

S5 E03 - The Dreaded Batter Pudding Hurler (Of Bexhill-On-Sea)

Transcribed by Kurt Adkins, corrections by Peter Olausson. Additional corrections by thegoonshow.net. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC Home Service.

FX:

PENNY IN MUG

GREENSLADE:

Thank you. We now come to the radio show entirely dedicated to the downfall of John Snagge.

SECOMBE:

He, of course, refers to the highly esteemed Goon Show.

GRAMS:

FUNERAL DIRGE, WAILING PEOPLE

SECOMBE:

Stop! (GRAMS STOPS) Time for laughs later. But now to business. Mr Greenslade!? Come over here.

FX:

RATTLING CHAINS

GREENSLADE:

Yes, Master?

SECOMBE:

Tell the waiting world what we have for them.

GREENSLADE:

My lords, ladies and other National Assistance holders - tonight the League of Burmese Trombonists present a bestseller play entitled:

ORCHESTRA:

TIMPANI

SELLERS:

The Terror Of Bexhill-on-sea or...

ORCHESTRA:

TROMBONE CHORD

SECOMBE:

The Dreaded Batter Pudding Hurler.

ORCHESTRA:

SINISTER HORNS CHORD

GREENSLADE:

The English Channel, 1941. Across the silent strip of green-grey water, in England, coastal towns were deserted. Except for people. Despite the threat of invasion and the stringent blackout rules, elderly gentlefolk of Bexhill-on-Sea still took their evening constitucionals.

FX:

SEA WASHING ONTO BEACH

HENRY CRUN:

Ohhh, dear, dear, dear. Ohh, no. It's quite windy on these cliffs, Minnie.

MINNIE:

Yes, yes. What a nice summer evening. Typical English evening.

HENRY CRUN:

Yes, the rain is lovely and warm. Minnie?

MINNIE:

Yes?

HENRY CRUN:

I think I'll take one of my sou'westers off.

MINNIE:

You devil, you!

HENRY CRUN:

Here, Minnie, hold my elephant gun.

MINNIE:

Oh, dear, I don't know what you brought it for, you can't shoot elephants in England, you know!

HENRY CRUN:

Why not?

MINNIE:

They're out of season.

HENRY CRUN:

Oh. Does this mean we shall have to have pelican for dinner again?

MINNIE:

I fear so, I fear so!

HENRY CRUN:

Then I'll risk it, I'll shoot an elephant out of season.

MINNIE:

You can't shoot an elephant out of season.

HENRY CRUN:

Yes I can, Minnie!

MINNIE:

Elephants mustn't be shot out of season.... (FADE)

GREENSLADE:

Listeners who are listening will, of course, realise that Minnie and Henry are talking rubbish. As erudite people will realise, there are no elephants in Sussex. They're only found in Kent. North of a line drawn between two points thus making it the shortest distance.

FX:

PENNY IN MUG

GREENSLADE:

Thank you!

HENRY CRUN:

Well, if that's how it is I can't shoot any.

MINNIE:

Come, Henry, we'd better be getting home. I don't want to be caught on the beaches if there's an invasion.

HENRY CRUN:

Neither do I, Minnie. I'm wearing a dirty shirt and I don't...

FX:

METAL DOOR SLIDES OPEN

HENRY CRUN:

Ooh, oh, Minnie?

MINNIE:

What, what, what, whatwhatwhatwhat?

HENRY CRUN:

Minnie, did you hear a gas oven door slam just then?

MINNIE:

Don't be silly, Henry! Who'd be walking around these cliffs with a gas oven?

HENRY CRUN:

Lady Docker?

MINNIE:

Yes, but apart from the obvious ones, who'd want to...

FX:

WHOOSH! SPLAT!

MINNIE:

Oooooooooooooohohohohohohohohohohoh... Yeuhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!

HENRY CRUN:

No, I've never heard of him.

MINNIE:

Help, Henry! I've been struck down from behind, buddy. Heelp!

HENRY CRUN:

Oh! Oh, dear, dear! Poor Minnie!

