

S7 E11 - The Telephone

Transcribed by Tony Wills. Minor adjustments by thegoonshow.net. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the BBC.

SEAGOON:

I say Greenslade, that's a bit near the knuckle.

GREENSLADE:

Never mind, Mr Seagoon...

SEAGOON:

Ahhhhh.... (UNDER GREENSLADE'S NEXT LINE).

GREENSLADE:

...never mind. Comfort yourself with a leading part in this daring sex drama...

MILLIGAN:

Awwwww...

GREENSLADE:

...entitled... "The Telephone".

MILLIGAN:

Sinful!

ORCHESTRA:

"OH, A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE" BRIGHT BRASS BAND TYPE LINK ENDING WITH CYMBAL CRASH

SELLERS:

Act one, scene one. The North London GPO telephone manager's office.

FX:

PHONE RINGS

SPRIGGS:

What's that, Jim?

NASAL VOICE:

[SELLERS]

Er... telephone call.

SPRIGGS:

Awww! So they've installed it at last, Jim. Call a meeting of all the people we keep especially for meetings. And make it three o'clock.

NASAL:

Right. I'll put the hands forward.

FX:

CLOCKWORK MECHANISM STARTING UP, RATCHETTING NOISE. BELL STRIKES THREE TIMES.

OMNES:

(HUBBUB OF VOICES) Oh, I, Thank you, thank you. Rhubarb, rhubarb. GPO telephone type rhubarb...

SPRIGGS:

Silence!

OMNES:

Custard, rhubarb.

SPRIGGS:

Silence. Silence members of the rhubarb society. Gentlemen, this first meeting of the telephone managers will be presided over, in his new underpants, by mister Jasper Bus at 6 4 10.

JASPER:

[SECOMBE]

Thank you, thank you. Settle down.

SPRIGGS:

Who's next, Jim?

FLOWERDEW:

There's somebody in my district who wants a phone.

OMNES:

Good heavens! Alarm, alarm. Rhubarb. Terrible. Rhubarb, rhubarb, rhubarb. Ying tong iddle I po...

SPRIGGS:

Have you got the name of this sensual, pleasure loving devil?

FLOWERDEW:

Henry Albert Sebastopol Queen Victoria Crun!

SPRIGGS:

Disgusting!

FLOWERDEW:

I've held him off for eight years but my supplies of our printed refusal cards is running so low. The things they use them for, I tell you, I...

GREENSLADE:

Ahhh, may I inter... ahh... just a moment, please, may I interrupt here, gentlemen?

SPRIGGS:

You have. You have interrupted.

GREENSLADE:

I happen to know that Mr Crun is the inventor of the black telephone.

SPRIGGS:

The black...?

NORTH:

Rubbish! Argy bargy. What about Edison Bell?

GREENSLADE:

Edison Bell, sir, invented the *brown* telephone.

SPRIGGS:

Gentlemen. If we know what's good for us, we'll give this chap, Crun, a telephone immediately.

ORCHESTRA:

SAME TUNE AS BEFORE

SEAGOON:

Hello, listeners. The job of installing Crun's phone fell to me, Ned Seagoon!

ORCHESTRA:

SAME TUNE AS BEFORE

SEAGOON:

Yes, thank you, ha ha. As you've guessed by that tune, I was the senior outdoor line layer, Uxbridge area.

GREENSLADE:

That is quite true.

SEAGOON:

Thank you.

GREENSLADE:

Seagoon had just finished a brilliant military career by climbing over the wall at Aldershot. He arrived at Mr Cruns house.

FX:

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK. DOOR OPENED.

GRYTPYPE:

Oh, good morning, postman. Three pints, please.

SEAGOON:

No, no no, you don't understand, I've come to install a black telephone.

GRYTPYPE:

Four pints and a small brown.

SEAGOON:

I'm sorry, I've only got a large black.

MORIARTY:

Owwwww. A large black? Sapristi bombet! What type talking are you doing, there?

SEAGOON:

I'm from the GPO.

MORIARTY:

We have nothing to hide.

GRYTPYPE:

And we have nothing to show either. But do come in, G'PO. You'll... umm...

MILLIGAN:

(OFF) GPO, please.

GRYTPYPE:

You'll pardon the mess, we can't help it, really, we're bachelors, you know.

SEAGOON:

I see. Why don't you get married?

