

## S6 E08 - Shangri-La Again

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

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### **GREENSLADE:**

This is the BBC Home Service, brought to you by the British Broadcasting Corporation, makers of Faux Pas.

### **SECOMBE:**

Yes indeedy, the makers of Faux Pas! And here is their greatest to date, entitled...

### **SELLERS:**

The extraordinary talking-type wireless Goon Show.

### **MILLIGAN:**

(SINGING) Oooooooooohhhhhhhh.

### **ORCHESTRA:**

(SINGING) Oooooooooohhhhhhhh.

### **MILLIGAN:**

(SINGING) Oooooohhhh Oooooaawwww.

### **ORCHESTRA:**

(SINGING) Oooooohhhh Oooooaawwww.

### **MILLIGAN:**

(SINGING) Oohh Ooaaw Oohh Ooaaw Ooaaw.

### **ORCHESTRA:**

(SINGING) Oohh Ooaaw Oohh Ooaaw Ooaaw.

### **MILLIGAN:**

(SINGING) Oooooohhhh (HIGHER PITCH) Oooooaawwww!!!!

### **ORCHESTRA:**

(SINGING) Oooooohhhh (HIGHER PITCH) Oooooaawwww!!!!

### **MILLIGAN:**

That's the end of that lot! Ha ha ha!

**SECOMBE:**

Well done, Milligoon. Well done! Well done! Well done! WEEELL DONE!

**MILLIGAN:**

Yes, well done! It leaves only me to announce the story of... 'Lost Horizon'. Ooooooooooh!

**ORCHESTRA:**

MAGICAL SCENE SETTING MUSIC. HARP AND MAJESTIC WOODWIND CHORDS.

**GRAMS:**

STRANGE ELECTRONIC TRILL. (CONTINUES UNDER)

**SELLERS:**

(ECHOEY) The story of Shangri-La is adopted from Fred Hilton's book 'Lost Horizontally' based on the legend of Shangra-Lu, from the play "Across Ava Gardner with stethoscope, Geigercounter." Shangri-la...

**ORCHESTRA:**

FURTHER MAGICAL SCENE SETTING.

**GRAMS:**

STRANGE ELECTRONIC TRILL CONTINUES.

**SEAGOON:**

(SLIGHTLY ECHOEY) Shangri-la, I still hear the call of it. I, dear listener, was the only man in the world to see it and return... alive. Let me read the story from my diary. "December the 24th 1933 - have had news that a Japanese invasion of Manchuria is imminent. "

**ORCHESTRA:**

HARP CHORDS.

**GRAMS:**

DISTANT RIFLE FIRE. (CONTINUE UNDER)

**FX:**

TELEPHONE RINGS.

**SEAGOON:**

Hello, Seagoon, British Embassy, Peking here.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

[MILLIGAN]

(ON PHONE) Hello sir. Information here. Japanese are closing in on Peking.

**SEAGOON:**

Then you must take every precaution.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

I have, sir. Twenty armed men on the roof of the building. We've sand-bagged the entrance.

**SEAGOON:**

Good.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

Three battalions of guards in slit trenches.

**SEAGOON:**

Yes.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

And I've mined the whole area around me.

**SEAGOON:**

Good man. Where are you speaking from?

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

A phone box in East Acton.

**SEAGOON:**

Splendid fellow. I'll see you get Needle Nardle Noo and bar for this.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

Thank you, sir. I must go now, my wife's boiling over.

**FX:**

HANDSET DOWN.

**SEAGOON:**

I wonder who he was?

**FX:**

PHONE RINGS. HANDSET LIFTS.

**INFORMATION CLERK:**

Jim Pills.

**SEAGOON:**

Thank you.

**FX:**

HANDSET DOWN.

**SEAGOON:**

Hmm. Things look pretty grim. The situation calls for immediate action. First I must evacuate the British residents.

**FX:**

DOOR OPENS.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Oh, Neddie. I want to see you.

**SEAGOON:**

This was Lord Grytpype-Thynne, British Consul General. How cool he looked in his porcelain vest and automatic self-igniting boots.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Neddie, Major Bloodnok has been detailed to order a plane to fly the British residents to safety. Would you be at Peking airport between midday and noon?

