

S7 E03 - The Nadger Plague

Transcribed by Yukka Tukka Indians. Minor adjustments by thegoonshow.net. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC Light Programme.

SECOMBE:

Mr. Greenslade, never mind the commercials, mate.

GREENSLADE:

Oh!

SECOMBE:

Enough of this splin-splan-slon a-hern-hern. Give us a magic lantern lecture on this week's show.

GREENSLADE:

As you will, sir.

FX:

LANTERN SLIDE OPERATION.

GREENSLADE:

Ladies and gentlemen, on inserting the first colour slide we perceive the title to be, 'The Great Nadger Plague'.

PIANO:

LONG RAMBLING INTRODUCTION

SELLERS:

According to the next slide it was in the year 1656 that the dreaded Nadger plague swept across Europe like the dreaded Nadger plague of 1656. The next slide says...

SPRIGGS:

Ooooh, Jim! Jim, men were cut down in the prim of their prime. They went down like pins of nine! Ohhhh! Oh, hirror! Ooh, horror! Ooh, horror!

SELLERS:

(IRISH ACCENT) Did you say O'Hara?

SPRIGGS:

Oh, damn, here you go!

SELLERS:

No, stop it.

SPRIGGS:

We present the musical lantern slide which follows immediately, Jim.

SELLERS:

(IN FAR BACKGROUND) Oh, nooo...

FX:

LANTERN SLIDE OPERATION.

ORCHESTRA:

BUCOLIC INTRODUCTION ON FLUTE & HARP. BANNISTER ON VOCALS. (CONTINUE UNDER)

GREENSLADE:

As you see ladies and gentlemen, this beautiful slide shows the scene on the eve of the disaster. The stiddley Hume of Lord Seagoon's hountry coose at Ninfield in the sountry of Cussex. The year, 1656. Or, for our regular customers, at the reduced rate of 1537.

FX:

CROQUET BALLS IN PLAY.

SEAGOON:

(LAUGHS) Oh, a ploon of plun! Like croquet, Lady Plutt, you have fecked me ball and merry crackie card. Ha ha ha! See you later, m'carte.

THROAT:

Right, darling.

SEAGOON:

Begone, then, delicate creature. But see! Who approaches?

ELLINGTON:

I pray pard your plin, me Lord Seagoon.

SEAGOON:

Ah, me Lord Footman. How tarries?

ELLINGTON:

Oh, a quill of quolls and quarms. But I splon. I deviate. Two ragged aristocrats await you.

SEAGOON:

Usher them on in. Or in on. Strike out that which does not apply.

GRYTPYPE:

(APPROACHING) There's no need m'Lud. We took the liberty of striking it out ourselves.

SEAGOON:

The voice came from one of two tall naked men.

GRYTPYPE:

Yes. Pray pardon our 'al fresco' appearance but our tailor is ill.

SEAGOON:

What's his name.

GRYTPYPE:

Al Fresco.

SEAGOON:

I'm not of humours to know that.

GRYTPYPE:

Would you just step over here by this reeking unmade bed.

SEAGOON:

Yes. Who is he?

GRYTPYPE:

This bed is, and I quote from this prison discharge paper, the Compte de Jim Reeking Moriarty, Knight of a hundred stars, Cheval de Notre Caleur and fish potter extraordinary.

MORIARTY:

Ah, Lord Seagoon. Your humble.

SEAGOON:

You're revolting.

GRYTPYPE:

And now, of course, allow me to introduce myself. Moriarty, announce my name.

MORIARTY:

Certain-mate. (ANNOUNCING) Oh, ladies and gentlemen, announcing, in the brown corner, at two hundred pounds, four shillings and eightpence, my Lord Hercules Grite-pype Thynne.

GRYTPYPE:

Thank you, Moriarty. Neddie, we come from France seeking the hospitality for which the English are so ill-famed.

SEAGOON:

My Lords! You couldn't have come to a better place.

GRYTPYPE:

We could have, but we didn't have the money.

SEAGOON:

You jest i' faith.

GRYTPYPE:

You're jest a Charlie. Hahahaha!

SEAGOON:

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

GRYTPYPE:

Ohhh, nitty-nutty-noo.

SEAGOON:

Yes, yes. A chamber for you. Othello, smoke out the bedding in room number six. It's the tick, you know.

GRYTPYPE:

Of course.

SEAGOON:

We have them every year about this time. What *is* the time?

GRYTPYPE:

Four twenty.

