

THE GOON SHOW:
THE FIREBALL OF MILTON STREET

First broadcast on February 22, 1955. Script by Spike Milligan and Eric Sykes. Produced by Peter Eton. Announced by Wallace Greenslade. The orchestra was conducted by Wally Stott. Transcribed by anon, corrections by Peter Olausson.

Greenslade:

This is the BBC

Peter (American cool cat):

All right, cats, let's creep

Orchestra:

[Tea dance music]

Harry:

Stop! *[stops immediately]* Stop this madness! You sinful people! Now Mr. Greenslade -

Greenslade:

Sir?

Harry:

Unlace that rubber farthing ale, gurd up your poor old loins and give the listeners the old posh chat there, give them the old posh wireless talk Wal, go on boy

Greenslade:

Ladies and gentlemen, a story translated from a yet unwritten story that was found embedded in an uncooked Russian sock. We proudly present -

Orchestra:

[Drum rule over speech]

Milligan (theatrical):

Oooh! "The Fireball of Milton Street", or "What's become of that crispy bacon we had before the war, ey?" What's become of it? So brown! So crisp! With that lovely firm layer of white fat. Ooooh! What's become of it, ey? Answer me! What's become of that crisp bacon we had before the war? Don't laugh, answer me! What's become -

FX:

[Pistol shot]

Orchestra:

[Funeral march music]

Harry:

We regret to announce the sudden death of the well-known athletic thespian and actor Sir Jim Nasium.

Peter (another theatrical voice):

Yes! In his absence we give you The Fireball Of Milton Street.

Orchestra:

[Dramatic link, ending in lone harp]

Sellers:

Mid the rolling hills of Sussex in the county of Somerset lies the little Kentish village of Milton Street, Pride of Essex. Milton Street, one of the sonk ports. It was to this little village that a disturbing discovery was to come.

Grams:

[Slow footsteps over speech, bell rings once]

Eccles:

One o'clock! One o'clock on a frosty night! A clear night! A fine night! Oh, it's good to be alive!
One o'clock on a frosty night one - oh!

Henry:

Aaaaah!

Eccles:

Ooh, hello! Mr. Crun! Where you been at this time of night?

Henry:

Mmmmm, I've been for a walk

Eccles:

Ooh, I wish I was clever like that

Henry:

Well, good night Eccles

Eccles:

Good night, good night

Grams:

[Slow footsteps over speech, bell rings once]

Eccles:

One o'clock -

Grams:

[Bell rings again]

Eccles:

Two o'clock on a fine night *[fades out]*

FX:

[Heavy chains being jangled over speech]

Henry:

Now, what have I done with my front-door key? Let me see: trouser cupboard, wine-cellar, hot-water tap, butter dish, Minnie's Ginger-wine-still... Drat it! Every key but the front-door. Oh well.

FX:

[Three heavy thuds on door]

Minnie (distant):

Oooh! We'll all be murdered in our beds! Who's that down there?

Henry:

I've lost my key, Min.

Minnie:

Oh dear, I'm coming, buddy.

FX:

[Footsteps down five flights of stairs]

Henry:

I can't understand it, we live in a bungalow!

FX:

[Heavy chain being jangled, key turned door opens]

Minnie:

Oh, what's all this, Henry? What is this?

Henry:

I can't get in, Min, I've dropped my key out in the dark and I can't see.

Minnie:

Oh well, come inside in the light and have a look for it.

Henry:

Thank you, Min.

FX:

[Door closes]

Minnie:

Now hurry up, Henry.

Henry:

I will, I will. Don't go back to bed yet, Min, I'm not in yet

Minnie:

Oh dear, hurry up, I don't want to stay up all night waiting for you to come home.

Henry:

Well don't rush me, Min. As soon as I find the key I'll let myself in.

Minnie:

Okay.

FX:

[Heavy chain being jangled]

Henry:

Drat it. I can't find it, I can't find the key!

Minnie:

Well why don't you knock? I'll let you in.

