

PIERROTTERS SCRIPT

WE'RE ONLY HERE FOR THE PIER!

EPISODE 1 "A LOVELY DAY"

SFX The sea, some music - by the sea...this is regular introductory stuff but atmospheric

ANNOUNCER; This is the BBC Light Programme. And now we present Britain's favourite Pierrot troupe the Pierrotters in "We're Only Here For The Pier!".

SFX: FAST BY THE SEA INSTRUMENTAL.

ANNOUNCER: It's Summertime once again. The winter's over and throughout the country holidaymakers are flocking back to the seaside. From Blackpool to Bournemouth the promenades once again echo to the delightful sounds of gossiping girls and giggling children. But where have all the Pierrots gone? 30 years ago each seaside town had at least one Pierrot troupe entertaining on the seafront every day in satin, pom-poms and ruffles, regaling young and old with a light-hearted blend of saucy songs and sketches. But now they have vanished - or so it seems. For on the pier in the bustling resort of Brightsea, a rather odd man can be seen making his way eagerly towards the first aid post, his eyes beadily fixed upon a woman in uniform.

SFX The sound of a tea room

Mtrn Oooo, well blow me down if it isn't you - Uncle Tacko!

Uncle Matron, Matron how are you? I've missed you, you know - life hasn't been the same without your starched apron and girlish charms

Mtrn Ooo you are a one! (catch phrase) Are you working the pier again this year with The Pierrotters?

U How could I not - being a thespian is my life. Come, let's walk to the end of the pier

Mtrn Oh you old romantic

U Ah Matron!
Here we shall perform and lift hearts once more
To bring light and gaiety
To the sparkling seashore...

Mtrn You always had such a way with words, Uncle

U And you always had such a way with wounds, Matron.

Mtrn Speaking of dressings, where on earth will you Pierrotters be changing after your little hut on the beach got blown-up last year?

U Yes, a most unfortunate incident, Matron, it was a leaky valve on the gas boiler - I'd just slipped-in to make a quick cuppa and kaboom! I was blown to kingdom come

Mtrn Are you alright now, Uncle?

U Yes, but my "little problem" has come back to haunt me again

Mtrn Oh dear. Do you still have the ointment I gave you?

U Of course, and I always follow your instructions...

Together Twice daily round the rim
Keeps the Uncle's insides in!

Mtrn So where are you changing this year

U I've rented a room for the Rotters here at the end of the pier!

Mtrn How exciting, can I see?

U Certainly, it's here

SFX Exterior of sea, seagulls etc., unlocking and unbolting of security devices, then creaking of door

U There you are, Matron...the Rotterden!

Mtrn Yuk! There's filth and muck everywhere

U But it's home to us

Mtrn It's just the old band room under the stage

U It's got everything we need

Mtrn You mirrors, sinks and a lavatory?

U 48 music stands and a large tuba actually, it's been used as a store, you see.

Mtrn But it's full of old junk and mattresses - there's buckets and spades and old tin baths, three cardboard palm trees and that's the biggest

aspidistra

I've seen in years

U Thank you. Do you fancy a cup of tea, Matron?

Mtrn Why, thank you, Uncle. have you got a new boiler

U Heavens no, I just brought the old one across from the hut ...

SFX Match striking followed by explosion and seagulls

Mtrn You can't possibly *work* here

U We can - we want to keep out of the way of *him*

Mtrn Who?

U Keith Suede (*Horror fanfare - this goes-off every time his name is said, like Moriarty*)

Mtrn Not him!

U Who?

Mtrn Keith Suede (*Horror fanfare*)

U Yes, that suave seaside gangster

Mtrn That penny-pinching

U Thin-moustached

Mtrn Hairy-chested

U Waist 42

Mtrn Nasty man

U Yes

Both Keith Suede (*Horror fanfare*)

U He's back again, with his plans to modernise the beach with his money-making schemes. Tearing the living heart and soul from the seaside with concrete and steel

Mtrn Where's he based?

U He's running a string of bogus fortune telling ladies on the prom between the piers

Mtrn How do you know they are bogus?