SEAGOON:

Gad! They're late this year. (SCREAMS) Arrrrgh! Dear listeners, at that moment the two men turned to go to their room, and I observed the seats of their trousers were burned out. I knew that sign only too well. It meant... that these men were stricken with the dreaded nadger plague. (SCREAMS) Arrrrgh! Run for it! The nadgers! The plague!

OMNES:

The plague!

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC LINK

GREENSLADE:

Listeners will no doubt be puzzled at Seagoon's terror on seeing a pair of burnt-out trouser seats. To find the explanation, I will insert another coloured lantern slide which shows the good people of Ninfield assembled in the Corn Exchange.

FX:

LANTERN SLIDE OPERATION.

OMNES:

VARIOUS COUNTRY MUMBLES AND LINCOLNSHIRE RHUBARBS.

FX:

GAVEL

CRUN:

Gentlemen. Lord Seagoon is right in calling this meeting.

SPRIGGS:

Well said, Jim.

CRUN:

As chief apothecary of Ninfield I have been studying the humours of the trousers for many years. And I can tell you that the two gentlemen staying at Lord Seagoon's house are clear cases of the dreaded nadger plague!

GRAMS:

DUCK QUACKS. HORSE NEIGHS. CHICKEN CLUCKS. COW MOOS.

SEAGOON:

Citizens of Ninfield, I must warn you. Beware the moment the seats of your trousers start to burn. Then you've got it.

SPRIGGS:

Oh, tell me, sir. How can we avoid catching this dreaded malady?

SEAGOON:

There is no cure, Jim. But there is a preventative measure.

SPRIGGS:

Ohhh!

SEAGOON:

Ohhh! As the disease only strikes the seat of the trousers, it is best that we desist from wearing any.

SPRIGGS:

Oh, horrors of horrors! But would it not be unwise for the men of Ninfield to walk abroad without their nether garments? Remember, there's a hard frost in the morning.

SEAGOON:

He's right. We can't risk damage to our crops. However... however, I have an alternative. As the seat of the trousers is the vulnerable part, that portion shall be cut out.

SPRIGGS:

Ohhh.

BLOODNOK:

This is a lot of rubbish. Nadgers? I've never heard of it. It's all fish and vinegar, do you hear! (SNIFFS) Can you smell...(SNIFFS) Oh, me britches! Oohhh!

SEAGOON:

Run for your lives! The nadgers!

OMNES:

The nadgers!

GRAMS:

SCREAMING. BOOTS RUNNING AWAY AT SPEED.

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC CHORDS

GREENSLADE:

Dear viewers, as you will observe on this lantern slide, Lord Bloodnok had indeed been stricken by the nadgers. Now here on the next slide you'll see the men of the village filing past Doctor Crun to have the seats of their trousers removed.

FX:

SCISSORS SNIPPING.

SEAGOON:

Oops! Mind how you go, Doctor Crun!

CRUN:

I'm sorry. Next, please. Your name, sir?

GELDRAY:

Max Geldray, English gentleman.

CRUN:

Ploogie!

MAX GELDRAY

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

GREENSLADE:

That was Max Geldray, BBC Contract artist now under the threat of death. However, with the seat of his trousers removed he can now face the world with a smile. Now, The Nadger Plague, coloured slide number four.

FX:

LANTERN SLIDE OPERATION.

MORIARTY & GRYPYPE:

(LAUGH)

MORIARTY:

You naughty... you naughty Gright-pype Thine! Oh-ho-hohh! The way they all ran away from the manor, eh?

GRYPYPE:

Yes. That was a brilliant idea of mine that you thought of.

MORIARTY:

What?

GRYPYPE:

Burning those fake nadger holes in our trousers. Now, put on that lantern slide of Lord Seagoon's treasure chest.

MORIARTY:

Right.

FX:

LANTERN SLIDE OPERATION.

MORIARTY:

There. What a beautiful picture.

GRYPYPE:

Isn't it.

MORIARTY:

(STRAINS) I can't get the chest open.

GRYTPYPE:

Well try this lantern slide of a bunch of keys.

FX:

KEYS JANGLING.

MORIARTY:

Oh! Voila, voila! They all fit perfectly.

GRYTPYPE:

And look what's inside! A lantern slide of four pounds seven shillings in coppers.

MORIARTY:

(RAVES) Then it's true! He is a millionaire!

FX:

DISTANT HAND BELL.

ECCLES:

(DISTANT) Hear ye! Hear ye! The proclamation sayeth; The plague... the plague having come to Ninfield...

