S10 E03 - The Chinese Legs

Transcribed by Steve Dale. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC.

SELLERS:

(OFF) Big time music hall!

GREENSLADE:

Now a moment of Musical Twittery.

GRAMS:

'IN A MONESTARY GARDEN' AT VARIOUS SPEEDS., MAIN THEME WHISTLED; MIX IN CHICKENS,

MILLIGAN:

(VERY 'STIFF-UPPER'LIP') Ladies and Gentlemen. Presenting the Reverend John Sellers.

SELLERS:

(VERY LOUD AMERICAN PREACHER) My friends. Frinds and fronds. Now will you allIIII... open your bankbooks and sing with me, 'Bank Statement No. 349'!

GRAMS:

CROWD OF MOURNERS.

SELLERS:

Yes. It is written in red, friends! 'Thou shalt not overdrawwww'! But! Friend, my friend, here. There is new word! A new word of hope! And the word is...!

MILLIGAN:

(QUAINTLY) "Fon."

SELLERS:

Yes, 'Fon!' This word Fon was invented by Mr Tom Danglers of Quox!

TOM DANGLERS:

[SECOMBE]

(WHIMPY VOICE) Yes. For many years now I have felt the need of a new word in our language. For days and nights I lay awake thinking. Then, suddenly, in a blinding flash of inspiration, I seen this word... 'Fon'! So up I got and wrote it down. It did look good, even in the dark. In the light of morning it was still there, and I knew the word 'Fon' was here to stay. I am very well pleased with it. Thank you and ta!

SELLERS:

Thank you, sister! And now, my dear friends, Mr Nueler of the quarn hump will now... lead you all in saying 'Fon!"

MILLIGAN:

(SAME AS BEFORE) After me, now, friends. (CLEARS THROAT) (SINGS) 'Fon'.

OMNES: (SINGS) Fon.

MILLIGAN: (SINGS) Fo-ho-hon.

OMNES: (SINGS) Fo-ho-hon.

MILLIGAN:

(SINGS) Fo-ho-ho-ho-hon.

OMNES:

(SINGS) Fo-ho-ho-ho-hon.

MILLIGAN: (SINGS) Fohhhhn!

OMNES: (SINGS) Fohhhhn!!

MILLIGAN: Oh, we're having fon tonight, folks! And now, bretheren, over to Tom 'Motorcar' Sellers!

SELLERS: (MAD LAUGH) I'm finished with cars you know, they're silly things!

MILLIGAN:

(OFF) He's finished, folks! He's finished with cars, folks!

SELLERS:

I'm down to one motorcar a week, folks!

MILLIGAN: (OFF) He's finished, folks!

SELLERS: And those are in tablet form, I've given them up!

GRAMS: CAR DRIVES OFF

SELLERS:

What was that?! I must have that car! I must have that car!

SPRIGGS:

It's true, folks! But wait! What is this approaching?

SELLERS:

It's the unexpired portion of a human body on an African safari called Martin Clodd!

GRAMS:

AFRICAN WELCOME SONG, JUNGLE DRUMS ACCOMPANIMENT...

SEAGOON:

Stop!!

GRAMS:

OUT

AFRICAN CHIEF:

[GO ON, GUESS] (SHOUTING) Bah Tula! Meda Aluh! Ba da dula nyipps. Gahtua. Baybar yum bumburm nagaduigah!

SEAGOON:

(QUIETLY) I see. Carstairs. Tell him I don't understand what he's saying.

CARSTAIRS:

[MILLIGAN] Right, sir. Er... G'ahtu. Vahtu malu.

AFRICAN CHIEF:

Mm.

CARSTAIRS:

Mutakiah.

AFRICAN CHIEF:

Yahde?! Meyoooou! Mega ta lalla! Magutab ghali!

CARSTAIRS:

He says... he says he doesn't understand what he's saying either!

SEAGOON:

It's near enough for jazz!

GRYTPYPE:

Wait a moment! Wait one moment. Lift up your shirt!

FX:

RIPPPPP!

SEAGOON:

(SCREAMS) Whoop!!

GRYTPYPE:

Just as I thought! You're three men called... (HUGE ANNOUNCEMENT) Harry Secombe!!!

