

S7 E17 - Shifting Sands

Transcribed by Yukka Tukka Indians, corrections by thegoonshow.net. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC Light Programme.

SELLERS:

(AMERICAN-STYLE GAME-SHOW HOST) Is the correct answer! And you win the spon prize of a pair of revolving cardboard sock!

SEAGOON:

Mr Sellers, kindly remove that Hughie Green disguise and give a rapid impression of the Oozlem bird.

GRAMS:

WHOOOOSH.

SELLERS:

Oh!

SEAGOON:

"Gone and never called me 'mother'".

"Dirty British coaster with a salt caked smoke stack..."

BLOODNOK:

You filthy swine!

SEAGOON:

As I was saying;

"Dirty British coaster with a salt caked smoke stack,
Butting through the channel in the mad march days."

GREENSLADE:

Isn't that by the poet laureate?

SEAGOON:

Nonsense. It's by Masfield. Jim Masfield.

BLOODNOK:

I know another one of his by Kipling. (SINGS)
On the road to Mandelay
Where the flying fishes play
And the dawn comes up like thunder...

MILLIGAN:

(SINGS) Out of China 'cross the bay...

FX:

GUNSHOT

BLOODNOK:

Got him! I couldn't resist him, he was so beautifully marked!

SEAGOON:

Naturally. He was just back from the laundry.

BLOODNOK:

Ohh, ho, ho! So gather round me, lads, while I recount it.

OMNES:

Soldier-like grumblings.

BLOODNOK:

There's a little green-eyed idol to the north of Kathmandu,
But the wind blew up the chimney just the same.
And when it came to water, we... (FADE)

ORCHESTRA:

MILITARY LINK. 'WHERE ARE THE BOYS FROM THE OLD BRIGADE'

GRAMS:

FADE IN SOUNDS OF MARCHING.

GREENSLADE:

The tale Bloodnok told was of India, nineteen-hundred and two, from the year of the same name.

SEAGOON:

Yes. I was fresh out of Sandhurst and it wasn't long before I joined the army. It was a proud moment when my batman sewed those two gleaming pips onto the seat of my trousers. (FADE)

WILLIUM:

I see you worked your way up from the bottom, sir. Congratulations on you becoming a Second Lieutenant.

SEAGOON:

Yes! To think, just a month ago I was only a Brigadier. Now let me view myself in the 'commissioned ranks only' mirror.

FX:

GLASS SMASHING.

WILLIUM:

Ooh, it's never done that before, sir.

SEAGOON:

Well, I'll make damned sure it doesn't do it again. Take it out and shoot it. Ha, ha, ha, gad! Yuech yuech yuech yuech! How I look forward to a day on the battlefield!

SPONLEY:

[MILLIGAN]

(UPPER CLASS TWIT) I say! Seagers, old chap!

SEAGOON:

Why, it's Nigel Sponley, the third long things.

SPONLEY:

Yes. Grand news!

SEAGOON:

What, Nigel?

SPONLEY:

The regiment's sailing tonight for active service.

SEAGOON:

Active service? Does that mean fighting?

SPONLEY:

Yes!

SEAGOON:

Oh, my leg! My leg, it's gone!

SPONLEY:

Quick! After it!

SEAGOON:

In a few bounds, Nigel Sponley had the leg trapped by the throat and returned it to me. But it was a close thing.

SPONLEY:

Damn close!

SEAGOON:

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

WILLIUM:

Pardon me, Lieutenant, son, er, sir. The, er, C.O. wants to see you in 'is dressing gown.

SEAGOON:

Right! I'll change at once.

ORCHESTRA:

FURTHER MILITARY LINK.

OMNES:

MILLIGAN DOING IDIOT SERGEANT MAJOR IN THE DISTANCE

FX:

DOOR OPENS THEN SLAMS.

SEAGOON:

Seagoon reporting, sir!

C.O.:

[SELLERS]

Come in.

FX:

DOOR OPENS THEN SLAMS.

SEAGOON:

Thank you.

C.O.:

Now, what's your phone number?

