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The Adventures of Stetson McGraw
Episode 6: Stetson McGraw and the King of Texas

SCENE ONE: INTRO

MUSIC: THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

Radio theatre presents: "The
Adventures of Stetson McGraw".
Episode six: "Stetson McGraw and
the King of Texas".

MUSIC: FADE OUT THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER

In our last episode, legendary
lawman Stetson McGraw disguised
himself as a musician, and
infiltrated the rogue army led by
the preserved brain of General
Santa Ana. But suddenly, Rufus,
the very government figure who had
hired Stetson, revealed himself as
a double agent, and ordered the
lawman put to death....

SCENE TWO: THE ENCAMPMENT PARADE GROUNDS

SOUND: DISTANT CROWD NOISE. DISTANT THUNDER. FAINT WIND.

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--

SOUND: A GUNSHOT.

SOUND: A SHORT SCREAM.

SOUND: THE THUD OF A BODY HITTING THE GROUND.

Beat.

STETSON
Um... y'all missed.

SAL
The firing-squad guy got shot! I'm
outta here!

SOUND: SCAMPERING FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRAVEL.

BRENT
Yup, the gig's done.

SOUND: ANOTHER SET OF FOOTSTEPS.

DANNY
Guys. Don't you think Stetson
could use our help?

SOUND: YET ANOTHER SET OF DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS.

SOLDIER #2
The shot must have come from...
there. No, don't shoot!

SOUND: A GUNSHOT. A SHORT PAUSE, THEN A RETURNING GUNSHOT.

SOLDIER #3
Gah!

SOLDIER #4
Take cover!

SOLDIER #3
(in pain)
That shot came from the armory! How
can he move that fast?

SOLDIER #2
There's more than one shooter.

SCENE THREE: THE PARADE-GROUND PLATFORM

SOUND: THE QUIET MURMUR OF AN EXCITED AUDIENCE WAITING FOR A
SPEECH.

SOUND: RATCHETING AND STEAM-EMITTING NOISES, AS A STEAM
POWERED MACHINE STARTS UP.

SOUND: A SHORT SQUEALS OF FEEDBACK.

Note: all the speeches sound amplified, perhaps with some unconventional effect (like a slight flange) superimposed.

SANTA ANA

We have long prepared for this day
of victory, but there has been a
change of plan.

SOUND: INTERROGATIVE SOUNDS FROM THE CROWD.

SANTA ANA

I shall attack first.

SOUND: DUBIOUS SOUNDS FROM THE CROWD.

SANTA ANA

I myself shall tear down their main
defenses and strike fear into their
cowardly hearts! And their
defenses sundered, you, my army,
shall pour into the city of Austin,
and take over the capitol!

SOUND: SLIGHT CHEERS.

SANTA ANA

And I shall become, now and
forever, the King of Texas!

SOUND: WILD CHEERING.

SCENE FOUR: THE ROOF OF THE ARMORY

SOUND: THE SAME CHEERING, ONLY MORE DISTANT.

SOUND: THE WIND IS A BIT MORE PRONOUNCED.

Paolo says something in Italian.

GIANCARLO

Fine. You watch the speech, and
I'll watch the firing squad.

SCENE FIVE: THE PARADE-GROUND PLATFORM

SOUND: AUDIENCE MURMURING.

SOUND: RATCHETING, CREAKING NOISES.

RUFUS

I see that some of you have doubts.

SOUND: VAGUE SOUNDS OF AGREEMENT.

RUFUS

You don't believe Santa Ana can carry out this plan in his current condition. Because you didn't raid the Round Rock Express! You haven't seen this!

SOUND: MORE RATCHETING. A MASSIVE TARP HITS THE GROUND.

SOUND: THE AUDIENCE GASPS.

RUFUS

"Mad Dog" Doud's greatest contraption. The arms have built in weaponry. The legs can derail a locomotive. And the whole contraption is built from impenetrable steel.

SOUND: HE KNOCKS AGAINST THE STEEL, MAKING A 'PING' NOISE.

RUFUS

When activated on its own, it just attacks whatever's around. But we have a more sophisticated control system in mind!

SOUND: THE USUAL BUBBLING AND VALVE NOISE FOR SANTA ANA.

SOUND: A SUDDEN CHEER FROM THE CROWD.

SOUND: RUFUS MAKES SOME GRUNTS OF EXERTION.

SANTA ANA

Be careful, Rufus.

RUFUS

Of course, jefe.

SOUND: RUFUS MAKES SOME GRUNTS OF EXERTION.

