

The Treaty

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CLEAN VERSION

(revisions are not marked)

NB.

Page numbers are different to previous draft

Scene numbers are the same

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OMITTED **CAST LIST**

Prologue

A large table denotes the Downing Street Cabinet Room; above it hangs a large map of the world; the British Empire, covering two thirds of it, is coloured in red. Some simple furnishings denote the Irish HQ at Hans Place. A separate area consists of a small, plain desk with a typewriter. This is Erskine Childers's office: whenever possible, he remains here, watching the action and typing. The staging is fluid; other locations are conjured up as necessary.

Glasnevin Cemetery - August 28, 1922

Rain.

Kathleen McKenna enters, opening a black umbrella. She and Tom Jones will be our guides.

McKenna

August. 1922. Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.

She stands in the rain, watching the (offstage) burial ceremony. The drone of the rite drifts in.

McKenna

So many funerals.

She looks around her at the size of the crowd.

McKenna

Each one bigger than the last... If this keeps going, some day all Ireland will be at one big funeral.

(wry)

Or we'll all be dead.

She returns to the rite.

Tom Jones enters, and deftly makes his way to her side.

Jones

Miss McKenna.

McKenna

Mr Jones. Thank you for coming.

Jones

I bring the condolences of the British Government.

McKenna

You are here on business, then.

Jones

Ah.

(he considers)

No, Miss McKenna. This is personal.

They listen to the rite.

Jones

Not quite a year since we first met. Who could have known it would turn out like this?

McKenna

Oh, we knew, Mr Jones. We knew it in our bones.

Priest (off)

In nomine Patris et Filii...

McKenna blesses herself. Jones bows slightly.

Priest (off)

et Spiritus Sancti...

Jones leaves her, turning to the audience as he walks.

Jones

A year earlier.

Act One

One

1 **Downing Street - June 15, 1921**

He arrives at the Cabinet table, now carrying a sheaf of documents. He places one at each place setting.

Jones

June, 1921. Downing Street, London.

Churchill, Birkenhead, Macready enter.

Jones

India is on the verge of revolt. In Iraq we've just defeated a revolt. In Egypt, we are staving off revolt. But most of the Cabinet's time is taken up with -

Lloyd George

(entering)

Bloody Ireland!

Birkenhead

Not another outrage?

Churchill

Another constable shot in cold blood.

Birkenhead

But that must be -

Macready

Five hundred and one members of our forces since January last year.

Lloyd George

I swear, General, if this new policy doesn't have that band of murderers by the throat within weeks, I will take every man we have out of Mesopotamia and I will drop them on Ireland and lay waste to it.

Macready

(tapping the paper)

It's all there, Prime Minister. As you requested.

Birkenhead

General. This new policy... "Coercion"... You suggest we try the rebel leaders for treason.

Macready

Yes.

Birkenhead

Which ones?

Macready

Well, de Valera, obviously.

Churchill

Never mind de Valera - it's Collins runs the murder gang.

Birkenhead

They can't catch Collins.

Birkenhead

What about Childers?

Lloyd George

Can we really hang the author of The Riddle of the Sands?

Birkenhead

Such a dreary novel. We should have hanged him for that.

Churchill

Why stop at the leaders - every Sinn Féin MP who takes his seat in this "Dáil" - every one of them should hang.

Lloyd George

Isn't that a little bloodthirsty, Winston?

Birkenhead

There is some precedent that suggests that executing Irish rebels may not be the most effective strategy for winning over the Irish public.

Lloyd George

General, some of the other measures proposed here could appear somewhat... indiscriminate... We don't want another "Croke Park" on the front page of the New York Times.

Maccready

That was unfortunate. But I must be clear. This policy means that dreadful things must happen. When you hear of our shooting a hundred men a week, will you stay the course?

Lloyd George

Thank you, General. And Northern Ireland?

Maccready

Some hiccups, but partition seems to be having the desired effect. ***

Lloyd George

(dismissing them)

Gentlemen.

The meeting disperses. Lloyd George remains at the table as Jones gathers up the papers.

Lloyd George

Well, TJ?

Jones looks at him skeptically.

Jones

"Coercion", PM?

Lloyd George

They have no uniforms, no rules of engagement, no Hague Convention. They shoot men in their beds, in front of their wives. They're not an army, TJ - they're murderers.

Jones

They're Celts, Prime Minister. They've been at it for seven hundred years. They'll happily keep going for seven hundred more.

Beat.

Jones leaves. Lloyd George looks after him, thinking, then leaves.

2

Hans Place - October 8

McKenna leads Griffith, Barton and Childers in.

McKenna

Four months later - October, 1921. Hans Place, Knightsbridge. A truce has been agreed; the Irish have been invited to London for peace talks.

They admire their surroundings.

McKenna

Well, Mr Griffith, Mr Barton, Mr Childers. I hope you find the accommodation appropriate to plenipotentiaries of Dáil Éireann.

Griffith

Thank you, Miss McKenna. I'm sure it will be more than adequate.

Childers

And where is Mr Collins?

A man enters and observes them, unseen, from the shadows.

Griffith

~~Eh...~~ Mr Collins thought it better he had his own... team... around him, Erskine.

Childers

(with derision)

His "brotherhood", no doubt.

Griffith

His security needs are somewhat more acute than ours.

McKenna

Mr Collins is lodging nearby. I'll show you to your rooms, gentlemen.

They leave.

3

Outside

Michael Collins enters. The man in the shadows steps out and places a gun against his back. Collins freezes. The man leans in towards Collins's ear.

Dalton

(mock Cork accent)

Bang bang.

Collins whirls and pushes him.

Collins

You little fucker, Emmet. You'll pay for that, boy.

Collins coils.

Collins

Let's have a bit of ear.

He pounces.

Dalton

Careful! It's loaded.

Collins

So it should be.

They wrestle, wildly. Dalton bests him.

Dalton

Jesus, Mick, you're out of shape.

Collins looks around with disdain.

Collins

I'm out of my fucking element, is what I am.

They get their breath back.

Dalton

I don't like it, Mick.

Collins

Did I have any choice?

Dalton

There's a bay window in your room, for fuck's sake. Multiple access points. They have men everywhere.

Collins

If the Brits wanted me dead, they'd have shot me by now. It's not their men I'm worried about.

Dalton

The Brotherhood is with you, Mick. We have control of the Army.

Collins

For now. We're here to compromise, Emmet. The Army's not ready for compromise.

Dalton

The men will follow you anywhere.

Collins

Just keep a close eye on Childers, will you?

Dalton

(laughing)

What kind of a threat is Childers?

Collins

He has the zeal of the convert. There's no greater threat than that.

Dalton disappears back into the shadows.

4

Hans Place/Downing Street - October 11, am

Collins arrives at Hans Place.

McKenna

Good morning, Mr Collins.

Collins

Kathy, for Christ's sake, it's Mick! There's enough about this place already would put a poker up a man's arse.

Griffith, Barton and Childers enter and greet Collins.

Griffith

Gentlemen. [Before we meet the British,] I'd like to review our instructions from the Cabinet one last time.

Griffith produces a letter, and Éamon de Valera appears.

Griffith

(reading)

A chairde dhil. Your objective...

De Valera

... is to secure recognition of the Irish Republic by the government of the United Kingdom, and the support of that government for the reversal of partition and the unity of Ireland.

You have been appointed plenipotentiaries of Dáil Éireann, with full decision-making authority. But you will refer back to the Cabinet in Dublin before making any decisions.

All communications with Dublin are to be by courier only.

Under no circumstance is the telephone to be used.

You will accept no hospitality.

I advise that you start with the smaller issues. Avoid the issues of the Republic and Ulster for now. I am working on a proposal that I intend will resolve these. An entirely new device in international relations. I will send on details presently.

De Valera disappears. Griffith puts away the letter. The delegation falls into discussion.

Churchill and Birkenhead have meanwhile entered; Birkenhead peers out the window of the Cabinet room.

Birkenhead

Did you come in the front door, Winston?

Churchill

The crowds! I had to come round the back.

Birkenhead

What in God's name are they doing on their knees?

Churchill

I think they're praying.

Birkenhead

Well thank God for Henry the Eighth.

Lloyd George enters, followed by Tom Jones.

Birkenhead

Prime Minister - a splendid place to meet a group of anarchic gunmen.

Lloyd George

The Irish question has haunted us for 700 years, gentlemen. It is the key to all politics: India; Iraq; a trade deal with the United States; even the future of our own coalition. Let us not be squeamish about solving it.

Churchill

To allow the Irish a "republic" would give succour to every insurrectionary rabble across the Empire. It would fatally undermine the Crown. Any government that facilitated it would be smashed to atoms.

If there must be compromise, it must be on something else.

Lloyd George

Ulster.

Jones

(to audience)

Ah yes. Ulster.

Birkenhead

We are committed to Ulster.

Jones

(to audience)

Perhaps I should clarify. Since the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, Ireland has been partitioned. Sir James Craig is the first Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

Birkenhead

We have pledged to Craig that we will not coerce Ulster into a united Ireland. My party will not tolerate any weakening of that pledge.

Lloyd George

But a Southern Ireland that abandons its claim to the status of "republic" - that gives its allegiance to the Crown - is one that poses no threat to Northern Ireland.

Churchill

(following his logic)

So if we can persuade the Irish to give allegiance to the Crown...

Lloyd George

... we can persuade the Unionists to reunite with the South.

Birkenhead

And should the Irish refuse to give allegiance to the Crown?

Lloyd George

The alternative is clear.

Churchill

War.

Lloyd George

TJ, remind us who the Irish have sent to represent them, would you?