MINNIE:

Help!

HENRY CRUN:

Police! English Police! Law Guardians!

MINNIE:

Not too loud, Henry, they'll hear you.

HENRY CRUN:

Police of the law.

FX:

POLICE WHISTLE FOLLOWED BY A WHOOSH!

SEAGOON:

Can I help you, sir?

HENRY CRUN:

Are you a policeman?

SEAGOON:

No, I'm a constable.

HENRY CRUN:

Oh, what is the difference?

SEAGOON:

They're spelt differently.

MINNIE:

Ohhhhhh, help me, differently spelt constable.

SEAGOON:

Oh! What's happened to this dear old silver bearded lady?

HENRY CRUN:

She was struck down from behind.

SEAGOON:

And not a moment too soon. Congratulations, sir.

HENRY CRUN:

I didn't do it.

SEAGOON:

Coward, hand back your OBE. Now, tell me who did this felonious deed? What's happened to her?

HENRY CRUN:

It's much too dark to see.

MINNIE:

Yes.

HENRY CRUN:

Strike a light.

SEAGOON:

Not allowed in blackout.

MINNIE:

Strike a dark light.

SEAGOON:

No, madam! Madam, we daren't. Why, only twenty eight miles across the Channel the Germans are watching this coast.

HENRY CRUN:

Don't you be a silly billy policeman.

MINNIE:

Bravo, Henry.

HENRY CRUN:

Pittle Poo.

MINNIE:

Pittle Poo. They... they... they... they can't see a little match being struck.

SEAGOON:

Oh, all right.

FX:

STRIKING MATCH - BOMB WHISTLE - EXPLOSION

SEAGOON:

(ECHOEY) Any questions?

HENRY CRUN:

Yes, where are my legs?

MINNIE:

Where are mine?

SEAGOON:

Now are you aware of the danger from German long range guns?

HENRY CRUN:

I have it! I've got it, I've got the answer. Just by chance I happen to have on me a box of German matches.

SEAGOON:

Wonderful! Strike one. Ha, they won't dare fire at their own matches.

HENRY CRUN:

Of course not. Now...

FX:

STRIKING MATCH - BOMB WHISTLE - EXPLOSION

HENRY CRUN:

Curse! The British! The British!

SEAGOON:

We tried using a candle, but it wasn't very bright and we daren't light it. So we waited for dawn and there, in the light of the morning sun, we saw what had struck Miss Bannister. It was... a batter pudding!

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC CHORD

HENRY CRUN:

It's still warm, Minnie.

MINNIE:

Oh. Thank heaven, I hate cold batter pudding.

HENRY CRUN:

Come, dear little Minnie. I'll take you home with me, Minnie. I'll give you a hot bath, rub you down with the anti-vapour rub, put a plaster on your back, give your little feet a mustard bath and then put you to bed.

SEAGOON:

Do you know this woman?

HENRY CRUN:

Devilish man!

MINNIE:

Naughty man!

HENRY CRUN:

Naughty, naughty, horrible, naughty man! Of course I do. This... this is Minnie Bannister, the world famous poker player. Give her a good poker and she'll play any tune you like.

SEAGOON:

Well, get her off this cliff, it's dangerous. Meantime, I must report this to the Inspector. I'll call on you later, goodbye.

FX:

SPLASH

SEAGOON:

As I swam ashore I dried myself to save time. That night I lay awake in my air-conditioned dustbin, thinking. Now who on earth would want to strike another with a batter pudding? Obviously it wouldn't happen again, so I fell asleep. Nothing much happened that night, except that I was struck with a batter pudding.

MILLIGAN:

It's all rather confusing, really!

GREENSLADE:

In the months to come, thirty eight batter puddings were hurled at Miss Bannister.

MINNIE:

Ohhh!

GREENSLADE:

A madman was at large. Scotland Yard was called in.

ORCHESTRA:

MUSICAL LINK

GRYTPYPE:

Inspector Seagoon?

SEAGOON:

Yes.