ORCHESTRA:

'I'M JUST WILD ABOUT HARRY' IN 2/4, HUGE RENDITION.

GRAMS:

GIGANTIC CROWD CHEERING...

MILLIGAN:

(AS CHEERS DIE) Oh, he's not as popular as he used to be, folks!

SEAGOON:

What? What? What? What? What? That [UNCLEAR], I tell you! I tell you, according to my 'Tim' rating, I'm still top of the tree!!

GRAMS:

TREE FALLING

MILLIGAN:

(OVER ABOVE) TIMBERRRRRR!!

SEAGOON:

(SCREAMS)

MILLIGAN:

Meantime...

GRYTPYPE:

You're Doctor Livingstone, I presume?

SEAGOON:

Yes, that's it! I'm Doctor Livingstone, I presume! Spelt...

GRAMS:

(AT VARIOUS SPEEDS) L.I.V.I.N.G.S.T.O.N.E. (SHORT RASPERRY!)

GREENSLADE:

Ta. Ladies and Gentlemen. We present the Labour Exchange of the air. If you look in your Radio Times you will see, with the aid of a powerful magnifying glass, the name 'Goon Show'. Let it be so!

GRAMS:

CROWD CHEERING. STOPS SUDDENLY.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Aiyyy!

GRAMS: CROWD CHEERING AGAIN

BLUEBOTTLE:

Hooray!

GRAMS: CROWD CHEERING AGAIN

BLUEBOTTLE:

Hooray!

FX: BLUEBOTTLE BEING HIT.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Ahhhgh!

SEAGOON:

Right in the old credentials! Ha, ha, ha! Part one: a [UNCLEAR] coal sack in the Hebridies. Fnoof!

GRYTPYPE: Happy New McYear Moriarty!

MORIARTY: You said that last year!

GRYTPYPE: This is an encore, do you hear me!

MORIARTY: (GIBBERISH).

GRYTPYPE: To think we're two hundredweight of anthracite. What a perfect disguise for us, Moriarty.

MORIARTY: Two Hundredweight, yes, but you only let me be four ounces!

GRYTPYPE: I thought of the idea, I deserve the lion's share!

MORIARTY: I didn't know lions shared anthacite, Grytpype!

GRYTPYPE: How do you think they keep warm all the winter?

GRAMS: BAGPIPES SLUR UP TO PROPER PLAYING SPEED. PETER DOES A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION OF A HAIRY SCOTSMAN TALKING OVER...

GRYTPYPE: Hark, Moriarty! A merry Hogmanay singer! Open la Fenetre!

FX: WINDOW SLID OPEN...

GRYTPYPE: (CALLING) Here, lad!

FX:

PIANO LANDS ON PIPER..HUGE CRASH. PIPER SCREAMS, PIPES RUN DOWN.

GRYTPYPE:

Right in the haggis! Moriarty? I can hear a twit in part two who is two parts twit.

GRAMS:

FADE IN WELSH COALMINERS' CHOIR, SINGING 'A WELCOME IN THE HILLSIDE'.

SEAGOON:

(SINGS WITH THE RECORDING; RECORDING SPEEDS UP AND HARRY DESPERATELY ATTEMPTS TO SING UP WITH IT. FINALLY ADMITS DEFEAT AND BLOWS A RASPBERRY!) Ah, Wales! Land of my forefathers and Moby Dick! Three mothers... Three mothers, two man ankles, (SINGS) and a partridge in a pear tree! Fatang!!

OMNES:

FATANG FATING...FATONG...ETC...

SEAGOON:

Ah, Wales, land of song, land of the certain things! A good job we got out of England before they swallowed it! (LAUGHS)

GRYTPYPE:

I recognise those reeking lethal brandy fumes! It's Ned of Wales! Ring-ring-tring!

SEAGOON:

Aha, haaaa! It's the flesh-coloured telephone. Alor! Ring-ring-tring!

MORIARTY:

Hello... hello, Neddie of Wales! Hello, Neddie of Wales. There's somebody here would like to talk to you!

SEAGOON:

Who?

MORIARTY:

Me! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

FX:

SLAPSTICK

MORIARTY:

Owwww!

GRYTPYPE: Right in the old credentials, again.

MORIARTY: You swine!

