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The Adventures of Stetson McGraw  
Episode 5: Stetson McGraw and the Sunshine Band

SCENE ONE: INTRO

MUSIC: THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Radio theatre presents: "The  
Adventures of Stetson McGraw".  
Episode five: "Stetson McGraw and  
the Sunshine Band".

MUSIC: FADE OUT THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

In our last episode, legendary  
lawman Stetson McGraw was caught on  
the wrong side of the law, falsely  
accused of derauling the Round Rock  
Express so that a mysterious bandit  
army could steal the train's  
equally-mysterious cargo. Joined  
by a trio of criminals, and keen to  
find some answers, Stetson found  
the bandits' giant encampment on  
the far side of Waco. But at that  
same moment, the bandit army found  
Stetson -- and held him at  
gunpoint!

SCENE TWO: AN IMPROBABLE STAND OF TREES

SOUND: CRICKETS. OCCASIONAL HORSE NOISES. WIND KICKING UP.  
FAINT THUNDER.

SOUND: A RIFLE COCKS.

SOLDIER #1

Halt!

SOLDIER #2

Tell us what you're doing here, or  
we kill every one of you!

GIANCARLO

This is not so good.

SOUND: FADE IN THE FAINT RUMBLE OF A RUNAWAY HORSE-DRAWN  
CART.

GIANCARLO (CONT'D)  
Of course, good sirs. We are  
tailors.

STETSON  
Huh?

GIANCARLO  
And allow me to say, these  
uniforms? Not good. Mister Santa  
Ana is not happy.

SOLDIER #2  
But he designed these himself!

GIANCARLO  
And now he sees the limitations of  
his fashion sense. You -- turn  
that way.

SOUND: THE RUSTLE OF STEPS THROUGH THE GRASS.

GIANCARLO  
You too.

SOUND: THE RUSTLE OF STEPS THROUGH THE GRASS.

SOLDIER #1  
What are you doing?

GIANCARLO  
Distracting you from that oncoming  
cart.

SOUND: THE RUNAWAY CART IS QUITE LOUD NOW.

SOLDIER #2  
What?

THIEF  
Get out of the way!

STETSON  
Jump!

SOUND: HORSES GALLOP THROUGH THE GRASS. STETSON AND COMPANY  
HIT THE GROUND. SOUND: GUNSHOTS. SCREAMS. A NEIGH.

SOUND: A HORSE LANDS ON THE GROUND. A CREAKING NOISE, THEN  
BREAKING WOOD. SOUND: TWO MORE GUNSHOTS. Beat.

SOUND: ANOTHER THUMP. A DISSONANT CHORD PLAYS ON A BANJO.  
Beat.

MIKE

It is over.

PAOLO says a prayer in Italian.

GIANCARLO

If they heard that at the camp, we  
won't have time to pay our  
respects.

STETSON

What was he cartin' around in such  
a goldurned hurry, anyhow?

SOUND: A FEW THUMPS OF LUGGAGE BEING MOVED AROUND, AND  
SQUEAKS OF CLASPS BEING UNCLASPED.

SOUND: A SLOW STRUM ON A BANJO.

GIANCARLO

A banjo?

SOUND: SEVERAL PEOPLE APPROACH THROUGH THE GRASS, COMPLETELY  
OUT OF BREATH.

DANNY sounds confident and cheerful all the time.

DANNY

You stopped him!

GIANCARLO

Absolutely! Stopped who?

DANNY

That blackguard tried to steal my  
band's instruments.

STETSON

This is yours?

DANNY

Name's Danny Sunshine. This here's  
the Sunshine Band

PAOLO

The Sunshine Band! Paolo adds  
something in Italian.

DANNY

Exactly. This is Brent. Brent is  
surly, as usual.

BRENT

We ain't payin' a finder's fee.

DANNY

And Sal.

Sal is scared, as usual.

SAL

Uh... hi.

SOUND: VOICES IN THE DISTANCE.