GRYTPYPE:

My name is Hercules Grytpype-Thynne, Special Investigation. This Batter Pudding Hurler.

SEAGOON:

Yes?

GRYTPYPE:

He's made a fool of the police.

SEAGOON:

I disagree, we were fools long before he came along.

GRYTPYPE:

You silly, twisted boy. Nevertheless, he's got to be stopped. Now Seagoon...

SEAGOON:

Yesyesyesyesyesyesyesyesyes?

GRYTPYPE:

Please, don't do that. Now these batter puddings, they were obviously thrown by hand.

SEAGOON:

Not necessarily. Some people are pretty clever with their feet.

GRYTPYPE:

For instance?

SEAGOON:

Tom Cringingnut.

GRYTPYPE:

Who's he?

SEAGOON:

He's a man who's pretty clever with his feet.

GRYTPYPE:

What's his name?

SEAGOON:

Jim Flatcrock.

GRYTPYPE:

Sergant Throat!

THROAT:

Yes?

GRYTPYPE:

Make a note of that.

THROAT:

Right. Anything else, Sir?

GRYTPYPE:

Yes.

THROAT:

Right.

GRYTPYPE:

Now Seagoon, these batter puddings, were they all identical?

SEAGOON:

All except the last one. Inside it, we found... this.

GRYTPYPE:

What? An army boot!? So the dreaded hurler is a military man. Any troops in the town?

SEAGOON:

The 56th Heavy Underwater Artillery.

GRYTPYPE:

Get there at once, arrest the first soldier you see wearing one boot.

SEAGOON:

Ying tong iddle I po.

GRYTPYPE:

Right, off you go.

ORCHESTRA:

BLOODNOK THEME

BLOODNOK:

Ahhhhhh! Ohhhh! Oh, oh, oh! How dare you come here to my H.Q. with such a ridiculous...

SEAGOON:

I tell you, Major Bloodnok, I must ask you to parade your men.

BLOODNOK:

Why?

SEAGOON:

I'm looking for a criminal.

BLOODNOK:

You find your own, it took me years to get this lot! Oh... oh... I surrendered the army...

SEAGOON:

Ying tong iddle I po!

BLOODNOK:

Very well, then. Bugler Max Geldray? Sound fall in the hard way.

MAX GELDRAY:

'THEY WERE DOING THE MAMBO'

ORCHESTRA:

NAVAL TYPE LINK

GRAMS:

COMPLAINING FROM THE SOLDIERS

BLOODNOK:

Silence, silence, lads. Silence! Lads, lads, lads, lads, lads.

VOICE:

Ya big flathead!

BLOODNOK:

Lads! My dear lovely, hairy lads. I'm... I'm sorry I had to get you out of bed in the middle of the day but I'll see you get extra pay for this, I promise you.

GRAMS:

CRIES OF DISSENT

BLOODNOK:

Oh, no. Ahhhhhh... That's what I like - spirit. Now Seagoon, which is the man?

SEAGOON:

I walked along the serried ranks looking for the soldier with one boot, but my luck was out. The entire regiment were barefooted, all save the officers who wore reinforced concrete socks.

BLOODNOK:

I say Seagoon, it's getting dark. You can't see in this light.

SEAGOON:

I'll strike a match.

FX:

STRIKING MATCH - BOMB WHISTLE - EXPLOSION

SEAGOON:

Curse, I forgot about the Germans.

ECCLES:

We want our beddy byes.

SEAGOON:

Who are you?

ECCLES:

Me? I'm Lance Private Eccles, but most people call me by my nickname.

SEAGOON:

What's that?

ECCLES:

Nick. Hahahahahaha, that's a joke! (ASIDE) I made a joke about the nick!

SEAGOON:

I inspected the man closely. He was the nearest thing I'd seen to a human being without actually being one.

BLOODNOK:

I say, Seagoon. You... surely you don't suspect this man? Why, we were together in the same company during that terrible disaster.

SEAGOON:

What company was that?

BLOODNOK:

Desert Song, 1933.