GRYTPYPE:

The plague? He must be joking.

ECCLES:

(DISTANT) No, I'm not! The plague! The King has decreed that the village shall be put in quaren-nine and in quarantine and surrounded by a cordon of... cordon of... cordon of sol-jers.

GRYTPYPE:

What! Let's get out of here.

MORIARTY:

Awwwww!

GRAMS:

DOUBLE WHOOSH.

FX:

DOOR SHUTS.

SEAGOON:

Curse. Just as the listeners already know, Thynne and Moriarty in fake nadger trousers have made off with my entire fortune in coppers. Pausing only for an English summer, I leap on my favourite Arab. Hup...

GRAMS:

PENGUIN-TYPE QUACKS

SEAGOON:

Ahh! That's better. Now, tango after them!

GRAMS:

RECORDING OF TANGO (PIANO, VIOLIN AND BASS COMBO). OVERLAY WITH GALLOPING HORSES HOOVES. SPEED THE WHOLE THING UP AND FADE INTO DISTANCE. PAUSE. COCKEREL CROWING.

GREENSLADE:

We included that recording of a cockerel for people who like that sort of thing. And... and now, here is a recording for people who *don't* like that sort of thing.

MILLIGAN:

(COCKEREL IMITATION)

FX:

PISTOL SHOT.

MILLIGAN:

Aaagh!

GREENSLADE:

If listeners will stand on their beds and face north, they'll be able to see a portion of the ensuing lantern slide which shows a sentry on duty at the nadger-ridden village of Ninfield.

GRAMS:

NIGHT SOUNDS. DISTANT OWL.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Halt, who goes there? Oh. It is a little owl. Hello, little owl. Thinks: I will make up a poetry up.

Hello, little owl.

I can hear you 'owl, little howl.

(GOING OFF) You little lovely howl.

MORIARTY:

(VERY CLOSE) Shh. Shh. Shh! Look. Look, Grytpype. Look over there. That...

GRYTPYPE:

Mm?

MORIARTY:

It's a...

GRYTPYPE:

Uh?

MORIARTY:

What is it?

GRYTPYPE:

It's... er... Hand me that book on British wildlife. Let's see. Lady Docker? No, it can't be her. Errrrr... Ah, yes, yes! The lesser spotted sentry boy.

MORIARTY:

Splendid, Grytpype Thynne. I should talk to him because I'm wearing the hat.

GRYTPYPE:

Right and I'll accompany you on this waistcoat.

GRAMS:

(RECORDING) AMATEUR PIANO ARPEGGIOS IN C

GRYTPYPE:

Is that alright for you?

MORIARTY:

(SINGS) Me. Me. Yes, right. (CLEARS THROAT) (CALLS OUT) I say! Little ragged lad!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oooh. You're not an owl.

MORIARTY:

Of course not. Of course I'm not an owl, I'm on holiday.

BLUEBOTTLE:

But I heard one. I heard-ed one.

MORIARTY:

You heard-ed?

BLUEBOTTLE:

It went HOOT, HOOT, HOOTIE! It's fake howl makes an 'owl howl.

MORIARTY:

Quelle brilliant impression. Tell me, little lad, can you do an impression of a sentry fast asleep?

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes, I can, yes.

MORIARTY:

Yes?

BLUEBOTTLE:

Lays on ground, closes eyes. Does imitation cardboard snoring. Imitation ten seconds from now - onetwothreefoursevensennineten. (SNORES)

MORIARTY:

Alright.

BLUEBOTTLE:

This is my mimitation now.

MORIARTY:

Oh, he's not finished. Right. All clear, Grytpype. Lets go [UNCLEAR].

GRAMS:

DOUBLE WHOOSH

SEAGOON:

Good heavens! A piece of knotted string asleep at his post. Get up, you rotten twine!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Ahhe! Don't shake my ITMA-type catchphrases. Stop shaking me. You'll shake my knots off. I'm not doing real sleeping. I was doing an impression of sleeping.

SEAGOON:

Well, do an impression of waking up.

BLUEBOTTLE:

(SMACKS LIPS) 'Ello, mum. What's for breakfast?

SEAGOON:

Very good. Now tell me, little string-type soldier, did you see two criminals go by with four pounds seven shillings in coppers?

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, but I saw two coppers go by with four pounds seven shillings in criminals! Yeoue-hee-hee-hee-hee! I have made a little jockules.

FX:

THUD ON NUT.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh-heough! Type oh-heough!