MIKE

No time for formalities; we've got  
to go someplace where we'll blend  
in. Now.

SOUND: THE VOICES GET LOUDER.

SCENE THREE: THE SALOON

SOUND: THE CLINK OF GLASSES AND A LOUD RUMBLE OF  
CONVERSATION.

DANNY

He offered to watch the cart for  
us.

BRENT

For free!

SAL

We should have known he'd try to  
steal it.

STETSON

Y'all aren't from around here, are  
you?

DANNY

Nope, but we love to visit new  
places and meet new people!

STETSON

Mr. Sunshine, this is Waco: a  
godforsaken hellhole that's only a  
little step sideways from anarchy.  
'New people' try to kill you. Or  
rob you and then kill you.

BRENT

Hey, it's a paying gig.

SAL

Yeah, but it's for... Santa Ana.

GIANCARLO

What?!

MIKE

General Santa Ana?

STETSON

Am I the only feller who reckons  
that guy died forty years back?

BRENT

At least he's got money.

SCENE FOUR: A CAMPSITE OUTSIDE WACO

SOUND: BONFIRE, CRICKETS, LIGHT BREEZE This conversation is  
whispered quietly.

MIKE

Are we really having this  
conversation?

GIANCARLO

Do we even care about Santa Ana?

MIKE

Mad Dog \*told\* Stetson that Santa  
Ana was a great threat to Texas. We  
\*have\* to stop him.

GIANCARLO

Stop a whole army?

MIKE

We can get information.

GIANCARLO

But they don't want to tell us  
about Santa Ana. And I'm not sure  
we want to know.

STETSON

Well, \*I\* do.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRASS.

STETSON (CONT'D)

I ain't sayin' I'm \*doin'\* anything  
about it. But when I damn near get  
killed a half-dozen times, I want  
to know why.

SCENE FIVE: AT THE CAMPSITE

SOUND: SAME AMBIENT NIGHTTIME SOUNDS AS BEFORE, THIS TIME WITH A FEW PLUCKED BANJO NOTES.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

DANNY

Stetson! All set to head back to Austin?

STETSON

Not yet. Listen, Danny: this army is bad news. You know that. And I have it on good authority that they're gonna do something awful to the whole state of Texas.

DANNY

That wouldn't surprise me.

STETSON

I know you don't \*want\* to tell me nothing about Santa Ana. But this is a chance to do something good. Something right. Some folks live their whole lives without a chance like that.

SAL

Is he threatening us?

BRENT

Or paying us?

DANNY

But Stetson, it ain't no story -- Santa Ana loves old-time music, and we're one of the last Austin bands that plays it. One of his foot soldiers made us a deal.

SAL

We didn't know what Waco was like.

BRENT

Craig did -- he's drunk himself into a stupor, 'stead of having to live through one sober day in Waco. CRAIG groans.

GIANCARLO

That is him over there, in that...  
heap?

DANNY

Yup. A real shame, too -- he's our  
harmonica player, and this general  
guy loves harmonica music.

MIKE

This should be easy to deal with.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRASS.

Craig scats nonsense in an interrogative tone.

MIKE

First, we take away his booze.

SOUND: A BOTTLE BREAKS.

Craig scats nonsense in an angry tone.

Mike screams.

STETSON

Damn, he's quick!

BRENT

When he gets like this, there's no  
keeping him from his gin.

SAL

What'll we do?

STETSON

Gentlemen...

MUSIC: A QUICK LITTLE HARMONICA IMPROVISATION.

STETSON (CONT'D)

Come tomorrow, you've got  
yourselves a new harmonica player.

SCENE SIX: OUTSIDE THE ENEMY CAMP

SOUND: THE SAME 'ENCAMPMENT' NOISES FROM LAST EPISODE.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRASS.

SAL  
This'll never work. They won't  
even let us \*in\* to the camp. We'll  
all be killed!

BRENT  
Then we won't get paid, Stetson.