SEAGOON:

Were you both in the D'Oyly Carte?

BLOODNOK:

Right in the D'Oyly Carte.

SEAGOON:

I don't wish to know that.

SELLERS:

(AD LIBBING) I say! I say!

SEAGOON:

But wait!! At last, by the light of a passing glue factory, I saw that Eccles was only wearing... one boot!

ECCLES:

Ooooh! Well, I only got one boot.

SEAGOON:

I know, but why are you wearing it on your head?

ECCLES:

Why? Why? It fits, dat's why! What a silly question to ask...

SEAGOON:

Let me see that boot! Mmmmm, size 19. What size head have you got?

ECCLES:

Size 19.

SEAGOON:

Curse, the man's defence was perfect.

ECCLES:

Ho ho!

SEAGOON:

Major Blooknok?

BLOODNOK:

How dare you call me Major Bloodnok!

SEAGOON:

That's your name.

BLOODNOK:

In that case, I forgive you.

SEAGOON:

Where's this man's other boot?

BLOODNOK:

Stolen.

SEAGOON:

By whom?

BLOODNOK:

A thief.

SEAGOON:

You sure it wasn't a pickpocket?

BLOODNOK:

Positive, Eccles never keeps his boots in his pocket.

SEAGOON:

Damn!

MILLIGAN:

Damn!

BLOODNOK:

Damn!

SEAGOON:

They all had a watertight... they all had a watertight alibi. But just to make sure, I left it in a fish tank overnight. Next morning, my breast pocket phone rang.

FX:

TELEPHONE RINGING

SEAGOON:

Hello?

HENRY CRUN:

Mr. Seagoon, Minnie's been hit with another batter pudding.

SEAGOON:

Well, that's nothing new.

HENRY CRUN:

It is, this one was stone cold.

SEAGOON:

Cold!?

HENRY CRUN:

Yes, he must be losing interest in her.

SEAGOON:

It proves also that the phantom Batter Pudding Hurler has had his gas-pipe cut off! Taxi!

FX:

BAGPIPES RUNNING OUT OF STEAM

ABDUL:

[MILLIGAN]

Yes, Sir? Hooray for rule Britannia, poor old Marilyn Monroe, poor old Joe!

SEAGOON:

The Bexhill Gas Works and step on it.

ABDUL:

Very good, Sir. Hooray, here we go!

FX:

BAGPIPES FILLING UP WITH AIR AND SPEEDING UP AND FADING INTO DISTANCE...

GREENSLADE:

Listeners may be puzzled by a taxi sounding like bagpipes. The truth is, it is all part of the BBC new economy campaign. They have discovered that it is cheaper to travel by bagpipes. And not only are they more musical, but they come in a wide variety of colours. See your local bagpipe officer and ask for particulars. You won't be disappointed.

MILLIGAN:

It's all rather confusing, really.

NARRATOR:

[SELLERS]

Meantime, Neddie Seagoon had arrived at the Bexhill Gas and Coke Works.

SEAGOON:

Phewwww! Blimeyyy! Anyone about?

ODIUM:

[MILLIGAN]

Yeahurureurur?

SEAGOON:

Good.

ODIUM:

Yeahrur.

SEAGOON:

I'd like a list of people who haven't paid their gas bills.

ODIUM:

Yeahurureurur.

SEAGOON:

Oh, thank you. Now, here's a good list, I'll try this number.

FX:

DIALLING TELEPHONE

SEAGOON:

Think we've got him this time. (LAUGHS) Hello?

WINSTON CHURCHILL:

[SELLERS]

Ten Downing Street, here.

SEAGOON:

(GULP) I... ooh, I'm... I'm terribly sorry.

FX:

HANDSET CLICKS DOWN

SEAGOON:

No, no, it... it couldn't be him. Who would *he* want to throw a Batter Pudding at?

FX:

TELEPHONE RINGS

SEAGOON:

Hello? Police here.

ATTLEE:

[MILLIGAN]

This is Mr. Attlee. Someone's just throw a Batter Pudding at me.

