

PARNELL

SERIALIZED FROM THE Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer PICTURES BY **LEBBEUS MITCHELL**

SYNOPSIS—Parnell, leader of the Irish National Party, is in love with Katie O'Shea, estranged wife of a new Irish member of Parliament, Captain Willie O'Shea, who had induced her to entertain Parnell in their home to further his political ambitions. She had nursed Parnell following a heart attack caused by his strenuous exertions in Ireland to quell renewed violence after the Phoenix Park murders. It is through Katie's discovery of a letter from the man who forged the letters that caused The House to try Parnell for complicity in the murders, that he is freed of the charge, welcomed back to the House and given Gladstone's promise to introduce an Irish Home Rule Bill.

CHAPTER THREE

Parnell and Katie O'Shea had stepped out of Parliament building into one of London's "pea-soup" fogs, lost their way and wandered about the streets, happy to be alone together in the moment of his great triumph. It was some hours later when they returned to Eltham and found Willie O'Shea waiting to see Parnell. The Irish leader cut short Willie's congratulations.

"What did you want to see me about?"
 "It's about myself. I feel that I should be something better than a mere M. P. After all, I've been pretty close to you, these last four months. You've been our guest. Everybody knows that. Don't I deserve some more important position?"

"Such as?" asked Parnell quietly.
 "You'll have the right to nominate Chief Secretary when you have your own Parliament in Ireland. I think my importance to the Party entitles me to the appointment."
 "Your importance to the party!" Parnell put wounding contempt into the words. "You have none! I should be betraying the whole Irish Party—everything I believe in."

"And that's the thanks I get for befriending you, letting you stay here, when all the world was against you!"
 "Charles has been here as my guest," said Katie.
 "That is a dangerous admission," reported her husband. "Come now, Mr. Parnell, what do I get?"

"Nothing till you prove your worth to Ireland and the Party."
 "I think you are making a mistake, I thought we could be friends. If we can't... there are others who don't think me as unimportant as you do. The Irish aren't the only Party." He ostentatiously took up his hat and left slowly. Parnell did not call him back as he evidently expected.

"That was a threat," said Katie, panic-stricken.
 "Yes, I know."
 It was not until they were leaving Eltham to attend the reception at which Gladstone had promised to announce his sponsorship of an Irish Home Rule Bill, that Willie O'Shea again showed his hand. As they were starting for the carriage, both Katie and Parnell were served with papers in Willie's divorce suit. He named Parnell as co-respondent.

"He's chosen a fine moment for it," said Aunt Ben who was going to the reception with them. She was near tears. "Tomorrow this will be in all the papers."
 "Tomorrow, yes, but so will Home Rule," replied Parnell.
 "I wonder," said Aunt Ben.
 When they reached London, they found newsboys selling extras, shouting the headlines: "Parnell named in divorce! Irish leader named in divorce!"

"It has been given to the papers deliberately tonight," said Parnell.
 He sent the ladies back to Eltham while he went to his office and dispatched a letter by messenger to Gladstone, asking if his presence at the reception would prove an embarrassment to the Liberal leader.

Katie and Aunt Ben, instead of returning at once to Eltham, proceeded to the hotel at which Willie was staying. Katie came right to the point, ending his astonishment at their call.
 "Willie, I want you to withdraw this suit for divorce."
 "Why, that's what you have always asked for."
 "I know, but now I ask you to withdraw it. Or if it's a divorce you want, let me divorce you, or else you name some other man than Charles. Why did you choose this moment? Out of spite? What harm have I done you, or he either, except to refuse to get a position for you that you had no right to ask for?"

"Is tarnishing my honor no harm?"
 "Stealing my wife?"
 "You've known that for months. You must withdraw the suit."
 "Surely, Willie," said Aunt Ben, "a little money would remove the tarnish from your honor. I'll double your allowance."
 "It's no use, Aunt Ben. I can't."
 "Listen to me, Willie O'Shea: on the day that you withdraw this suit I'll settle 20,000 pounds on you. And then never see you again. It will be cheap at the price."
 "Twenty—" cried Willie, his face flushing, a greedy light in his eyes. "But I can't. I tell you it's out of my hands now!"

"They've tried to ruin Charles before," said Katie. "Remember what happened to Piyott. I'll defend the case, go on the witness stand and say you and I conspired together to get Charles to the house to use him for your ends. When you failed, you turned to this suit as a revenge. If I say that as next myself, who'll the Court believe, you or me."
 "You wouldn't dare! You'd destroy yourself—have to leave England."