SANTA ANA

Just connect my jar to the control leads!

RUFUS

The contraption was damaged in the transport, jefe.

SOUND: "WHAT'S GOING ON?" NOISES FROM THE CROWD

SANTA ANA
Do something!

SCENE SIX: THE ROOF OF THE ARMORY

Paolo says something in Italian.

GIANCARLO
That's silly, Paolo. Paolo says
something in Italian.

GIANCARLO
Why would Rufus remove one of the
armor plates?

Paolo says something in Italian.

GIANCARLO
What won't fit?! Paolo says
something in Italian.

GIANCARLO
No, I have to keep an eye on this
firing squad.
(to himself)
Those soldiers are bound to do
something stupid.

SCENE SEVEN: AN ENCLOSED SPACE NEAR THE ENCAMPMENT PARADE
GROUNDS

SOUND: THE AUDIENCE NOISE IS VERY MUTED.

The following conversation is whispered until otherwise
noted. Soldier #3 sounds like he's in bad shape.

SOLDIER #3
What do we do?

SOLDIER #4
I don't know.

SOLDIER #2
We wait. We've got cover here. We
do nothing.

SOLDIER #3
Do we run?

SOLDIER #4
We'd get shot at!

SOLDIER #2
Again.

SOLDIER #3
Do we track down the snipers?

SOLDIER #4
How do we find them in time?

SOLDIER #2
Keep pressure on it. It will slow
the bleeding.

SOLDIER #4
I say we do our job!

SOLDIER #2
What?

SOLDIER #4
I say we kill Stetson McGraw!

SOLDIER #2
We can't shoot him from here! No,
stay here!

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRAVEL.

SOLDIER #4
Prepare to die, you --

SOUND: GUNSHOT.

Soldier #4 grunts.

SOUND: A BODY FALLS TO THE GROUND.

SOLDIER #3
Oh, god.

SOLDIER #2
That might be a good thing.

SOLDIER #3
What?

SCENE EIGHT: THE PARADE-GROUND PLATFORM

Rufus grunts one last time.

SOUND: THE JAR CLICKS INTO PLACE. ALL SORTS OF SQUEAKS,
VALVES, AND CLICKS AS THE GIANT CONTRAPTION ACTIVATES.

Santa Ana laughs maniacally.

SANTA ANA
I have hands! I have eyes! I
have... power!

SOUND: AUDIENCE CHEERS.

SANTA ANA
And... what is this?!

SOUND: THE CONTRAPTION TAKES SEVERAL HEAVY, THUDDING
FOOTSTEPS, WHILE MAKING ALL MANNER OF CREAKING & HISSING
NOISES.

SANTA ANA
Out of my way!

SOUND: AUDIENCE MEMBERS SCREAM, HURRY OUT OF HIS WAY.

SCENE NINE: AN ENCLOSED SPACE NEAR THE ENCAMPMENT PARADE
GROUNDS

SOUND: THE AUDIENCE NOISE IS VERY MUTED.

SOUND: HEAVY, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS APPROACH FROM THE DISTANCE.

SOLDIER #2
Listen, it's *good*, because now I
know where the second shooter is.

Soldier #3 is not paying attention to Soldier #2.

SOLDIER #3
No.

SOLDIER #2
We can go that way without getting
shot.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS ARE CLOSER. WE HEAR SOME MACHINERY
NOISE NOW.

SOLDIER #3
Run.

SOLDIER #2
And then we shoot Mr. McGraw from
over there, and --

SOLDIER #3
Run!

SOLDIER #2

What?

SANTA ANA

Why is Stetson McGraw not dead?!
Where is my firing squad?! Beat.

SOLDIER #2

Take my arm.

SOLDIER #3

What?

SOLDIER #2

Run!

SOUND: QUICK FOOTSTEPS. SOLDIER #3 MAKES PAINED NOISES.

SANTA ANA

Halt!

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS STOP.

SANTA ANA

I leave you one simple job -- the
four of you shoot one unarmed man.

SOLDIER #2

S... s... snipers.

SANTA ANA

I will crush your head with my
hand.

SOUND: A MENACING, METALLIC CREAK.

SANTA ANA

But first, I'll finish off that
Stetson -- hey!

MIKE

Uh-oh.

STETSON

Cut the ropes, dammit!

SOUND: DULL, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

MIKE

Okay! You're free of the pole. And
the blindfold

STETSON
My hands are still tied, and --
waagh!

SOUND: THEY HIT THE GROUND.

