

THE GOON SHOW:
THE WHITE BOX OF GREAT BARDFIELD

First broadcast on March 15, 1955. Script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes. Produced by Peter Eton. Announced by Wallace Greenslade. Orchestra conducted by Wally Stott. Transcribed by Kurt Adkins and Tony Wills, adjusted by Peter Olausson.

Greenslade:

This is the BBC Home Service. *[strained]* And I'm getting fed up saying it! I am, really I am...

Secombe:

Steady Mr Greenslade... Wallace, Wallace control yourself. Heheheh. Stand by to hear those two sons of filth - Fred Socrates and partner!

Orchestra:

[Variety theatre intro]

Socrates (Sellers):

Thank you, thank you, thank you ladies and gentlemen. And now a little monologue entitled "The Canterbury Bells won't ring tonight, the old Dean's dropped another clanger!"

Socrates (backstage):

It was Christmas night in the workhouse...

Milligan (over top of Fred):

I say, I say. I say, I say, I say, I say...

Socrates:

You rude man, will you kindly not interrupt my act when I'm entertaining these nice ladies and gentlemen?

Milligan:

I say, can you tell me what is it that has eight wheels and flies?

Socrates:

What is it that has eight wheels and flies?

Milligan:

Yes, what is it that has eight wheels and flies?

Socrates:

I don't know. What is it that has eight wheels and flies?

Milligan:

Two corporation dust carts. Thank you!

Socrates:

I don't wish to know that!

Socrates & Milligan (singing):

That's why we're arm in arm together... Just like we used to beeee...

Orchestra:

[Punchline fanfare]

Secombe:

And so ends a farewell tribute to Kenneth Adam from his dear friends in the highly esteemed Goon Show!

Grams:

[Flute playing snake charming tune]

Seagoon:

London nineteen hundred and one. That was a good year for England. Well, we'd have looked silly with out it wouldn't we. Ha ha ha! I remember one lunch hour... I was stalking a pigeon in Trafalgar Square... When suddenly, in my driving mirror I observed a large crowd of women gathered around a very tall Scotsman.

Omnes (feminine):

Whoooooooooooo!

Seagoon:

He spoke.

Omnes:

[Babbling in background]

Ellington:

Ma friends, ma friends. I will pay ten shillings to any man who can escape from these chains.

Seagoon:

Ten shillings?

Grams:

[Whoosh]

Seagoon:

I accept the challenge Ginger!

Ellington:

Right! Put yer hands behind yer back...

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Ellington:

...Now let's see if I can get these chains...

FX:

[Chains rattling in the background]

Seagoon:

Fool. Little does he know that these iron chains, leg shackles, hand cuffs and straitjacket can't keep me prisoner for more than a second because, dear listener - heheheh - I am none other than Ned Seagoon, Son of Houdini!

Orchestra:

[Flat fanfare and cymbal crash]

Seagoon:

Thank yewww! ...Yes, Son of Houdini whose book on how to escape I have sewn in the lining of my wig.

Ellington:

Right! Right, now that's it. Ten shillings if you can get out of that lot.

Seagoon:

Money for jam. Heheheh. All I have to do is to...

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

...flick my wrists so. *[struggling]* Raise my elbow, above my nose. Urghh, I'll be free in a second. Haha, nothing can hold me. Me, Son of Houdini.

Orchestra:

[Flat fanfare and cymbal crash]

Seagoon:

Thank you. *[puffing]* Now, I raise my right knee and place it under... Yes... I'll be free in a second. *[fades out]*

[Pause]

Grams:

[Big Ben chiming (twelve times) for a long time]

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

Now *[struggling and puffing]* I'll just get my left foot under my right arm. I'll be free in a second.

Ellington:

Man you said that thirteen hours ago.

Seagoon:

I'm just teasing you.

Ellington:

Well I'm just going home.

Seagoon:

Oh no you don't! Have that ten shillings ready. I'll be free in trice. Hahahah! Remember, nothing can hold Ned, son of Houdini!

Orchestra:

[Flat fanfare and cymbal crash]

Seagoon:

Thank you. *[struggling]* urghhh! Now I just stand on my head and slip my waist over my knees. Ohhrrgggg. Ahhh, watch the ol' tenor's friend there...ah! Say I, I'll get free if I go black in the face.

Ellington:

Man! That's how I got free!

Seagoon:

Towards dawn he left me. Then...

Moriarty:

Hawwwwwww, *[singing]* April in Paris. Chestnuts in blossom... *[stops singing]* Hor-hor, what is this chain covered charlie in the gutter?