GRYTPYPE: He-lo neelio whirls. He meant me, Ned. Not him-him but me-me.

SEAGOON: Mimi, darling, you sound as young as ever! So the operation *was* a success!

GRYTPYPE: Oh, ho, ho, ho! Ohhhh. You naughty Neddie of Wales.

SEAGOON:

Aha, ha, ha!

GRYTPYPE:

Neddie, as your personal adviser, I must advise you to see me at once, whichever you prefer!

SEAGOON:

What? But... but... but... I... I... I... I... I... I don't quite understand!

GRYTPYPE:

Happy New Hogmanay, Ned, we've no time to waste! Meet me outside Buckingham Palace!

SEAGOON:

Where's that?

GRYTPYPE:

Follow that sickening trail of OBEs, it'll lead you straight there. But first! A certain nose.

GELDRAY:

It's me, folks!

SEAGOON:

Yes!

GELDRAY:

Happy New Nose, folks. Play that Conks of Highgate arrangement, Wally of Kensington! Ploogie!

MAX GELDRAY:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

GREENSLADE:

That was Mr Max Gelgray. I didn't *think* he looked well when he started! Now, Wal of Weybridge announces Part Two. Thynne decides to visit Ned of Wales. (SINGS ON ONE NOTE) Waaaaales...

GRYTPYPE:

Taxi!!

GRAMS: EXPLOSION

SINGHIZ THING:

Where to, sir?

GRYTPYPE:

Are you the Prime Minister of England?

SINGHIZ THING:

No, sir. My turn next week!

GRYTPYPE:

Good. Now, driver, run me to Wales.

SINGHIZ THING:

Hold my hand, sir!

GRAMS:

TWO SETS OF BOOTS RUN AWAY...CAR SPEEDS AWAY...TRUCK SPEEDS OFF...HORSE GALLOPS AWAY...SHRIEK OF TRAIN WHISTLE, TRAIN SWIFTLY PULLS AWAY...MOTORBIKE ROARS AWAY...HORSE AGAIN...BIKE AGAIN...JET PLANE ROARS OVERHEAD...FOOTSTEPS HURRY UP AND SLUR TO A STOP...

GRYTPYPE:

(PANTING) There *must* be a shorter way!

SINGHIZ THING:

There is, but it doesn't take so long!

GRYTPYPE:

What?

SEAGOON: Ahoy, Grytpype! Welcome to Wales!

MORIARTY: You're welcome to it, too!

SEAGOON: What? What? What? Take that!

FX: THUDDD!

GRAMS: STARTLED CHICKEN

GRYTPYPE: What... What a *fowl* blow, Ned!!!

MORIARTY: How *dare* you hit me with that old joke! You caught me unawares.

SEAGOON: I'll catch 'em if I see 'em, an' all!

MORIARTY: Neddie, according to the records, we have discovered that you were *not* born in Wales!

SEAGOON: (HUGE HOWL OF ANGUISH!)

GRYTPYPE: Don't take it so bad, Ned!

SEAGOON:

But I *am* Welsh, I tell you! (SINGS) Sospan Bach! (SHOUTING) I *am* Welsh! I was born at The Mumbles, I tell you. I've got corn in my socks! I can pronounce the name of that Welsh railway station. Erm... erm... Cardiff! There!!!

ORCHESTRA: TATTY CHORD IN C **SEAGOON:** That's a catchy tune. Play it again.

ORCHESTRA: SAME CHORD

SEAGOON: Gad, they'll all be whistling it tomorrow!

ORCHESTRA: WHISTLES ONE NOTE, CLOSE TO THE GOON CHORD.

SEAGOON:

Listen! It's tomorrow! (LAUGHS) I must find out the true truth of my birth. Now, if I'm not Welsh, then what *is* my nationality?

GRYTPYPE:

Your nationality, Ned. Well, you were born astride the Chinese-British-India border.

SEAGOON:

This is terrible!

GRYTPYPE:

I didn't write it!

SEAGOON:

Which half of me is... is... is... is... is... Chinese?!

GRYTPYPE:

It's your legs, Ned. They were hanging over the border when you were born.

SEAGOON:

My dear legs! Chinese!? I... I don't believe it!

GRYTPYPE:

I'll give you my advice, Ned, but first - sing this blank cheque.