SEAGOON:

Spon, three-four-nine, sir.

FX:

DIALLING

C.O.:

Spon, three-four-nine.

FX:

PHONE RINGS.

C.O.:

Answer that, Seagoon.

FX:

PHONE LIFTS.

SEAGOON:

Hello? Seagoon here.

C.O.:

Seagoon, come over to my office right away.

SEAGOON:

Right, sir.

FX:

PHONE DOWN.

FX:

KNOCK ON DOOR. (BRISK)

C.O.:

Come in!

FX:

DOOR OPENS THEN SLAMS.

SEAGOON:

Seagoon reporting, sir.

C.O.:

You're a devilish difficult fellow to get hold of.

SEAGOON:

Yes, sir. I always grease myself as a precaution.

C.O.:

(LAUGHTER)

SEAGOON:

(JOINING IN)

C.O.:

Yes, very... Yes, that's a jolly good one, that, yes. By jove! Ah, ha, ha, dear! Seagoon, this is Commander Greenslade, R.N.

SEAGOON:

How do you do?

GREENSLADE:

Er, Seagoon. I have here the editor of the 'NAAFI Quarterly'.

(HERE, SELLERS PLAYS TWO PARTS IN ONE SCENE. IT'S A BIT HARD TO TELL THEM APART BUT I'LL HAVE A GO...)

GRYTPYPE:

How do you do? Gentlemen I have here in this cardboard suitcase, Count Jim 'Thighs' Moriarty.

MORIARTY:

Owwwwwww.

GRYTPYPE:

Confidential bus-conductor to the President of France and war correspondent of 'Health and Sound'.

MORIARTY:

How do you do, gentlemen? I have news. An outpost of the British Empire is in danger!

SEAGOON:

Tell us something new, mate.

MORIARTY:

What!

GRYTPYPE:

Lieutenant Seagoon, we have it on good authority from our milkman that the besieged garrison at, er... at Fort Thud on the frontier of Waziristan has lost its union jack.

SEAGOON:

You mean... our troops don't know what side they're on?

GRYTPYPE:

They know which side they're on but they can't prove it!

SEAGOON:

Gad! It... it must be hell out there.

C.O.:

It is. Now then, what we've got to do...

ECCLES:

Here, here, here! What's going on here?

SEAGOON:

Nothing.

ECCLES:

Oh, I'll clear off, then.

GRYTPYPE:

Seajune, we want you to take the plans of a union jack to Fort Thud.

SEAGOON:

The plans?

GRYTPYPE:

Yes. You must realise, Seagoon, that all union jacks are made from an original set of rare plans left behind by King Arthur in an early British waiting room, circa BC.

SEAGOON:

You mean - and I say this on behalf of the bewildered listeners - that without those plans Britain would never be able to build another union jack?

GRYTPYPE:

Exactly.

SEAGOON:

(CHOKING BACK TEARS) I say...

GREENSLADE:

(VERY EMOTIONAL) Easy old man.

C.O.:

(TENSE) Steady, Commander.

SEAGOON:

I'll be alright. What is that all about, then? (CAST GET THE GIGGLES)

C.O:

Seagoon, don't spoil everything, so. Without those carefully rehearsed moments of dramatic tension, where would the empire be today, sir?

SEAGOON:

Where it's always been, in Leicester Square!

ORCHESTRA:

TATTY CHORD IN C

SEAGOON:

Hup!

ORCHESTRA:

CYMBAL SNAP.

GELDRAI:

Hi!

SEAGOON:

So gentlemen, this is where the story really starts. And here to hold it up is Max Geldray. Alright lads, round the back for the old brandy, there!

GRAMS:

BOOTS RUNNING AWAY.

MAX GELDRAI:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC LINK.

SELLERS:

The Shifting Sands of Weziristoon, part pflin!

SEAGOON:

With the plans of the union jack secreted in the hip pocket of my hat, I set fire to my socks and set off hot-foot for Fort Thud. Which was under the command of its commander, where, at this very moment, folks, they are playing his signature tune.

