

*Iolanthe*

**ALL.** A pleasant, etc.

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, etc.

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, etc.

(*Enter LORD TOLLOLLER.*)

**LORD TOLL.** 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!) But such an award would be open to misconstruction, and therefore, at whatever personal inconvenience, I waive my claim.

**LORD TOLL.** 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

*Iolanthe*

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 woosack which is stuffed with such thorns as these!

*(Enter LORD MOUNTARARAT.)*

**LORD MOUNT.** 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.)*

**RECITATIVE – PHYLLIS.**

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

**CHORUS OF PEERS.**

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!  
Her origin's lowly, it's true,  
I've grammar and spelling for two;

**CHORUS.**

Of birth and position he's plenty,  
With blood and behaviour for 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,