U Because they all have a beard

Mtrn Sounds a bit odd to me - I'll pop along and have a closer look

U Be careful Matron, those bogus bearded fortune-telling ladies are a mean-looking bunch

Mtrn I'll be back

SFX Door shuts

ANNOUNCER: And so Uncle Tacko awaited the arrival of the other

Pierrots in the Rotterdam. Meanwhile Matron set off

down the pier on the trail of the Evil Suede.. As she passed the Winter Gardens, she was hailed by a strapping young boy with some welding equipment on his back

Gacko Ey, aright there A was wond'ring like, ye naw, if tha's knows weea the problem is baht this ear gas

Mtrn I beg your pardon, sweetie

G I ses - dya knaw baht the gas...eh? I'm looking for the gas problem you've got at the end of the pier. T'boss says there's a geyser with a leaky valve and something isn't done about it soon then there'll be a big problem

Mtrn Oh well that'll be that Uncle Tacko you want - he's a got a leaky valve and a problem with his gas.

SFX *The sound of horse's hooves*

G The end of the pier, you say?

Mtrn That's right, dearie

G Uncle who? (horse louder)

Mtrn (shouting) Tacko!

(Horses go past with a whinny and Doppler effect, maybe the jangling of metal, the hooves clatter into the distance up the pier)

G What was that?

Mtrn I'm not sure, it looked like a knight

G On 'ossback

Mtrn On the pier

G In armour

Mtrn I wonder what he's doing here?

G Probably looking for a damsel to slay or a dragon to wed. No, wait a minute, that's a dams...

Mtrn Oh well, either way I'm in with a chance

G Aye mebbe you are

Loudspeaker This is Suede enterprises, the enterprises of Keith Suede offering YOU the chance to invest in the future of the seaside. No more tiresome sand between your toes, no more annoying shingle marks when you sunbathe - Suede enterprises promise you the chance to buy-into new "Concrete Beach". Call-in at one of our stalls along the front NOW and see how YOU can benefit from this dynamic new scheme. Remember the future's bright, the future's SUEDE

Mtrn I'd better be going

G Er, yeah., good luck with yer dragon

A Meanwhile, in the Rotterdam at the seaward end of the pier, Uncle Tacko was *still* awaiting the arrival of the other Pierrots

U I wonder where they've all got to...

SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

U: Who is it?

M: It's me Uncle, Mister Macko.

U: Mister Macko! My dear old chum! Come in come in.

SFX: DOOR RATTLED

M: Erm, it won't open Uncle.

U: Turn the knob.

SFX: KNOB RATTLED

M: It's not working.

U: No, the knob on your side.

M: I haven't got a knob on my side.

U: On the door.

M: Ah.

SFX: DOOR RATTLED. DOOR FLYING OPEN. CLATTER OF FALLING POTS, PANS AND PLATES.

U: Oh for the old pier's sake Macko, you've just broken my favourite tea set.

M: Sorry Uncle, was it very special?

U: It was Victorian.

M: Oh that's alright, from the fuss you were making I thought it must be a new one.

U: (Exasperated sigh) Good grief. Anyway, I suppose I'd better get the kettle on now you're here.

SFX: STRUCK TINDERBOX. ROAR OF GAS FLAME.

M: Ah it's good to be back on the old Pier.

U: So what have you been doing since last year, Mister Macko?

M: Well let me see. First I was in Bournemouth with Bessie. Then Rachel got leave from the Wrens so I had to go to Ramsgate. then Saucy Susie from Surbiton turned up so I had to lay low for a while with Kennington Katie. Then who should I bump into but Prudence from Penza...

U: Yes I think I get the picture. Now, to business: it's the beginning of another season for The Pierrotters.

M: Ah yes!

U: But I'm afraid I have some rather bad news, Mister Macko.

M: What? Has Hattie from Hove been looking for me?

U: No, Macko, you and I are the only remaining members of The Pierrotters.

M: You mean the others are all....

U: Yes. They've all three gone to a better place.

M: Oh no, oh those poor boys.

U: Oh I don't know, I'm sure they're enjoying themselves. There's a lot of money to be made in Bournemouth for a trio of female impersonators.