STETSON  
I'm "Craig", remember? And we'll  
get in. Besides, Mike and the two  
Italians are warning folks back  
home about this here army.

SAL  
Will anyone believe them?

DANNY  
Quiet everybody! It's showtime!

SOUND: A RIFLE IS COCKED.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS STOP.

SOLDIER #1  
Halt! Who goes there?!

DANNY  
The name's Danny Sunshine! This  
here's Brent, Sal, and Craig --  
we're the Sunshine Band!

SOLDIER #2  
You are late! El jefe is expecting  
you.

SOUND: A GATE CREAKS OPEN.

SOUND: THE 'ENCAMPMENT' SOUNDS GET LOUDER.

The following conversation is whispered.

DANNY  
This is amazing! All these  
soldiers, and all these  
contraptions! (he gasps) What do  
you reckon \*that\* is?

STETSON  
That is a very dangerous high-speed  
land vehicle.

DANNY  
You sure?

STETSON

Yup.

SOUND: A LOUD, DISTANT 'CREAK', AND SOMETHING MASSIVE HITS THE GROUND.

DANNY

What're they unloading off that railroad car?

STETSON

I reckon we're gonna find out.

SCENE SEVEN: THE OFFICERS' MESS.

SOUND: SAME AMBIENCE AS BEFORE, ONLY MUTED. THE CLINK OF DISHES. BACKGROUND CONVERSATION. FOOTSTEPS ON THE GROUND.

SOLDIER #1

This way.

SAL

Where are we going?

SOLDIER #2

To meet el jefe.

STETSON

(under his breath)

Finally!

SANTA ANA's voice is filtered a bit peculiarly, and is always accompanied by

SOUND: A FEW PFFTS FROM SOME STEAM-POWERED DEVICE, AND A LOW, CONSTANT GURGLE.

SANTA ANA

Gentlemen!

SOLDIER #1

General Santa Ana, I present to you: Danny Sunshine--

SANTA ANA

-- and his illustrious Sunshine Band.

DANNY

Pleased to meet you, um... where \*are\* you?

SOUND: A DROPCLOTH IS YANKED INTO THE AIR.

DANNY

Huh!

SAL

What?

STETSON

A BRAIN IN A JAR?! Beat.

SANTA ANA

Who said that?

DANNY

He meant nothin' bad by it, sir, he was just--

SANTA ANA

(bellowing)

Who dares take offense at my appearance!

STETSON

Hi. I'm Craig.

SOLDIER #2

Craig shall \*die\*, jefe!

SANTA ANA

Stay your hand, soldier. They say this 'Craig' is the greatest harmonica player in all of Austin, perhaps all of Texas. It would be such a waste to kill him.

SOLDIER #1

Sir?

SANTA ANA

All right, gentlemen. Let's hear a song. If your harmonica player is as good as they say, he lives. If not...

SOUND: LOTS OF GUNS ARE READIED.

SANTA ANA (CONT'D)

... he \*dies\*.

SOUND: INSTRUMENT CASES OPENING. A FEW GUITAR NOTES.

DANNY

Nothin' to worry about. Right, Craig?

STETSON

Huh?

DANNY

Ah-one, ah-two, ah-one, two, three,  
four.

MUSIC: A TWO-MINUTE INSTRUMENTAL, WITH ONE SMALL HARMONICA SOLO IN THE MIDDLE AND ONE SMALL HARMONICA SOLO AT THE END. THROUGHOUT, DANNY SHOUTS BITS OF AD-LIB ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE BAND. BY ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH, THE SOLDIERS ARE CLAPPING ALONG TO THE MUSIC.

SOUND: RIOTOUS APPLAUSE AS THE SONG ENDS.

SANTA ANA

Wonderful! Wonderful! Forget everything I said about killing this gentleman! And put them up in our finest officers' quarters!

DANNY

That's right nice of you, sir!