Henry:

All right.

FX:

[Door handle turned, door slammed, knocks on door]

Minnie:

Oh! Who is that?

Henry (outside):

It's me, Minnie, Henry!

Minnie:

Henry? Haven't you got a key?

Henry:

No.

FX:

[Door handle turned]

Minnie:

Come in, buddy, you're lucky I wasn't in bed, you know?

Henry:

Terrible news, Min, terrible! The world is coming to an end!

Minnie:

Oh! I'd better go and get the washing in.

Henry:

Min, this morning I photographed the sun and I discovered it's on fire.

Minnie:

Oh, the people are careless, Henry.

Henry:

Yes.

FX:

[Knocks on door]

Henry:

Aaaaah!

Seagoon:

I say, can I come in? I saw light in you window.

Henry:

Minnie poured it out for me, would you like one?

Seagoon:

Ying-Tong-Iddle-I-Po!

Minnie and Henry:

Good!

Minnie:

Dear mr. Seagoon, Henry says that the sun's on fire.

Seagoon:

On fire? *[laughs to himself]* You were always one for a joke!

Henry:

No I'm not, look I took this photo of the sun's coronor and it's smoking.

Seagoon:

Hmm, heavens above! Saints protect us, he's right! Fire! I must tell the villagers at once. *[Panic]*
The sun's on fire! The sun's on fire!!!

Orchestra:

[Dramatic link]

Omnes:

[Crowd noises]

Seagoon:

Please! Please! Silence! Silence!

Milligan:

Speak up!

Seagoon:

Villagers of Milton Street, I'm sorry I had to get you out of your beds. Mr. Crun, tell them what's happened.

Henry:

The sun is on fire!

Omnes:

[Calm silence except for on or two 'ohs' and 'ahs']

Seagoon:

Don't panic! Don't panic! Keep cool and all's well! We'll face it together, chins up! No cowards! Now remain steady, chaps, and at all cost don't panic. Remember we're British! All together now -*[sings]*Land of hope and glory, mother of the free. How can we exhort thee -

FX:

[Phone rings, picked up]

Seagoon:

Yes?

Grytpype:

[Other end of phone] You silly twisted boy, you.

Seagoon:

I don't wish to know that.

FX:

[Phone slammed down]

Greenslade:

Oh Mr. Crun, the sun is on fire, you say?

Henry:

Yes, yes.

Greenslade:

If that is so, the process must have been a ceaseless and conceivable rapid motion of electrons captured by nuclei, released at a million time per sec per sec, the effect being the radiated thermeo-electrons captured and harnessed as units of liberated satellite electrons, the product of which, with the space quottuum of 3.79 plus 10 to the power of 33 ergs per second, with a diathermic of 9 2 7 3 5 to the power of x, is the thallum 3 billion thrice upon 25 billion centigrades...

Henry:

It's not as simple as that! Oh deary me, no! Now are there any more questions?

Milligan: (theatrical):

Yes! What's become of that crispy bacon we had before the war, ey? What's become of -

FX:

[Pistol shot]

Orchestra:

[Funeral march music]

Seagoon:

Any more questions?

Bloodnok:

Yes. As squire of Milton Street, I think that as the sun is on fire, Ned Seagoon should go to London and tell the Queen.

Seagoon:

To London and tell the Queen? I'd be famous! Right, I'll do it!

Bloodnok:

Right, but first, it's a long weary journey to the capital, therefore how about a silver collection, ey? Come on!

Omnes:

[Voices reluctantly giving money]

Bloodnok:

Thank you, well done sir. Grand! And you, sir! Excellent!

Minnie:

Oooh!

Bloodnok:

I'm sorry madam, I beg your pardon. That's it, that's it, the hat's full! So Ned, there you are, off you go to London!

Seagoon:

Thank you. Farewell!

FX:

[Footsteps gradually speeding up, fade away]

Bloodnok:

Brave lad! Right now, Ellington, help me count the money in this hat.

Ray:

Right.

