

S5 E04 - The Phantom Head Shaver of Brighton

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GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC Home Service.

FX:

PENNY IN MUG

GREENSLADE:

Thank you. Tonight's broadcast comes to you from an Arab Stench-Recuperating Centre in Stoke Poges. The play is considered unsuitable for people.

SECOMBE:

Mr. Greenslade refers, of course, to the highly esteemed Goon Show.

ORCHESTRA:

'WHO WERE YOU WITH LAST NIGHT' VERY FAST, 'RAZZAMATAZZ'

SECOMBE:

Ah, what a composer that Richnah Wagner was. Now, tonight, the Goons, with the aid of a calibrated Turkish boot lathe and a portable volcano net, will re-enact a drama of crime. Mr. Greenslade?

GREENSLADE:

Yes, sir?

SECOMBE:

Tell the eager masses what we have in store for them.

GREENSLADE:

Rubbish.

SECOMBE:

Thank you. Yes... yes, it's rubbish. But to make it more interesting we call it...

SELLERS:

'The Phantom Head Shaver of Brighton'.

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC THEME, RISING CRESCENDO

MILLIGAN:

It started in Brighton, 1898. The year of the great Edison Bell.

SECOMBE:

Yes, often I heard it ringing in the night.

FX:

BIG BEN PLAYED VERY FAST MIXED WITH MANY ODD SOUNDS, BAGPIPES, SPLASHES, CATS ETC...

SECOMBE:

Midnight o'clock and a half quarter, six and seven-eighths or thereabouts! Sleeping peacefully in the Hotel Fred are the delightful young newlyweds Nugent and Mrs. Dirt.

MILLIGAN:

Suddenly! From their room we hear...

MRS DIRT:

[SELLERS]

OoooooOO! Helpppppppppppp! Helpppppppppppp! Helpppppppppppp! Oh! Look at his bonce! Ohhh!

NUGENT DIRT:

[SECOMBE]

Prunella, are you awake, dearest heart?

MRS DIRT:

Get away from me with that dirty big bald head!

NUGENT DIRT:

Bald head?

NUGENT DIRT & MRS DIRT:

(PANIC)

FX:

DOOR BURSTS OPEN

MORIARTY:

Please, please, please, please, please, I beg, please, yakkamakaka, please. Madame, M'sieu, please. All this noise, you're waking all the other honeymoon couples up. Now, what is the trouble?

MRS DIRT:

It's 'im, my husband, look at him.

MORIARTY:

He appears to be a perfectly normal freak.

NUGENT DIRT:

If I get off this billiard table I'll strike you down.

MRS DIRT:

You shut up, baldy!

NUGENT DIRT:

What's all this 'baldy' stuff? I'm not bald.

MORIARTY:

The madame is right. You are... bald!

MRS DIRT:

Ohhhhhh....!

ORCHESTRA:

CRASHING THEME

GREENSLADE:

Poor Nugent Dirt, indeed he was hairless. The Phantom Head Shaver had struck. The day after, I, Wallace Greenslade, opened a little tobacco kiosk. It was that week that Nugent Dirt was taken to court by his wife.

OMNES:

COURTROOM MURMURS

FX:

THREE LOUD GAVEL BANGS

USHER:

[ELLINGTON]

Silence in court! Silence! The court will now stand for Judge Schnorrer. And if you'll stand for him, you'll stand for anything.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

[SELLERS]

(JEWISH ACCENT) Alright, alright, get seated and let the mularky start.

USHER:

M'lord, the first case. Mrs. Dirt versus Mr. Dirt. Mrs. Prunella Dirt?

MRS DIRT:

Yes, mate?

USHER:

Raise your right hand and your left leg. Now, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

MRS DIRT:

I do.

USHER:

Well, you ain't gonna get far. M'lord, the witness for the persecution is ready.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Alright, let the prosecuting council start off his shpiel.