Seagoon:

The stranger was a tall hairy man wearing reversible Jewish socks and an explodable sporrán.

Moriarty:

Hotchhh aye mon ami. 'Tis a braw bruck moonlick nick this night.

Seagoon:

A Scotsman by jove. He approached with his kilt at the high port.

Moriarty:

Hotchhh aye.

Seagoon:

Hotchhh aye, to be sure. Who are you?

Moriarty:

Allow me.

Seagoon:

The stranger stepped back. Raised the tail of his shirt. And revealed a centrally heated brass name plate.... By the side was a bell.

FX:

[Door bell rings; door handle rattles open]

Moriarty:

Sapristi nyackos it's you again. Come in.

Seagoon:

Thank you.

FX:

[Dragging chains, door shuts]

Moriarty:

Here! Let me take your wet kilt.

FX:

[Material ripping]

Seagoon:

Whoop! Thanks. Now, if I could just get me left leg over my...

Moriarty:

Not now!

Seagoon:

Oh.

Moriarty:

First you must meet my partner.

Seagoon:

The stranger pressed a button in his trousers. A bookcase swung back revealing a plastic mule rest. From it he took out a volume. Rapidly he turned to page nine. On it was a drawing of a door marked Scotland. He knocked.

FX:

[Knocking on door]

Grams:

[Bagpipe music]

Gryttype:

Otch oye, otch oye.

Seagoon (off):

Otch oye

Gryttype:

Ahh, come in gentlemen. Oh here Neddie, let me take your kilt.

FX:

[Material ripping]

Seagoon:

Whoop! *[campily]* Thank you. My it is draughty.

Gryttype:

Have a bagpipe.

Seagoon:

No thanks, I'm religious. Now I'll get my left leg under these...

Grams:

[Tiger growling]

Seagoon:

[Gulps] A tiger?

Gryttype:

Yes.

Seagoon:

Don't let it come near me!

Gryttype:

Why not?

Seagoon:

I've got flu.

Gryttype:

Down Pussy. Put the little man down.

Seagoon:

Why is that tiger wearing brown boots?

Gryttype:

His black ones are at the menders. Here. Have a fresh kilt.

FX:

[Material ripping]

Seagoon:

Whoop! Thank you. Now excuse me, I, I must get out of these chains. Errrr urghhh... They can't hold me, Son of Houdini.

Orchestra:

[Flat fanfare and cymbal crash]

FX:

[Chains]

Seagoon:

Right! Now I'll just get my leg over my right shoulder... Urghh... Rotate my ankles in circles... Bend my head under my glasses... Burghhh... Space my arms round my waist, up my back, under my chin. At the same time bend my legs up under the base of my skull... Eurghhh... Eurgghhh....There *[puffing]* How's that?

Gryttype:

You silly twisted boy. Neddie? Stop playing that leather euphonium and answer me. Why are you keeping us prisoners here?

Seagoon:

What?

Gryttype:

A likely story.

Seagoon:

It's the truth!

Grams:

[Tiger growling]

Seagoon:

Keep away from that tiger.

Gryttype:

Why?

Seagoon:

It's got flu! And no wonder in this weather. Just look at the snow out of the window.

Gryttype:

Yes, it's a pity it's going to waste.

Moriarty:

Do you realise Seagoon, that the Sudanese have never seen snow?

Gryttype:

Just think Neddie. You could be the man to hold the first exhibition of British snow in Khartoum. You'd make a fortune.

Seagoon:

Really? But I don't own any snow.

Gryttype:

Moriarty, a bill of sale.

Grams:

[Whoosh]

Gryttype:

Sign there would you Neddie.

Grams:

[Scribbling on parchment]

Gryttype:

There. That gives you possession of all the snow in England.

Seagoon:

Hooray! I'll take it to the Sudan and make my fortune, but first...

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

...I'll just get this left leg over here... And the right leg over... Earrlp!

Greenslade:

While Mr Seagoon is in the second day of his lightning escape act we see approaching the French coast, a celluloid lift containing a harmonica player with a ginger glass eye. Max Geldray!

Max Geldray and Orchestra:

[Musical interlude: 'Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White']

Greenslade:

The White Box of Great Bardfield part two, and I'm surprised it's got this far.

Seagoon:

Having spent all my life savings on buying all the snow in England, I realised that I had cornered the world market. Next I contacted England's greatest and only snow packer.