SOUND: SOMETHING SMASHES INTO A WALL.

STETSON
What is that?!

MIKE
Stay down!

SOUND: FRANTIC FOOTSTEPS THROUGH THE GRAVEL.

SOUND: SOMETHING SMASHES INTO A WALL.

STETSON
What's going on?

MIKE
Santa Ana is punching the walls.

STETSON
That's Santa Ana?

MIKE
Yes. We run now.

SCENE TEN: OUTSIDE THE ARMORY.

SOUND: THUDDING FOOTSTEPS IN THE DISTANCE.

GIANCARLO
We have to hurry! He might already
be dead!

Paolo says something in Italian.

DANNY
Howdy, Giancarlo!

GIANCARLO
No time for pleasantries. We have
to find Stetson.

DANNY
We saw 'im that-a-way. Hopin' that
Santa Ana contraption don't catch
up with him.

SOUND: FOOTSTEPS, RUNNING AWAY.

SAL
Be careful!

SCENE ELEVEN: OUTSIDE THE MESS HALL.

SOUND: CROWD NOISE IS BARELY AUDIBLE, AS ARE THE OCCASIONAL FOOTSTEPS OF THE CONTRAPTION.

Note: this conversation is whispered.

STETSON
He see us?

SOUND: HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, RECEDE.

MIKE
We can't hide forever.

STETSON
What do we do?

SOUND: NORMAL FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

GIANCARLO
Here.

STETSON
How did y'all get in here?

GIANCARLO
Dressed like one of them, and
claimed I was transporting
prisoners.

STETSON
What are you wiping on me?

GIANCARLO
Blood.

STETSON
What?

SOUND: TWO GUNSHOTS.

GIANCARLO
... and now you need to play dead.

SOUND: HEAVY, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

MIKE
I'll hide over there.

SOUND: SCUFFLING SOUNDS, DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS.

SANTA ANA
What happened? Giancarlo puts on a
voice.

GIANCARLO
I killed him, jefe. Stetson McGraw
is dead.

A long, long pause.

SANTA ANA
I will crush his body into --

GIANCARLO
No!

SANTA ANA
No?

GIANCARLO
Jefe... he has been a worthy
adversary? You should demonstrate
your valor by not desecrating his
corpse.

Beat.

SANTA ANA
Yes. Bury him with honor.

SOUND: HEAVY, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS DEPART.

Stetson lets out a long-held breath.

SANTA ANA
(distant)
Gentlemen, I shall see you all in
Austin.

SOUND: WILD CHEERING.

SOUND: HEAVY, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS DEPART QUITE QUICKLY.

SOUND: NORMAL FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

MIKE
That contraption goes so fast!

GIANCARLO
And he's attacking Austin.

STETSON
... and he's undefeatable.

Paolo says something in Italian. It's long-winded.

GIANCARLO
So?

Paolo continues, peevishly, in Italian.

GIANCARLO
That will not work.

Paolo says one last thing in Italian.

GIANCARLO
Paolo says that the contraption got damaged in the wreck, and that Rufus had to remove an armor plate from its neck to fit Santa Ana into place.

STETSON
If I could shoot a bullet in there

-

MIKE
It would take out the leads and immobilize that contraption.

GIANCARLO
No marksman could hit that -- it's a zillion-to-one shot!

STETSON
Zillion-to-one's better'n nothin'.

SCENE TWELVE: BEHIND THE ARMORY

SOUND: SEVERAL FOOTSTEPS. IN THE BACKGROUND, SHOUTED ORDERS, MARCHING.

MIKE
Where are we going?

GIANCARLO
If we go through with Paolo's crazy idea, then we 'saddle up', yes?

STETSON
Horses won't get there in time.

MIKE
You are giving up?

STETSON
No.

SOUND: A TARP IS REMOVED.

STETSON
I'm gettin' there before he does.

MIKE
What is this?

STETSON
This is what I used to catch up to
that train.

GIANCARLO
A, uh, high-speed land vehicle,
yes?

STETSON
Yup. Got wrecked pretty bad, but
they've fixed it up nice.

GIANCARLO
Great. We get in this and we go.

STETSON
Only room for one passenger.

MIKE
And you're the only one who's
driven it.

SOUND: APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS.

SOLDIER #5
You there! What are you doing!

SOUND: A PUNCH LANDS.

SOUND: A BODY HITS THE GROUND.

GIANCARLO
You'd better hurry.

MIKE
Here. Take my rifle. It is one of
the finest in all of Texas.