**SEAGOON:**

I'll get ready. (CALLS) Wong?

**WONG:**

[MILLIGAN]

Ah, yes sir?

**SEAGOON:**

Wong, I'm leaving for England.

**WONG:**

Oh.

**SEAGOON:**

Pack my sleeping bag and send the other one home.

**WONG:**

Please, sir, cannot my brother, Jim Wong, and I come with you?

**SEAGOON:**

Sorry Wong. Only English people are allowed on the plane.

**WONG:**

But sir, we can pretend we are English.

**SEAGOON:**

Haha, nonsense. You know very well two Wongs don't make a white.

**WONG:**

They are wishing to know that.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Well said, Neddie. Who is it says that you haven't got a sense of humour?

**SEAGOON:**

Everybody.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Yes. Well, I'll see you at the airport in scrimpson skranson hours.

**SEAGOON:**

Sorry, sir. I can't be there until half-past skansons.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Very well then, half-past skansons, but don't be more than a skanson late will you?

**SEAGOON:**

I'll be there dead on skansons.

**GRYTPYPE:**

Needle nardle skinson!

**FX:**

DOOR CLOSES.

**SEAGOON:**

In half an hour I was ready to leave. I burnt the official documents, set the goat free and swallowed the union jack. I was just about to dismantle the official embassy saxophone when...

**FX:**

DOOR OPENS.

**GRAMS:**

HIGH SPEED RECORDING OF MILLIGAN GIBBERISH.

**FX:**

DOOR SLAMS.

**SEAGOON:**

I never saw him again.

**BLOODNOK:**

Ooh, oh, Seagoon, Seagoon...

**SEAGOON:**

It was Major Bloodnok of the third Disgusting Fusiliers.

**BLOODNOK:**

Rouse me splonger and blun! Oh, I've been through hell to get here.

**SEAGOON:**

There must be a cooler route?

**BLOODNOK:**

Yes, I was surrounded by a Jap patrol. But I soon had them crawling for me on their hands and knees.

**SEAGOON:**

How's that?

**BLOODNOK:**

I hid in a drain-pipe. Shhh! There's someone outside the window. Look out!

**GRAMS:**

PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

**SEAGOON:**

What is it?

**BLOODNOK:**

It's a gramophone record.

**SEAGOON:**

Quick, put it on.

**BLOODNOK:**

Right!

**GRAMS:**

RECORDING (SLIGHTLY FASTER) PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

**SEAGOON:**

What is it?

**BLOODNOK:**

It's a gramophone record.

**SEAGOON:**

Quick, put it on.

**BLOODNOK:**

Right!

**FX:**

RECORDING WITHIN RECORDING (EVEN FASTER) PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

**SEAGOON:**

What is it?

**BLOODNOK:**

It's a gramophone record.

**SEAGOON:**

Quick, put it on.

**BLOODNOK:**

Right!

**FX:**

RECORDING WITHIN RECORDING (EVEN FASTER AGAIN) PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

**SEAGOON:**

What is it?

**BLOODNOK:**

It's a gramophone record.

**SEAGOON:**

Quick, put it on.

**BLOODNOK:**

Right!

**FX:**

RECORDING WITHIN RECORDING (TOP SPEED) PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

**SEAGOON:**

What is it?

**BLOODNOK:**

It's a gramophone record.

**SEAGOON:**

Quick, put it on.

**BLOODNOK:**

Right!

**BLOODNOK:**

Stretch me skallibonkers and flatten me Doreen Lundies! It's a Japanese mirror trick. We shall have to get out of here.

**SEAGOON:**

Yes! Yes! Yes! Now, what about the plane?

**BLOODNOK:**

The plane, the plane. Ooo! Ooo heavens!

**SEAGOON:**

What's up?

**BLOODNOK:**

Oh, Heav... Look - if I tell, promise you won't blow up?

**SEAGOON:**

I promise.

**BLOODNOK:**

I forgot to order it.

**GRAMS:**

EXPLOSION.

**BLOODNOK:**

You promised!

**SEAGOON:**

Bloodnok, I don't like the way you're acting.

**BLOODNOK:**

Then get Lawrence Olivier.

**SEAGOON:**

Gladys?

**ELLINGTON:**

Yes, darling?

