT and TOLLOLLER.

Lord M. I am much distressed to see your Lordship in this condition.

Lord Ch. Ah, my Lords, it is seldom that a Lord Chancellor has reason to envy the position of another, but I am free to confess that I would rather be two Earls engaged to Phyllis than any other half-dozen noblemen upon the face of the globe.

Lord T. (*without enthusiasm*). Yes. It's an enviable position when you're the only one.

Lord M. Oh yes, no doubt - most enviable. At the same time, seeing you thus, we naturally say to ourselves, "This is very sad. His Lordship is constitutionally as blithe as a bird - he trills upon the bench like a thing of song and gladness. His series of judgements in F sharp minor, given andante in six-eight time, are among the most remarkable effects ever produced in a Court of Chancery. He is, perhaps, the only living instance of a judge whose decrees have received the honour of a double encore. How can we bring ourselves to do that which will deprive the Court of Chancery of one of its most attractive features?"

Lord Ch. I feel the force of your remarks, but I am here in two capacities, and they clash, my Lords, they clash! I deeply grieve to say that in declining to entertain my last application to myself, I presumed to address myself in terms which render it impossible for me ever to apply to myself again. It was a most painful scene, my Lords - most painful!

Lord T. This is what it is to have two capacities! Let us be thankful that we are persons of no capacity whatever.

Lord M. Come, come. Remember you are a very just and kindly old gentleman, and you need have no hesitation in approaching yourself, so that you do so respectfully and with a proper show of deference.

Lord Ch. Do you really think so?

Lord M. I do.

Lord Ch. Well, I will nerve myself to another effort, and, if that fails, I resign myself to my fate!

No:8 - TRIO – (Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat, & Lord Chancellor.)

Lord M. If you go in
 You're sure to win -
 Yours will be the charming maidie:
 Be your law
 The ancient saw,
 "Faint heart never won fair lady!"

All. Never, never, never,
 Faint heart never won fair lady!
 Every journey has an end -
 When at the worst affairs will mend -
 Dark the dawn when day is nigh -
 Hustle your horse and don't say die!

Lord T. He who shies
 At such a prize
 Is not worth a maravedi,
 Be so kind
 To bear in mind -
 Faint heart never won fair lady!

All. Never, never, never,
 Faint heart never won fair lady!
 While the sun shines make your hay -
 Where a will is, there's a way -
 Beard the lion in his lair -
 None but the brave deserve the fair!

Lord Ch. I'll take heart
 And make a start -
 Though I fear the prospect's shady -
 Much I'd spend
 To gain my end -
 Faint heart never won fair lady!

All. Never, never, never,
 Faint heart never won fair lady!
 Nothing venture, nothing win -
 Blood is thick, but water's thin -
 In for a penny, in for a pound -
 It's Love that makes the world go round!

 Nothing venture, nothing win -
 Blood is thick, but water's thin -
 In for a penny, in for a pound -
 It's Love that makes the world go round!

Dance, and exeunt arm-in-arm together. Enter STREPHON, in very low spirits.

Streph. I suppose one ought to enjoy oneself in Parliament, when one leads both Parties, as I do! But I'm miserable, poor, broken-hearted fool that I am! Oh Phyllis, Phyllis!-

Enter PHYLLIS.

Phyl. Yes.

Streph. (*surprised*). Phyllis! But I suppose I should say "My Lady." I have not yet been informed which title your ladyship has pleased to select?

Phyl. I - I haven't quite decided. You see, I have no mother to advise me!

Streph. No. I have.

Phyl. Yes; a young mother.

Streph. Not very - a couple of centuries or so.

Phyl. Oh! She wears well.

Streph. She does. She's a fairy.

Phyl. I beg your pardon - a what?

Streph. Oh, I've no longer any reason to conceal the fact - she's a fairy.

Phyl. A fairy! Well, but - that would account for a good many things! Then - I suppose you're a fairy?

Streph. I'm half a fairy.

Phyl. Which half?

Streph. The upper half - down to the waistcoat.

Phyl. Dear me! (*Prodding him with her fingers.*) There is nothing to show it!

Streph. Don't do that.

Phyl. But why didn't you tell me this before?

Streph. I thought you would take a dislike to me. But as it's all off, you may as well know the truth - I'm only half a mortal!

Phyl. (*crying*). But I'd rather have half a mortal I do love, than half a dozen I don't!

Streph. Oh, I think not - go to your half-dozen.

Phyl. (*crying*). It's only two! and I hate 'em! Please forgive me!