Griffith

(in parallel)

Mr Childers - would you brief us on the British delegates?

Jones

Surprisingly, the Irish are being led not by their so-called president, Éamon de Valera, but by the founder of Sinn Féin, Arthur Griffith. His party was originally a non-violent movement, but we mistakenly blamed it for the 1916 "Rising" - so the gunmen all joined it.

Childers

The British delegation is being led by the Prime Minister himself - the "Welsh Wizard", David Lloyd George. I asked our London representative to seek advice on negotiating with Lloyd George. "Better to write to him," he was told: "After all, a letter cannot be mesmerised."

Jones

Second in command for the Irish is their, em, "Finance Minister", Michael Collins -

Birkenhead

(astonished)

They sent Collins?

Churchill

At least now we'll know what he looks like.

Jones

Not a subtle man, by reputation. We think he is the real force in the delegation.

Childers

Lloyd George's fellow Liberal on the British delegation is Winston Churchill. He defected from the Tories about 15 years ago - as a result, he's not really trusted by anyone.

Collins

Nobody trusts a defector.

Jones

The economic expert on the Irish delegation is Robert Barton. Anglo-Irish. A veteran - Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He was stationed in Dublin during their "Rising" in '16, when some of the leaders were imprisoned in his barracks, and he came under their influence - and joined them.

Childers

The lawyer on the British delegation is Frederick Smith - Lord Birkenhead. He leads the Unionist wing of the Conservative Party - so he is key to keeping the Unionists on board.

Jones

And lastly, the secretary to the Irish delegation... a certain Erskine Childers. His mother was Irish - he is a first cousin of Robert Barton. Had a distinguished record of service [in the Army and Navy], but then we sent him to Dublin in 1917, and he came under the influence of the nationalists...

Birkenhead

This seems to be rather a pattern.

Jones

He is not, however, universally trusted in Ireland.

Birkenhead

(eyeing Churchill)
Turncoats rarely are.

Griffith

And your opposite man, Childers - the secretary to the British?

Childers

A civil servant, Thomas Jones. Welsh, I believe. Close to Lloyd George. I'm afraid we don't know much else about him.

Griffith

Well, gentlemen, we shall be greeting them / very shortly...

Lloyd George

We expect them any moment, / gentlemen...

Collins

Wasn't Birkenhead the counsel who had Casement hanged?

Childers

He led the prosecution, yes.

Collins

I'll be damned before I'll shake that hand.

The Irish delegation erupts.

Birkenhead

Well I'll be damned if I'll shake hands in this room with any traitor or murderer.

The British delegation erupts.

Jones

Prime Minister?
(in Welsh)

Mae gen i syniad. Rhowch eich cydweithwyr y tu ôl i'r bwrdd cyn i'r Gwyddelod ddod i mewn, ac arwain y Gwyddelod yn uniongyrchol i'w lleoedd - ni fydd cyfle i ysgwyd llaw. (I have an idea. Place your colleagues behind the table before the Irish enter, [and usher the Irish directly to their places] - there will be no opportunity to shake hands.)

Lloyd George

Mae hynny'n cael ei ysbrydoli, *TJ*. (*That is inspired.*)

Lloyd George directs Churchill and Birkenhead to their places on one side of the table, as Jones brings the Irish in.

Lloyd George

(*shaking his hand*)

Mr Griffith! You are welcome to Downing Street.

He ushers Griffith along the opposite side of the table. Griffith goes to shake hands across it but realises he can't.

Lloyd George

Gentlemen.

He ushers Collins, Barton and Childers along after Griffith.

The two delegations face off across the table.

Lloyd George

(*motioning to sit*)

Please.

He chooses his words very carefully.

Lloyd George

We are here to discuss how the... *association...* of Ireland with the... *community of nations* known as the British Empire... may best be... *reconciled...* with Irish... *national aspirations...*

He pauses to check that no offence has yet been taken.

Lloyd George

Let us begin.

Act One

Two

5 **Downing Street - October 11-16 (early plenaries)**

McKenna

And so it starts.

The men fall into impassioned dumb show of the negotiations. A whirl of movement and documents - memos, newspapers, scrawled notes.

Jones

The first country in the British Empire to negotiate for its independence.

McKenna

The first country to fight the British Empire to a stalemate.

Jones

Hours...

McKenna

... days...

Jones

... weeks...

McKenna

... months to come, of talking...

Jones

... positioning...

McKenna

... arguing...

Jones

... jousting...

McKenna

... lecturing the opposing side...

Jones

... lecturing one's own side...

McKenna

... statements to the press...

Jones

... leaks...

McKenna

... rumours.

Jones

They have plenary conferences at Downing Street in the mornings, then -

Lloyd George

Let me accompany you to lunch, Mr Griffith.

Griffith

I'm afraid we are under instructions to accept no hospitality. We will lunch at our lodgings.

McKenna

They come back to Hans Place to eat...

Jones

Then back in for an afternoon sessions...

McKenna

And then delegation meetings...

Jones

... and Cabinet...

McKenna

... and memos to be written...

Jones

... and Red Boxes...

McKenna

... and correspondence, into the small hours...

Jones

The PM has laid out an agenda, but...

McKenna

We avoid the big issues, for now.

Jones

... the Irish won't engage on the big issues.

Lloyd George

The question of allegiance, Mr Griffith. The Oath to the King. Ireland's relationship to the British Empire.

Griffith

Of critical importance. But first we'd like to look at some of the detail of your proposals on tariffs, here (*picking up a document*) on page, eh, 6...

Churchill

(*later*)

But what will be the position of Ireland within the British Empire?

Collins

A crucial issue, but we need some certainty first on the issue of pensions. If you look at page, eh, 12...

Jones

It's almost as if they are delaying, for some reason.

Collins

(*aside, with the Irish only*)

We're in there talking shite like fucking eejits.

Griffith

Is there nothing yet from Dublin?

Collins

Where the fuck are the proposals from Dev?

6

Hans Place - October 17

De Valera reappears.

De Valera

A chairde dhil.

He has an acetate projector which beams onto the wall.

McKenna

Finally, the full detail of President de Valera's proposals arrives.

McKenna hands a letter to Griffith, who opens it and reads.

De Valera

This is the British Empire.

He draws a large circle.

De Valera

And, from the British perspective, this is Ireland.

He draws a small circle at the centre of the large one.

De Valera

Within the Empire. At the heart of the Empire. In a union with Britain herself. But at Easter 1916, we proclaimed a Republic - a Republic free of allegiance to a foreign crown - a Republic we have sworn to uphold. And since then, in fact, this is Ireland.

He draws a small circle apart from the large circle.

De Valera

Entirely independent of the Empire... The problem is that this (pointing at the second small circle) is intolerable to the British... and this (pointing at the first small circle) is intolerable to us.

So the question is, is there a political form that can move this (*the first*) closer to this (*the second*)?

Is there a way that this (*the second*) can be associated with this (*the large circle*), without violating the integrity of either?

He pauses.

De Valera

This will be a new form of association, Gentlemen. Something not yet tried amongst the community of nations...

He draws a third small circle, touching the large one.

De Valera

So this is your task. To move the British from here (*the first*) to here (*the third*). If you can achieve that, I believe we can succeed in moving our people from here (*the second*) to meet the British there (*the third*).

Griffith

So that, gentlemen, is President de Valera's proposal.

He looks at the diagram.

Beat.

Barton

Has he a term for this new form of association?

Griffith

(checking the letter)

He calls it "External Association".

Collins

It would be difficult to get that into a ballad.

Childers

So we are to sacrifice the name of the Republic?

Collins

Who gives a fuck about the name, Erskine?

Griffith

A rose by any other name would smell so sweet.

Barton

Men died for the Republic.

Collins

Don't tell me what my men died for, Bob.

Barton

They didn't die for a Venn diagram.

Griffith

Gentlemen, some compromise was inevitable. This has merit.

Collins

It would be good if we could explain it without a blackboard.

Griffith

We shall have to choose our moment carefully.

Brugha has appeared with de Valera.

Brugha

Is the Republic not enough for you, Chief?

De Valera

We were never Republican doctrinaires, Cathal.

Brugha

We took an oath to the Republic.

De Valera

And this respects that oath.

Brugha

It comes almighty close to entering the Empire.

De Valera

But it doesn't enter it. That's the point.

Brugha

You should have gone with them, Chief.

De Valera

There will be time enough for that, Cathal.

7

Downing Street / Hans Place - October 17-23

McKenna

The negotiations continue.

Jones

October 21st.

Childers

Ireland is an island. If you deny her the right to defend her sea border, with a navy, you deny her existence as a nation.

Churchill

Mr Childers, I think from your experience with the British Navy, you know well we simply must have free use of the Irish coasts for Imperial defence.

Childers

As I know well from experience, Mr Churchill, "imperial defence" is too often a euphemism for colonial expropriation.

General outburst.

McKenna

October 24th.

Barton

The right to impose tariffs on trade is a key element of ~~fiscal~~ sovereignty.

Birkenhead

You export nine tenths of your produce to us. Why would you want to place a customs barrier in the Irish Sea?

Barton

When we have taken back control of our trade policy, we will be free to trade globally - we will no longer be so reliant on you.

Birkenhead

You can't boost your trade by withdrawing from your largest market - that's economically illiterate.

General outburst.

McKenna

While they talk all day, I type up the minutes and memos of the previous day, for relaying back to Dublin, by hand.

She hands Griffith some memos, which he quickly reviews, initials, and returns.

McKenna

Mr Childers does his own typing, late into the night...

Childers hands her an envelope.