**SEAGOON:**

Is the transport ready to take us to the aerodrome?

**ELLINGTON:**

Yes, darling.

**SEAGOON:**

Thank you, darling. Here's an airing cupboard - go and have some fun. Now, Bloodnok! Where's your wife?

**BLOODNOK:**

My wife? Erm, my wife won't be coming with us, old lad. You see, I..., well, she can't leave her bed.

**SEAGOON:**

Why not?

**BLOODNOK:**

I've sewn her in the mattress.

**SEAGOON:**

You skindrell of scoundrels, that's matricide!

**BLOODNOK:**

Yes!

**GRAMS:**

RIFLE FIRE.

**SEAGOON:**

They're getting closer. Eccles!

**GRAMS:**

COCONUT SHELLS APPROACHING AT THE GALLOP.

**ECCLES:**

Heeeeello!

**SEAGOON:**

Carry these. Oh, and check my automatic to see if it's loaded.

**ECCLES:**

OK. Let me see, now. Oh! Ah, they got three bullets in the magazine. What's it got...? Oh, yeah. One in the barrel. And, er...

**FX:**

PISTOL SHOT.

**ECCLES:**

...one in my head.

**SEAGOON:**

Good man, Eccles. Keep up the good work.

**ECCLES:**

Thank you.

**SEAGOON:**

Now, gentlemen.

**ECCLES:**

Yes?

**SEAGOON:**

We're about to journey through war-torn countryside.

**ECCLES:**

Ooh.

**SEAGOON:**

There'll be fighting all along the way. We've got to travel through it. Twenty-five miles in an open car. Therefore we must take precautions. Here. Here's two aspirins each. England forever! Followed closely by Max Geldray.

**MAX GELDRAV:**

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

**ORCHESTRA:**

DRAMATIC LINK

**GREENSLADE:**

'Lost Horizon' part two - Escape.

**GRAMS:**

THUNDERSTORM. RAIN CONTINUES UNDER:

**SEAGOON:**

In a tropical storm we arrived at the ruined Peking airport.

**GRYTPYPE:**

I thought you'd never get here, Neddie. Let me take your wet saxophone.

**SEAGOON:**

Thank you. Ah, any luck with the plane?

**GRYTPYPE:**

Well, we've had the offer of a private one from Count Fred Moriarty here. Count, this is Mr. N. Seagoon, Minister without portfolios.

**MORIARTY:**

I wondered why he wasn't wearing any.

**SEAGOON:**

Who is going to pilot this machine?

**MORIARTY:**

I am, for £10,000.

**SEAGOON:**

That's a lot of money.

**MORIARTY:**

Yukkakakkoo, I know. That's why I'm asking for it. You have the embassy funds?

**SEAGOON:**

Yes, but...

**GRYTPYPE:**

Yes, yes. Hand them over, Neddie, there's a good boy. It's our only chance.

**MORIARTY:**

Thank you. I'll tell you what we'll do...

**SEAGOON:**

I did as I was instructed. But I was suspicious. Who was this Fred Moriarty? I became more suspicious as I watched him and Lord Gryttype rolling on the floor, pouring the embassy funds over their heads. Ha ha ha! Still, you're only young once.

**MORIARTY:**

(AD-LIB) Or, as in your case, twice.

**SEAGOON:**

(AD-LIB AND LAUGHS) You just thought of that.

**MORIARTY:**

(AD-LIB) Yes, I did.

**SEAGOON:**

(BLOWS RASPBERRY)

**MORIARTY:**

(AD-LIB) You just thought of that! (BACK TO SCRIPT) Now then, gentlemen, back to the story. We're ready to take off in the...

**SEAGOON:**

Right!

**MORIARTY:**

...flying type aeroplane.

**SEAGOON:**

Right. Ladies and gentlemen, there is room for thirteen on the plane.

**ECCLES:**

Ooh.

**SEAGOON:**

Unfortunately, there are fourteen of us. One of us has got to stop behind.

**OMNES:**

MUMBLING.

**ECCLES:**

I got bad legs. I got bad legs.

**SEAGOON:**

Don't rhu barb me! Any volunteers? Bloodnok!?

**BLOODNOK:**

What? Oh. Well, look here, I mean, I'd love to stay. But I made a vow that before I die I'd like to see the old country again.