GRYTPYPE:

I would but Moriarty doesn't love me.

SEAGOON:

(CLEARS THROAT) Um, ah, are you Mr Crun?

GRYTPYPE:

No, I'm... er... Grytpype Thynne, criminal by appointment to the royal household cavalry.

MORIARTY:

Owwwww.

SEAGOON:

Really? Why are you living in a hole in the ground?

GRYTPYPE:

Something to do with the shortage of money, you know.

SEAGOON:

Ohh. Mr Crun's moved then?

GRYTPYPE:

Yes, to 17A Africa.

SEAGOON:

17A Africa. Hmm. Can I get there down the Finchley Road?

GRYTPYPE:

Eventually, yes.

SEAGOON:

I'd better write that down. E V E N C H E W, chew, A L Y – 'eventually'.

MORIARTY:

No, wait, wait, wait.

SEAGOON:

Right, goodbye.

MORIARTY:

No, not yet! Come back, little boiling bubble. Listen to me, before you go to 17A Africa.

SEAGOON:

Yes?

MORIARTY:

Would you take this suspicious-looking brown paper parcel, wrapped in string and tied with newspaper?

SEAGOON:

Certainly. Certainly. Ok, Willium, 17A Africa and step on it!

FX:

MULTIPLE BOOTED FOOTSTEPS SPEEDING UP TO A RUN.

GREENSLADE:

Eight months later.

GRAMS:

STOMPING, CLAPPING CHANTING AFRICAN-SOUNDING SONG.

ECCLES:

(COMING IN ON SONG) A dum da dee.

FX:

BOOTS AT JOGGING PACE (FAST MARCH)

WILLIUM:

Oh, 'ere, mate, you sure we're still in the Finchley Road?

SEAGOON:

(PANTING) Of course. Now, let's see. We've... we've used forty-eight thousand miles of cable. Willium, you'd better nip back to Acton for another telegraph pole.

WILLIUM:

Oh, mate, I'm fed up going back, I... port comes only from Prortingal, you know. It's dark when I gets home at night. And as soon as I gets back I has to turn round and cycle back here in the morning.

SEAGOON:

Yes, yes, I see. It does seem a long way out here. Perhaps we should ask our way. Pardon me?

GELDRAY:

Sorry boy, I'm a stranger round here. Ploogeee.

WILLIUM:

Cor, Max Geldray! Blimey, I'm off... (FADES)

MAX GELDRAY:

"AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'"

FX:

TOM-TOMS BEATING. SCRATCHING OF NIB ON PARCHMENT

SELLERS:

As Neddie staggered blindly through Africa, at the extreme end of the Finchley road, he little knew he was within a telephone call's throw of the British Telephone supply depot, Ulumgarla.

ORCHESTRA:

BLOODNOK THEME.

FX:

RASPBERRY UNDERNEATH:

BLOODNOK:

Oowwww! Arghh! Oowwww! Oohhhhh. Well, I can't sit here all day.

ABDUL:

Sahib! Sahib, sahib, sahib, sahib, sahib. A palladium-type comic-type gentleman has just collapsed in a heap outside.

BLOODNOK:

I know, I just tripped over that heap myself only this morning. Now lift up his wig and lets have a look at him.

SEAGOON:

Argghhh, oowwwwl.

BLOODNOK:

Steady, lad. Fan him with a thermometer and put a copy of the Lancet under his head.

SEAGOON:

Arg oooh, oooh, argh...

ABDUL:

Ah, goodness gracious, he is... he is seriously unconscious Major.

BLOODNOK:

No wonder. I'll just lift that heavy wallet off him. (STRAINS)

FX:

RUSTLE OF BANK NOTES BEING COUNTED UNDER:

BLOODNOK:

(COUNTING RAPIDLY) One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, thirty-three, thirty-five, thirty-eight, thirty-nine. No wonder, there were forty pounds pressing on his chest. Now we'll restore the circulation in his arms with the toad ointment.

SEAGOON:

Awww (COMING ROUND NOISES)

BLOODNOK:

Just put this pen in his hand and run it lightly over this cheque, there.

SEAGOON:

Ahhhh! Ohh! Where am I?

BLOODNOK:

In the red.

SEAGOON:

Thank heavens! A British bank manager.

BLOODNOK:

He... he's delirious. Hold him down while I force this brandy between my lips.