McKenna

... and in the mornings he hands me sealed envelopes addressed to President de Valera.

Collins

[Have I ever told you how angelic you look after mass of a morning, Kathy?

McKenna

By God but the effect of mass doesn't be long wearing off you, Mick.]

Collins

The usual post this morning?

McKenna

Sealed, to the President.

Collins

And if it ever happens to not be sealed, you'll let me know?

McKenna

You'll get me into trouble, Mick.

Collins

All in the name of the Republic, Kathleen, a stór.

McKenna

What are you so afraid of, Mick?

Collins

All I'm afraid of is the things I don't know.

Jones

But for all the industry, progress is imperceptible.

Lloyd George

(with Jones)

This isn't working, TJ.

Collins

(with Griffith)

We're going round in fucking circles, Arthur.

Jones

It does seem to be rather stuck, PM.

Griffith

What can we do about it?

Lloyd George

Griffith - I sense a moderate spirit. Collins - a man who wants to get things done.

Collins

I can't move with Childers breathing down my neck. And writing secretly to Dev every night.

Jones

Mr Childers would appear to be something of a straitjacket.

Collins

We have to get him out of the room.

Lloyd George

Can we get rid of him?

Collins

Barton also.

Jones

Leave it with me, PM.

Griffith

They'll smell a rat.

Collins

What if the Brits proposed something?

McKenna

Mr Griffith? Mr Jones is here to see you.

Griffith

Mr Jones!

Jones

The PM feels we're not making as much progress as we could... I was wondering- The PM was wondering... if perhaps it might be expedient to have a sub-conference meeting...

Griffith

"Sub" conference?

Jones

Purely the leadership. No secretaries... I wouldn't want my good self to be getting in the way...

Act Two

One

8 **Downing Street - October 24, 1921**

Lloyd George, Churchill, Collins and Griffith approach the table. Griffith distributes a document.

Jones

And so the negotiations move into sub-conference format.

McKenna

Mr Griffith decides now is the time to present President de Valera's proposal for "external association".

Griffith does so in dumb show, Jones speaking over him.

Jones

I confess, even the Celt in me flounders amidst the poetic finessing the Irish bring to the question of "association".

Griffith has finished. Silence around the table. The British look at each other and at the document.

Lloyd George

Mr Griffith. Will you. Take. An oath. To the Crown?

Griffith

We will... accept the Crown as the... bond of association.

Lloyd George

The "bond" of association?

Griffith

We will... adhere to the Commonwealth.

Churchill

What do you mean by "adhering"?

Lloyd George

You mean membership? Allegiance?

Collins

Not quite.

Griffith

We should be associated with the Commonwealth - outside of that, we would be a free people.

Lloyd George

I wish you to be a free people -

Griffith

Excellent. We are agreed then.

Lloyd George

and to freely choose to enter the Empire.

Collins

It's not a free choice if the alternative is war.

Churchill

The alternative to a truce is always war.

Lloyd George

So you do not accept the link with the Crown?

Griffith

We would accept it as head of the association.

Lloyd George

But not as members of the Empire?

Griffith

(mollifying)

But we would have representation at the Imperial Conference and would accept its decision in matters of common concern.

Churchill

So you would not be a member of the Empire but would attend the Empire's conference and accept its decisions?

Griffith

In matters of common concern.

Lloyd George

What are matters of "common concern"?

Griffith

Large matters.

Churchill

War?

Collins

And peace.

Griffith

Trade.

Lloyd George

So you want to leave the trade association that is the Commonwealth, but accept its rules on trade.

Griffith

Well, that would be the / essence of our proposal.

Churchill

It sounds to me rather like you want to have your cake and eat it.

Griffith

I confess, I've never quite understood that saying: surely, by definition, you have to have cake in order to eat it?

Jones

I believe the expression used be "eat your cake and have it" - in the sense of "have" meaning to keep.

Lloyd George

Mr Jones -

Churchill

It's an Irish phrase, Mr Griffith - it was coined by Dean Swift.

Lloyd George

I think we are losing sight of the problem -

Collins

Here's the problem: you people came to our country, and you stole all our fucking cake.

Lloyd George

Gentlemen.

(addressing the document)

Can you change "free partnership with the British Commonwealth" to "free partnership within the British Commonwealth"?

Griffith

But that would mean Ireland being prepared to enter the Commonwealth - we are prepared to associate with it, not enter it.

Lloyd George

Can you change "a recognition of the Crown" to "recognition of the Crown"?

Griffith

But that would imply allegiance - we are offering simply a form of recognition.

Churchill

(impatient)

You mean to say you will go to war over an indefinite article?

Collins

(irritated)

Will you?

Tea is brought in.

Lloyd George

Ah, a timely interlude, I think.

Griffith

No, thank you.

Lloyd George

Mr Collins.

Collins

No. Thank you.

Lloyd George

But / you don't mean to say that you're still bound by...

Griffith

We have undertaken to accept no hospitality while in Britain.

Churchill

It's a cup of tea!

Griffith

We are not here as your guests.

Lloyd George

I was under the impression I was negotiating with plenipotentiaries of the Dáil Éireann.

(to Churchill)

These men are not even plenipotentiaries of their own elevenses.

Griffith

We agreed to be bound by this stricture. It is a trivial inconvenience in the context of our historic struggle.

Churchill

We are trying to end a war. Centuries of conflict, of distrust. We each of us take our careers and our reputations, in our hands.

Collins

We take our lives in ours.

Lloyd George

We have to learn to trust each other. We cannot do that from opposite sides of a bare table.

Griffith

Trust is earned, not given, Mr Lloyd George.

They break up.

Act Two

Two

9

Hans Place

Collins

It's not working, Kathy.

McKenna

You're giving your all, Mick.

Collins

It's not about effort. Lloyd George is right - it's about trust.

McKenna

Lloyd George is the last person you can trust.

Collins

I'm going to have to trust him at some point. But it's all too formal. Too fucking English. We can't even have a cup of tea with them.

McKenna

No hospitality.

Collins

Exactly.

McKenna

No British hospitality.

Collins

Right.

McKenna

What about Irish hospitality?

Collins

Bring them here?

McKenna

Neutral ground.

Collins

In London?

McKenna

The Laverys'.

Collins

The painter?

McKenna

He's Irish. His wife is American. They're intimates of half the British cabinet. They throw parties. Perhaps that environment might be more...

Collins leaves. Griffith enters. McKenna hands him a card.

Griffith

An invitation?

McKenna

Lady Lavery is famous / for her parties.

Griffith

I have a meeting with the Prime Minister, at Chequers.

McKenna

But Mr Collins -

Griffith

If Mr Collins wishes to venture into the Laverys' den, he has my blessing.

10

The Laverys'

A party. Churchill and Birkenhead enter.

Birkenhead

Winston!

Churchill

Freddie!

Birkenhead

You know who I met at the last one of these - old Phillimore.

Churchill

Judge Phillimore - still going strong!

Birkenhead

He wanted some advice on a tricky sentencing question - a sodomy case.

Churchill

Ah.

Birkenhead

'Freddie!' he cried, 'What do you think one ought to give a man who allows himself to be bugged?'

'Oh', I replied, '30 shillings, two pounds - whatever you happen to have on you.'

Lady Lavery enters amidst their laughter.

Lavery

Gentlemen.

Birkenhead

Lady Lavery! I didn't mean to cause any offence.

Churchill

Lady Lavery! Please excuse my right honourable friend.

She glides on to greet Collins as he enters, uncomfortable.

Lavery

Mr Collins. Mícheál Ó Coileáin.

Collins

(taken aback)

Lady Lavery.

Lavery

Hazel, please.

Collins

Mick.

Lavery

You dress up rather well, Mick.

Collins

You are... a picture, Lady Lavery.

Lavery

Don't mount me on the wall just yet, Mick.

She brings Churchill and Birkenhead in.

Lavery

I think you know my good friend, Winston?

A waiter appears with a tray of drinks.

Churchill

Whiskey, Mr Collins?

Collins hesitates. Lady Lavery takes one off the tray.

Lavery

Irish whiskey, Mick.

And Lord Birkenhead.

Birkenhead

Mr Collins.

Lavery

(leading Birkenhead off)

Freddie, John's portrait of you is exquisite - the line of your face! You look ravishing...

Churchill

(gesturing outside)

Lavery's gardens are rather fine. Shall we?

They walk outside.

11 **Chequers (new sequence)**

Lloyd George has entered meanwhile and set up a chess board. Griffith enters.

Lloyd George

A drink, Mr Griffith?

Griffith demurs.

Lloyd George

(apologetically)

Of course - "hospitality".

You play chess?

Griffith

I used play with some friends in a little cafe on O'Connell Street...

Lloyd George

Very good.

Griffith

Until it was shelled during the Rising.

Lloyd George

Ah. So you're out of practice.

Griffith

Actually, I managed to find some time again more recently...

Lloyd George

Excellent.

Griffith

... while at his Majesty's pleasure.

Lloyd George

I apologise if having you released cut short your return to form.

(hands behind his back)

Which hand?

Griffith

The left.

Lloyd George opens his left hand, containing a black pawn.

Griffith sits at the board.

12

*

Churchill

You don't trust me, Mr Collins.

Collins

You spent the last two years trying to kill me, Mr Churchill. You put a price on my head.

Churchill

£5,000! A damn good price! When I was in South Africa, and the Boers were hunting me, they offered just 25 quid.

13

*

Griffith

This is a fine room.

Lloyd George

It's the Cromwell Room.

Griffith

Ah.

Lloyd George

That's his sword on the mantelpiece - would you like to hold it?