ROPESOCK:

[MILLIGAN]

My lord, my client, Mrs. Prunella Dirt, claims that her husband, Nugent Dirt, did deceive her in that during their courting days, right up to their marriage night, he did in fact conceal his baldness from her without her knowledge. She... she discovered this sad state when, at one o'clock in the morning of the honeymoon night, she was...

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

(DROOLING) Go on, go on, go on.

ROPESOCK:

My lord, please.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

What? What? What?

ROPESOCK:

Please, please. At one o'clock in the morning, Madame Dirt arose to clean the windows.

WILLIUM:

I object.

ROPESOCK:

Who are you?

WILLIUM:

I'm the window cleaner.

ROPESOCK:

I don't wish to know that.

WILLIUM:

Aaaah!

ROPESOCK:

The fact that she was cleaning the windows is unimportant.

WILLIUM:

My bread and butter.

ROPESOCK:

What about your bread and butter?

WILLIUM:

I clean the windows with it.

ROPESOCK:

I don't...

USHER:

Silence in court!

SEAGOON:

M'lord, as council for the defence, I think we are straying from the facts. My client is accused of hiding a bald head. He denies this emphatically. He claims he was shaved in the night with a razor - by person or persons... unknown!

OMNES:

BUZZ OF EXCITEMENT... GETS OUT OF HAND

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence in court!

SEAGOON:

Silence in court!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence!

SEAGOON:

Silence!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence!

SEAGOON:

Yes, silence!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Thank you. Now listen, I want some silence 'ere.

USHER:

Silence in court!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence!

SEAGOON:

Silenceeee!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silenceeee there!

USHER:

Silence in court!

FX:

GAVEL BANGING STARTS AND CONTINUES

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silennnnnnnnce!

USHER:

Siiiiiiiiiiiiiii-leeeeeence!

OMNES:

UPROAR

GRAMS:

MIX IN BATTLE SCENE

GREENSLADE:

Yes, I remember the case because during the recess I did a brisk trade in my little tobacco kiosk. One of my best clients was the defending council, Q.C. Hairy Seagoon. (FADES...)

SEAGOON:

(COUGHS) Yes, I smoked heavily during the trial. It was one evening as I puffed on my alabaster meershaum pipe that events took a turn in the favour of Nugent Dirt. (FADES...)

FX:

KNOCK ON DOOR, DOOR OPENS

SEAGOON:

Oh, parcel!

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

For me?

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Any message?

THROAT:

No.

SEAGOON:

You positive?

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Well thank you.

THROAT:

Right.

FX:

PAPER PARCEL BEING OPENED

SEAGOON:

Now, I wonder what it can be? Good heavens! Is it...? Yes, its hair, human hair. And a note: 'Nugent Dirt is innocent. This hair is his. It was I who balded him while he slept. Signed: The Phantom Head Shaver'!

ORCHESTRA:

THREE MORE CONCLUSIVE CHORDS

USHER:

The case of Dirt versus Dirt. Third week.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Now, then, Nugent Dirt, the jury of three just men and twenty-nine criminals finds you guilty of hiding your bald nut from your wife until after you'd married her.

NUGENT DIRT:

It's a lie!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence!

NUGENT DIRT:

Silence!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Thank you. Therefore I sentence you to pay a fine of three shillings or do sixty years in the nick.

NUGENT DIRT:

I'll do the sixty years, I'm not throwing three bob down the drain.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Dirt, for refusing to throw three bob down the drain I sentence you to sixty years in the nick. Any last request?

NUGENT DIRT:

Yes, I want to hear 'I can't believe that you're in love with me'. Thank you.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Call Max Geldray!

MAX GELDRAI:

'I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME'

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Silence! Silence in court! What a load of rough we got here.

SEAGOON:

(TRIUMPHANT) M'lord - stop the case! Stop the case!

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

What? What? What?

SEAGOON:

I have here evidence that will prove my client Nugent Dirt innocent! See? This hair is his! I submit it for analysis.