ORCHESTRA:

SINISTER TIMPANI DRUM ROLL

SEAGOON:

Months went by - I couldn't stop them. Still no sign of the dreaded Hurler. Finally, I walked the streets of Bexhill at night disguised as a human man. Then, suddenly...

ORCHESTRA:

A SINISTER AND DRAMATIC FANFARE

SEAGOON:

Nothing happened. But it happened suddenly, mark you. Disappointed, I lit my pipe.

FX:

STRIKING MATCH - BOMB WHISTLE - EXPLOSION

SEAGOON:

Aargh, curse those Germans!

MORIARTY:

Ohhh... Pardon me, my friend.

SEAGOON:

I turned to see the speaker. He was a tall man wearing sensible feet and a head to match. He was dressed in the full white outfit of a Savoy chef. Around his waist were tied several thousand cooking instruments. And behind him he pulled a portable gas stove from which issued forth the smell of... batter pudding.

MORIARTY:

Could I borrow a match? You see my gas has gone out and my batter pudding was just about to start browning.

SEAGOON:

Certainly, here... No, no, no... Keep the whole box, I... I have another match at home.

MORIARTY:

So rich! Well, thank you, m'sieur, you have saved my batter pudding from getting cold. As you will agree, there's nothing quite so bad as being struck down with a cold batter pudding.

SEAGOON:

Oh, yes?

MORIARTY:

Of course. Well, goodnight m'sieur.

SEAGOON:

Goodnight. I watched the strange man as he pulled his gas stove away into the darkness. But I couldn't waste time watching him, my job was to find the Dreaded Batter Pudding Hurler!

GREENSLADE:

Those listeners who think that Seagoon is not cut out to be a detective, please write to him care of Rowton House.

SEAGOON:

On December 25th the Hurler changed his tactics. That day Miss Bannister was struck with a Christmas Pudding. Naturally, I searched the workhouse.

INSPECTOR:

(PUFFING CIGAR) Mmmm. Mmmm. Mmmmm. Mmmm. Mmmm. Seagoon? The hurler is abroad.

SEAGOON:

What's that, Sir?

INSPECTOR:

Hmm, a Miss Bannister has just received this letter. It was postmarked 'Africa' and inside was a portion of batter pudding. (SELLERS ALMOST CORPSES)

MINNIE:

Yes, he hasn't forgotton me, buddy!

SEAGOON:

So he's in Africa. Now we've got him cornered. I must leave at once. Where is my power packed, giant assistant? (CALLS) Bluebottle!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yahaaaaay! I heard you call me, my Capitain, I heard my Captain call me. Waits for audience applause, not a sausage. Puts on 'I don't care' expression as done by Aneurin Bevan at Blackpool Conservative Rally.

SEAGOON:

Bluebottle, you and I are going to Africa.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Goody, goody! Can... can we take sandwiches?

SEAGOON:

Only for food. Any questions?

BLUEBOTTLE:

No.

SEAGOON:

I can't answer that, can you?

BLUEBOTTLE:

No.

SEAGOON:

Ignorant swine! Got that down, Sergeant Throat?

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Good.

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Right, we catch the very next troop convoy to Algiers. And who better to drive us out of the country than Ray Ellington and his Quartet?

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

'OLE MAN RIVER'

ORCHESTRA:

NAUTICAL MUSICAL LINK

SELLERS:

(AMERICAN ACCENT) And now...

FX:

WAVES AGAINST WOOD

GREENSLADE:

Seagoon and Bluebottle travelled by sea. To avoid detection by enemy U-boats they spoke German throughout the voyage, heavily disguised as Spaniards.

SELLERS:

As an added precaution they travelled on separate decks and wore separate shoes on different occasions.

SEAGOON:

The ship was disguised as a train. To make the train sea-worthy it was done up to look like a boat and painted to appear like a tram.

MILLIGAN:

All rather confusing, really.

SEAGOON:

Also on board were Major Bloodnok and his regiment. When we were ten miles from Algiers, we heard a dreaded cry.