Ray Ellington and His Quartet:

[Musical interlude]

FX:

[Running footsteps over speech]

Seagoon:

Meantime I, Ned Seagoon, was running towards London to tell the Queen the sun was on fire. I reached the river, I jumped - *[FX pause for a while, start again]* - I reached the other side. I arrived at the second river, I jumped - *[FX pause for a while, start again]* - and I reached the other side. So then, then I came to a very wide raging torrent. I ran as fast as I could, I jumped - *[FX stop]* - Right! Hands up all those who thought I was going to fall in the river. Come along, you with the big head there, Bill Matthews? Come on, hands up! Right! Take a hundred lines: "I must not try and guess the end of Goon Show gags". *[Laughs]* Now, here is what really happened.

FX:

[Running footsteps over speech]

Seagoon:

I ran, I jumped [*FX stops*] and then -

Grams:

[*Giant splash*]

Seagoon:

Ha ha ha! Right, hands up all the charlies who wrote the hundred lines. Take another hundred: "I must not write a hundred lines until I'm dead sure". All right, Greenslade.

Greenslade:

Listen to 'The Fireball of Milton Street' part 3. Outside the Ministry of Works. [*Silence*] Part 4, inside the Ministry of Works.

Grams:

[*Gramophone record playing*]

FX:

[*Tea cup and saucer rattling, rapid knocks on door*]

Grytpype:

Come in, charlie!

FX:

[*Door handle turned, door opens*]

Seagoon:

Good morning. I want to see the Queen.

Grytpype:

Oh, you'll have to see the secretary of state, I'll write you an introductory letter [*Pen scratching*] "Please see Ned Seagoon". There.

Seagoon:

Thank you. Now who is the secretary of state?

Grytpype:

I am.

Seagoon:

Ah, well I have a letter for you.

Grytpype:

Have you?

Seagoon:

Yes.

Grytpype:

Let me see: "Will you please see Ned Seagoon".

Seagoon:

I want to see the Queen.

Grytpype:

Oh, well you'll have to see the minister of the crown.

Seagoon:

Where's he?

Grytpype:

Go and wait in that room there, will you?

Seagoon:

Right.

FX:

[Door handle turned, door opens, slams shut]

Seagoon:

Oh, I'm so excited! Hee hee! The minister of the crown, ey? I wonder what he looks like...

Orchestra:

[Brass fanfare]

Greenslade:

[Shouts] His Excellence, the Right Royal Minister of the Crown!

FX:

[Heavy footsteps slowly getting closer]

Grytpype:

You wanted to see me?

Seagoon:

Yes sir, I want to see the Queen. You see, the sun's on fire!

Grytpype:

What?

Seagoon:

The sun's on fire, sir!

Grytpype:

Oh, this is the charlie. Now Neddy, I want you to build a rocket to take you to the sun. Take a barrel of water onboard, and then off you go to put out the fire.

Seagoon:

Well, where will I get the materials to build it?

Grytpype:

Well the Ministry of Works have got a lot of junk - er, special materials you could use.

Seagoon:

Who'll pay for it?

Grytpype:

Oh the villagers, of course. Then, when the rocket comes back from the sun, we'll buy it back off you, at twice the price.

Seagoon:

Hooray! I'll save England! I'll be a hero! *[Sings]* Come, come I love you only, come heero of miine...

Grytpype:

No I can't say it again.

FX:

[Rapid knocks on the door]

Grytpype:

Come in!

FX:

[Door handle turned, door opens]

Grytpype:

Yes, what do you want?

Milligan: (theatrical):

I want to know what's become of the crispy bacon -

FX:

[Pistol shot]

Grams:

[Funeral march music]

FX:

[Door slams, music stops immediately]

Greenslade:

Meantime at Milton Street, a dissenter is at work.