Griffith

Eh -

Lloyd George

The great republican.

Griffith

That's not quite how we think of him in Ireland.

Lloyd George

Yes, his republicanism did perhaps prove a little extreme. Perhaps we can agree that beheading the king is not always the best guarantee of moderate government.

16

*

Churchill

The Boers were magnificent fighters. As were those who fought against them - many of them your countrymen. You remember the Siege of Ladysmith, in '99?

Collins

I was nine.

Churchill

The Boers were dug in on the Tugela Heights. It was the Irish led the assault - the Dublins and the Inniskilling Fusiliers. I watched them through my field glasses. They set off at dusk. Up the bare, grassy hill. The setting sun glinting on their bayonets. But we didn't know the Boers had guns hidden in the hills. Sixty of them. Boom. Boom. Boom. The men slowed. The guns kept pounding. The men dwindled. It was dark now, the only light coming from the shells as they fell amongst our men. Eventually, the men just disappeared into the hillside.

(pause)

Twelve hundred men took part in the assault. Six hundred fell.

Collins

What a waste.

Churchill

And yet, today, the Boer prime minister is a partner in the imperial conference, and helps design policy for the Empire.

18

*

Lloyd George

I confess, I don't know this strategy, Mr Griffith.

Griffith

It's called the King's Indian.

Lloyd George

To glance at that board, anyone would think I was dominant.

Griffith

It is a slow-burning strategy.

Lloyd George

The long game.

21

*

Churchill

I am sure you would rather have led from the front, in the field, instead of...

Collins

Instead of what?

Churchill

Sending boys out to shoot men in their beds.

COLLINS

We fought in the field in '16 - you destroyed our city and executed our leaders. How [the hell] would you have had me lead this fight?

22

*

Lloyd George

I read your study of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Mr Griffith - you appreciate the unifying force of a king shared between two countries...

Griffith

I once thought it offered a solution.

Lloyd George

There is a German term you may have come across in your studies... *Realpolitik*...

23

*

Churchill

It will be different next time - if these talks fail, if we have to go back to war. You have declared yourselves on the world stage. Your international supporters will not stand for you returning to your guerrilla tactics. You will have to fight in the field. Like you did in '16.

24 *

Lloyd George

I lead the minority party in a coalition. The Tory die-hards know little about Ireland, and care less. But they will fight to keep Ireland in the Empire - not merely "associated" with it. So whatever I concede, I must keep Ireland within the Empire...

Griffith

And I must return Ulster to Ireland.

25 *

Collins

After we surrendered, your men marched us to O'Connell Street. There's a patch of green in front of the Rotunda Hospital there - a small patch, mind. They kept us there for the night. But there wasn't room for us all. So they made us lie on top of each other. Not allowed move - not even to take a shite. Anyone who so much as stretches himself gets the crack of a rifle butt on his skull. There's a district inspector in charge, a fellow called Lea-Wilson. He recognises Tom Clarke, and pulls him out in front of everyone.

CHURCHILL

Clarke - one of the leaders.

COLLINS

That's right. Clarke's in his 50s. All above us, at the hospital windows, the nurses are looking out. Lea-Wilson has his men strip off Clarke's trousers. The lot, like. And they keep him there. Standing. Bollock naked. Mocking him. For hours. A week later, you shot him.

Beat.

CHURCHILL

That was unnecessary.

26 *

Lloyd George

Think of what you gain from the Empire. Access to your greatest market. Influence in the greatest community of nations in the world. A seat alongside other proud, independent nations. South Africa. Australia. Canada.

Griffith

Canada is three thousand miles away. The Crown has no practical authority there. We are sixty miles away - if you disagree with our interpretation of the Imperial constitution, you can have gunboats up the Liffey in a matter of hours. Again.

27

*

Churchill

I envy Lavery his gardens. Such endless inspiration for painting.

Collins

Sure where would the likes of us get time to be painting?

Churchill

You're not married, Mr Collins, children?

Collins demurs.

Churchill

You need something in your life other than war. Or politics.

(beat)

When the black dog descends... One needs something one can lose oneself in.

28

*

Griffith is pondering his move. Lloyd George is thinking.

Lloyd George

You are correct... Canada does have more freedom in practice than it does in law, because of its distance...

Beat.

LLOYD GEORGE

You Irish are masters of the English language - come up with the form of words that will codify in law the freedoms that Canada has in practice, and claim them for Ireland.

Griffith moves.

Lloyd George

That, Mr Griffith, would be a constitutional revolution. An entirely new device in imperial relations.

Griffith

Check.

29

*

Collins

(hesitant)

I am sorry for your recent loss, Mr Churchill.

Churchill

Her birthday is next month. She will be- She would have been three.

(pause)

I have seen men cut to death, clubbed to death, blown to smithereens. I thought I was inured to death. But this one...

(beat)

You and I, Mr Collins, we have known the power of life and death. But when we most need it, we have no power at all.

Collins

I do not want any more death between us, Mr Churchill.

30 *

Lloyd George

Don't you see, Mr Griffith, this is the path to Irish unity. A Southern Ireland that remains within the Empire - that gives its allegiance to the Crown - is one that Northern Ireland must be content to join with. If they refuse, I will go to the country on it, and the country will back me. I will not return to war with an Ireland that accepts the Crown.

31 *

Churchill

We want you with us, Mr Collins. Free to govern yourselves but united in friendship within the Empire. The natural genius of our two nations collaborating on the world stage.

32 *

Griffith moves. Lloyd George studies the board. He is beaten.

Lloyd George

It appears you are about to take my king.

Griffith

The long game.

Lloyd George concedes, offering his hand. Griffith shakes.

33 *

Churchill

What happened to the district inspector? The one who stripped / Clarke.

Collins

Lea-Wilson? We found him.

Churchill

No quarter.

34 **Hans Place**

Childers speaks from his typewriter - he is writing to de Valera. De Valera reappears.

Childers

Griffith and Collins are weak on the Republic, Chief.

De Valera

I sent them to London in full knowledge of their predilections.

Childers

We don't know what they're agreeing in these "sub conferences".

De Valera

Their pliancy will lure Lloyd George in. Assure him of our bona fides. Move him towards External Association.

Childers

They may give too much away. What if they sacrifice the Republic entirely?

De Valera

They cannot give anything away without our consent.

Childers

But if things go too far -

De Valera

We will rein them in in Dublin.

Act Two

Three

35 **Downing Street - November 5-7**

McKenna

At last, there appears to be some momentum.

Jones

The Prime Minister has undertaken to persuade the Unionists to back Irish unity.

McKenna

All that remains is to get the endorsement of -

Jones

Sir James Craig, Prime Minister.

Craig enters. Lloyd George pours them both whiskeys.

Lloyd George

Sir James.

Lloyd George presses a drink on Craig, who protests.

Craig

But it's ten am!

Craig takes it.

Lloyd George

We are on the cusp of resolving the eternal Irish question. The Irish will come into the Empire.

Craig

I'm afraid I don't see quite what that has to do with Northern Ireland. What happens in the South is a matter between you and them.

Lloyd George

You share a small island, Sir James. An island too small to have a boundary run through it. With the South settled in loyalty to the Crown, there can be no need for continued separation of the Six Counties.

Craig goes to interrupt but Lloyd George powers on.

Lloyd George

You may prefer, of course, to retain your current status...

Craig goes to interrupt but Lloyd George powers on.

Lloyd George

However, in that case, you are likely to face a customs border in your trade with Southern Ireland. And it is difficult to see how the subsidies you currently receive could continue... I fear the tax burden on your people would be likely to rise very substantially.

(beat)

You might send me your response in due course, Sir James. We should conclude this process in time for the opening of the new session of your parliament.

Craig knocks back his drink and leaves. Jones, Churchill and Birkenhead enter.

Lloyd George

(triumphant)

I know the Presbyterians, gentlemen - my wife is one. They have their hands on their hearts all the time, but if you try to touch their pockets they shove their hands in them.

Laughter.

Lloyd George

Craig will come in to an all-Ireland parliament. When he does...

Churchill

(congratulatory)

Ireland will come into the Empire.

Lloyd George

Fill your glasses, gentlemen. Gladstone failed -

Churchill

Asquith failed.

Lloyd George

We are nearly there.

He raises his glass.

Lloyd George

To peace in Ireland.

Birkenhead

Peace in Ireland.

Churchill

Peace in Ireland.

They drink. Craig enters.

Craig

Prime Minister.

The others melt away.

Lloyd George

Sir James! I trust you have given my proposal due consideration.

Craig

I have, Prime Minister.

Lloyd George

And found it favourable.

Craig

I have not, Prime Minister.

Lloyd George

But the Irish have all but conceded. They will come into the Empire - I am sure of it.

Craig

Prime Minister, for three hundred years my people have tilled the soils of Ulster. Every stone wall in those counties affirms our faith in the Reformed Church and our loyalty to the Crown. Thousands of our sons made the supreme sacrifice at the Somme, in testament to that faith and that loyalty. And now you expect me to go to every village - to every kirk - and tell them I have thrown off the protection of the Crown - for an alliance with the conspirators of republicanism and of Rome?

Lloyd George

They will pledge allegiance to the Crown.

Craig

And you would trust them on their pledges? They will abandon that allegiance as soon as suits them.

Lloyd George

But I have given Sinn Féin assurances that, if they come into the Empire, the Six Counties will enter the all-Ireland parliament.

Craig

I think you know the Presbyterians, Prime Minister - we place great store in God's gift of free will. If we are ever to enter an all-Ireland parliament, we will do so of our own free will.