ORCHESTRA:

BLOODNOK THEME

BLOODNOK:

Ohohohohohohoh! Ohohohohohoh! Ohohohohoh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Ohoh!

FX:

CORK POPPING.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, that's better! Now...

GRAMS:

EXTENDED SOUNDS OF POURING.

BLOODNOK:

(DRINKING SOUNDS)

ABDUL:

Major! Major Bloodnok, sir! The Colonel is coming. Tottenham three, Arsenal two. Snow on high ground.

BLOODNOK:

Thank you, thank you. The Colonel? Oh! Chain the brandy to the wall. I... I know his sort.

CHINSTRAP:

[JACK TRAIN]

A glass of port? I don't mind if I do. (AUDIENCE APPLAUSE) Thank you.

BLOODNOK:

By the great leather puttees of Gemard R. Goldstein! Colonel Chinstrap, it's you, sir!

CHINSTRAP:

Yes, sir. Colonel Chinstrap is always me.

BLOODNOK:

What a fortunate co-incidence for you both.

CHINSTRAP:

Well, if you insist Dennis, just a chotta-peg.

BLOODNOK:

Yes, yes, yes.

GRAMS:

POURING.

BLOODNOK:

Enough?

CHINSTRAP:

Just a spot more.

BLOODNOK:

Yes, yes.

GRAMS:

FURTHER POURING.

BLOODNOK:

Cheers.

CHINSTRAP:

Cheers.

FX:

GLASSES CLINK. SOUNDS OF DRINKING

BLOODNOK:

Have another?

CHINSTRAP:

Ah, just a small one, please.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

GRAMS:

FURTHER FURTHER POURING.

BLOODNOK:

Cheers.

CHINSTRAP:

Cheers.

FX:

GLASSES CLINK. SOUNDS OF FURTHER DRINKING

BLOODNOK:

Spot more?

CHINSTRAP:

Err, no, no. I think it's about time you had one.

BLOODNOK:

Yes, yes, yes, oh, yes, I will, then.

GRAMS:

FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER POURING.

(SOUNDS OF FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER DRINKING)

BLOODNOK:

Oh! Does you good, you know, doesn't it?

CHINSTRAP:

I say, Dennis?

BLOODNOK:

Yes, yes?

CHINSTRAP:

Anything happen during the night?

BLOODNOK:

In the night?

CHINSTRAP:

Yes.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, the night, yes.

CHINSTRAP:

Yes, in the night.

BLOODNOK:

Well, Humphrey, the fort was attacked by fifteen thousand tribesmen, but they were driven off by a frenzied shrieking figure waving a whiskey bottle.

CHINSTRAP:

Good heavens. Who was it?

BLOODNOK:

You, sir!

CHINSTRAP:

Are you sure, Dennis?

BLOODNOK:

Am I sure?!

CHINSTRAP:

Yes.

BLOODNOK:

Of course I'm sure.

CHINSTRAP:

Er... thank you.

BLOODNOK:

You weren't the only one in that night-shirt, you know! Ohhh, it was hell in there! Well...

GRAMS:

FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER SOUNDS OF POURING

BLOODNOK:

Bottoms up!

CHINSTRAP:

Cheers.

(SOUNDS OF FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER DRINKING)

BLOODNOK:

Oh! Oh, ohhhh!

FX:

GLASSES CLINK.

CHINSTRAP:

I have a toast.

BLOODNOK:

Yes?

CHINSTRAP:

Here's to the old country, sir!

BLOODNOK:

What... what old country?

CHINSTRAP:

Any old country.

BLOODNOK:

Yes!

CHINSTRAP:

Cheers!

BLOODNOK:

Cheers.

(SOUNDS OF FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER DRINKING)

BLOODNOK:

Well now, Colonel, I suppose you're wondering why you sent for me.

CHINSTRAP:

Yes, I... Just a minute, just a minute, my boy.

BLOODNOK:

What? What?

CHINSTRAP:

(OFF) Quiet out there! (NORMAL) Blasted goldfish!!