Omnes:

[Crowd noises]

Bluebottle:

People! People of Milton Street! Listen to me! Enter Bluebottle, strikes orator's pose, cops dirty big brick in back of nut. Puts lump in pocket for later. Listen, I'm telling you the sun is not on fire. *[Crowd gets noisier]* Shut up you, shut up! I'm telling you, it's not on fire. Have seen it through my cardboard cut-out telescope - posted free with every six box-tops of Filth Muck the Wonder Soap.

Minnie:

Don't you believe him!

Bluebottle:

I'm telling the truth!

Seagoon:

I say, what's going on here?

Bluebottle:

I am here to prove that the sun is not on fire!

Moriarty:

[Aside] Curse, this little nutty goon could ruin our plan. *[Aloud]* Don't believe him, Neddy. Ask him to prove it!

Seagoon and Crowd:

Yes, prove it!

Bluebottle:

All right, all right, shut up you! Shut up, you! I will prove it! Stand back! Takes off shirt to show well-developed bones and spare ribs and satchel. I will climb this ladder with a piece of bread, and when I get to the top I will hold out to the sun. If the sun is not on fire, the bread will get toasted. *[Logical error there!]* Now then, who's gonna hold the ladder?

Eccles:

I'll hold the ladder.

Bluebottle:

Thank you, Eccles. Promise you won't let go.

Eccles:

I promise you won't let go.

Bluebottle:

Then I will go! Sprin-ges on to ladder. Effect is ruined as trousers fall down. Oh! Short vest! Tee-hee! Max Geldray, cover up my short bits!

Max Geldray:

[Musical interlude]

Greenslade:

We take up the story with Bluebottle at the top of his 200 foot ladder.

Grams:

[Wind howling over speech]

Bluebottle:

Tee hee! It's a bit parkey up here. Oh, silly little me, I dropped my toasting fork. Hey, somebody down there, bring up my toasting fork!

Seagoon (far off):

Don't panic!

Bluebottle:

Oh dear, what can I do now I'm waiting up here? *[Mumbles a tune to himself]* Oh I know. Ladies and gentlemen, I will spring you all a riddle, listen: When is a door not a door? Answer: When it's ajar. Not a sausinge for that one. Ahem. When is a horse not a horse? Answer: When it's turned into a field. Oh well, roll on beddie-byes.

FX:

[Phone rings, picked up]

Bluebottle:

Hello? No I'm sorry, I haven't *[hangs up]*. Silly man, have I got any rooms to let? *[Sings to himself]*

FX:

[Heavy steps ascending the ladder]

Eccles:

Ah, oh, here's your toasting fork.

Bluebottle:

Ohhhh! You fool, you mind what you're doing with it! Harm can come to a young lad like that.

Eccles:

I'm sorry, Bluebottle.

Bluebottle:

Eccles?

Eccles:

Yuh?

Bluebottle:

...Tee-hee! Who's holding the bottom of the ladder?

Eccles:

Well, eh, don't worry, I'm, I'm holding the - Ooooooh!

Bluebottle (falling in to distance):

You rotten swine, you!

FX:

[Thud]

Bluebottle (far off):

Eeigh!

Greenslade:

At the foot of the now-fallen ladder a fresh crisis had arrived. Seagoon is about to ask Bloodnok for the money he had collected in his hat the previous day.

Seagoon:

I'm about to ask you for the money you collected in your hat the previous day.

Bloodnok:

Go ahead.

Seagoon:

I want the money you collected in your hat the previous day.

Bloodnok:

What?

Seagoon:

Grytpype-Thynne wants it as first-payment on the materials for building the rocket.

Bloodnok:

What, money? I arrest you!

Seagoon:

What for?

Bloodnok:

Resisting arrest.

Seagoon:

I'm not resisting!

Bloodnok:

I arrest you for not resisting then.

Seagoon:

I'm innocent!

Bloodnok:

At your age, rubbish! I arrest you for not being in uniform!

Seagoon:

I'm not in the services!

Bloodnok:

What? Then I arrest you for being a coward!

Seagoon:

I'm not a coward!

Bloodnok:

I arrest you for being a hero!

Seagoon:

I'm not a hero!