FX:

BUBBLES

BLOODNOK:

(GASP OF CATCHING BREATH) Yes, you... you look much better now, lad.

SEAGOON:

So do you. Thank you.

BLOODNOK:

Now, if you'll pardon me, I'll just stand in this hole facing north.

SEAGOON:

Why?

BLOODNOK:

It's all the rage, you know.

SEAGOON:

Gad, It must be hell in there!

BLOODNOK:

Further down it is.

BLOODNOK:

Now, lad, what brings you from the steaming hell of Finchley?

SEAGOON:

I'm looking for the inventor of the telephone.

BLOODNOK:

Ah, that's Crun, Henry Crun. So you're looking for that cool, high stepping fool, are you? Him and his sensual Caucasian knee dancing. That's how he tempted poor Minnie away from me. Ohh, Min!

SEAGOON:

Oh! Come now, Major Dennis, please.

BLOODNOK:

What? Ohh.

SEAGOON:

Dry your tears on this marble statue of a handkerchief.

BLOODNOK:

Thank you. Poor Min. Abducted in the prime of her twilight. Oh, it... it's a long story. I... I remember it all started on the road to Mandaley.

SEAGOON:

I see.

BLOODNOK:

(SINGS) Where the flying fishes play and ya-owwwll...

SEAGOON:

Yes, yes. Yes, yes. Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes. But... but that's your pigeon.

BLOODNOK:

So it is! How did it get out? Take this pigeon away and bring me a clothes brush.

SEAGOON:

Major, a simple question - where is 17A Africa?

BLOODNOK:

17A? You're on the wrong side of the continent.

SEAGOON:

Ohh.

BLOODNOK:

Odd numbers are right over on the other side.

SEAGOON:

Well, could you let me have two hunters and a safari to escort me?

BLOODNOK:

For a consideration.

FX:

CASH REGISTER. COIN IN TILL.

BLOODNOK:

Thank you. You'll find them encamped in a hole in the ground at core-what-a-gonger.

SEAGOON:

Right. Right, goodbye, Major.

ORCHESTRA:

LINK.

GREENSLADE:

Sitting over an all night camp fire, awaiting the arrival of Seagoon, sit two all night sun tanned veterans of the safari.

GRAMS:

CRACKLE OF FIRE, HYENAS, OTHER NIGHT ANIMALS

BLUEBOTTLE:

Time for beddy-byes, Eccles.

ECCLES:

Ok. I'll slip on my pyjamas.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Why? Are they greasy?

ECCLES:

Ah, ha ha ha ho ho, hu hu ha ha ho. Ohhh, you made a funny joke, then. Oh!

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes. Shall I tell you another one, Eccles?

ECCLES:

Yeah, I'd like that. Like, fine, fine, fine.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes, I... I like telling stories... 'cause...

ECCLES & BLUEBOTTLE:

Telling stories is fine.

BLUEBOTTLE:

I say, Eccles?

ECCLES:

Yah, Bottle?

BLUEBOTTLE:

This story is only for big boys.

ECCLES:

Oh. I'll put my hat on, then. Ok.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes. You won't tell my mum, will you, Eccles?

ECCLES:

(SOFTLY) Oh, no, no. This is just between me and you.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yeah.

ECCLES:

Ok, now, then. Go on, Bottle. Go on.

BLUEBOTTLE:

I... I...

ECCLES:

Come on.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Why did the chicken cross the road?

ECCLES:

Ah, ho ho hu hoooo! Oh, you naughty boy! Oh, ho ho, ah, hu ho! You naughty fella. Oh, it's a good job for you I'm a man of the world! Oh, dear. Oh, dear.

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, no, no, Eccles.

ECCLES:

Eh?

BLUEBOTTLE:

That was not the end. It finishes up - "To get to the other side"

ECCLES:

Oh, ah. Wait a... no, no, no, no. That's... that's not as funny as the first one. Oh, dear, oh, dear. That was... that... that was was funny, Bottle. [UNCLEAR] funny, funny. "Why did the chicken cross the..."

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, no.

ECCLES:

Oh, dear.

BLUEBOTTLE:

You do not appreciate my modern style back of match box type joking. I do not wish to discourse further.

ECCLES:

Oooh

BLUEBOTTLE:

I have got other matters to think of.

ECCLES:

Oh, Bottle, steady, now.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Arreeeye! There's something in my bed.

ECCLES:

The Phantom's struck again!