Lloyd George

(disbelieving)

The negotiations will collapse. I gave Arthur Griffith my word I would resign rather than resume the war.

Craig

Is it not extraordinary how many great men have come to grief over the eternal Irish question.

Lloyd George

But you risk war / on the island.

Craig

What we have, we hold, Prime Minister. Our answer is no.

Craig leaves. Jones and Churchill return.

Lloyd George

(devastated)

I thought the logic of it was unassailable.

They have no answer.

Lloyd George

The talks will collapse. The truce will be over.

Churchill

We must ready ourselves for war.

Lloyd George

I promised Griffith -

Birkenhead

Our first loyalty is to Ulster.

Lloyd George

I will resign. I will go to the country. The country will / back me.

Churchill

You can't go to the country - you haven't the numbers. The Tory die-hards won't give you an election. They'll just put their own man in as PM.

Lloyd George

I gave my word I would not return to war in Ireland. If war is ahead, I have no option but to resign.

Churchill

Coward.

Lloyd George

It is the only honourable option left.

Churchill

It would be the essence of dishonour.

Birkenhead

It would be an abdication of responsibility.

Lloyd George

Either Ulster must be coerced into a United Ireland, or the South must be coerced into Empire. But I cannot lead that coercion. Not any more. Let whoever replaces me repair the Irish problem.

Churchill

You give up too early.

Lloyd George

But all is lost!

Jones

If you'll excuse me, PM - I have an idea.

36

Hans Place

Jones arrives to meet Griffith.

Griffith

Mr Jones.

Jones

There is a problem, Mr Griffith. The Unionists are... surprisingly resistant to our entreaties...

Griffith

Your prime minister gave me his word he would resign rather than endorse the continued partitioning of our country.

Jones

That is precisely what he is contemplating.

(beat)

But what will happen then?

Griffith

An election. He will bring it to the country. The country will back him. That is / what he said.

Jones

There won't be an election. The Tories have the numbers on their own. They will abandon the coalition and form a Conservative and Unionist government - a militarist government. They will set to and coerce Ireland.

Griffith

War.

Jones

And they will relish it.

Beat.

Griffith

What can we do?

Jones

Craig doesn't trust you. The Unionists won't come in under an all-Ireland parliament. We cannot force them. We need another strategy.

Griffith

Their farmers, their businessmen - the border will cripple them - they don't want it.

Jones

Perhaps there could be a mechanism to review the border -

Griffith

Review?

Jones

Should it prove to be the case that - for now - we cannot get rid of it altogether...

Beat.

Griffith

We have always recognised that elements amongst Unionism may prove implacable, in the short term... Provided the principle of Irish unity is accepted - essential unity - we may be prepared to let individual counties in Ulster vote themselves out. That would reduce Northern Ireland to a rump in the north-east. In time, economic pressure would compel them to join us.

Jones

Yes, yes... But a vote... Would you really want the entirety of the province convulsed by a poll on the border?

Griffith

How else would we review it?

Jones

Perhaps some kind of expert body. A commission.

Griffith advances to meet Lloyd George.

37 **Downing Street - November 12****Griffith**

If you wish to propose such a boundary commission, we will in due course consider it.

Lloyd George

I don't need you to support it. I just need you not to denounce it.

Griffith

I will have to consult with my colleagues, and with Dublin.

Lloyd George

I am not asking for a commitment from Dublin, Mr Griffith - I am asking you to hold your fire. If I fly this kite of a boundary commission with Craig, do not shoot it down. Do not draw attention to its defects.

Griffith

But Craig will reject it.

Lloyd George

The current border is indefensible. If Craig were to reject a reasonable proposal to review the border, he would lose crucial support in Westminster. Were he to accept it, it would shrink his state to the point where it would be barely viable. In the circumstances, he may come to consider an all-Ireland parliament the lesser evil.

Griffith

(beat)

We will not denounce it. You have my word.

38 **Hans Place**

A party is underway. A man appears outside, and stands waiting - this is Ernie O'Malley. Another man, O'Malley's sidekick, appears behind him, and stands off, watching. In his room, Childers types on.

McKenna

(arriving with a cake)

Where's the birthday boy gone?

Barton

Let's have a song!

McKenna

Mr Griffith - a ballad!

Griffith

Well now, it would hardly be a party without a song.

He is bashful at first, but grows in confidence.

Griffith

Of all the money that e'er I
had
I spent it in good company
And all the harm I've ever
done
Alas it was to none but me
And all I've done for want of
wit
To mem'ry now I can't recall

Griffith

Den mahoin uilig a bhí iramh
agam
Chaitheas I gcomhlúadar
iontach é
'S a dochat atá déantar a'm
Is liom féin amháin do
dhéanas é
Nithe déanta toisc easpa
gaoise
Ní thagann anois chun cuimhne
chugam

They join in for the chorus - McKenna's voice standing out.

All

So fill to me the parting glass
Good night and joy be to you all.

Griffith

Of all the comrades that e'er I had
They're sorry for my going away
And all the sweethearts that e'er I had
They'd wish me one more day to stay.

By unspoken agreement, McKenna takes over.

McKenna

But since it fell unto my lot
That I should rise and you should not
I gently rise and softly call

All

Good night and joy be to you all.

All

Good night and joy be with you all.

Silence.

Collins

[Your health, Arthur.]

Barton

What is it, Mick - 40?

McKenna

Ah he's not a day over 35!

Collins

Bugger off the lot of you. I'm feeling old enough at 31.

All

Happy birthday, Mick.
Breithlá sona, a Mhicheál.

Collins

Is that for me?

Dalton steps outside to confront O'Malley.

Dalton

What has you in London, O'Malley - business or pleasure?

O'Malley

I hear there's no shortage of pleasure, anyway.

Dalton

There's a truce. You got orders. You shouldn't be here.

O'Malley

The truce will end.

Dalton

What do you want?

O'Malley

To talk to himself.

Dalton

I have orders. He's seeing no one. The talks are at a sensitive phase.

O'Malley

Is that singing I hear? Celebrating something? I hear Mick's going down a storm with the Brits.

Dalton

Is that it, O'Malley?

O'Malley

There might be talk of some action.

Dalton

Here?

O'Malley

Where it hurts them most.

Dalton

You know what it would mean to defy orders?

O'Malley

We took an oath, Dalton. Before God. To the Republic. That supersedes orders.

Dalton

I'll tell him you called, O'Malley. Be going on home, now. And don't be hanging around here - there's all sorts of dangerous people out there. With guns.

O'Malley

There's more than just the Brotherhood in this fight, Dalton. Some of us have no need of secret societies.

Dalton has produced his pistol and carries it low at his side.

O'Malley

We'll be watching, Dalton.

O'Malley backs away, watching Dalton all the while. He and his comrade disappear.

40

Back at the party.

Barton

Mick! A song!

Collins

Ah no.

McKenna

Ah go on, Mick. Something from Cork. A ballad.

Collins

A traditional number, is it?

McKenna

To make us homesick.

Collins thinks for a moment. He starts off as if it were a sean n6s song - drawing out the note.

Collins

He...

He is delaying the punchline.

Collins

... is an... Englishman!

And the song takes off, with boisterous support.

Collins

For he himself has said it,
And it's greatly to his credit,
That he is an Englishman!

All

That he is an Englishman!

Collins

For he might have been a Roosian,
A French, or Turk, or Proosian,
Or perhaps Itali-an!

All

Or perhaps Itali-an!

Jones arrives at Hans Place. McKenna is called out to meet him.

Collins

But in spite of all temptations
To belong to other nations,
He remains an Englishman!

All

He remains an Englishman!

They toast and drink. Meanwhile:

McKenna

Mr Jones!

Jones

Miss McKenna. So sorry to disturb- You appear to be celebrating -

McKenna

It's Mr Collins's birthday - won't you come in?

Jones

No, I -

McKenna

Come in, Mr Jones!

Jones

Honestly, I / just wanted to speak to Mr Griffith.

McKenna

(ushering him in)

Mr Jones, you know how the Irish take offence when hospitality is refused.

Jones

I don't think I - Isn't that a little / ironic?

McKenna

Something to oil the vocal cords?

Jones

No! Thank you -

Collins

Mr Jones! What a surprise. A song!

All

A song!

Jones

No, really, I / don't think I should.

Collins

You know the rules, Mr Jones - you can't come to an Irish party without a song.

Jones

But I wasn't coming to a party -

Griffith

Business can wait, Mr Jones.

An expectant pause. Jones gives in.

Jones

Perhaps a little song from the valleys.

Griffith

Ciúnas, más é do thoil é.

Jones

(Land of My Fathers)

*Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi,
Gwlad beirdd a chantorion, enwogion o fri;
Ei gwrol ryfelwyr, gwladgarwyr tra mad,
Tros ryddid collasant eu gwaed.*

During the chorus, Collins joins him.

Jones/Collins

*Gwlad, gwlad, pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad.
Tra môr yn fur i'r bur hoff bau,
O bydded i'r heniaith barhau.*

They finish. A moment's silence and then cheers.

Jones

You are quite the man of surprises, Mr Collins.

Collins

One of the benefits of a little time in a prisoner of war camp in Wales, Mr Jones.

Jones

Mr Griffith - a moment?

They step away from the party.

Jones

The idea of a boundary commission - that you discussed with the PM...

Griffith

I said we wouldn't shoot it down.

Jones

I wrote up a memo on it, for the record. You know how it is - civil service. Would you review it?

Griffith

Of course.

(scanning it)

That seems to be the essence of it, Mr Jones.

Jones

Would you mind signing it? Just a matter of protocol.

Griffith pauses for a brief moment.