SEAGOON:

Shut-type up! Type, shut up-type fool.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh!

SEAGOON:

You've let two men go through disguised as two other men. After the four of them. Wait. Why is that gas stove wearing a hat?

BLUEBOTTLE:

He's going out. That gas stove is Eccles.

SEAGOON:

Splin, splan, splon. Poor little cardboard grenadier. Ha-ha. He thinks that the noble Eccles is a noble gas stove. Just to prove that he is mad and I am sane, I will question the gas stove in its own tongue. A-hem. Hello, gas stove.

ECCLES:

Hello, Neddie.

SEAGOON:

Ahhh-ahhhhgh! Nowts, norts, newts! It's true! Eccles *is* a gas stove. Tell me, Eccles, what's cooking? Ah-ha ha ha! What's cooking!

ECCLES:

I... I don't wish to cook that.

SEAGOON:

Get out of my oven.

ECCLES:

What?

SEAGOON:

I mean, how did this fate befall you?

ECCLES:

Well, Neddie. When I heard about the nadger plague... (MUMBLES UNDER)

SEAGOON:

While he was mumbling I read an amazing story. Seemingly, as Eccles had no trousers he could not avoid the plague by having the seat cut out and had therefore swallowed a witch's magic potion which had changed him into a gas stove thus making him immune to the plague. This has given me an idea. I will hie me to the witch. Eccles, lead the way. But first, an impression of Ray Ellington.

ECCLES:

That's easy.

RAY ELLINGTON

GRAMS:

OBJECT DROPPED INTO CAULDRON. STEAM AND BUBBLING LIQUID.

MINNIE:

(INCANTING) Yim bom biddelly doh!

Double, double,

toil and trouble,

fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Fire burn you sennacower frog,

Ooh, debuk and hair of a dog.

Ohiee, yim bom biddelly doh!

CRUN:

Stop making those naughty spells, Min.

MINNIE:

I'm not making a naughty spell.

CRUN:

You are. You made a naughty spell.

MINNIE:

I'm not. Henry, hand me that carton of frozen asses gall and a nose of a tack buddy.

CRUN:

Oh, yum, yum, yum.

MINNIE:

Yum to you!

CRUN:

Are you using Mrs. Beaton's cookery book?

MINNIE:

Of course, it's the first thing that I put in.

CRUN:

Oh.

FX:

SLOW KNOCKING ON DOOR.

SEAGOON:

The door was opened by an elderly cupboard with the drawers open.

CRUN:

Yes, I'm just putting some clean newspaper in. Yes, I was...

SEAGOON:

I understand. Some of my best friends are cupboards.

CRUN:

Oh.

MINNIE:

Oh! Did you want *me*, young welsh buddy?

SEAGOON:

Mistress Bannister. Are you the witch?

MINNIE:

Only part time, bud. You see, the B.M.A. don't recognise me.

SEAGOON:

I didn't recognise you, myself. You've aged so much.

MINNIE:

You...? Ohhh!

CRUN:

Don't you talk to Min like that.

MINNIE:

Go on, tell them.

CRUN:

Or I'll... I'll... ohie-er... (FIBRILLATIONS)

SEAGOON:

I caught him as he fell. Mistress Bannister!

MINNIE:

Ohhhh!

SEAGOON:

I want a magic potion that will change me into some inanimate object.

CRUN:

You mean, you're not one? Ha ha ha...(LAUGHS. DEVELOPS INTO HEART ATTACK)

SEAGOON:

I caught him as he fell.

MINNIE:

Here, young man, take this bottle of green liquid. Drink it when your powder's running low and then you'll be transformed into any object you want, buddy, ohhh...

SEAGOON:

Thank you, ma'am. Here's my personal, unsigned, plasticine A.E.I.O.U.

MINNIE:

Thank you. And here's a tip, buddy. Grytpype Thynne and Moriarty are on their way to the Green Sailor's Inn. Ooooooh!

SEAGOON:

What? Hup! Onwaaaaaard!

GRAMS:

HORSES HOOVES. SPEED UP GRADUALLY AND FADE. WIND, DISTANT THUNDER CRACK.

FX:

KNOCK ON DOOR.

WILLIUM:

Coming, mate, coming. 'Old on a minute, mate. I don't know. I'm coming. I don't know what mates are doing out on a night like this, mate. I dunno, it's... um... mate night for nobody, mate.

FX:

LOCKS BEING DRAWN BACK. DOOR OPENS.

WILLIUM:

It's not a night...