JUDGE SCHNORRER:

Ohh, my life! We got to go through all lot this again? Oy oy oy oy... Alright - case suspended til the 'air's analysed and proved to be or not to be Nugent Dirt's.

OMNES:

MURMURS

ORCHESTRA:

HARP

GREENSLADE:

The days of waiting for the analysis of the hair were agony for Hairy Seagoon. He smoked pipe after pipe of one of my special tobaccos.

SEAGOON:

(COUGHING) Gad, this tobacco! (COUGH) I must tell Mr. Greenslade not to make it so strong.

FX:

KNOCK ON DOOR. DOOR OPENS

SEAGOON:

Oh, another parcel?

THROAT:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

Any message?

THROAT:

No.

SEAGOON:

Good night.

THROAT:

Good night.

FX:

DOOR CLOSES

SEAGOON:

I... I wonder what's in this one.

FX:

PAPER OPENING

SEAGOON:

Good heavens, it's empty! Wait, here's a note. 'Dear Seagoon, I struck again last night and this time I have not sent you the victim's hair. Signed: The Phantom Head Shaver'. Mmm. 'PS: If you want to know who the victim is - look in the mirror'. (PAUSE) Ahhhhhhhhhh - I've been balded - he's balded me - ohhhhhhhhhh!

ORCHESTRA:

THREE SINISTER CHORDS, SOFT AND LOW

GREENSLADE:

Poor Seagoon, all his lovely hair gone. The following day I opened up a larger shop as my supplies of pipe tobacco were increasing.

SELLERS:

In the months that followed, the Phantom struck again and again! Fifty men were balded while they slept.

MILLIGAN:

Brighton became a city of terror. The holiday trade was threatened. That year only two gentlemen came to Brighton.

CHURCHILL:

Come on, Clem, what've we got to lose?

MILLIGAN:

Cease! And then, a hurried meeting was called.

OMNES:

FAST MURMURS

OLD MAN:

[SECOMBE]

Gentlemen - people aren't coming to Brighton, they're frightened. I ask you to think of an idea that will revive the holiday trade and defeat the Phantom Head Shaver!

HENRY CRUN:

I suggest that every one entering Brighton be handed a bald wig and that he should sleep in that self-same wig.

MINNIE:

Rubbish, if all the men wear bald wigs, the Phantom will attack the women.

HENRY CRUN:

I fear that the ladies, too, will have to wear bald wigs.

MINNIE:

Rubbish, buddy. Why should I wear a bald wig? I'm already bald.

HENRY CRUN:

Well, wear a bald wig with hair on.

MINNIE:

You c... you can't have a bald wig with hair on, buddy.

HENRY CRUN:

Gnk - mnk. Why not, eh? Why not?

MINNIE:

What? What? I'll tell you. Listen, listen.

HENRY CRUN:

What? What?

MINNIE:

If a bald wig had hair on, it wouldn't be bald.

HENRY CRUN:

What? What? What? What? What? What?

MINNIE:

Who ever heard of a bald-headed man with hair on, eh?

HENRY CRUN:

Well, I've heard of, I've...

MINNIE:

Who? Who? Go on, tell me, who? Who? Who?

HENRY CRUN:

No, no, no, I'm not going to tell you.

MINNIE:

That's because... that's because you don't know anybody with a hairy bald head, do you?

HENRY CRUN:

Yes I do, Minnie.

MINNIE BANNISTER:

No, you don't.

HENRY CRUN:

I do, Minnie.

MINNIE:

Who? Who? Go on, tell me, who?

HENRY CRUN:

I don't see why I should tell you.

MINNIE:

Because you don't know any one with a hairy bald head. Do you?

HENRY CRUN:

(MUMBLES GRUDGINGLY) Mnk... I do... I do know somebody with a hairy bald head.

MINNIE:

You... you don't.

HENRY CRUN:

Mnk - grnp - knp... I... I do.