Streph. I don't think I ought to. Besides, all sorts of difficulties will arise. You know, my grandmother looks quite as young as my mother. So do all my aunts.

Phyl. I quite understand. Whenever I see you kissing a very young lady, I shall know it's an elderly relative.

Streph. You will? Then, Phyllis, I think we shall be very happy! (*Embracing her.*)

Phyl. We won't wait long.

Streph. No. We might change our minds. We'll get married first.

Phyl. And change our minds afterwards?

Streph. That's the usual course.

No:5 – DUET – (Phyllis & Strephon.)

Streph. If we're weak enough to tarry
Ere we marry,
You and I,
Of the feeling I inspire
You may tire
By and by.
For peers with flowing coffers
Press their offers -
That is why
I am sure we should not tarry
Ere we marry,
You and I!

Phyl. If we're weak enough to tarry
Ere we marry,
You and I,
With a more attractive maiden,
Jewel-laden,
You may fly.
If by chance we should be parted,
Broken-hearted
I should die -
So I think we will not tarry
Ere we marry,
You and I.
Ah,

Both. Ah,

Phyl. If we're weak enough to
tarry
Ere we marry
You and I,
With a more attractive
maiden,
Jewel laden,
You may fly.
You and
I.

If we're weak enough to
tarry
Ere we marry
You and I,
With a more attractive
maiden,
Jewel laden,
You may fly.

Strep. If we're weak enough to
tarry
Ere we marry
You and I,
Of the feeling I inspire,

You may tire -
By – and bye,
Of the feeling I inspire,
You may tire by – and –
bye -

If we're weak enough to
tarry
Ere we marry
You and I,
Of the feeling I inspire,

You may tire -
By – and bye,

Both. So I think we will not tarry
Ere we marry,
Ere we marry,
You and I,
You and I,
You and I.

Phyl. But does your mother know you're - I mean, is she aware of our engagement?

Enter IOLANTHE.

Iol. She is; and thus she welcomes her daughter-in-law!

Kisses her.

Phyl. She kisses just like other people! But the Lord Chancellor?

Strep. I forgot him! Mother, none can resist your fairy eloquence; you will go to him and plead for us?

Iol. (*much agitated*). No, no; impossible!

Strep. But our happiness - our very lives - depend upon our obtaining his consent!

Phyl. Oh, madam, you cannot refuse to do this!

Iol. You know not what you ask! The Lord Chancellor is – my husband!

Strep. and Phyl. Your husband!

- Iol. My husband and your father! (*Addressing STREPHON, who is much moved.*)
- Phyl. Then our course is plain; on his learning that Strephon is his son, all objection to our marriage will be at once removed!
- Iol. No; he must never know! He believes me to have died childless, and, dearly as I love him, I am bound, under penalty of death, not to undeceive him. But see - he comes! Quick - my veil!

IOLANTHE veils herself. STREPHON and PHYLLIS go off on tiptoe ⁷. Enter LORD CHANCELLOR.

Lord Ch. Victory! Victory! Success has crowned my efforts, and I may consider myself engaged to Phyllis! At first I wouldn't hear of it - it was out of the question. But I took heart. I pointed out to myself that I was no stranger to myself; that, in point of fact, I had been personally acquainted with myself for some years. This had its effect. I admitted that I had watched my professional advancement with considerable interest, and I handsomely added that I yielded to no one in admiration for my private and professional virtues. This was a great point gained. I then endeavoured to work upon my feelings. Conceive my joy when I distinctly perceived a tear glistening in my own eye! Eventually, after a severe struggle with myself, I reluctantly - most reluctantly - consented.

IOLANTHE comes down veiled

No:10 – RECIT. & BALLAD – (Iolanthe).

My lord, a suppliant at your feet I kneel,
 Oh, listen to a mother's fond appeal!
 Hear me to-night! I come in urgent need -
 'Tis for my son, young Strephon, that I plead!

BALLAD - IOLANTHE.

He loves! If in the bygone years
 Thine eyes have ever shed
 Tears - bitter, unavailing tears,
 For one untimely dead -
 If, in the eventide of life,
 Sad thoughts of her arise,
 Then let the memory of thy wife
 Plead for my boy - he dies!

He dies! If fondly laid aside
 In some old cabinet,
 Memorials of thy long-dead bride
 Lie, dearly treasured yet,
 Then let her hallowed bridal dress -
 Her little dainty gloves -

⁷ In some productions Phyllis and Strephon do not leave the stage at this point but remain observing the action from the shadows down stage.

Her withered flowers - her faded tress -
Plead for my boy - he loves!

The LORD CHANCELLOR is moved by this appeal. After a pause.