M: What? They've formed another act? The traitors!

U: Don't trouble yourself Mister Macko, I've already set about securing replacements. In fact the first potential new pierrot should be here any moment.

Announcer And so, whilst the awaited the new recruits, the two old chums settled down with a cup of tea and recounted tales of the vigorous games they used to play when they were young. Meanwhile, Matron had reached the landward end of the pier looking for the bogus Suede fortune tellers...

Mtrn Here, where can I find them Suede outlets?

A She enquired of the passers-by...

Mtrn I said, where can I find them Suede people?

A No-one seemed to know...

Mtrn Oo look, there's someone with a big beard, I'll just see if it's real

SFX *Tug of a beard*

Male voice Ouch! Get off me woman

Mtrn Oo you are a one - a real one, now what about your crystal ball...

SFX *Scrunching noise*

Male voice Aaaargh!

Mtrn (moving into the distance) Well there must be one of them around
somewhere

Another male voice Ooof!

Yet another Ow! (into the distance)

A And so Matron continued her quest to find the Suede outlets, whilst
Uncle Tacko and Mister Macko continued their fond
reminiscences in the Rotterdam...

M (continuing from the conversation) ...that's when Brown Owl found me
in the Guides' tent

T ...and all the time I'd been tied upside down with Akela tickling my
stomach

(They both laugh)

SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

U There we are, Mister Macko, it's our first new recruit

M Splendid, come in

*SFX DOOR OPENING. MASSIVE CLATTER OF POTS, PANS
AND PORCELAIN*

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McF (Darkly) Hello. I'm looking for someone called "Uncle Tacky"

U Tacko, young man, Tacko - I'm not Tacky

M Yes well, let's reserve judgement on that

U I'm Uncle Tacko and this is my good friend Mister Macko

McF Good morning

U Right then sit down. Before we can enlist you into our Pierrot troupe, I
need to take down your particulars

McF Oh no you won't

M We need to ask you a couple of questions

McF Oh that's alright

U Now what is your name?

McF I am El Senor McForbsey of The McForbseys

M El Senor - that's Spanish isn't it?

McF Och aye

M But you're a Scottish-type person aren't you?

McF Si, but my Grandmother had a lot of Spanish blood in her, she was a vampire based in Barcelona

U Well I'm afraid "McForbsey" won't do at all, all our names have to end in "Acko", it's part of the contract signed with the pier years ago.

M What about "McForbseyacko"?

U Bit of a mouthful

M McFacko?

U McFacko! El Senor McFacko, yes I like that.

McF Call me what you like as long as I get paid

SFX Scribbling

U There, that looks nice

M You've written it on your trousers, Uncle

U Oh yes, sorry

SFX Scribbling

McF: Shall I do my audition piece now? I'll start with my Shakespeare.: Is this a dagger I see before me, the handle towards my hand?

U: (Hastily) Yes thank you, but we were a little more interested in your musical prowess. What instruments do you play?

McF: Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet and these ...

SFX: DRONING BAGPIPES STARTING UP AND HORSES HOOVES IN DISTANCE

U: What on earth's that?

M: I think it's some sort of labour-saving device Uncle.

U: I see. I'll be very glad when it stops.

M: Yes. (TO McF) Ahh, thank you that'll do. I said that'll do thank you sir. Excuse me, but would you ... could you ... WILL YOU STOP MAKING THAT HORRIBLE NOISE?!

SFX: PIPES DRONE TO A HALT AND LEAVE HORSES' HOOVES GETTING LOUDER

McF: Sorry, were you saying something?

U: Yes, if you'd just put those down and come over here.

SFX: BAG OF TOOLS DROPPED ON FLOOR. HORSES' HOOVES VERY LOUD

U (Shouting) A couple more questions...

SFX: LOUD HOOVES. CRASH OF SPLINTERING WOOD. NEIGHING.

U: What ... what on earth's going on.

Sq: Ha ha! It is I, the mighty Prince! Bow before me minions!

U: I'm sorry?

M: Can we help you at all?