BLUEBOTTLE:

It's a crocodile!

ECCLES:

Oh, a crocodile, that's lucky.

BLUEBOTTLE:

(INCREDULOUS) A crocodile lucky?

ECCLES:

Of course he's lucky, he's got a bed to sleep in.

GRAMS:

CRICKETS IN BACKGROUND GETTING LOUDER UNDER:

BLUEBOTTLE:

Eeehehheh. I'll just switch off the candle. "Switch!" Good night, Eccles.

ECCLES:

Good night, Bottle.

FX:

LIP SMACKING NOISES

GRAMS:

CRICKETS VERY LOUD, QUIET PURRING/SNORING

ECCLES:

(YAWN)(CHUCKLES) "Why did the chicken cross the road!" Oh, dear, dear. Oh, dear. That's real stag party stuff, Bottle'. You're a man of the world, Bottle.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes.

ECCLES:

Oh! (GURGLES TO HIMSELF) Bottle! Bluebottle! Bottle, don't laugh. Don't laugh, I'm in danger.

BLUEBOTTLE:

What?

ECCLES:

Give me the gun, quick.

BLUEBOTTLE:

(ALARMED) Why?!

ECCLES:

There's something moving on the end of my foot.

FX:

SHOT.

ECCLES:

That got rid of it!

BLUEBOTTLE:

What was it?

ECCLES:

My toe!

FX:

RATTLING OF DOOR?

SEAGOON:

Excuse me.

ECCLES & BLUEBOTTLE:

(YELLING IN CONFUSION)

SEAGOON:

Silence! Shut...!

ECCLES:

Shut up, shut up.

SEAGOON:

Shut up, Eccles.

ECCLES:

Shut up! Shut up, Eccles!

(PAUSE)

SEAGOON:

Silen gablunden. Stop all this hern, hern, hoon, hoon. Who do you think you are?

ECCLES:

Napoleon.

SEAGOON:

You're Napoleon?

ECCLES:

No, but that's who I think I am.

SEAGOON:

If you're Napoleon, I'm the Duke of Wellington.

ECCLES:

Want a fight?

SEAGOON:

Listen, little glass of water. I'm Neddie Seagoon. I believe you're the two guides to take me to 17A Africa.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Yes. We have got all your stores ready for the journey. Check!

ECCLES:

Check!

BLUEBOTTLE:

One knitted human bath chair. One long-playing record of a naked woman.

SEAGOON:

With clothes on, of course.

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, her clothes are on the other side!

BLUEBOTTLE AND ECCLES:

(LAUGH TOGETHER)

ECCLES:

Let's turn the record over.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Aheee.

SEAGOON:

Then I trust you'll only play that record in the dark. Mr Ellington! A demonstration on your quonge.

ECCLES:

Ahhh, he's going to quonge.

ECCLES:

What's a quonge, Bottle?

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

SINGS - "SINGIN' THE BLUES"

ORCHESTRA:

LINK MUSIC

GRAMS:

FROGS

FX:

HACKING AT BUSH NOISES

SELLERS:

With the sun directly overhead and the ground directly underfoot, telephone engineer Seagoon pushed forward to install the telephone before the rains came and the Jones' went.

SEAGOON:

We'll need a telegraph pole here. Bloodnok, hand me those two bananas from my binocular case.

BLOODNOK:

Here.

SEAGOON:

Thank you. I say, that's funny, I can see a French sign. "Caution. Le-Sahara desert ahead. Le warning - No telephone engineers". I say, we can't stand for that!

BLOODNOK:

Oh!

SEAGOON:

Put up a British sign, immediately.

FX:

RHYTHMIC HAMMERING.

SEAGOON:

There! "No hawkers, no circulars".

FX:

KNOCK ON DOOR, DOOR OPENED.

SEAGOON:

I say, can't you read? "No hawkers, no circulars".

ELLINGA:

Me not a hawker.

SEAGOON:

Then you must be a circular. A-ha, ha, ha. Get that! If you're not a hawker, you'd be a circular! You must be... Ha, he... hahum. (PAUSE) English joke.

ELLINGA:

African silence.

SEAGOON:

Didn't they tell you, back in England I'm on the TV every week.

ELLINGA:

I know, that's why I come to Africa. Listen, little corny comic. Mr Crun sent me to find out if you've go a parcel for Moriarty, cor-blimey.