FX:

[Hammering steel nails in. Over:]

Crun:

Mnk mnk mnk... Ohhhhh... *[repeated for several seconds]*

FX:

[Knocking on door]

Bannister:

Oh oh ohhhhhh. We'll all be murdered in our beds.

Crun:

It's alright I can't get the wood you....

FX:

[Door knob rattling, door opening]

Seagoon:

Good morning.

Crun:

You can't come in.

Seagoon:

And why not?

Crun:

Our tiger's got flu.

Seagoon:

I don't wish to catch that.

Crun:

Oh...

Seagoon:

Mr Crun? I want to transport one hundred tons of snow to the Sudan.

Crun:

Woah, ohhhh.

Seagoon:

I understand that you are skilled in this dying craft.

Crun:

Yes, yea mnk mnk... You can't get the wood you know.

Seagoon:

Can't you?

Crun:

No, no. You can't get it at all. Do you know Molly Nasher?

Seagoon:

No, why?

Crun:

She can't get the wood either. You can't get it you know, you, you, you, it...

Bannister:

We'll all be murdered in our beds I tell you...

Seagoon:

Yes, yes, now, now Mr Crun, please.

Crun:

Yes?

Seagoon:

Will you accept the task of transporting my snow to Khartoum?

Crun:

Khartoum?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Crun:

Poor, poor, poor old Jim Tigernuts.

Seagoon:

Jim Tigernuts? What about him?

Crun:

He couldn't get the wood either. He had to put 'em in cardboard boxes.

Seagoon:

What was he?

Crun:

An undertaker you know...

Seagoon:

I don't wish to know that.

FX:

[Door opening]

Crun:

Ohhh.

Bannister (singing):

Yom pom piddle...

Grams:

[Tiger growling over:]

Bannister (singing):

Yom pom piddle pee...

Crun:

Minnie? Stop that modern crazy rhythm singing. You, you, you sinful woman.

Bannister:

Ahhh, you're a square buddy! You're corny!

Crun:

Never you mind about who's corny, you put that tiger down.

Bannister:

This, this tiger's not well buddy. He's got flu.

Crun:

Never you mind buddy.

Grams:

[Tiger growling over:]

Bannister & Crun (arguing):

Ahh, Buddy...

Bannister:

You'll have us all murdered in our beds...

Crun:

Why don't you want the wood you know...?

Crun:

It's no good trying to tell me whether I'm old and square. I can get the... I... Hnk, mnk, mnk... ohhhh... Minnie? Minnieee? Oh dear. Where have you gone? Ohh...

Grams:

[Tiger growling]

Crun:

Tigo. Good, good tiger. Oh dear, open your mouth... Min? Are you down there?

Bannister (faintly):

Yes, I'm just going to bed.

Crun:

Come out of there. Tigers aren't meant to be slept in you know. You mustn't... Come out at once, I'm...

Seagoon:

Stop this madness...

Crun:

Mnn can't...

Seagoon:

Mr Crun.

Crun:

... get the wood you know...

Seagoon:

I understand that. Mr Crun, I'm going down to the docks to commandeer a ship. I want all my snow boxed and crated and delivered to the quay tomorrow.

Crun:

Poor tiger. He's got the flu you know...

Bannister:

We'll all be murdered in our tigers!

Greenslade:

Ladies and gentlemen. A word to listeners who may have been perplexed by the recurring appearance of a tiger with influenza. The RSPCA have asked me to point out that on no account would they permit the employment of a tiger in a poor state of health. The tiger appearing on this programme has not got flu, but is just acting the part of a tiger with flu. Snow on high ground, rain in places, part three we join Seagoon at the docks.

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

Hrghhhh! I'll just get my left elbow under the right armpit and I'll be, uhhh, I'll be free in a second.

Grams:

[Tiger growling]

Seagoon:

What's that? Who owns this tiger?

Eccles:

Hallowwww!

Seagoon:

I found myself looking into the face of a ragged idiot wearing a tin sou'wester, carrying a flannel anchor and leading a tiger.

Eccles:

You know? He's got flu.

Seagoon:

Wait! Why is that tiger wearing brown boots?

Eccles:

His black ones are at the menders.

Seagoon:

No, what I mean is why does a tiger wear boots?

Eccles:

Well, it's lucky.

Seagoon:

Why?

Eccles:

What other tiger's got two pairs of boots to wear? Anyhow, he's got flu an'...

Seagoon:

I don't wish to know that. Let me tell you, you are speaking to the Son of Howdini.