SEAGOON: (SINGS) Ten Pounds!

GRYTPYPE: A little higher, Ned,

SEAGOON:

(SINGS) Fifteen-Pounds-Ten!

GRYTPYPE: A little higher to give it - tuuuum!

SEAGOON: (SINGS) Twenty Pounds!

GRYTPYPE: Now, Ned, as high as you can sing!!

GRAMS: HARRY SINGS AT DOUBLE SPEED: 'ONE - HUNDRED - POU-OUNDS!!!!!'

GRYTPYPE:

Splendid! Now, Ned. My advice to you is to get a passport for those Chinese legs. You'll find they reinterned! Until then, Neddie, you must walk on your hands or you will be guilty of legs.

SEAGOON:

Right! Uhhh... Hup!! (STANDS ON HIS HANDS; SOUND OF COWBELLS!)

MORIARTY:

Let's get these boots on your hands, Ned.

SEAGOON:

(MAKES VARIOUS STRAINING NOISES) There! How's that?

MORIARTY:

It suits you, Neddie! Now, wait here, Ned.

GRAMS:

WHOOSH, WHOOSH

ORCHESTRA:

GONG

GREENSLADE:

Part Two. In an attempt to solve the mystery of his legs' nationality, Neddie Seagoon goes to the registrar of military legs certificates on the British-India frontier.

ORCHESTRA:

BLOODNOK THEME

(DEAD SILENCE)

BLOODNOK:

I'm cured!! I'm cured! (AUDIENCE APPLAUSE) Ohhhh! Ohh. Yes! Not a sound!! Oh, I can go to parties again! Ohhh!

GLADYS:

[ELLINGTON] Er... Pardon me, Major.

BLOODNOK:

What is it, Gladys?

GLADYS:

Er, time you dressed, sir. There's a dinner tonight, mate.

BLOODNOK:

Oh!

GLADYS:

And Lord and Lady Hamilton are comin'. Er... what shall I lay out?

BLOODNOK:

You lay out Lord Hamilton and leave her to me, will you! Ohhhh!! The full treatment!

FX:

HEAVY FAST KNOCK.

BLOODNOK:

(PANIC) Ahowww! Ohoooh! The police!

GLADYS:

Major, there are other people!

BLOODNOK:

Not in my life, no!

FX: DOOR RATTLES

BLOODNOK:

Ohh! Oh. Come in, sound effects man!

FX: DOOR OPENS; POP!

BLOODNOK: Ohh, you too?

ECCLES: Me, too? There's only one of me.

BLOODNOK: And the world is grateful! What is your name? What's your name?

ECCLES: Um. Oh, um. Got it on a bit of... Oh! Eccles!

What name?
ECCLES:

I forget now, I got a bad memory. I got a letter for you in my boot.

BLOODNOK: Oh! A footnote!

BLOODNOK:

ECCLES: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha-hum!

BLOODNOK:

But wait!

ECCLES: Wait?

BLOODNOK:

Wait! What have you got in that crate on your head?

ECCLES:

You noticed it, then. I got fifteen statues of Jane Mansfield inside.

BLOODNOK:

What?! Oh, I mean, oh! But... but... but whatever for?

ECCLES:

Well, you never know! One day some smart-Alec might say to me, "I suppose you've got fifty statues of Jane Mansfield in that crate." And I'll say, "Yes I have!" And 'e's going to look pretty stupid! Aha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

BLOODNOK:

Gladys! Out with your arrangement and quell him with a tune of mel.

GLADYS:

(CLOSE TO MIC) Oh, dear, dear, I don't know what's coming next, I really...

BLOODNOK:

Ohhh!

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

'THAT'S THE TIME WHEN I'M WITH YOU'

GREENSLADE:

That was Mrs Gladys Ellington, the famous Irish Tenor.

MILLIGAN:

We now come to part three. Pa-tilly-pom! (HUMS) In which we find... Pom-pom-bidit-beeee! The orchestra missing. Ching!

(GAP, THE AUDIENCE FILL IT WITH APPLAUSE)

SEAGOON:

I walked around England on my hands for three years. And no signs of Grytpype Thynne and the promised passport. (CHUCKLES) So I decided to visit the registrar of births in India to find out my true position.

BLOODNOK:

Upside down!