MINNIE:

Don't.

HENRY CRUN:

Do.

MINNIE:

You don't.

HENRY CRUN:

(SHOUTS ANGRILY) Mnk Grmp Nuk Knup... I... Mnk. I doooooooooo!

MINNIE:

(SHOUTS ANGRILY) You.... you don't!

FX:

CLASH OF SABRES TO MIX WITH ARGUMENT (CRUN: "HAVE AT YOU, YOU OLD BAG!") - ONE PISTOL SHOT FOLLOWED BY SILENCE

HENRY CRUN:

I do.

MINNIE:

You don't. I'm going home. I say you don't know a bald-headed man with hair on his head, so there. Pah!

FX:

DOOR SLAMS

HENRY CRUN:

Pah... I do, I *do* know...

FX:

PHONE RINGS. RECEIVER.

MINNIE:

(DISTORTED) You don't.

HENRY CRUN:

I do.

FX:

RECEIVER SLAMMED DOWN.

HENRY CRUN:

I do.

FX:

DOOR OPENS.

MINNIE:

You don't.

FX:

DOOR SLAMS.

HENRY CRUN:

I do! I....

FX:

PHONE RINGS - RECEIVER GRABBED OFF HOOK

HENRY CRUN:

(SHOUTS) Idoldoldoldoldoldoldoldo! Idoknowamanwithahairybald head! Idoldoldoldoldo-Ido, sothere-Ido! Idoldoldo know a man with a hairy bald head! So there! I do!

MILLIGAN:

Thank you. Could I speak to Mr. Seagoon please?

HENRY CRUN:

For you.

SEAGOON:

Hello? Seagoon here.

MILLIGAN:

One moment, please, sir. You're through, sir.

GRYTPYPE:

Hello, Seagoon.

SEAGOON:

Yes.

GRYTPYPE:

Forensic Laboratory here.

SEAGOON:

Oh, I'm pleased to meet you. You must excuse my appearance.

GRYTPYPE:

That hair we analysed...

SEAGOON:

Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes yes?

GRYTPYPE:

Please, don't do that.

SEAGOON:

The hair, what about the hair?

GRYTPYPE:

It wasn't hair, it was tobacco.

SEAGOON:

What? In that case, Ellington, play while I mee-dee-tate. Exits left, smoking.

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

'SKOKIAAN'

SELLERS:

The Phantom Head Shaver of Brighton, Part Three.

SEAGOON:

By now the position was serious. All told, three hundred men had been balded by the Phantom.

GREENSLADE:

My tobacco stocks were now quite high.

MILLIGAN:

The military authorities had ringed the town with troops and soldiers.

SELLERS:

The only exit was Haywards Heath. Then, on a hunch, Seagoon went into action.

SEAGOON:

(COUGHS) I'll go and seek this Phantom myself. Bluebottle?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I heard you call me, Captin! I heard my little ragged capt'in call me. Enter Bluebottle, pauses for audience applause, as usual not a sausage. (AUDIENCE APPLAUDS) Aaaaay! Strikes defiant bus driver outside garage-pose but... but trousers fall down and ruin effect.

SEAGOON:

Little brave lad, tonight we ride to Haywards Heath to track down the Phantom Head Shaver. Are you ready?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I am ready, my Capitain! Let justice be don-ed. He will fall under the wrath of my Boys' Wonder mag cardboard sword. Pulls up trousers, tucks in shirt. Hehuehuehue! My hands are cold.

SEAGOON:

The Shaver's a dangerous man, he might kill.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Eh! (GULP) What...? He he he he he he! I just remembered, I got to go and shampoo my goldfish, I won't be long.

SEAGOON:

Come here, Bluebottle. Don't tell me you're a coward?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I won't, but you're bound to hear about it sometime.

SEAGOON:

Come, little spotted dick. To Haywards Heath!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Ride, vanquerio, ride. Holé!