SFX: HORSE REARING UP AND WHINNYING.

Sq: I am the noble Prince of Porridge and this is my mighty steed - Throbber.

U: I think you want the race course. Just go back up the pier, turn right, go up the hill and...

Sq: Nay nay.

SFX: HORSE NEIGHING

Sq: Silence Throbber. Nay, old man. I seek not the race course. I am in search of that bold band of knights known as The Pierrotters.

M: That's us.

Sq: Aha, ist so? Then my quest is at an end.

U: But why have you come on a horse?

Sq: I was simply following the mystical commandments set out in the small ads section of the Evening Argus.

U: But I placed that advertisement, and I don't remember putting anything about bringing a horse.

Sq: See here you foolish old man, printed in black and indeed, white.

SFX: RUSTLE OF PAPER.

M: Let's have a look Uncle. (READS) "Experienced Pierrots required for seaside Concert Party troupe. Mares preferred."

U: Ah, that should be "Males preferred". It's because we share changing facilities and soap you see. Prevents any unpleasantness.

M: Yes, so if you could just take your armour off and tie the horse up outside.

Sq: Never minion, I never go anywhere without my proud Throbber under my jodhpurs.

U: Suit yourself. Now just a few questions first. Name?

Sq: Sir Quester, the Prince of Porridge.

M: Sorry, Prince of ...?

Sq: Porridge.

U: Well the name'll have to change for a start.

Sq: Why, you horribly seedy man?

U: You see all our names have to end in "Acko".

Sq: Nonsense. I refuse to renounce the royal title of Porridge.

M: (DIPLOMATICALLY) The Porridge bit's fine, we could even go with the Prince. But Sir Quester won't do at all.

Sq: (ANGRY) Well that's fine, and what are you suggesting as a replacement?

M: Let me see, Sir Questeracko, Sir Questacko, Sircustacko ... erm, how about Squacko?

U: Squacko. Excellent, Squacko it is.

SFX: SCRIBBLING PEN

Sq: I am not answering to a stupid name like Squacko.

M: How about a compromise - Sir Squacko.

Sq: Sir Squacko, the mighty Prince of Porridge.

U: (TESTILY) Oh very well.

SFX: CROSSING OUT. SCRIBBLING.

Sq: And I get to keep the horse.

U: Yes alright.

Sq: And the armour.

U: Yes alright, now shut up all of you. Now off you all go and change

M Where are the costumes, Uncle?

U They're over there in a pile in the corner.

Sq What are these horrible sheets for?

U That'll be our costumes

McF But they are all covered in stains

U That'll be our costumes

M And there's a funny smell

U That'll be our costumes

All What?!

U These are last year's costumes, I kept them especially

McF You mean we are supposed to be wearing costumes left in a fetid and rotting heap, exposed to the damp and ravages of an entire Winter?

U Yes, people like a whiff of nostalgia

McF They won't like a whiff of these costumes

U Just try them on for size at least

Sq I refuse to change in front of minions, where is my dressing room and valet?

U You can go behind the screen like everyone else. Now please hurry along, we need to get ready

(Murmured grudging assent by all)

SFX Rummaging of clothing

M Uncle, these costumes really hum

U I know

M No, I mean *really* hum, listen...

SFX There is some jolly harmonious humming

U Well I say, whatever next?

SFX Knock at the door

U Aha! that will be number five - our last member. Keep changing, you lot and I'll make sure he's welcome

SFX Knocking at door in a chirpy sort of way

U Coming, coming

SFX Door opens

Gacko 'Ullo

U Come in, come in, how are you my fine fellow?

G Fine. Is this the right place then?

U Yes, yes, I'm glad you made it in time

G Well I came as fast as I could. Now where's the equipment?

U It's with the others behind the screen

G What others?

U The other boys - say hello chaps

M Hello young man

Sq Greetings, minion

McF Hello wee laddie

U There you are, that's who you're working with

G Er, well if it's all the same to you I'll come back later and do the job

U You can't

G No it's OK I'm not busy, I'll go down the arcade until you er blokes have finished whatever it is you're er doing

U You can't

G I can

U We need you now!