No:11 – RECITATIVE – (Iolanthe, Queen, Lord Chancellor & Fairies.)

Lord Ch. It may not be - for so the fates decide!
 Learn thou that Phyllis is my promised bride.

Iol. (*in horror*) Thy bride! No! no!

Lord Ch. It shall be so!
 Those who would separate us woe betide!

Iol. My doom thy lips have spoken -
 I plead in vain!

Fairies. (*without*). Forbear! forbear!

Iol. A vow already broken
 I break again!

Fairies. (*without*). Forbear! forbear!

Iol. For him - for her - for thee
 I yield my life.
 Behold - it may not be!
 I am thy wife.

Fairies. (*without*). Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
 Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
 Willaloo!
 Willaloo!

Lord Ch. (*recognizing her*). Iolanthe! thou livest?

Iol. Aye!
 I live! Now let me die!

Enter FAIRY QUEEN and FAIRIES. IOLANTHE kneels to her.

Queen. Once again thy vows are broken:
 Thou thyself thy doom hast spoken!

Fairies. Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
 Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
 Willahalah! Willaloo!
 Willahalah! Willaloo!

Queen. Bow thy head to Destiny:
 Death thy doom, and thou shalt die!

Fairies. Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
Aiaiah! Aiaiah!
Willahalah! Willaloo!
Willahalah! Willaloo!

PEERS and SENTRY enter. The QUEEN raises her spear.

Leila. Hold! If Iolanthe must die, so must we all; for, as she has sinned, so have we!

Queen. What?

Celia. We are all fairy duchesses, marchionesses, countesses, viscountesses, and baronesses.

Lord M. It's our fault. They couldn't help themselves.

Queen. It seems they have helped themselves, and pretty freely, too! *(After a pause.)* You have all incurred death; but I can't slaughter the whole company! And yet *(unfolding a scroll)* the law is clear - every fairy must die who marries a mortal!

Lord Ch. Allow me, as an old Equity draftsman, to make a suggestion. The subtleties of the legal mind are equal to the emergency. The thing is really quite simple - the insertion of a single word will do it. Let it stand that every fairy shall die who *doesn't*⁸ marry a mortal, and there you are, out of your difficulty at once!

Queen. We like your humour. Very well! *(Altering the MS. in pencil.)* Private Willis!

Willis. *(coming forward)*. Ma'am!

Queen. To save my life, it is necessary that I marry at once. How should you like to be a fairy guardsman?

Willis. Well, ma'am, I don't think much of the British soldier who wouldn't inconvenience himself to save a female in distress.

Queen. You are a brave fellow. You're a fairy from this moment. *(Wings spring from SENTRY'S shoulders.)* And you, my Lords, how say you, will you join our ranks?

FAIRIES kneel to PEERS and implore them to do so.

PHYLLIS and STREPHON enter.

Lord M. *(to LORD TOLLOLLER)*. Well, now that the Peers are to be recruited entirely from persons of intelligence, I really don't see what use we are, down here, do you, Tolloller?

Lord T. None whatever.

Queen. Good! *(Wings spring from shoulders of PEERS.)* Then away we go to Fairyland.

⁸ The Lord Chancellor's "doesn't" is often shortened to "don't".

**No:12 – FINALE – ACT 1. – (Phyllis, Iolanthe, Queen, Leila, Celia, Lord
Tolloller, Lord Mountararat, Lord Chancellor, & Chorus of Fairies &
Peers.)**

- Phyl. Soon as we may,
 Off and away!
 We'll commence our journey airy -
 Happy are we -
 As you can see,
 Every one is now a fairy!
- Phyl., Queen, Iol. Every, every, every,
 Every one is now a fairy!
 Though as a general rule we know
 Two strings go to every bow,
 Make up your minds that grief 'twill bring
 If you've two beaux to every string.
- All. Though as a general rule we know
 Two strings go to every bow,
 Make up your minds that grief 'twill bring
 If you've two beaux to every string.
- Lord Ch. Up in the sky,
 Ever so high,
 Pleasures come in endless series;
 We will arrange
 Happy exchange -
 House of Peers for House of Peris!
- Lord Ch., Lord M., Lord T. Peris, Peris, Peris,
 House of Peers for House of Peris!
 Up in the air, sky-high, sky-high,
 Free from Wards in Chancery,
 I/He will be surely happier, for
 I'm/He's such a susceptible Chancellor.
- All. Up in the air, sky-high, sky-high,
 Free from Wards in Chancery,
 I/He will be surely happier, for
 I'm/He's such a susceptible Chancellor.

CURTAIN