BLOODNOK:

They should wear slippers, you know.

CHINSTRAP:

Well, if you insist, just a little...

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

FX:

DOOR OPENING.

ECCLES:

Here! What's going on here?

BLOODNOK:

Nothing.

ECCLES:

I'll clear off, then.

FX:

DOOR CLOSES.

GRAMS:

FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER SOUNDS OF POURING. MIX IN DISTANT SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE

BLOODNOK:

Look, the... the relief column's arrived!

CHINSTRAP:

Send her in.

FX:

DOOR OPENS.

GRAMS:

TRAM ARRIVING AT JUNCTION.

BLOODNOK:

Great Scott! It's a 49 tram!

CHINSTRAP:

Then it's one of ours.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

(ENTERING) Gentlemen, here are the plans for the union jack you so desperately need.

BLOODNOK:

Hurray, hurray!

SEAGOON:

Sorry I'm late gentlemen, but your fort is twenty miles further north than it says on the map.

CHINSTRAP:

Twenty miles further north? Then it's happened again. This fort was built on shifting sands and your combined extra weight must have set it going north again.

BLOODNOK:

You're right, Colonel. Look out of the wall!

SEAGOON:

Great spones of galloping Hern! The fort's crossing the frontier into Waziristan.

FX:

DOOR KNOCK.

BLOODNOK:

Ohohohouuuahhhhhohhhhuh! Ohohohouuuuuahhhhhhohhh! Oh, I recognise that knocking. It's the devilish Waziric tribal chief, 'The Wad of Char'!

FX:

HEAVY KNOCKING.

WAD OF CHAR:

[ELLINGTON]

Let me in, Bloodnok, or I'll open this door, cor blimey!

FX:

DOOR OPENS

WAD OF CHAR:

Now...

BLOODNOK:

Curse! He knew the combination of the hinges.

CHINSTRAP:

I say, sir, ask what he wants while I climb out the window.

WAD OF CHAR:

Come back! Your fort now resting on my father's domain.

BLOODNOK:

How painful for him.

WAD OF CHAR:

I warn you, Bloodnok.

BLOODNOK:

Ohhhh!

WAD OF CHAR:

Your fort is now in the sacred car-park of El Bow. Cost you seven and six an hour, mate. Pay by cash cheque at sunrise or we attack.

BLOODNOK:

I'm warning *you*, Wad of Char, unless you withdraw that threat by dawn... we'll pay!

WAD OF CHAR:

Alright, mate. And now my latest number. Yim bom bulla boo!

BLOODNOK:

You filthy swine, you.

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

ORCHESTRA:

MILITARY LINK.

GREENSLADE:

The Shifting Sands of Waziristan. Part three, The Shifting Sands of Waziristan.

SEAGOON:

Quite right, yes.

GREENSLADE:

Through the night...

SEAGOON:

Yes?

GREENSLADE:

...on the fort's battlements...

SEAGOON:

Yes? Yes? Yes?

GREENSLADE:

...British soldiers...

SEAGOON:

Oooo, yeah?

GREENSLADE:

...stood to for the expected attack.

SEAGOON:

Right!

GRAMS:

HOWLING WIND

BLUEBOTTLE:

Are you wearing your long winter draws, Eccles?

ECCLES:

No, I am not wearing my winter-draws-Eccles.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh.

ECCLES:

Nope, no. No, I... I never wear them, Bottle.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Cor. Aren't you afraid of going round without wearing any of them?

ECCLES:

Nope.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh. Coo, what courage! Do you know that you're a second Wyatt Earp?

ECCLES:

Doesn't Wyatt Earp wear long draws?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I do not know. I have never looked up his trouser leg.

ECCLES:

I'll tell you something.

BLUEBOTTLE:

What?

ECCLES:

I... I looked up my dad's trousers once.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Cor!

ECCLES:

And I discovered something.

BLUEBOTTLE:

What?

ECCLES:

That's where he keeps his legs. Bottle?

BLUEBOTTLE:

What?

ECCLES:

You ever seen your daddy's legs?