SEAGOON:

Major! I've just arrived by first-class brown paper parcel.

BLOODNOK:

Save the string, lad. I have a grandma who's never seen a piece! (SINGS) That old stringless grandma of miiiiiiine!

SEAGOON: Have you a record of my birth?

BLOODNOK: Yes!

GRAMS: RECORD HISS, BABY CRYING.

SEAGOON: Beautiful! Let's dance!

BLOODNOK:

Not... not standing on your hands, Ned, the other way round, please.

SEAGOON:

Oh! Sorry. Ah! Ah, that's better! Now ...

SPRIGGS:

Hands up, Jiiim! Hands up, Jii-iiimmmm. I arrest those Chinese legs for standing on British ground!

BLOODNOK: It's the British Leg Police!

FX: NED BEING CHAINED UP

SEAGOON:

I say, look here, what's this!? I... I can't walk around with this chain around my legs!

SPRIGGS:

Those Chinese legs are prisoners of England! Your top half can go free, Jim. (SINGS) Go free, Jiiimmm! Go free, Jiiiimmm.

GREENSLADE:

Meantime, in fiendish China.

ORCHESTRA: GONGGGGGG

GRAMS & FX:

CROWD OF CHINAMEN TALKING, MIX IN POPS AND THUDS.

CHINESE ANNOUNCER:

[MILLIGAN] Okay, man. Oh, boy. It all fun. Please, silence for your flend... and mine... Mao... Tse... *Tunggggg*!!!

OMNES:

CHATTERING OF MOCK CHINESE VOICES

MAO:

[SECOMBE]

(COMIC CHINESE ACCENT) Thank you, flends! I hlave blad news! We have discovered that there are one pair of Chinese legs in prison out thlere in British India! We must clapture them and bling them black to modern China. Land of Flee Legs!!

OMNES:

CHINESE AGREEMENT SOUNDS.

GRYTPYPE:

Just a minute, young Chinaman! My friend and I can get those legs back for a certain payment!

MAO:

Hip! Hip!

VERY SMALL GROUP:

Hoolay!!

ORCHESTRA:

GONGGGGG. PETER PLAYING PIANO VERY BADLY, WITH SPIKE ADDING LITTLE BASS BITS.

GREENSLADE:

That night, under a Chinese noon and an Indian sun and a Catford street lamp, a raiding party under Moriarty crept up on Ned's sleeping legs!

BLOODNOK:

(SNORING)

SEAGOON:

(STAGE WHISPER) Psst! Bloodnok!

BLOODNOK:

(AWAKES) No, I'm not. What? Oh! What ...? What is it, darling?

SEAGOON: There's... There's a hand on the end of my leg!

BLOODNOK: Strange, I've got feet on the end of mine.

MORIARTY: Stand up, Neddie! Give up those Chinese Legs!

SEAGOON: What? What? What? What? What? What? What?

FX: NED'S LEGS UNSCREWING.

SEAGOON: I say, look here! Stop unscrewing my legs at once!

MORIARTY: Don't move, Neddie! This finger is loaded with bones!

FX: WHOOSH; CLANK!

SEAGOON: (HORRIFIED) My legs! Gone! Gone and never called me Mother!

BLOODNOK: Never mind, lad. Here. Get this pair of skates under you. Now, off you go!

FX: NED'S SKATES.

GRAMS:

(OVER ABOVE) NED SHOUTING: "I DEMAND LEG JUSTICE!!", REPEAT WITH VARIATIONS, SPEED UP AND FADE OUT...

GREENSLADE:

The loss of his legs was brought to the notice of the United Nations, who've always been at a loss.

FX:

GAVEL

CRUN:

Gentlemen. Ah, that's got that nail in. Um... Members. The... um... er... the... subject is the question...

THROAT:

[UNCLEAR].

CRUN: Of Seagoon's Legs...

OLD UNCLE OSCAR:

[SECOMBE] (NEAR-DEAD MUMBLINGS) May I...? May I...? May I...?

CRUN:

What? What? What? What?

OLD UNCLE OSCAR:

May I...? Uhhhhhhh!!!

MINNIE:

Ohhh. He's... he's dead, Henry.

CRUN:

What, again? Who is he?