ECCLES:

Mine ahead! Woohoowoo! Dirty big mine ahead!

BLOODNOK:

I say, I say, I say! What's happening, here? Why are all these naughty men cowering down on the deck, the cowards?

SEAGOON:

There's a mine ahead.

BLOODNOK:

Mine...?

FX:

FOOTSTEPS RUNNING AWAY - SPLASH

SEAGOON:

Funny, he wasn't dressed for swimming.

ECCLES:

Oh, here, here, here, here, here! There's no need to worry, fellas, about the mine! It's one of ours!

FX:

EXPLOSION

ECCLES:

Oooh!

SEAGOON:

Bloodnok and I floundered in the cruel sea.

FX:

LAPPING WAVES

BLOODNOK:

Fortunately we found a passing lifeboat and dragged ourselves aboard.

SEAGOON:

We had no oars but luckily we found two outboard motors and we rowed with them.

BLOODNOK:

Brilliant.

SEAGOON:

For thirty days we drifted to and fro, then hunger came upon us.

BLOODNOK:

Aeioughhhhh, if I don't eat soon I... I'll die of hunger. And if I die I won't eat soon. Wait a moment! (SNIFFS) Oohohohh, can I smell cooking or do my ears deceive me?

SEAGOON:

He was right, something *was* cooking. There, in the other end of the lifeboat, was... a gas stove! Could this be the end of our search?

BLOODNOK:

I'll knock on the oven door.

FX:

KNOCKING ON METAL

MORIARTY:

(FAINTLY) Just a minute, please, I'm in ze bath.

FX:

MORIARTY FAINTLY SINGING AS HIS FOOTSTEPS COME DOWN METAL STAIRS, DOOR SCRAPES OPEN

MORIARTY:

Alors, good morning, I... You!

SEAGOON:

Yes, remember Bexhill? I lent you the matches.

MORIARTY:

You don't want them back?

SEAGOON:

Don't move, I arrest you as the Dreaded Batter Pudding Hurler.

MORIARTY:

Sacre Bleu!

SEAGOON:

Hands up, you devil, don't move! This finger is loaded.

MORIARTY:

If you kill me I promise you, you'll never take me alive.

BLOODNOK:

Wait, how can we prove he's the hurler?

SEAGOON:

That batter pudding in the corner of the stove is all the evidence we need. We've got him!

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC FANFARE

FX:

LAPPING WAVES

GREENSLADE:

But it wasn't so easy. Forty days they drifted in an open boat.

ORCHESTRA:

SINGLE VIOLIN: 'HEARTS AND FLOWERS'

BLOODNOK:

Oooaeioughhhh, I tell you Seagoon, let's eat the batter pudding or we'll starve!

SEAGOON:

No, you hear me, No! That's the only evidence we've got. Though I must admit this hunger does give one an appetite.

BLOODNOK:

We must eat it or die.

SEAGOON:

Never!

BLOODNOK:

Very well then, I shall stop playing my violin. (MUSIC STOPS)

GREENSLADE:

And that, we fear, is the end of our story except, of course, for the end. We invite listeners to submit what they think should be the classic ending. Should Seagoon eat the batter pudding and live? Or leave it and, in the cause of justice, die? Send your suggestions on a piece of batter pudding. Meantime, for those of you cretins who would like a happy ending, here it is.

ORCHESTRA:

ROMANTIC MUSIC

SECOMBE:

Darling. Darling, will you marry me?

BLOODNOK:

Of course I will... darling.

GREENSLADE:

Thank you, good night.

ORCHESTRA:

END TUNE

GREENSLADE:

That was The Goon Show. A recorded programme 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. Announcer Wallace Greenslade. The programme produced by Peter Eton.

Notes:

Lady Docker was the colourful wife of the industrialist Sir Bernard, who was the very wealthy managing director of BSA (Birmingham Small Arms). Formerly she was a hostess at the Café de Paris and was known to the press as Naughty Norah, thanks to her outrageous extravagance and ability to generate scandal.