SANTA ANA

From there you can see my last great speech before the invasion.

DANNY

Looking forward to it!

SAL

"Invasion"?

SOUND: HURRIED FOOTSTEPS.

SOLDIER #3

(out of breath)

General Santa Ana, I bring you word that --

SANTA ANA

Young man, must you interrupt our celebrations?

SOLDIER #3

One of the musicians, sir! One of the musicians is... a government spy!

SOUND: THE SOLDIERS GASP WITH SHOCK.

SANTA ANA  
It can't be! These musicians are  
brilliant!

SOLDIER #3  
But sir, I was sent by --

SANTA ANA  
Anyway, which one of these  
gentlemen are you accusing?

SOUND: APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS.

RUFUS  
I am accusing Stetson McGraw, the  
disgraced ex-sheriff pretending to  
be a mouth harp player!

STETSON  
Rufus? You work for Santa Ana?

SANTA ANA  
But Rufus, how do you know?

RUFUS  
Because this is the very man the  
addle-minded governor of Texas  
hired to arrest "Mad Dog".

SANTA ANA  
Señor Doud?

RUFUS  
Mmm. Our precious little inventor  
friend. The one who didn't want  
his contraptions falling into the  
'wrong hands' after I ordered them  
all to be shipped to our  
encampment.

SANTA ANA  
Then Stetson is on our side, no?

RUFUS  
He was, unwittingly, until he  
learned the truth about the Round  
Rock Express and conspired with  
Doud to blow up the train!

STETSON  
Hey, I didn't know the truth about  
anything!

SANTA ANA

An entire band conspiring against  
me. Betraying me! They all must  
die!

STETSON

Sir general. It was just me. These  
folks are honest musicians. They're  
just tryin' to get by.

RUFUS

I think we can give them one last  
job.

BRENT

We gettin' paid?

RUFUS

Oh yes. And you'll be able to  
watch when the festivities begin.

SCENE EIGHT: THE ENCAMPMENT PARADE GROUNDS.

SOUND: CROWD NOISE.

SOUND: MARCHING FOOTSTEPS THROUGH GRAVEL.

SOUND: THE CROWD NOISE IS SLIGHTLY MUTED. At the same time,  
we hear:

RUFUS

(filtered, distant)

Take your seats. El jefe's speech  
shall begin in three minutes.

SOLDIER #1

Musicians. This is your cue.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS STOP.

DANNY

He gets one last song. Let's make  
it good!

He counts them off. MUSIC: THE BAND PLAYS "TAPS" IN THE  
BACKGROUND.

SOLDIER #1

So. The great Stetson McGraw. Not  
so great now, is he? The soldiers  
laugh.

SOLDIER #2  
Your blindfold, Mr. McGraw.

STETSON  
I always swore that the man who  
shot me, I'd look him in the eye.

SOLDIER #1  
Looks like you'll break that vow,  
Mr. McGraw.

The soldiers laugh.

SOLDIER #2  
Your last cigarette, Mr. McGraw.

SOUND: A MATCH IS STRUCK.

SOUND: STETSON SPITS OUT THE CIGARETTE.

STETSON  
My daddy always told me those  
things'll kill ya.

SOLDIER #2  
Very well, Mr. McGraw.

SOUND: A PUNCH CONNECTS.

STETSON  
Oof!

SOUND: A FEW MORE STAGGERING FOOTSTEPS.

SOUND: GUNS ARE COCKED.

SOUND: MORE FOOTSTEPS.

MUSIC: DRUMROLL.

SOLDIER #1  
Ready! Aim! Fi--

SCENE NINE: OUTRO

ANNOUNCER  
Is this the end for our hero? What  
sort of 'invasion' does Santa Ana's  
army have in mind? And will the  
Sunshine Band ever, ever get paid?

MUSIC: THEME MUSIC.

## ANNOUNCER

Find out in the thrilling  
conclusion (MORE)"The Adventures of  
Stetson McGraw"!