MINNIE:

I don't know. Oh, wait, there's a... there's a label on his foot.

CRUN:

What does it say, Min?

MINNIE: 'This is a foot'.

SEAGOON: Never mind about his dingle, what about my legs?

AMERICAN:

[SELLERS]

As an American representative and major shareholder in UNO, I decide and suggest we send a marine task force, the American Sixth Fleet, John Brown's body, the Fifth Amendment, Marilyn Monroe, new wide-screen version of Fred Hur in spontillican colour to attack communist China and restore the status quo of this man's life for democracy. Let us scrub the atom bomb to say to the Chinese and show the tender shred of true love that lives on Wall Street and Time Magazine. And all those things in America that we all hold precious. And that precious American quality, called *money*!!!

GRAMS:

CROWD OF MOURNERS.

GREENSLADE:

Ta. Part Four. The great World War Three for Neddie's Legs.

GRAMS:

TUMULT OF WAR. FADES UNDER JOHN SNAGGE

JOHN SNAGGE:

(PRE-RECORDED) 'This is London calling in the Baa Bee See. Undersea service report from the front. Today American Marines occupied the heights of Neddie Seagoon's knees and are attacking down his shins towards the hairy ankle area. It is expected that by dawn his feet will be occupied by footsoldiers. I myself will be in bed. Football. Greek Wanderers, 3; Bolton, 676. There was an accident at the corner of Burke St when a bicycle knocked over a red lantern. Anybody seeing the accident, keep quiet, as the driver was a policeman!'

WILLIUM:

Oh. Well, Ned, mate, it looks like your legs'll soon be your own again, mate! Them lovely little leggies.

FX:

EXPLOSION. CROWD OF CHINESE

SEAGOON:

Ahh! The Chinese are shelling my knees! Here comes a midget waving a dirty white flag! I wonder what he wants!

BLUEBOTTLE:

You got any soap powder, Mistah?

SEAGOON:

No I haven't, we had the last for Christmas.

BLUEBOTTLE:

I am Lee Fong Blue. Mysterious junior laundryman to the Chinese army! Oh. Oh, hello everybody! Well, I didn't see you all dere. Didn't I see you was a-sittin' out dere. Oh, Happy New Year to you all. I made my New Year's resolution. I'm givin' up string and cardboard.

SEAGOON:

You? A Finchley Boy Scout doing laundry for the Chinese?

BLUEBOTTLE:

Do not be fooled, Ned of Wales. Terry 'Cardboard' Bluebottle is really in the pay of the Borough of Finchly, and is working to save your legs from the Chinese ratepayers!

CHINESE MAN:

[MILLIGAN] Hands up!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Who's there?

CHINESE MAN:

Ah! A Finchley [UNCLEAR]!

SEAGOON:

Gad! A Sax Rohmer fiend Chinese in long Mandarin underwear!

CHINESE MAN:

Listen, Neddie of Wales! If you let us [UNCLEAR] your legs, we make your knees a corporal in the Chinese Army!

BLOODNOK:

No, no, no! Don't let him dazzle you with promises of knee power, Ned! I'll make them English Sergeants!

CHINESE MAN: We'll make 'em Chinese Captains!

BLOODNOK: English Majors!

CHINESE MAN:

Chinese General!

SEAGOON: Any Advance on Chinese General? Any advance?

BLOODNOK: British Dustman with OBE attachment!

SEAGOON: British Dustman going once.. Going twice.

WILLIUM: I object, mate!

SEAGOON: Who are you?

WILLIUM:

I'm the dustman who's been going twice! I don't wanna go any more, mate, I tell yer!

SEAGOON: Blast! Foiled by British Dustman!

CHINESE MAN: Ah!

SEAGOON: Now, you Chinese devil! Stand by for the funny payoff!

WILLIUM:

Woahhh!

FX: SOUND OF FURNITURE BEING SHIFTED.

SEAGOON: (VARIOUS STRAINING NOISES)

CHINESE MAN: Ah! No! No! Not that! The table! The tables! Ah, the tables!

FX:

TABLE COMES TO A STOP WITH A BANG.

SEAGOON:

And that, folks, is how we turned the tables on the Chinese! And that's all, folks of world, from Ned of Wales!!

ORCHESTRA:

OLD COMRADES MARCH.