**SEAGOON:**

What old country?

**BLOODNOK:**

ANY old country.

**SEAGOON:**

Major Bloodnok, you and Lieutenant Greenslade are the only two single men. It's between you two.

**BLOODNOK:**

Greenslade?

**GREENSLADE:**

Yes, sir.

**BLOODNOK:**

Marry me, darling, marry me!

**SEAGOON:**

Stop this Noel Coward dialogue.

**BLOODNOK:**

I beg your pardon.

**SEAGOON:**

Now, you and Greenslade go behind that hut and decide who is to stay.

**BLOODNOK:**

Certainly. Come, Greenslade, dear lad. (FADES) I've always admired you, you know...

**GRAMS:**

BOOTS WALKING AWAY.

**BLOODNOK:**

I've always admired you...

**GRAMS:**

FOOTSTEPS CONTINUE.

**FX:**

PISTOL SHOT.

**GREENSLADE:**

Ahhhhhhh!

**GRAMS:**

FOOTSTEPS RETURNING.

**BLOODNOK:**

The gallant Greenslade has volunteered to stay.

**SEAGOON:**

Major Bloodnok! You're holding a pistol in your hand and it's smoking.

**BLOODNOK:**

Yes, it steadies its nerves, you know. Very jumpy with the old trigger, you know.

**SEAGOON:**

Bloodnok, you've done a murder. When you get back to England you'll pay for that.

**BLOODNOK:**

How much?

**SEAGOON:**

A pound down and three and nine a week.

**BLOODNOK:**

They're costing more these days.

**SEAGOON:**

It's the luxury tax, you know.

**BLOODNOK:**

Of course, of course!

**SEAGOON:**

Needle nardle noo! Silence! Everyone on board the flying aeroplane. Fasten your safety belts. Contact!

**GRAMS:**

AEROPLANE ENGINE STARTS.

**ORCHESTRA:**

Dramatic flying link.

**GRAMS:**

FURTHER AEROPLANE SOUNDS. CONTINUE UNDER:

**SEAGOON:**

Dawn, December the twenty-fifth. Have been airborne eight hours. Altitude twenty thousand feet, magnificent day, plane running very smoothly, engines in perfect condition, no wind, ideal weather for flying. Crashed.

**MORIARTY:**

Seagoon! Nobody's hurt but the plane is a wreck.

**SEAGOON:**

That's why it crashed. I wonder where we are?

**ECCLES:**

Well, I say we're miles from civilization.

**SEAGOON:**

How do you know?

**ECCLES:**

Everything's so peaceful.

**SEAGOON:**

Well said. Well done. (HYSTERICAL) Well done! Well done! Well done! Ha ha hum, now...

**ECCLES:**

Oh, oh, oh!

**SEAGOON:**

What have you done?

**ECCLES:**

I've... I've broken my leg.

**SEAGOON:**

How did you do that?

**ECCLES:**

I just got a hammer and went WHACK!

**SEAGOON:**

Splendid man, Eccles. Keep up the good work. Here's a razorblade, have fun.

**BLOODNOK:**

Neddie! Neddie! We must repair the plane's talking radio. It's our only chance of contact with the outside world.

**SEAGOON:**

Don't worry. I've got a man working on it now. We'll just have to sit and wait. And so, dear listener, we sat and waited. Sometimes we stood and waited, which is like sitting down only higher. Ha-hum. Three weeks went by and then...

**ECCLES:**

Mr. Seagoon! The radio set... the radio set...

**SEAGOON:**

Yes, yes, yes?!

**ECCLES:**

It still ain't working.

**SEAGOON:**

Curse. That does it. We've had it, chaps.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

No, you've not hadded it. I have come to save you, little welsh ball.

**SEAGOON:**

I turned to meet the maker of this melodious voice. It was a short, thin, shivering youth, heavily wrapped up in rice paper and dental floss.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

I have been sented to save you from the dreaded starvation. Here, have a wine gum.

**SEAGOON:**

Little badly constructed wreck.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Oh!

**SEAGOON:**

Who are you?

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

I am the mysterious stranger of the snows. I am known as 'He who walks bare-footed through the frosty mountains'.

**SEAGOON:**

Why?