Griffith

Of course.

Jones produces a pen and Griffith signs.

Jones

Thank you.

Griffith

You'll stay for a drink?

Jones

I shouldn't, Mr Griffith. Thank you. Good night now.

Griffith

Good night, Mr Jones.

He watches after him for a moment.

McKenna

All well, Mr Griffith?

Griffith

Yes, Miss McKenna, yes. Let us return to the party. We have earned it.

As Griffith returns, McKenna turns back to the audience.

McKenna

Over the following weeks, the British flesh out their offer, in a draft Treaty: a boundary commission, to ensure essential unity; and a guarantee that Ireland will have the same rights as the other dominions have in practice as well as in law.

Griffith

It's good, Michael.

Collins

It's not the Republic.

Griffith

It was never going to be the Republic. Dev knew that. Even Brugha must. It's time to bring it home.

As they leave, Collins surreptitiously gives a copy of the document to Dalton, who conceals it.

Act Three**One**

41 **The Mansion House, Dublin - December 3 (new draft of scene)**

McKenna

Saturday, December 3rd. Eleven am. The Mansion House, Dublin.

The Irish Cabinet enters: de Valera, Brugha, Griffith, Collins, Barton, Childers as secretary. Childers confers quietly with de Valera, distributes copies of the draft Treaty, then stands off. They read in silence, page by careful page. As Collins enters, he slips McKenna a document and whispers something, then joins the cabinet. A man emerges from the shadows and takes the document from McKenna.

Collins and Griffith exchange glances, hopeful. Eventually:

De Valera

The question that confronts us, it seems to me, is this: can this document be the basis for further discussions? Or does it suggest that further discussions are pointless?

Griffith and Collins are stunned.

Griffith

But we have made great progress -

Collins

This is practically external / association.

Brugha

What have you been doing, spending all your time at the theatre?

Griffith

How dare you / Cathal.

Barton

The delegation has been working hard -

Griffith

Night and day.

Brugha

I hear there's been a lot of work at night / alright.

Collins

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BRUGHA

Ní ormsa an locht mar a churieann sí fearg.

COLLINS

Abair amach é Brugha. Anything you want to say about me, say it.

Brugha

What is the point of continuing discussions with the British when there is no difference between the line the British pursue and the one that our people pursue?

Collins

And what do you mean by that?

Brugha

I mean the British chose their men.

Griffith

That is an outrage!

De Valera

I think Mr Brugha may have spoken intemperately.

Collins

You think I am in their pay?

Brugha glances to Childers. Collins sees it.

Brugha

The talks, Mr Childers - have they been conducted by the delegation as a whole, with you documenting them, as Secretary?

Childers

For the past six weeks, the talks have been conducted to the exclusion of Minister Barton and myself, in "sub-conference" format.

Brugha

"Sub-conference"?

Griffith

Myself and Mr Collins. But we have always reported back thoroughly to the delegation and to Dublin.

Brugha

And did the British object at any point to this sub-conference idea?

Griffith

No / they did not.

Childers

The idea came from the British.

Brugha

Of course it did - because Lloyd George spotted you were weak on the Republic - he wanted to peel you off.

Collins

I do not take my opinions from Mr Lloyd George. I am Michael Collins.

Brugha

"The Big Fella." So easily seduced. And not just by Lloyd George, I hear.

Griffith

You are out of / order,
Cathal.

Collins

Repeat that outside this
room, Brugha / and so help me
God I will...

De Valera

Nobody is acting in bad faith here. Our differences are honest differences of opinion. But if we are intolerant of those differences - if we let them spread to the country - that would mean disaster.

They stand down.

De Valera

Perhaps the delegation chairman would take us through some of the thinking behind this document.

Griffith

We believe the British have made a number of substantial concessions... On trade... on defence... on the oath... on Ulster. If you turn to page five, I'll talk you through their proposal of a boundary commission, which will ensure essential unity...

McKenna

The debate goes on all day. But it keeps coming back to one core issue.

Brugha

The Republic means the Republic. Sovereign and separate.

Collins

The Republic is a work in progress.

Brugha

It was established in blood. And ratified by the votes of the people.

Griffith

The people did not vote for the precise content of a republic. They voted simply for freedom from Britain.

Brugha

Absolute freedom.

Collins

This Treaty will give us the freedom to achieve that final freedom.

De Valera

I proposed a solution to balance our freedom with association with their Empire.

Collins

They rejected it.

Griffith

The difference was merely one of emphasis - you were seeking an association with the Empire, they are offering an association within it.

Brugha

That is the difference between keeping our oath to the Republic, and violating it.

Griffith

We took an oath to do our best for Ireland.

Brugha

We took an oath to overthrow the King - and now you want us to take an oath to him?

Griffith

Read the oath!

Brugha

I will not read that aloud in this room.

Collins grabs it.

Collins

"I do solemnly swear to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish Free State."

Brugha

Go on.

Collins doesn't continue. Griffith picks it up.

Griffith

"To the Community of Nations known as the British Empire; and to the King as head of the State and of the Empire." It is an oath to the Irish constitution first - to the King as an afterthought.

Brugha

An afterthought!

Childers

Any Irishman who took that oath would be acting a lie.

Barton

It is the principle of it! That oath creates a position that is not true - a false position.

Griffith

The principle that I have stood on all my life is the principle of Ireland for the Irish people. If I could get that with a Republic I would have a Republic;

if I could get that with External Association, I would have External Association; and if I can get that with a monarchy, now, I will have a monarchy.

Brugha

Do you think Tom Clarke died for a monarchy? Pearse?

Brugha

Plunkett? Ceannt? Do you remember Éamonn Ceannt's last advice for us? "Never to treat with the enemy, never to surrender to his mercy but to fight to a finish" - his last advice before they shot him.

Griffith

Is there to be no living Irish nation? Must we always live by the demands of the dead?

Brugha

If I were our last man... if my last cartridge had been fired... if I were lying on the ground, and our enemies standing over me with their bayonets raised, and they said to me, 'Now, will you take an oath to our King?' I would say, 'No! I will not'.

Beat.

Brugha

If you sign this Treaty you will split Ireland from stem to stern.

Silence.

De Valera

I propose that the delegation return to London to continue to pursue an association with the Empire.

Collins

You should go, Dev.

De Valera

I am needed here.

Griffith

Our best man should be at the negotiating table.

De Valera

Not until we have their final offer.

Barton

This is not London's final word.

Collins

You haven't been in the room, Bob!

Barton

And why is that?

Collins

If you think there's a better offer to get, Dev, you should be over there getting it. Lloyd George is leading his people in the negotiations -

GRIFFITH

Craig has been in London, leading his.

COLLINS

Why is our Chief not leading us?

De Valera

I may have to lead our people back to war! That will be difficult if I am seen to have been bartering with the enemy.

Collins

And how do you think I look?

De Valera

I am the symbol of the Irish republic. It is vital to keep that symbol pure.

Griffith

I will lead the delegation back. We will seek further concessions. But I will not risk war by repudiating an offer that I think is honourable. I will not break off negotiations on the issue of the Crown and Empire.

De Valera

Do not break on the Crown. That would damage us internationally. The world will not understand our objection on principle to staying within the Empire. If you cannot secure External Association, and a breakdown appears inevitable, switch the focus to Ulster. Object to the boundary commission. Make the negotiations break down on that. That will damage Britain internationally. They will find it hard to justify a threat of war over our refusal to accept partition.

Griffith

But should they offer External Association, we are prepared to work with the Boundary Commission?

Brugha

It's not unity, Chief.

Griffith

It would be essential unity.

De Valera

We can work with it.

Griffith looks uneasily at Collins.

De Valera

If they offer new terms, bring them home. Do not sign in London.

Griffith nods.

42 **Hans Place - December 4 - morning**

McKenna

The delegation arrives back in London the following morning.

Collins

I'm not going back in, Arthur.

Griffith

Michael -

Collins

I can't.

Griffith

But the Cabinet / gave us instructions...

Collins

For Jesus's sake, Arthur. I have done what was asked of me. I have come here and acted like a fucking politician. And we got something. And if it's not enough for them, so be it. But I will not go back into that room and pretend that I think I can get something better.

43 **Downing Street - December 4 - afternoon**

Griffith, Barton and Childers advance to meet with Lloyd George, Churchill, Birkenhead and Jones.

Jones

At 5pm on Sunday, December the 4th, the Irish return to Downing Street - for what we hope will be the final time.

McKenna

The delegation makes a last attempt to secure a British concession on Empire...

Barton

Our proposal of External Association would do nothing whatsoever to undermine the Empire.

Lloyd George

We cannot open this up again!

McKenna

... or force a break on the issue of Ulster.

Childers

But the main difficulty is Ulster - we can agree to nothing without a guarantee of unity.

Churchill

By staying within the Empire, you will ensure essential unity, in time.

Barton

(frustrated)

For God's sake, we cannot stay within the Empire!

He realises his mistake as he says it.

Birkenhead

Ah.

Churchill

So.

Lloyd George

Plainly spoken. I thank you. For two months, we have sought a simple answer to our essential question: would Ireland plot its future within the Empire, or against it? You have procrastinated, proposed ambiguities to avoid the question, and subtleties to obscure it. But now it is clear. There is no prospect of reconciliation. I suggest you send us your formal rejection of our proposals tomorrow and we can jointly announce the end of the negotiations. And of the truce.

The Irish leave.

44

The Laverys' - December 4 - night

Collins stalks the room, anguished.

Collins

I was going to get married.

Lavery

I've asked you not to talk of her.

Collins

A young lad - to play in Croke Park some day.