Orchestra:

[Flat fanfare and cymbal crash]

Seagoon:

Thang yew! Now long lad, tell me, where can I hire a ship to take me to Africa?

Eccles:

Ahhhh. Where can you hire a ship to take you to Africa? Hm hmm. Yah, well let me see. There's umm... I know some fellas. I could, I could, I could um, I got em all um... I know these fellas, yup... uhmmmm... Let me see... Jim Cronger, nope, no not 'im nope. He can't get the wood ya know that fella. Uhhmm... Anudder fella... Ah gee, there's uhmm... Ahhh, ooohhh, ooohhh, ooohh. Um, yeah there's a fellow in Deptford - ah - no no, not him, not him... This shouldn't be difficult you know, it shouldn't be difficult. I, I got quite a few fellas in dummm, now let me think now ummm... Ummmm... What was the question again?

Seagoon:

You idiot Eccles!

Eccles:

You idiot Eccles!

Seagoon:

I want a ship and supplies.

Eccles:

Orrrr supplies oooh. How about milk?

Seagoon:

Yes I suppose I'll need some?

Eccles:

Oh good. 'Cos me and my partner are in the milk business.

Seagoon:

Who's your partner?

Eccles:

A cow! Har har har har!

FX:

[Pistol shot]

Grams:

[Funeral dirge]

Seagoon:

Alas poor Eccles I knew him well. Right! Now has anyone here got a ship for hire?

Bluebottle:

Yes I have! ...Enter Blunebottles. Sticks head through porthole, cops dirty big bosun's spanner on nut. Splun! Oer I don't like this game.

Seagoon:

Tell me more little heavily pimpled stranger.

Bluebottle:

Do you want a ship? I have a ship. A proud ship. Thinks. I have a ship, a proud ship.

Seagoon:

Where is it little Nelson?

Bluebottle:

Here it is! Springs forward onto deck of proud ship. Springe!

FX:

[Thump]

Bluebottle:

This is my rocket ship. See, I will demonstrate its power to you. I stand on the deck and light the rocket fuse, so!

Grams:

[Explosion, whoosh of rocket]

Bluebottle:

There it goes.

Seagoon:

Why aren't you on it?

Bluebottle:

Because... Hmmm, the ship has gone. Thinks. Then what is Bluebottle standing on?

Grams:

[Splash]

Bluebottle:

Oyyy! I'm drowned in the deaded water. Look! All the silver paper's come off my cardboard cutlass. My best trousers is wetted. This means I'll have to wear Mum's old drawers while they dry. Heeheehee! Exits left to hear Ray Ellington's Quinten.

Ray Ellington Quartet:

[Musical interlude: 'Sally']

Greenslade:

We come now to the great day when Ned Seagoon arrived at Port Sudan with the four hundred boxes for the first great exhibition of British snow in the Sudan. At the quayside Major Dennis Bloodnok, conman and bar.

Bloodnok:

All lies do you hear me, all lies. I swear on my convicts uniform. Now Neddie, you've err brought the snow?

Seagoon:

Yes, a hundred tons.

Bloodnok:

Bravo for the old country. What's its name again?

Seagoon:

Fred!

Bloodnok:

That's it. Long live Fred! Now into this sack and I'll take you to the great exhibition hall.

Grams:

[Whoosh - whoosh]

Bloodnok:

Here we are.

Omnes:

[African noise]

Bloodnok:

Thank you, thank you thank you. Yes... Now ladies, gentlemen and wogs. Mr Ned Seagoon will now cut the ribbon on the first box of British snow.

Omnes:

[Excited mutterings]

Bloodnok:

Abdul, Abdul. The scissors?

Abdul (Milligan):

I can't get the safe open hooray.

Bloodnok:

Safe? What are the scissors doing in the safe?

Abdul:

Scissors are made of gold.

Bloodnok:

Gold!

Abdul:

Hooray.

Bloodnok:

Uhk. Steady Dennis! *[clears throat]* You can't get the safe open you say? Well, let's see if old Dennis can do it, eh? Heheheh, yes now. Just put on me running shoes. Now how wide's this safe? Three foot eh? You wogs there! Clear a lane three foot wide from here to the door. Now before I open the safe... So that no-one will know my secret methods... Will you all close your eyes. Have you all done that? Splendid, splendid. Now uh...

FX:

[Heavy object rumbling over floor]

[Pause]

Grams:

[Distant explosion]

Seagoon:

What's that? Good heavens, the...

Bloodnok:

What's the matter lad?