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

My boots is at the menders. He he he! He he he! Always a joke from little merry Blunebottle.

**SEAGOON:**

Intellectual giant, where do you hail from?

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Where do I hail from, he says. It is a place that lives in the memory forever. I got it writted down on a fag-packet, somewhere. Oh, yes. It is Shangra Lurn. Land of eternal youth. Land of purity. No drink, no sex, no sin. And I'm fed up with it, I am. (AUDIENCE APPLAUSE) Thank you, fellow sinners.

**SEAGOON:**

Hurricanes of bunions! This place Shangri-La, it sounds like Utopia.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Well, it's spelt differently, I know that.

**SEAGOON:**

Don't tarry. Lead us to Shangri-La.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Follow me!

**ORCHESTRA:**

DRAMATIC MOUNTAIN SCALING LINK.

**GRAMS:**

BLIZZARD WINDS.

**SEAGOON:**

On we plunged, through raging snow storms. Three weeks we battled on, right to starvation.

**BLOODNOK:**

Yes. Many's the day we had to exist on a handful of caviar and champagne.

**SEAGOON:**

Yes. The weight of our baggage became too much. In a moment of desperation we ditched the following vital equipment; 18 hundred weight of rusty iron piping with fittings.

**MILLIGAN:**

Twenty four lead budgerigar perches.

**BLOODNOK:**

One long, thin object with no fixed abode.

**SEAGOON:**

One bronze bicycle with cement parachute ejector seat.

**MILLIGAN:**

One...(SINGING) Oooooo oooooo ooooooo!

**BLOODNOK:**

One bus.

**LALKAKA:**

Thirty six cardboard replicas of Nelson's Column from the inside.

**BLOODNOK:**

One rubber Mosque with detachable beard.

**SEAGOON:**

That's enough men. We daren't risk leaving any more behind. Now, get those pianos on your backs and away we go.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

No. Stop, stop I say! You must not go yet. You must hear the mysterious temple music of Lama Ray Ellington and his gulf stream and unshaven bongos.

**RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:**

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

**SEAGOON:**

Then, on the second of January, a miracle!

**ORCHESTRA:**

SHARP CHORD, WOODWIND TRILLS (HOLD UNDER)

**SEAGOON:**

In a natural rocky gorge we reached a tunnel in the sheer cliff face. In darkness we stumbled along its interior. Then a shaft of light gleamed at the far end. We reached it exhausted. And lo! There before us lay Shangri-La.

**ORCHESTRA:**

MONUMENTAL FANFARE. DISTANT TEMPLE BELL. SOLEMN CHINESE THEME. (CONTINUE UNDER)

**SEAGOON:**

Dear listener, I looked out upon a pastoral scene that I'd only dreamed existed. It almost defied description. In warm sunshine a valley that sang with colour. Hillocks topped with banyan trees. And from their secret willow, doves sprang their wings bent skywards.

**GRAMS:**

RECORDING OF 'NEPTUNE' FROM HOLST'S PLANETS SUITE. (FIG VI TILL END)

**SEAGOON:**

Streams chuckled and vanished in early mists. Surmounting all lay a monastery, clean and white in the sun, against which coloured prayer flags fluttered like spilled paint. This, then, was Shangri-La, my paradise, my predestined resting place. (SHOUTING) MORE! What about the old radio awards for acting there?

**GRYTPYPE:**

You silly, twisted boy.

**SEAGOON:**

I'd forgotten all about that.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Yes, I had, too. Stop all this. You're spoiling the game, what is I like. This is the bit where I take you to see the great big head Lama and his great big head.

**ORCHESTRA:**

Gong.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Thank you, J. Arthur Rank. Now, take off your shoes and face the great cardboard cut-out Kaboda for the Dali Lama.

**SEAGOON:**

Approaching me were two bags of dust on legs.

**MINNIE:**

(DISTANT) I saw it at the window and I said...

**FX:**

TEASPOON DROPS.

**MINNIE:**

Ohhh! What's happened?

**CRUN:**

You can't get the Yetis, you know.

**MINNIE:**

I said we'd all be murdered in our monasteries and you didn't... you didn't come.

**CRUN:**

Grinn, k-nit, plung!

**MINNIE:**

Ohh!