GREENSLADE:

Is this the Green Sailor Inn?

WILLIUM:

Yes, mate.

GREENSLADE:

Then part seven. In which two travellers arrive at the inn.

WILLIUM:

Oh. Well, I'd better go and get the beds ready, mate.

MORIARTY:

Yes, yes, mate. Yes, mate. And a bowl of steaming venison and a side of mead for our horse's friends.

WILLIUM:

Who's your horse's friends?

MORIARTY:

We are.

WILLIUM:

Oh.

GRYTPYPE:

And landlord, we want a room with the walls facing inwards, a table laid with your best silver and napiery...

MORIARTY:

Yes! And a window overlooking our horse and a set of knotted sheets hanging there from.

WILLIUM:

'Ere, wait a minute, mate.

MORIARTY:

What, mate?

WILLIUM:

Sheets hanging out the window?

MORIARTY:

Yes, mate.

WILLIUM:

I know what you're going to do, matey. The moment my back's turned that horse'll be up them sheets for a free night's kip. No, no.

MORIARTY:

Curse it! Curse it! Curse it, Grytpype, he's guessed our plan.

GRYTPYPE:

Alright, landlord, you've rumbled us. Put the horse on the bill.

MORIARTY:

Yes, and hurry.

FX:

DOOR OPENS.

WILLIUM:

Alright, mates, in here. Room number ninety-nine. Named it after me old Dad, I did.

MORIARTY:

Ooh! What a lovely room your father must have been.

WILLIUM:

Yes.

MORIARTY:

Wait! (AUDIENCE LAUGH) Wait for the laugh. So, yes, look! And a gas stove in the corner, mate.

WILLIUM:

Yes, a bloke left it here earlier on. And that clock on the mantelpiece. Left his horse behind and all.

MORIARTY:

Oh. I've never heard of a man with a horse behind but I'll take your word for it.

WILLIUM:

It's the nadgers what do it, you know.

MORIARTY:

Really?

WILLIUM:

I'll go and get your dinner.

MORIARTY:

Thank you, lad, thank you.

FX:

DOOR CLOSES.

MORIARTY:

Now, then, Grytpype. Let's count Seagoon's fortune and see how much it comes to this time.

FX:

PAPER BEING DEALT OUT ON WOODEN TABLE.

MORIARTY & GRYPYPE:

(DISTANT COUNTING OF MONEY).

SEAGOON:

Hello listeners. Hear that ticking? Yes. That clock on the mantelpiece was none other than I, Neddie Seagoon. I had drunk the witch's magic potion and been transformed into an eight day, all weather clock with device to waking you up with a cup of tea. Now I must maintain the deception. A-hem. (SINGS LIKE CLOCK STRIKING THE HOUR) Dong, dong, dong, dong. Dong, dong, dong, dong. Dong, dong, dong, dong. Dong, dong, dong, dong. DONG! DONG! DONG!

MORIARTY:

Three o'clock? *My* watch says four.

SEAGOON:

DONG!

MORIARTY:

What?

GRYPYPE:

Nonsense, I make it seven.

SEAGOON:

DONG! DONG! DONG!

MORIARTY:

There's something strange going on in this room. That clock's slow. I'll wind it up from behind.

SEAGOON:

Don't you dare touch me or I'll strike.

MORIARTY:

Ooooh! That clock spoke!

GRYTPYPE:

It's witchery! Run for it!

GRAMS:

BOOTS RUN OFF AT SPEED. PANE OF GLASS SMASHING.

SEAGOON:

(LAUGHS) Listeners, they've fled leaving the Seagoon fortune behind.

ECCLES:

Ha-ha! Listeners, they've fled leaving the Seagoon for...

SEAGOON:

Shut up, the gas stove.

ECCLES:

Shut up! Clock.

SEAGOON:

Now to change into human form again. Hand me the magic potion.

ECCLES:

I can't move. I'm a gas stove.

SEAGOON:

Well, change back to Eccles.

ECCLES:

Ok. Hand me the magic bottle.

SEAGOON:

I can't. I'm a clock.

GRAMS:

TICKING OF CLOCK.

GREENSLADE:

And that, dear listeners, was three hundred years ago. To this day there is a room in the Green Sailor's Inn available for travellers, complete with gas stove, clock and four pounds seven shillings in coppers. Goodnight, Charlies, everywhere.

ORCHESTRA:

PLAYOUT

GREENSLADE:

That was the Goon Show, a BBC recorded program featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan 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 programme produced by Pat Dixon.