SEAGOON:

Oh, yes. I'd forgotten all about that.

ELLINGA:

So had the listeners. And that is why I mention it.

SEAGOON:

Good. Now listen, chief Ellinga, you show me where bwana Crun live.

ELLINGA:

Right, you follow me.

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC LINK.

GREENSLADE:

Meantime, in a little love nest at 17A Africa.

ORCHESTRA:

JAZZY UPBEAT SAXOPHONE SOLO, DRUM BEATING IN TIME WITH MUSIC

CRUN:

Min, Min, Min. Min, Min, Min.

ORCHESTRA:

MUSIC STOPS

CRUN:

Min.

MINNIE:

What is it?

CRUN:

Min, stop playing that saxophone in Africa and put it back in the fridge. You know they go off in this weather.

FX:

EXPLOSION.

CRUN:

You see, there goes one now. Now Min, tonight you must wear your tiara and long raffia drawers.

MINNIE:

What for, Henry?

CRUN:

It's Henry's guest night, Min. And I shall entertain you with my sensual caucasian knee dancing.

MINNIE:

Ohhhh! I'm fed up with your caucasian knee dance. The rolling your trousers up and klacking those knobby knees together. Kickety knack, knacky, clip, clack clock...

CRUN:

You mean, my knees are losing their magic?

MINNIE:

Yes. I want to go back to Dennis Bloodnok, the bounder of Ropers Light Horse.

CRUN:

Don't you fear, mixed up creature., Min...

MINNIE:

(SINGING) Yip dit dit da, ya ar ardol, nee nar nin...

CRUN:

Stop that sinful wobbling, you.

MINNIE:

Sorry, Henry.

ORCHESTRA:

PIANO INTRO CHORDS

MINNIE:

The first careless rapture is overdone.

MINNIE & HENRY:

(SINGS)

Someday I'll find you,
Moonlight behind you,
Turn to the dream I am dreaming.
Yes, I can hear you,
Your smile as it smiles.
Oooh!

GREENSLADE:

During this tender duet, approaching this scene is chief Ellinga, followed on foot by Eccles, Bluebottle and the head linesman from Finchley telephone exchange. These little snippets of information do help, don't they? Well, I won't hold up your fun any longer. If anybody wants me, I shall be in the residents' lounge.

FX:

RASPBERRY

ORCHESTRA:

TA-DA, CYMBAL CRASH.

BLOODNOK:

Ah! Here we are, 17A Africa and the end of the Finchley Road.

SEAGOON:

Right. Eccles, break the door down by inserting the key in the lock.

ECCLES:

Right, there!

FX:

RATTLE DOOR, OPEN

BLOODNOK:

Alright, you high stepping cool fool, you. Now where's that fair Minnie Banister?

MINNIE:

I haven't got the fare.

BLOODNOK:

Then, we shall have to waltz.

MINNIE:

Ta-da.

BLOODNOK:

Minnie, I'm taking you away from the squalor that you live in.

MINNIE:

Ohhhhhh.

BLOODNOK:

To the squalor that I live in.

ORCHESTRA:

INTRO PIANO NOTES.

BLOODNOK & MINNIE:

(SINGS)

Someday I'll find you,
Moonlight behind you...

FX:

WALLOP

BLOODNOK & MINNIE:

Ahhhowww.

MINNIE:

I've been got! I've been got.

SEAGOON:

Well, that's one character less for Sellers to play.

CRUN:

Yes, have you got the parcel from Moriarty?

SEAGOON:

Yes I have, Henry. But first, where would you like your telephone?

CRUN:

In my study, please.

SEAGOON:

Where's that.

CRUN:

Inside my house in North Finchley.

GRAMS:

RAPID RUNNING OF BOOTS.

SEAGOON:

Arrrrrrrgggggghhhh arrghhhhhh arggggh.

GREENSLADE:

I say, that *was* a bit of bad luck for Mr Seagoon, wasn't it? And now, of course, I know you're all wondering what was in that brown paper parcel. Well, goodnight.

ORCHESTRA:

END TUNE.

GREENSLADE:

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

ORCHESTRA:

PLAYOUT.

Notes:

1) Full lyrics (Noel Coward)... "Some day I'll find you. Moonlight behind you. True to the dream I am dreaming. As I draw near you you'll smile a little smile; For a little while we shall stand hand in hand."