BLUEBOTTLE:

No. He always takes them to work with him.

ECCLES:

Oh. What for, Bottle?

BLUEBOTTLE:

He uses them to stop his trousers from bending.

ECCLES:

Oh, fine. That... that's good. That... that's good, umm. (SINGS)
A letter to a dustman,
who takes my dust away.
A letter to a dustman...

BLUEBOTTLE:

Eeeeeeeeee! Eccles! Do not look now! Right behind you there's a pair of great big naked legs.

ECCLES:

Oooooo, legs?

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes.

ECCLES:

Whose are they?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I'll look up his trousers and see. Ohhhhhhhh! It's Ray Ellington.

WAD OF CHAR:

Yes, but me playing part of 'Wad of Char'.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh-hohoeeee! The enemy! Immediately attacks for England. Hit, hit, fight! Hit, hit, hit! Strike! Hit-strike, hit-strike, strike-hit!! Hit-hit. Hit-hit-hit-hit-hit-HIT! Knees fall off, collapses, loses.

WAD OF CHAR:

So, listen, little spirit of empire.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh-hohoeeee!

WAD OF CHAR:

You give me the key to fort gates and me give you four ounces dolly-mixture.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh, ho, hoi-hoi!!!! Every man has got his price. Here is the key.

WAD OF CHAR:

And here is four ounces dolly-mixture. Goodbye, mate.

GRAMS:

WHOOSH

BLUEBOTTLE:

Puts leading dolly-mixture into dinner hole. Savours morsel. Ahi hoo hooo! Huh hu hu hui! I have been trick-éd! These dolly-mixtures are forgeries, made from compressed senna-pods. Faints with horror. Faint, fall, thud.

SEAGOON:

What's going on here? Who's this soldier sleeping on guard? Good heavens, Private Bluebottle!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Captain, I have done a terrible thing! I gave the key of the fort gate to the dreaded 'Wad of Char'.

SEAGOON:

What! You'll be shot for this. Take aim, fire!

FX:

RIFLE SHOT

BLUEBOTTLE:

Thank you, Captain. Can I go home now?

SEAGOON:

Colonel, what are we gonna do?

CHINSTRAP:

We'll have to drink our way out.

GRAMS:

MACHINE GUN FIRE. BUGLE PLAYING ADVANCE OVER. SOUNDS OF BATTLE.

BLOODNOK:

Ooooooh, oooh! The Waziris are attacking. Oooohh! Ooooooh! Anybody got a hole in the ground?

SEAGOON:

Bloodnok, this is a fine time to turn coward!

BLOODNOK:

I know, that's why I chose it.

FX:

CORK POPPING.

CHINSTRAP:

Gentlemen, we'll drink our way out!

BLOODNOK:

A good idea.

CHINSTRAP:

I'll lead the way.

SEAGOON:

You can't drink your way out of this. These tribesmen are tough. There's only one language that Wazirirs understand - Waziri.

CHINSTRAP:

Splendid. I'll address the hoards from the battlements in their own language. (SHOUTS) I say you Wazaries, Chum jum din pew kin, chinkidy chankin juck, aves spon. They're not answering.

BLOODNOK:

What? Let me try, Humphrey.

CHINSTRAP:

Yes, thank you.

BLOODNOK:

Ohh. Atora muckin tora char, Bombay biddy boda cha! You're right, they're not answering, you know. Ohhhhh!

CHINSTRAP:

Perhaps it's their half-day closing.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

SEAGOON:

No. Wait! Wait! Ehehehehehehheiei! Wait!

CHINSTRAP:

Yes, I couldn't agree more.

SEAGOON:

What are those lumps at the bottom of the foothills?

ECCLES:

Toes!

SEAGOON:

Shut up, Eccles!

OMNES:

Shut up, Eccles! Shut up, Eccles!

SEAGOON:

Gentlemen, look! They're hauling 'Thin Tom', their long range cannon, into position.

BLOODNOK:

They're loading it.

CHINSTRAP:

By gad, sir, they're lighting the fuse.

SPONLEY:

They're... they're pointing it at us.