M Yes, come along and be a good chap, get your clothes off - I know it smells a bit but we're all grown men

G I er think I'd better be going, I've obviously come to the wrong place, I like girls me

U No you can't go, we've got a costume for you and we're on stage in half an hour

M ...and I like girls too

G Costume? On stage? I don't get it, I've only come to mend the boiler and gas stove

Omnes Gas stove?

G Yes, there was an explosion earlier and the gaffer said I should come here and check-out the boiler piping. I'm the gasman

M The gasman cometh

G What did you think I was doing?

U We thought you were our fifth member

M We're a Pierrot troupe, you see

G A Pierrot troupe?

Sq Yes, silly. You know - white satin, pom-poms, conical hats

G Oh, you mean like an act or a turn

U Yes, with songs and sketches and jokes old and new...

G Well I like a good ol' sing-song. Me and our mam we always sang songs as we practised our welding

Sq Do you play an instrument?

G Well a bit of pipe tapping when working the drains

U Perfect! You can be our drummer. We've found our fifth member!

G Now look, I don't want to be rude or owt, but I only came to fix your pipes

U But think of the glory, think of the fame! Bringing happiness and joy to the fun and sun seekers at the seaside. Helping to dispel the misery and anguish of the bitter war years. We can help pack up those troubles in an old kit bag, Tipperary's not so far away after all and now there are bluebirds over those white cliffs of Dover and the lights are going on again all over the world, it's time to roll out the barrel and get in the mood with all those hundreds of adoring, beautiful girls

G Girls, you say?

M Yes

G Beautiful and lovelorn?

M Most definitely

G Hundreds?

M Yep

G I'll do it!

(General agreement and excitement)

U Now I'll just do the formalities. Who exactly are you?

G I'm the boiler and gas man

U Sorry, Boil O’Gashman?

G No, I said boiler...

M Just spell it for him, Uncle’s a bit hard of hearing sometimes

G Er...B....er ...O...er...Y?...er, er...

U Aha! B-O-Y, spells BOY!

Sq All our names have to end in “Acko”, spong-brain, everybody knows that

M Spell your second name

G G....er...G...er....

U G-G , we can’t call you G, how about Gacko?

M Boy Gacko! Perfect!

G Boy Gacko? That’s stupid..

Sq A stupid name for a stupid person

G Alright mate, c’mon then, want to make something of it do ya?

Sq Careful, minion, or you will taste the might of my weapon

U Stop it at once boys. now hurry up and change, Boy Gacko, everyone else is ready.

M McFacko isn’t. Look, his trousers are still on the floor.

McF Don’t worry, Boys, I thought I’d wear these

G Haha! he’s wearing a skirt! Yuk you're weird.

McF (aggressively) Who are you calling weird, you stithy-brained sassanach?

G Well you, you were wearing a skirt and talking funny

McF (increasingly menacing) A skirt? A skirt! This, laddie, is a kilt. I’ll teach

you to make fun of a fine Scottish tartan.

G Yeah, but you look stupid, mate...

McF I eat we little tatties like you for my breakfast, I pull their hearts through their noses and their eyes through their asses. I'll boil your liver in aspic and I'll sit on your nose until it bleeds.

G Oh

McF Now are you going to get changed or not?

G Er, aye then alright...

A Meanwhile, just along the promenade

Loudspeaker voice of Keith Suede This is Suede enterprises, the enterprises of Keith Suede offering YOU the chance to invest in the future of the seaside. Roll up! Roll up! Ladies and gentlemen, enter this booth and see into the future! See what Suede can do for you! Roll up! Roll up! Fortunes to be made with Suede investments...etc.

Mtrn That sounds like the mob I'm looking for - aha! here we are (reading the sign) Suede Enterprises present Beaver Letyourpengrow the authentic Romany daughter of Topsy Joe's Pee...hmmm, sounds fishy to me...

SFX *The sound of a beaded curtain opening and maybe some strange music*

A Strange Suede Voice Welcome to the Suede emporium, what is it that you wish to know?

Mtrn I want to know whether you're a fake or not!

