

## Audition Piece for Strephon and Phyllis

(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.