Lavery

You've time.

Collins

It's too late.

Lavery

Don't be / ridiculous.

Collins

There's going to be war, again.

Lavery

Stay here.

Collins

This isn't a life.

Lavery

Make it your life. You're good at it. You've earned their respect.

Collins

What do I care for their fucking respect? I'm no politician.

Lavery

Ugh, such wilful ignorance.

Collins

I'm just a trumped up foot-soldier.

Lavery

What are you afraid of, Micheal?

Collins

I won't do what Pearse did - lead men to their deaths. I won't lead this.

Lavery

Good!

Collins

But I'll fight. I'll go back to Cork. Fight amongst my own. We might last longer down there.

Lavery

Madness.

Collins

Glorious madness, that's what we called it, once.

Lavery

Oh God, now you sound like Winston. The man's addicted to war.

Collins

War disgusts me.

Lavery

Then don't go back to it.

Collins

What choice have I got? The Chief / is rejecting their offer.

Lavery

Your Chief isn't even here! Don't you see? That makes you the Chief.

45

Downing Street

Lloyd George

We will have to institute Crown Colony Government in the South.

Churchill

They will resist.

Birkenhead

Martial law?

Churchill

As soon as the shooting starts.

Lloyd George

What will we need?

Churchill

About a hundred thousand troops.

Birkenhead

When do we revoke the Truce?

Churchill

As soon as the Irish have left.

Birkenhead

Can we arrest Collins?

Jones

Where is Collins?

Lloyd George

(shrugging)

He's given up.

Jones

Why?

Lloyd George

Because he's surrounded by a bunch of die-hards who'd rather he died for their cause than did anything to resolve it.

Jones

(puzzled)

They kept coming back to the issue of Northern Ireland.

Birkenhead

They were trying to engineer a break on Ulster - it would play better for them internationally.

Jones

But they can't break on Ulster - Mr Griffith gave you his word he'd support a boundary commission.

Churchill

Collins is the real force anyway.

Birkenhead

Didn't you put that in writing?

Lloyd George

What?

Birkenhead

The boundary commission.

Lloyd George

Did I?

Jones

(remembering)

I wrote a memo.

Lloyd George

Of course you did.

Jones

And Mr Griffith signed it.

Lloyd George

Well where is it?

Jones

I gave it to you!

Lloyd George

You know not to give anything important to me!

Jones

Try your pockets.

Lloyd George

I am trying my pockets!

Jones

I'll try your other suits. That's where we usually find them.

Lloyd George

Talk to Griffith. See if he can persuade Collins to meet me. If there's a deal to be made, he's the one to make it. And find that blasted memo.

46

The street

Collins emerges from Laverys' to be met by Dalton.

Dalton

Lloyd George wants to meet you.

Collins

What's the point, Emmet?

Dalton

Yesterday was a disaster. You weren't there. Lloyd George seems to think you can rescue it.

Collins

When?

Dalton

You're late.

Collins

Have you the reports from the Brotherhood?

Dalton produces two documents. He hands one over.

Dalton

Their report on the Army.

Collins

And?

Dalton

Discipline's collapsed.

Collins

How many men - reliable men?

Dalton

Less than 2,000.

Collins

Guns?

Dalton

One per man.

Collins

Ammunition?

Dalton

About a round per gun. And - the Brotherhood's response to the draft Treaty.

He hands it over.

Dalton

They think it's toxic.

Collins

Fuck.

Dalton

But it can be made acceptable. Changes on defence, the boundary commission, the oath - they've suggested a new wording.

Collins

And with those changes...?

Dalton

The Brotherhood will back it.

Collins

And the Army?

Dalton

We have control of the leadership. After that, who knows. The men spent two years getting shot at for the Republic - they mightn't appreciate the subtleties involved in staying in the Empire.

Collins

If there's a split - will they fight?

Dalton

That will depend on Dev.

47

Downing Street - December 5 - 9.30am

Collins arrives to find Lloyd George, Churchill, Birkenhead and Jones waiting for him.

Lloyd George

What do you need, Mr Collins?

Collins

Ulster.

Churchill

It's not that simple.

Collins

You stuck the northernmost part of Ireland in the South. Your boundary makes no sense.

Lloyd George

The boundary commission will fix that. It will give you back at least two counties - maybe three.

Churchill

The dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone.

Birkenhead

Half of Down. The cities of Londonderry and Newry.

Churchill

We don't want them - but we can't be seen to give them away.

Lloyd George

After the boundary commission transfers them to you, and the reality dawns on Craig, Belfast will come in under the Dublin parliament.

Collins

When?

Churchill

Sooner rather than later.

Churchill

They will be forced to join you.

Collins

Forced?

Lloyd George

The force of economics.

Collins

Not if you keep subsidising them.

Lloyd George

We have pledged not to coerce them. But that does not oblige us to endlessly pour money down their throats.

Collins

I need something more tangible.

Churchill

If we force the Six Counties into a united Ireland, they will fight you. You will have civil war. What alternative is there to partition at this present moment? But Ireland will soon be united.

Lloyd George

The unity of Ireland is an historical inevitability. But we cannot say anything publicly - the Tory die-hards would revolt.

Collins hands him a document.

Lloyd George

What's this?

Collins

A wording for the oath.

Lloyd George

We have stretched the Empire as far as it will go.

Collins

I've stretched the Republic till it snapped. I need you to bring the Empire almost to that point.

Lloyd George

Am I to understand this has the backing of the delegation?

Collins

It has the backing of the people who most count. I suggest you propose it.

Birkenhead takes it.

Birkenhead

"I do solemnly swear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the Irish State... and that I will be faithful to His Majesty..."

Lloyd George

This is allegiance.

Collins

You might call it allegiance. I might call it faithfulness.

Birkenhead

"... in virtue of the common citizenship of Ireland with Great Britain and her adherence to and membership of the group of nations forming the British Empire."

Collins

"Group of nations" helps take the sting out of the "Empire" bit.

Birkenhead

Why not leave out "Empire" altogether?

Churchill

What?

Birkenhead

We could use "Commonwealth of Nations".

Beat.

Lloyd George

Bring Griffith back this afternoon.

Collins

If we can't bring Barton on board now, we never will.

Lloyd George

Will Barton sign?

Collins

Nobody will sign, here. We'll have to bring it back to Dublin-

Lloyd George

Of course.

Collins

... but with this oath, we can win the argument there.

48

December 5 - 3pm

Jones

At three pm on Monday, the Irish delegation returns to Downing Street.

Griffith

We are close to agreement on many articles. But a gulf remains on the questions of allegiance and of Ulster.

Lloyd George

On Ulster, you have our terms. You have not objected to them.

Griffith

We have not accepted them.

Churchill

We have given Mr Collins undertakings on the workings of the commission.

Collins

It will give us back Fermanagh, Tyrone, half of Derry.

Lloyd George

How the boundary commission will work, and how we will have to say it will work, are two different things.

Griffith

That is a difficult thing for me to explain to the Irish people.

Childers

This is a Treaty we are discussing - and you expect us to take your word for how it will be implemented?

Birkenhead

This is not the real obstacle. The obstacle is your refusal to come into the Empire. You are merely trying to use the Ulster question to force the collapse of these talks so you can win a moral victory.

Griffith

How dare you question our integrity!

Barton

We are here in good faith!

Lloyd George

Well, let us see... Mr Griffith, you gave me your word that you would not repudiate the boundary commission proposal.

Barton

What?

Griffith

We discussed it, [briefly].

Lloyd George

A ddaethoch o hyd iddo? (Did you find it?)

Jones

Mae gen i yma. (I have it here.)

Jones produces the document and hands it to Griffith.

Lloyd George

Is that your signature?

Barton

(to Collins)

What is this letter?

Collins

I don't know what the hell it is.

Lloyd George
Mr Griffith?

Griffith
It is.

Lloyd George
There are other matters outstanding. I believe naval defence is one...

Childers
Naval defence is inseparable from / Irish sovereignty.

Churchill
I am willing to concede on the principle of defence sovereignty. We will, of course, need to retain some access to key ports - I think those details can be ironed out.

Lloyd George
And trade policy is, I think, another outstanding issue...

Barton
The right to an independent trade policy is a / fundamental component of sovereignty.

Birkenhead
We are willing to concede your right to strike your own trade deals. We hope that you will conclude that a free trade deal with the United Kingdom is in your best interests, but you will be free to refuse.

Childers
That would not alter the fact that you require us to swear an oath of allegiance to your king. That we cannot / do.

Lloyd George
Ah yes. The oath. We have done some further reconsideration of that.

Jones distributes copies.

Lloyd George
This new draft of the Treaty incorporates the concessions we have mentioned and a new formula for the oath.

Collins glances at it to confirm that it is his proposal from earlier. Barton and Griffith consider it closely. Childers studies and then dismisses it.

Griffith
This is, indeed, better.

Childers
It is still an oath to an English king.

Birkenhead
It is far less of an oath to the King than that which you once took, Mr Childers.

Griffith

There is room for some studied ambiguity.

Lloyd George

Gentlemen, you in Ireland often bring against us in England the charge of breach of faith. Now it is for you to show that Irishmen know how to keep faith. Let us end 700 years of conflict.

He takes out a pen.

Childers

They can't sign here - they haven't the authority.

Lloyd George

We have been talking to you for two months on the basis that you were plenipotentiaries.

Beat.

Lloyd George

I told Sir James Craig I would send him the conclusions of the negotiations tonight, in time for the opening session of the Northern Irish parliament tomorrow.

Barton

That's hardly a fixed / deadline...

