

*They fight. The Fairies, half concealed behind portions of the set, watch the combat with great interest.*

Darine. What are they doing?

Selene. It's some game of skill.  
It's very pretty.

Darine. Very.

*Knights pause to take breath.*

Oh, they've stopped!

Phyllon. Come, come - on guard!

Zayda. Now they begin again!

*They fight. The Fairies gradually move closer surrounding the knights.*

Ethais. Hold, we are overlooked!

*ETHAIS, who has turned for a moment in saying this, is severely wounded in the right arm.*

Selene. You may proceed.  
We like it much!

Darine. You do it very well.  
Begin again!

Ethais. Black curses on that thrust!  
I am disabled! Ladies, bind my wound -  
And, if it please you still to see us fight,  
We'll fight for those bright eyes and cherry lips  
Till one or both of us shall bite the dust!

Phyllon. *(aside to Ethais).*  
Hold! Call a truce till we return to earth -  
Here are bright eyes enough for both of us!

Ethais. I don't know that! Well, there, till we return -  
*(shaking hands).*  
But, once on earth again, we will take up  
Our argument where it was broken off,  
And let thy devils whirl me where they may  
We'll reach conclusion and corollary!

*During this the Fairies show that they have been very strongly influenced by the two knights.*

Darine. (*gazing at PHYLLON*).

Oh, fairyhood!  
How wonderfully like our Phyllon!

Selene. (*gazing in rapture at ETHAIS*). Yes!

And see - how strangely like our Ethais!  
(*sighing*). Thou hast a gallant carriage, gentle knight!

Ethais. It's little wonder that I'm like myself!  
Why I am he!

Selene. (*sighing*). No, not our Ethais!

Ethais. In truth I am the Ethais of all  
Who are as gentle and as fair as thou!

Selene. (*tenderly*).

That's bravely said! Thou hast a silver tongue!  
Why, what can gods be like if these be men?

***During this DARINE, ZAYDA, LOCRINE, and other Fairies show by their manner,  
that they take a tender interest in ETHAIS and PHYLLON.***

Selene. Say, dost thou come from earth or heaven?

Ethais. (*gallantly placing his arm round SELENE and DARINE*).

I think I've come from earth *to* heaven!

Selene. (*delighted*).

Oh, didst thou hear?

He comes from earth *to* heaven! No, Ethais,  
We are but fairies: this, our native home -  
Our fairyland - rests on a cloud which floats  
Hither and thither as the breezes will.  
We see the world; yet, saving that it is  
A very wicked world, we know it not.  
But on the lands o'er which our island hangs  
We shed fair gifts of plenty and goo-will,  
Drop tears of love upon the thirsty earth  
And shower fair water on the growing grain.  
This is our mission.

Phyllon.

'Tis a goodly one!

But tell us now - why have you summoned us?

Selene. Because we seek to teach you solemn truths  
That now ye wot not of, poor gentlemen!

(*tenderly*). Poor gentlemen! Poor wayward gentlemen!