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC MUSIC

FX:

HORSE'S HOOVES

GREENSLADE:

To Haywards Heath they rode, to the exit that was guarded by the finest of British troops.

ECCLES:

Hi dump eper dump yump dumper.... Halt, who goes dere? Anybody dere? Halt or I fire - fire or I halt. Halt! Anybody there? Anybody out there in the dark? Anybody? If there's anybody out there, speak up. If there's nobody, keep quiet. Aho-ho! Halt, anybody there? I can see you, I'll shoot, I'll shoot. I'll shoot, shoot, shoot. I'll shoot that, yep, yep. Ohhh, hump de di dum deeee di dummm. Halt! Who dat? Who dat? Who dat? Halt! Halt, who goes dere..?

BLOODNOK:

Eccles? Will you get out of that bed and get outside on guard. Get out of that bed or I'll... I'll tell about the Naafi funds!

ECCLES:

OK. I'm goin...

FX:

WHOOSH, DOOR SLAMS

ECCLES:

Oooooooo, it's dark out here, but I'm not afraid.

SEAGOON:

I say...

FX:

WHOOSH, DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS

ECCLES:

Who's dat out dere? Who's dat? Who's dat out dere?

BLOODNOK:

I warn you, sir, one step nearer and we'll scream.

SEAGOON:

Have no fear, I'm Queens Council Hairy Seagoon - defending council in the Nugent Dirt case. I have on me several documents of identification - including a letter of personal trust from the Commander of the British Army; a memo of recommendation from Mr. Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary; a special pass signed by Mr. Clement Atlee, the Leader of the Opposition; and last but not least, a permit to go where I please, signed by the Prime Minister the Right Honourable Sir Winston Spencer Churchill.

ECCLES:

Friend or foe?

SEAGOON:

Open the door!

FX:

DOOR OPENS

BLOODNOK:

I surrender, I surrender - Pax - I'm unarmed - you wouldn't hit a nursing mother would you?

SEAGOON:

Major Bloodnok, take off that Anna Neagle disguise. My ADC Bluebottle and I have followed a trail of hair to this post - we believe the Phantom Head Shaver is in the immediate vicinity.

BLOODNOK:

Here!? Ahahaha, I tell you, sir, the Phantom wouldn't dare come near here - not with old Bloodnok on duty. Why, I haven't slept for three nights - I've just sat here waiting for him - oh, yes, old Bloodnok needs a smart man to outwit him - ohohoh, yes... If the Phantom Head Shaver were to come here I... What are you staring at?

SEAGOON:

Do you usually have half your head shaved?

BLOODNOK:

What? Ohh, thunnedd, aeioughhhh, thud me gronkers with a gritclub - Ohhh nakka mo...

SEAGOON:

Something in his voice told me he knew what had happened.

BLOODNOK:

Ohh - look at me nut - half balded, ohhhh!

SEAGOON:

Now, now, Major, there, there - this is really a blessing in disguise. You see, I must have interrupted him in his work - and we all know that a criminal always returns to the scene of the crime.

BLOODNOK:

What - yer mean you want me to wait here for him to come back and shave the other half?

SEAGOON:

It's your duty.

BLOODNOK:

I refuse!

SEAGOON:

Then, under Chinese law, I subpoena you.

BLOODNOK:

You filthy swine, you. Oh, very well, I'll do it. Just leave me that book about Scottish Regiments.

SEAGOON:

But it's called The Decameron.

BLOODNOK:

Of course - it's all about Decameron Highlanders. Eiough.

SEAGOON:

Right, we'll leave you and...

FX:

DOOR BURSTS OPEN

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh! Captain, Capatain - I'm frightened, I'm frightened - I can hear someone in the ammunition hut - it sounds like a man sharpening a dirty big razor.

SEAGOON:

That's him - quick - follow me!

FX:

WHOOSH

SEAGOON:

(OUT OF BREATH) Listen -

FX:

RAZOR BEING STROPPED

SEAGOON:

(WHISPER) He's in this hut with a naked razor!