BLOODNOK:

They're going to fire it.

SEAGOON:

I wonder what they're up to.

SPONLEY:

Yes.

GRAMS:

SHELL DROPPING

BLOODNOK:

Duck!

GRAMS:

EXPLOSION FOLLOWED BY HEN CLUCKING

SEAGOON:

That's no duck, that's a chicken.

CHINSTRAP:

By gad, sir, they're firing hens at us.

BLOODNOK:

A *fowl* trick!

CHINSTRAP:

Egg-sactly.

MILLIGAN:

We're being *shelled*.

SEAGOON:

Stop cracking *yokes*!

ORCHESTRA:

TATTY CHORD IN C

GRAMS:

MASSED RIFLE FIRE.

SEAGOON:

Go on, Wal.

GREENSLADE:

Through the long night the Waziris attacked, firing their bullets from the hidden position inside their rifle barrels. Then at dawn, good tidings.

OMNES:

Rhubarb rhubarb rhubarb

CRUN:

Gentlemen of the fort, we have worked all night and completed a union jack. Owing to the shortage I was forced to build it of wood.

CHINSTRAP:

Wood? How is it going to wave?

CRUN:

I put hinges down the middle.

CHINSTRAP:

Thank you.

SEAGOON:

Great news! Hoist it up the flagpole.

CRUN:

We can't... can't do that. You see I used the flagpole to build the flag.

MINNIE:

Yes, yes. He... be... he got the... the...

GRAMS:

HEAVY ROLLING.

CRUN:

What? What's that...?

MINNIE:

Ohh! We'll be...

CHINSTRAP:

I say, what's that?

MINNIE:

What?

SEAGOON:

The fort! It's sliding back on the shifting sands towards India! Look!

MINNIE:

Ohhhhh!

SEAGOON:

I see the frontier approaching.

FX:

QUICK KNOCKING

SEAGOON:

There it is at the back door now.

FX:

DOOR OPENING

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

[SELLERS]

Good morning gentlemen, British Customs Officers.

SPRIGGS:

Yes, indeed. (SINGS) That's who we arrrrrrre!

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

Are you bringing any (SINGS LIKE SPRIGGS) wiiiines (NORMAL) or spirits into the country?

CHINSTRAP:

Only a flask full of brandy, sir.

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

How much does it hold?

CHINSTRAP:

Forty-eight gallons.

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

I wondered why your trousers were round your ankles. Forty-eight gallons, eh? That'll be seventy-five pounds in annas.

SEAGOON:

Anna doesn't live here anymore.

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

I was told that Anastasia. (ANNA STAYS 'ERE)

SEAGOON:

A magnificent film.

CUSTOMS OFFICER:

You can't take this fort across into India until you get rid of that brandy.

CHINSTRAP:

Gentlemen...

SEAGOON:

Yes!

CHINSTRAP:

We'll have to drink our way out of this.

SEAGOON:

Right, volunteers, one pace forwaaaaard... march!

GRAMS:

REGIMENT COMING TO ATTENTION

SEAGOON:

Name?

CHINSTRAP:

Chinstrap, late of one pace back. Good health.

GRAMS:

LIQUID BUBBLING OUT OF BOTTLE.

CHINSTRAP:

(GULPING)

GREENSLADE:

That was all fifty-scee years ago. But to this day, a white stone marks the spot where Chinstrap saved the day.

BLOODNOK:

Yes and it carries this simple inscription: "Here lies Colonel Chinstrap, drowned - from the inside."

SEAGOON:

That's it. All round the back for the old Marlon Brandy there!

GRAMS:

MASSED BOOTS RUNNING AWAY.

ORCHESTRA:

END THEME

GREENSLADE:

That was the Goon Show, a BBC recorded program featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan and Jack Train, with the Ray Ellington Quartet, Max Geldray and the orchestra conducted by Wally Stott. Script by Spike Milligan and Larry Stephens. Announcer, Wallace Greenslade. The program produced by Pat Dixon.

ORCHESTRA:

PLAYOUT