Lloyd George

I gave him my word, Mr Barton.

Silence.

Griffith

I will sign.

Lloyd George

For yourself or for the delegation?

Griffith

I speak only for myself.

Lloyd George

Though everyone else refuses, you will nevertheless agree to sign?

Griffith

That is so.

Beat.

Lloyd George

That is not enough. We shall sign as a delegation. We stake the life of the Government on our signature. Are you prepared to do the same?

Barton shifts uneasily.

Lloyd George fixes on Barton.

Lloyd George

Those who do not sign must take the full responsibility for the war that will immediately follow.

Barton

Immediately? But / that's completely unreasonable...

Lloyd George has removed two letters from an inside pocket.

Lloyd George

(in his right hand)

This letter encloses this Treaty that we propose now to sign.

(in his left hand)

This letter says that the Irish plenipotentiaries refused to come within the Empire, and that the negotiations are thus at an end, and war beckons.

Whichever letter you choose travels, tonight, by special train to Holyhead, and by destroyer to Belfast. The train is waiting with steam up at Euston. If it is to reach Sir James Craig by the morning we must have your answer by ten pm. You have until then, but no longer, to decide which letter I will send. If I send this letter, it is war - and war within three days.

Collins

(standing up)

Why you / lying scoundrel...

Griffith restrains him with a hand on his arm. Barton and Childers stand.

Barton

This is brinkmanship.

Childers

This is a breach of international law.

Griffith stands.

Griffith

You will have our answer.

The Irish leave.

Act Three

Two

49

Hans Place - December 5 - 9pm

Silence. Griffith is waiting. Collins is brooding. Childers and Barton exchange nervous glances.

Collins

I will sign.

Barton

But your oath!

Collins

What have we got for Ireland? Something she has wanted these past seven hundred fucking years. Will anyone be satisfied at the bargain? No. But this, this is the first real step.

Barton

I will not break my oath to the Republic - the most sacred bond on earth.

Collins

We knew, coming here, that there would be compromise, Bob. What else is a negotiation for?

Barton

Compromise - not outright surrender.

Griffith

We have won on defence, on trade. A major concession on the oath. A boundary commission that will reduce Northern Ireland to a rump state - essential unity.

Barton

You'd trust a British Prime Minister on a promise to Ireland?

Collins

"War in three days", Bob! Do you distrust him on that?

Barton

We fought before.

Collins

I have one round of ammunition per soldier. I cannot send men out to fight on those terms.

Barton

They will go willingly.

Collins

You're not the one asking them.

Barton

I will happily serve.

Collins

Bob, you spent the war in jail - you didn't see what it was like. You have no idea what you are bringing on the people.

Griffith

It will be on you if we go back to war now, Barton. All on you.

Collins

Bob, if you cause a new war, you'll be hanged from a lamp post in the streets of Dublin.

Childers

Traitors both.

Griffith

I will not take that from an Englishman!

Childers

I am by birth, domicile and deliberate choice an Irishman.

Griffith

You are English by rearing and by culture.

Childers

I am not alone in this room in having moved from my former views.

(re Collins)

Some have moved very far indeed.

Collins

Childers is merely secretary to the delegation. He has no vote here.

Childers

I have my voice. I have a mandate / to be here

Collins

I propose that the delegation now meets in private conclave to decide whether we will sign this Treaty.

Griffith

I second / that

Childers

I wish to speak to my cousin first.

Collins

It's too late for that.

Griffith

You may have a moment.

Griffith and Collins withdraw.

Barton

All the dead fought for is lost, Erskine.

Childers

No, Bob! They died to prevent surrender.

Barton

Can we sustain the war?

Childers

If we had asked that at the start, we would never have fought. This is the betrayal of everything we've fought for. All the sacrifice. All the women widowed and children orphaned.

Barton

War will widow more of them, Erskine.

Childers

You alone can stop this, Bob.

Barton

That means I alone bring war upon us.

Childers

Refuse to sign. We shall bring the offer home, to Dev. Let him rally the people against it.

Barton

There's no time!

Childers

We've taken this journey together, Bob - we haven't taken it to end in surrender.

He clasps Barton.

Childers

"Trust thyself", Bob - "every heart vibrates to that iron string".

50

Downing Street - December 6 - 2.20am

The Irish return to the Cabinet table. The British are still there. Silence. Jones enters with two copies of the Treaty. He places them in front of Lloyd George, who signs both, and then Jones places them before Churchill, Birkenhead, Griffith, Collins, who sign them. Finally, he comes to Barton. Barton doesn't react. He looks at Childers. Then at the others. He signs. Childers leaves, returning to his room. The rest all look at the documents. They look across the table. Then Churchill and Birkenhead surge forward around the table to shake the Irish hands.

Jones retrieves a tray with whiskey. The British are exhilarated. The Irish are exhausted. Childers starts typing.

Birkenhead

You know, Mr Collins, I think I may have just signed my political death warrant.

Collins

I have just signed my actual death warrant.

Churchill

You are not in celebratory mood, Mr Barton.

Barton

I fear history will never forgive us.

Churchill

Oh, history will be kind to me. Because I intend to write it.

Lloyd George

What now, Mr Griffith?

Griffith

We go home.

Lloyd George

To build a State.

Griffith

Merely the foundations. I promised my wife I'd retire by next August.

Lloyd George

To write?

Griffith

To garden. "Tis an unweeded garden, That grows to seed," as your poet said. Mine is very unweeded.

Lloyd George

What of Mr de Valera?

Griffith

There should be no surprise for him in this. It's the wild men behind him we have to fear.

Epilogue

De Valera appears, with Brugha behind him. The others step forward to listen, one by one. Childers remains at his desk, alternately listening to de Valera and typing furiously. Jones passes through the group with a tray, collecting their glasses. Birkenhead does not relinquish his.

De Valera

If the government and the people accept this Treaty, and if the Irish Volunteers of the future try to complete the work the Volunteers of the last four years have been attempting, they will have to complete it, not over the bodies of foreign soldiers, but over the dead bodies of their own countrymen.

McKenna

In January, 1922, the Treaty is approved by Dáil Éireann, and Arthur Griffith replaces Éamon de Valera as President.

Barton exits (to join de Valera). Collins watches him.

De Valera

They will have to wade through Irish blood, through the blood of the soldiers of the Irish government and through, perhaps, the blood of some of the members of the government in order to get Irish freedom.

De Valera and Brugha leave. Collins and Griffith look to each other.

McKenna

By June, the country has fallen into civil war. Arthur Griffith never gets to his garden. On the 12th of August, 1922, he collapses with a brain haemorrhage, and dies.

Griffith exits.

Jones

Lord Birkenhead is proved right. The Tory die-hards never forgive him for the Irish treaty. In October, 1922, they reject their own leadership, and bring down the government. Lord Birkenhead's career will never recover - he will drink himself to death eight years later.

Birkenhead knocks back his drink, and exits.

McKenna

Erskine Childers keeps fighting for the Republic at his typewriter, long into the night, in a succession of ever more precarious offices and hideouts, on the run. In November, 1922,

Childers stands up.

McKenna

he is captured at the Barton home in Wicklow, and executed for possession of a small pistol - which had been given to him as a present by Michael Collins.

Childers exits. Jones surveys the remaining British.

Jones

Lloyd George resigns with the collapse of his government. The Welsh Wizard will never hold office again. Nor will the Liberal Party.

Lloyd George exits. Churchill watches him, with a mild smirk. He takes out a cigar and lights it.

Jones

And Winston Churchill - well, as he promised, he will write his own story.

Churchill arches an eyebrow and exits. Just Collins is left.

It starts to rain. McKenna and Jones open umbrellas.

McKenna

Ten days after the death of Mr Griffith, Michael Collins, now chairman of the Provisional Government of the Irish Free State, goes to visit army units in his home place, West Cork. His convoy is caught in a republican ambush, and he is shot.

Collins exits.

McKenna

The Boundary Commission, which he believed would deliver 'essential' unity, will be postponed because of the Civil War, and eventually abandoned. The border will remain unchanged.

Rain. Jones joins McKenna, now at Glasnevin Cemetery again. (August 28, 1922)

Jones

I am so sorry for your loss.

McKenna

Our losses, Mr Jones.

Jones

Indeed.

McKenna

When sorrows come, they come not single spies...

Jones

But in battalions. Forgive me, Miss McKenna, but it has sometimes struck me that for a people so determined to throw off the shackles of the English, you are rather fond of quoting Shakespeare.

McKenna

We never said we didn't like the English, Mr Jones. We just said we didn't like being ruled by you.

Jones

I'm Welsh, Miss McKenna.

McKenna

So perhaps you know what I mean.

Jones

Ah.

McKenna

Mick- Mr Collins - he liked to say... "To go for a drink is one thing. To be driven to it is another."

McKenna holds out her hand. Jones takes it.

Jones

I hope we meet again, Miss McKenna.

McKenna

In happier times.

Jones leaves. De Valera's voice rings out again. McKenna looks up.

De Valera

Soldiers of the Republic.

McKenna

Nine bloody months later.

De Valera

The Republic can no longer be defended successfully by your arms.

McKenna

May, 1923.

De Valera

Further sacrifice of life would now be in vain. Military victory must be allowed to rest - for the moment - with those who have destroyed the Republic.

It stops raining. McKenna looks up at the sky. She closes her umbrella and makes to leave.

McKenna

The wars are over. But we do not celebrate. There are friends to be mourned, and work to be done.

As she leaves, she sings, softly, sadly.

McKenna

But since it fell unto my lot
That I should rise and you should not
I gently rise and softly call
Good night and joy be to you all.