**CRUN:**

Seacroon, welcome to Shangri-La!

**MINNIE:**

Yes.

**CRUN:**

All mod. cons. Light removals with horse and van.

**MINNIE:**

Listen, Buddy. We've brought you here to take Henry Crun's place when he retires.

**SEAGOON:**

You... you mean you want me to stay here until I die?

**CRUN:**

You can stop longer, if you wish. You see, I must retire. I'm seven hundred and nine years old.

**SEAGOON:**

Seven hundred and nine yea... I don't believe it. You look older.

**MINNIE:**

Gnyum gnyum... it's true.

**SEAGOON:**

You still alive?

**CRUN:**

It's true.

**MINNIE:**

The air in this valley keeps one young. Bluebottle here is only three hundred and ten.

**BLUEBOTTLE:**

Yes.

**MINNIE:**

Change those shorts.

**SEAGOON:**

Very well, I accept the post as Dalai Lama.

**GREENSLADE:**

'Lost Horizontally' part three, four, five, six, etc. Ying tong idle I poo. Needle nardle noo. All's well that ends well and this is Wallace Greenslade, lover of good english, wishing he were dead.

**FX:**

PISTOL SHOT.

**GREENSLADE:**

Oh!

**MILLIGAN:**

Wish granted.

**SEAGOON:**

Bloodnok, you must stop killing Greenslade, he's not well.

**BLOODNOK:**

I'm sorry but my nerves are in rags, you know. I can't stand Shangri-La. We've been here nine months and... well, look here old man, I mean, I want to go back to Peking. My wife might be carrying on with someone.

**SEAGOON:**

How could she? She was sewn in a mattress.

**BLOODNOK:**

She might have met a man sewn in another mattress. After all, they've got to have something in common, haven't they?

**SEAGOON:**

Ah, Bloodnok, I can see there are no flies on you.

**BLOODNOK:**

I know. Shut that door!

**MORIARTY:**

Ying tong idle I po - Seacroon. I'm going to leave this place and what's more...ooh, ooh, ooh!...I'm taking this Shangri-oo-la-la girl with me here.

**ORIENTAL FEMALE:**

[SELLERS]

No. I go with Dennis Bloodnok. He says he live in beautiful cottage in Switzerland and we are to be married in a beautiful white chapel.

**MORIARTY:**

That's right. Married in Whitechapel. Live in Swiss Cottage.

**SEAGOON:**

I don't wish to know that. Fools! The moment you take that girl into the outside air she'll crumble into her real age.

**MORIARTY:**

Sapristi cringe! Nyukkakukkakoo! Never mind. I tell you, I'm taking her and we're going!

**SEAGOON:**

Go then, my friends, all of you, but tempt me not. This valley is the paradise on earth for which I have searched all my life. And now, at last, would you rob me of the peace and happiness which is my due - yea, the due of all mortals? Go, I say! Leave me alone. For nothing - I repeat nothing - will ever make me leave. I'm staying.

**ECCLES:**

I'm staying with you.

**SEAGOON:**

(DESPERATE) No! No! Moriarty wait, I'm coming!

**ECCLES:**

Come back! No, come back!

**ORCHESTRA:**

PLAYOUT.

**GREENSLADE:**

That was The Goon Show - a BBC 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:**

UP AND OUT.

Notes:

Shangri-La is a fictional place described in the novel, Lost Horizon, written by British writer James Hilton in 1933. In it, "Shangri-La" is a mystical, harmonious valley, enclosed in the Himalayas. A film version was released in 1937. The story of Shangri-La is based on the concept of Shambhala, a mystical city in the Buddhist religion.

Ava Gardner was a movie star and sex symbol, most popular in the forties and fifties.

Manchuria is a name given to a vast territorial region in China, northeast Asia. In 1932, the Japanese army invaded Manchuria and threw out the Chinese.

East Acton is in the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

Peking (now known as Beijing), is the capital city in northern China.

Lawrence Olivier was an Oscar winning English actor and director, regarded by many critics as one of the greatest actors of the 20th century.

J. Arthur Rank was a British industrialist, film producer and founder of the Rank Organisation - Its opening film credits contained a man hitting a large gong.

Whitechapel and Swiss Cottage are areas of London.