ASSV Aargh, get off my face!

Mtrn So the beard's real, how about the ball?

ASSV Noooo! I'll tell you what you want!

Mtrn Who is this Suede?

ASSV He's da boss

Mtrn And what is his plan?

ASSV To concrete the beach so that it's smart and smooth and easy to clean

Mtrn And then?

ASSV And then to sell it-off in pieces

Mtrn So that's his plan, eh? We'll see about that...

A And so Matron made her way hastily back to the pier...Meanwhile,
back in the Rotterdam...

SFX *Enter The Pierrotters making an unfathomable racket as they
rehearse*

U Now then, quieten down, quieten down (the bagpipes are the last to
stop) Here we are again and don't you all look lovely?

G Can I wear me boots?

U No, I'm afraid not, we must be uniform in appearance and our neat
little ballet slippers are just the job

P I don't feel awfully Princely in this get-up, you know.

U Nonsense, you look magnificent!

G God I feel ridiculous

U Silence in the ranks!

G Look, I only came here to mend the gas

M Shshsh!

G What are we doing here?

U It's a little word beginning with P and ending with T - any ideas?

G Er, Pint?

Sq. President?

M Pert?

McF Pervert?

U No! The word is Pierrot

All Oh

U What's the word everybody?

Variously Pint/President/Pert/Pervert etc.

U No! Pierrot! Pierrot!

All Pierrot

U That's better. Now I know we haven't had much time to rehearse, but we're already late for the afternoon performance, so we have to get out there quickly. Are we all ready? Right then, off we go!

SFX DOOR OPENS, THUNDER AND RAIN

M We can't go out there, the instruments get ruined!

SFX DOOR CLOSES

U Not to worry chaps, there'll be plenty of other days

(Mtrn enters)

Mtrn Oh dear, Boys, don't look so down, it's only a shower

U But not one song on our first day, it's so frustrating

Mtrn Never mind, my dears, you can always do one for me

M That's a splendid idea, come on chaps let's do the show right here!

(They do the song - "Isn't It A Lovely Day To Be Caught In The Rain?")

Mtrn (Applauds) That was lovely, boys, and look, the sun has come out - I knew it would (They go out onto the pier)

CONCLUSION

SFX: SEAGULLS AT SUNSET. GENTLY LAPPING WAVES.

U: Aah, the end of our first day of the season, and wasn't it a lovely day, chaps.

M: No it wasn't. It poured with rain and no one came to see us.

G: Aye, and where were all these girls you were going on about?

McF: And where's my wages?

Sq: And no one's told me where my hotel is.

U: There's no need to go to a hotel Sir Squacko, there's room for all of us to snuggle down in the Rotterdam.

Sq: What? In there?

M: Yes, your bunk is in the corner, underneath the Boy Gacko.

(The Rotters argue. Matron enters)

Mtrn Now now, boys, why are you all arguing in here? The sun's come out just as I promised!

U Matron!

Mtrn: I'd just like to say thank you so much for that lovely song

M Our pleasure, Matron

Mtrn Oooh it's lovely to have The Pierrotters back again. The seafront hasn't been the same without the Pierrots.

U: How charming of you to say so.

G So tell us, Matron, did you find any of those bearded fortune-telling

ladies?

Mtrn: Ooh yes, and Uncle was right. I had a close look at their balls and they were definitely fake.

M: The rotten cheats.

Mtrn: That Keith Suede is up to no good. I've heard it from one of his own ne'erdowells, he's planning to concrete over the whole beach and sell it off.

U: The blackguard! That beach belongs to everyone. There's only one thing to do lads, we have to fight Suede every step of the way. At first light tomorrow we storm his offices and force him to concede to our demands.

M: Yes. Squacko and McFacko can cover his right flank and the rest of us can take him from behind

Mtrn: Ooh Mister Macko, you are a one.

U Come on everyone, I'll make us all a nice cup of tea

Omnes Nooo!

SFX MATCH AND EXPLOSION!

MUSIC - TITLE SEQUENCE

ANNOUNCER: You have been listening to "We're Only Here For The Pier!"
etc.

END