"She'll do it, Willie," said Aunt Ben. "Withdraw the suit."
 Upon his again protesting that it was too late, that he couldn't withdraw it, Katie and Aunt Ben left the hotel.
 Parnell was waiting for them at Eltham. Katie told him of her attempt to get Willie to withdraw the suit, of her determination to go on the witness box and swear she and Willie had conspired to get Parnell to make love to her, a plot from the beginning against the Irish leader.
 Parnell refused to allow her to make such a sacrifice. "You would still be tied to him. Isn't this what we've wanted! Freedom for you, so we can marry."
 "Not at such a cost!" she cried. "It's your career, your destiny I'm fighting for. Home Rule is bigger than your career. It's the whole people—all the dreams you've held out to them will be dashed to the ground if this happens. It's got to be good-bye. You must leave and not see me again."
 "For better or worse this has happened to us, Katie. It means a fight, but I've never been afraid of a fight. I shan't be now, with you beside me. The Party will stand by me. It's never failed me yet. All I ask is you. They can't refuse me that."
 "I'm afraid, Charles, afraid..."
 The Irish members of the House, assembled in Committee Room 15, fell silent as Parnell entered and called the meeting to order. He had sent Redmond and Healy to interview Gladstone. He now asked them to report on the interview. They stated that Gladstone had assured them of his heartfelt desire that England should have Home Rule, but that their first business was to choose a new leader.
 "Did he promise you Home Rule?" demanded Parnell.
 "How could he? How can he traffic with a Party whose leader has disgraced them?" responded Healy. "But it's Home Rule we'll have and get!"
 "Not without the alliance and unity we have today."
 "There's no alliance any more. It perished in the stench of the divorce court!"
 Parnell quieted the uproar that followed Healy's words. "Unity is the weapon you'll need now more than ever. If you think you can fight Mr. Gladstone better without me, that is for you to decide. But don't sell me for nothing. If you surrender me, it is your bound duty to get value for the sacrifice. I have a Parliament for Ireland in the hollow of my hand. I'd give you my word I'll get it for you if you'll let me."
 "And if you don't meet another Katie O'Shea!" cried a red-faced member raucously. In the renewed uproar Parnell sprang at the speaker and




knocked him down with a terrific blow to the jaw. Parnell's hand was seen to go swiftly to his side, while the blood drained from his face. His secretary sprang to his side. Healy waving his arms, was shouting:
 "Parnell will never get Home Rule. All he can get is insults. His name is a by-word and always will be. From tonight there's a new Irish Party. Those who are with me, who have the honor of Ireland at heart, who'd have a new Party and a new leader, follow me."
 Quietly by twos and threes, more than half of the members left the room while Campbell sent Michael Davitt, who had hesitated at the door, for a physician.
 Dr. Gillespie ordered a bed made up in Parnell's office; the physical wrench of the blow he had struck had brought about a recurrence of the heart trouble to which Parnell was subject. Parnell demanded to know the truth of his condition; learned that there was small hope for him.
 Alone with Campbell and Michael, he announced that he was going to Katie at Eltham. They could not dissuade him, and finally gave in. Campbell went ahead to warn Katie.
 She stood in the doorway, snow blowing about her, as Parnell's carriage drew up. She ran out and helped Davitt get him into the house. She wanted to put him to bed at once, but he insisted upon being taken into the drawing room by the fire place.
 "Oh, you shouldn't have come, Charles."
 "I had to. I'd have come across the world to you tonight. Let me hold you... There, it's good to have you against my heart where you belong."
 Michael and Campbell at last carried him up to bed. While they waited downstairs for what was to come, Katie sat by his side all night, her hand clasped in his. It was numb from the night-long clasp when her own physician arrived in the morning. He loosened Parnell's fingers and sent her out of the room.

Aunt Ben was outside the door. She took the numb hand that Katie was rubbing and massaged it gently.
 "Aunt Ben, it isn't possible, is it, that he's... just slipping away from us? What is there left when it's all over?... Just memories?"
 "More than that, my dear. The happiness and strength that your love gave him; the knowledge that you made him happy—made a great man happy."
 Katie was on the sofa, Aunt Ben's arms about her, when the doctor came out of the sick room and said his patient was awake, asking for her. She found Parnell propped up on the pillows. He reached for her hand.
 "Don't go away again. Don't ever go away."
 "I'll never go away."
 "I'm going to get well, Katie. The doctor didn't say so, but I know I am, with you beside me. If I'd stayed in town, I couldn't have gone on. There's so much we've never had time to do together—"
 "You shouldn't talk, dearest."
 "Yes, but this is important—the most important thing in my life: our marriage. Do you want me to ask you again, Katie? Will you be my wife?"
 "Charles, don't... I want to be more than all the world. You know that."
 "Do you want a grand wedding, with a choir and page-boys? There won't be orange blossoms though. You'll wear white roses. Where shall we live?"
 "Darling, don't bother about that now."
 "I want to bother. It's important. I

think I'd like to live here. I've come to think of it as home. Do you think I'll make a good husband?"
 "The best in the world, darling."
 "You'll have to teach me all the things that are expected of me. I'll have to practice... Do you know my wife?... My wife..." His voice weakened; his other hand groped for her. The pulse in his fingers beat more slowly. "Only you mustn't go away from me, Katie."
 "Darling, I won't ever."
 He gave her a beautifully tender smile. "I know you won't. One's destiny can't... ever..." He paused to draw a slow fluttering breath, "...go away... from me..." With a lingering sigh, breath deserted him. She drew his limp body close with a despairing cry:
 "Charles!... Charles!..."
 THE END.

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