ECCLES:

Ooooooooooooo!

SEAGOON:

(ALoud) Come out, Phantom Head Shaver - you're surrounded, d'yer hear? We're all heavily armed - if you don't come, we'll come to that door - and so help me - we'll knock!

ECCLES:

Yeah, dats tellin him, yeah, if you don't come out, we'll come and we'll knock.

SEAGOON:

Shut up!

ECCLES:

Shut up!

BLUEBOTTLE:

We're not afraid of you, Phantom Nut Balder - we have no fear! Come out and face me - come on and show your face! Looks out from behind tree to see if face is showing.

SEAGOON:

Bluebottle - go in and get him!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes, I will go in and - ehhehehehehe - me? You want me to go and get him, Capitan?

SEAGOON:

Yes.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Eehehehehe, little me? Go and get him?

SEAGOON:

Yes.

BLUEBOTTLE:

What, little tiny rotten weak frightened Bluebottle go in and get him?

SEAGOON:

Yes.

BLUEBOTTLE:

I don't like this game! Let's play another game, let's play doctors and nurses!

FX:

WHOOSH

SEAGOON:

Come down from that tree!

BLUEBOTTLE:

I'll be nurse Florence Nightingoon, the Lady with the Lump.

FX:

WHOOSH

SEAGOON:

Come out of that dustbin.

BLUEBOTTLE:

You be the doctor.

FX:

WHOOSH

SEAGOON:

Come out from behind that rock - the Phantom won't harm you - not when he sees that you're armed with a Jet Morgan cardboard cutout space catapult.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Alright, Capitain, I will go in - I shall conquer him in mortal combat. (ASIDE) Quickly makes out last will and testament on back of fag packet. (ALoud) I go in for England. Farewell!

ORCHESTRA:

FANFARE OF TRUMPETS

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, let's play doctors and nurses.

ECCLES:

Hey, he's frightened, why don't you send somebody else?

SEAGOON:

You then.

ECCLES:

Nope, try again.

SEAGOON:

Bluebottle, get in that hut and search it from end to end.

BLUEBOTTLE:

O.K.

FX:

DOOR OPENS AND SLAMS

FX:

DOOR OPENS

BLUEBOTTLE:

Not a soul in dere - we must have been hearing things - ha ha heuh, what a relief to hear things isn't it - heuheu. Can I go home now? I say Capitain, What are you starin' at me for?

SEAGOON:

Look in this mirror.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Noooooooo, you rotten swine, you - I've been balded! You've ruined my Tony Curtis type haircut! I told you I didn't like this rotten game!

SEAGOON:

Shh! Quiet! Quiet! He's still in there. I'll fix him - throw this stick of dynamite in through the door.

ECCLES:

O.K.

FX:

FUSE BURNING. STOPS WITH SPLUTTER.

SEAGOON:

Curse, it was a dud. Now let's go in - come on, keep me covered with your finger...

FX:

DOOR OPENS - MAMMOTH EXPLOSION - SPLINTERING GLASS - BITS OF NUTS AND BOLTS FALLING - FORKS, SPOONS, ETC.

BLOODNOK:

(APPROACHING) What's going on here? What's going on? I - good heavens!

GREENSLADE:

The - erm - hut blew up.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, poor fellows! They were looking for the Head Shaver, yer know.

GREENSLADE:

Yes - I know...

BLOODNOK:

Yes, I... Suppose he was blown up as well?

GREENSLADE:

(PAUSE) Care for a pipe of tobacco?

BLOODNOK:

What? Oh, that's very nice of you. Thank you!

GREENSLADE:

Good night.

BLOODNOK:

Goodnight. Charming fellow. Tobacco eh? Mmm yes lovely. Gad, it's almost the same colour as my hair. It *is* the same colour! Stop that man! That naughty man!

ORCHESTRA:

END THEME 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.

ORCHESTRA:

OUTRO