Seagoon:

The safe's gone.

Bloodnok:

Good heavens can't I turn my back for the moment? Never mind lad, it so happens that by the merest chance I have a pair of golden scissors on me. There, cut the ribbon.

Seagoon:

Ladies and gentlemen. Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking...

Bloodnok:

Here. Never mind that, cut the tape, go on.

Seagoon:

I now pronounce the box of British snow open.

Omnes:

[Native mutterings]

Seagoon:

Oh no! The snow's gone! The box is full of water!

Bloodnok:

Ee gad. The heat of the sun's melted it.

Seagoon:

Who stole my snow and put water in its place eh? I'm ruined! *[sobs]*

Bloodnok:

What? This water will sell for huge sums to tribesmen living in the Sahara Desert.

Seagoon:

Oh? *[panting]* How can I get there?

Bloodnok:

Quite simple. By the merest chance..

Seagoon:

Yes?

Bloodnok:

...I have outside a hundred camels and provisions for six weeks. They're yours for twenty pounds.

Seagoon:

Right! There!

FX:

[Cash register]

Bloodnok:

Thank you. Forward!

Orchestra:

[Suspense, desert type link]

Omnes (under music):

[Native mutterings]

Grams:

[Camel noises]

Orchestra:

[Slow rhythmic beating of big drum in background under:]

Seagoon:

January the 8th. Nearly there. Very, very excited. Expect to make a fortune selling my cardboard boxes of water to natives.

Bloodnok:

Travelled all night to avoid sun.

Eccles:

I travelled all day to avoid the moon.

Grytpype:

I travelled by train to avoid Eccles.

Seagoon:

I travelled by Eccles to avoid the train.

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

...get my right fist under my leg. Urugggghhh.

Orchestra:

[Drums stop]

Seagoon:

Stretch my shake a leg up the mud walled city of El Pong.

Chief Pong (Ellington):

You come my city Pongs. My People all pong. Me pong.

Chief Pong:

You! You got water in cardboard box for tribe? We need-um water.

Bloodnok:

Let me talk to him in his own language. Now! What's your language?

Chief Pong:

You watch yours, ladies present. Hey! You! You got water in cardboard box for tribe? We need-um water. Me give you money. Here.

FX:

[Coins chinking]

Seagoon:

Oh, thank you, very much. Where can I keep it all?

Bloodnok:

Lad! It just so happens I have here a replica of the safe that was stolen in the Sudan. I'll keep it for you.

FX:

[Coins chinking]

Bloodnok:

Thank you, thank you. Oh, and now so that no-one will learn the secret combination of the lock, will everybody please close their eyes while I unlock it? Are they closed? Right! Hup!

Grams:

[Speeding up footsteps running away into the distance]

Seagoon:

I never saw him again.

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Seagoon:

...Now I'll just get my left leg over my elbow...

Chief Pong:

Me no wish to know that!

Seagoon:

Uiee.

Chief Pong:

Show-um water. Pong people need-um water.

Seagoon:

Yes.... Right! I'll just open this cardboard box.

FX:

[Cardboard ripping]

Chief Pong:

Cardboard box empty cor blimey! Only steam!

Moriarty:

Curse, curses it's evaporated.

Seagoon:

Moriarty!?

Moriarty:

Yes?

Seagoon:

I'm ruined again! Will no-one help me? The Sheikh will kill me!

Grams:

[Whoosh]

Gryttype:

Don't worry Neddie. I can come to an 'micible agreement with him.

Seagoon:

Oh good.

Gryttype:

Oh Sheikh?

Chief Pong:

Yeah?

FX:

[Gunshot]

Gryttype:

Just a shallow hole Morarrty. Ah Neddie, I know a place where they'll pay anything for old cardboard boxes.

Seagoon:

Where?

Gryttype:

England.

Seagoon:

What do they want them for?

Gryttype:

Well, you see the idea is, they they pack snow into them and ship them to the Sudan...

Seagoon:

No!

Gryttype:

...Where the natives have never seen...

Seagoon:

No! No, leave me alone. Leave me alone

Gryttype:

... because it's there...

Seagoon (going off)

If I could just get my left leg under my right arm, and then stretch...

FX:

[Chains rattling]

Orchestra:

[Play outro theme]

Greenslade:

That was the Goon Show. A recorded program featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe and Spike Milligan. With the Ray Ellington Quartet and Max Geldray. The orchestra was conducted by Wally Stott. Script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes. Announcer Wallace Greenslade, the programme produced by Peter Eton.