Bloodnok:

Then if you're not a hero and you're not a coward what are you?

Seagoon:

I'm neither!

Bloodnok:

I arrest you for being a neither!

Seagoon:

Give me the money or I'll tell about you and the scout fund.

FX:

[Metal being shovelled out]

Bloodnok:

Ohhh, there you are Neddy! Dear Neddy, I was only joking lad, I was kidding, it's safe for you, Neddy. You know old Dennis wouldn't do a pal.

Seagoon:

Right, there Moriarty, £20. Tomorrow, we start building the rocket to the sun!

Orchestra:

[Grand link]

Grams:

[Work place noises, hammers etc.]

Sellers:

[BBC announcer] Well I'm speaking to you from the base of a Martello tower on the Pevensy marshes. The hammering you can hear comes from a busy band of workers from the village of Milton Street. They are erecting some kind of wooden rocket tied with string on top of the tower. That is what you said, sir, isn't it?

Moriarty:

Yes, yes, they are having the joke, ha ha ha! Yes, a joke. Now, Seagoon *[lowering voice]* you haven't breathed a word to this BBC charlie about it, heave you?

Seagoon:

No, sir, I haven't.

Moriarty:

Good.

Henry:

...Mnk, mnk...

Seagoon:

Ah, Mr. Crun. Well, it looks as if the rocket's nearly ready!

Henry:

Not quite, we need another layer of brown-paper and string on the outside.

Seagoon:

Yes, you're right. We can't take risks!

Henry:

No.

Grytpype:

Neddy, we've just delivered the last lorry of junk - er, valuables, and I hope you've got the money?

Seagoon:

Yes, £30.

FX:

[Cash till]

Grytpype:

Thank you. Now when will you be taking off?

Seagoon:

As soon as we have the gun-powder and sulphur at the base of the rocket. That's what's going to send us up!

Grytpype:

I'm sure it will. And, er, as a matter of interest, when you get to the sun, how are you going to put it out?

Seagoon:

We're each carrying a bucket of water.

Grytpype:

By Jove, are all of your family clever?

Seagoon:

Only the highbreds.

Grytpype:

Touché.

Seagoon:

Three-ché.

Grytpype:

Do you come here often?

Seagoon:

Only during the mating season, shall we dance?

Grytpype:

Yes.

Grams:

[Tea dance music]

Seagoon:

You dance divinely.

Grytpype:

Thank you, darling.

Moriarty:

Stop, stop! Stop this, stop this madness you simple people. You must take off as soon as possible. The Sussex police have heard of the rocket and are going to try and stop it!

Grytpype:

Curse, this could ruin everything. Seagoon, tell them all to speed up.

Seagoon:

Everybody, speed up!

Grams:

[Sound of work speeds up to cartoon noises]

Seagoon:

Stoop! Right, ready? Everybody in!

Omnes:

Yes, sir!

Seagoon:

Purse the sulphur and light the old wick there. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 -

Grams:

[Explosion]

Grytpype:

Oh dear, oh dear. After all that work. It's sad, Mor-I-arty, it's sad. However, let's count the money. 10, 20, 30... *[both giggle evilly]*

Moriarty:

Oh dear, those poor fools.

Grytpype:

Yes.

Moriarty:

A wooden rocket, a wooden rocket! I ask you! Trying to put out the fire on the sun! *[both laugh]*

Grytpype:

Yes.

Moriarty:

They deserved to die, didn't they?

Grytpype:

Yes they did, Mor-I-arty.

Moriarty:

Oh, 25, 26 million, 28...

Grytpype:

Moriarty, hasn't it gone dark? ...They, er, they couldn't have? ...Help! They've put out the sun!
Oh!

Grytpype and Moriarty:

[Panic]

Orchestra:

[End theme]

Greenslade:

That was the Goon Show, a 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 and Eric Sykes, announcer Wallace Greenslade, the programme produced by Peter Eton.

Orchestra:

[‘Crazy Rhythm’ outro]