GIANCARLO
 ... and this compass should help
 you out.

Paolo says something in Italian.

STETSON
 What's this?

GIANCARLO
 Goggles. So the wind won't blind
 you.

Paolo says something in Italian.

GIANCARLO
 He also says they are stylish.

SOUND: THE WHIRRS, PSSHTS AND CLACKS OF THE VEHICLE STARTING
 UP.

STETSON
 Y'all figure out what happened to
 that band, y'hear?

MIKE
 They'll be safe.

SOUND: THE WHEELS SQUEAL AND RUMBLE OFF INTO THE DISTANCE.

SCENE THIRTEEN: MOUNT BONNELL

SOUND: IDYLIC NATURE SOUNDS. BIRDSONG. CRICKETS CHIRP.
 WIND GENTLY BLOWS THROUGH THE TREES.

BETTY
 Isn't Mount Bonnell beautiful? You
 can see the whole city from here!

SOUND: APPROACHING HIGH-SPEED VEHICLE.

DANDY
 Not as beautiful... as you, my
 love.

BETTY
 Aw.

SOUND: THE VEHICLE SQUEALS TO A STOP.

Betty and the Dandy scream.

SOUND: A CLACK AND A CREAK AS STETSON GETS OUT OF THE VEHICLE.

DANDY
What in blazes are you doing?

STETSON
I'm gonna need this spot.

BETTY
He's got a rifle!

DANDY
Run!

SOUND: RAPIDLY DEPARTING FOOTSTEPS. STETSON COCKS THE RIFLE.

STETSON
Ah. Okay, Santa Ana. Show me what you got.

SOUND: A HORSE CANTERS FORWARD. A GUN IS COCKED.

DEPUTY
Sir, drop the weapon!

STETSON
What?

DEPUTY
Stetson?

STETSON
Deputy Matthews?

DEPUTY
I'm the sheriff now.

STETSON
Congratulations.

SOUND: HEAVY, THUDDING FOOTSTEPS APPROACH FROM THE DISTANCE.

DEPUTY
Cut the crap, Mr. McGraw -- you put down... your....

He trails off as THE FOOTSTEPS GET LOUDER.

DEPUTY
Oh my god.

STETSON
Yup, that's what I'm here for.

DEPUTY
But... you can't....

SOUND: AN AIR-RAID SIREN.

POLICEMAN
(far away)
Ready! Aim! FI--

SOUND: SQUEALING METAL, AND A SICKENING CRUNCH.

DEPUTY
It swept aside those cops like...

STETSON
You're blockin' the view, deputy.

DEPUTY
(absently)
Sheriff.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS RESUME, AND STEADILY APPROACH.

STETSON
I'll wait until he gets to that
there oil refinery --

DEPUTY
That's right in front of us!

STETSON
So it'll be the best shot.

SOUND: THE HORSE WHINNIES NERVOUSLY.

DEPUTY
You'll shoot him? With a rifle?
That'll just get his attention!

STETSON
Yeah. So I only get one shot.

DEPUTY
This is crazy!

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS ARE EVEN LOUDER. MORE MACHINERY NOISES
ARE AUDIBLE.

STETSON
... and I'm gonna wait for that
shot.

DEPUTY
I'm getting the hell out of here!

SOUND: A FEW HOOFBEATS AS THE HORSE TURNS AROUND.

STETSON
You tell your friends to aim for
its neck.

SOUND: HOOFBEATS GALLOP AWAY.

SOUND: THE FOOTSTEPS, NOW DEAFENING, STOP.

SANTA ANA
(amplified)
Stetson McGraw?!

STETSON
(to himself)
Howdy.

SOUND: RIFLE SHOT.

SCENE FOURTEEN: THE OIL REFINERY

Note: this short scene is from Santa Ana's perspective.

SOUND: THE WHIRRS AND CREAKS OF THE CONTRAPTION, AS LOUD AS
WE'VE EVER HEARD THEM.

SOUND: A SPLIT-SECOND 'ZIP' OF A SHOT THROUGH THE AIR.

SOUND: GLASS BREAKING.

SOUND: LIQUID GLUBBING OUT OF A CONTAINER.

SOUND: LOUD ZAPS!

SOUND: THE WHIRRS AND CREAKS BECOME RANDOM!

SANTA ANA
(hugely distorted)
What?! What is happening?!

SOUND: CRASH.

Beat.

SOUND: EXPLOSION!

SCENE FIFTEEN: JUST OUTSIDE OF AUSTIN.

SOUND: A BONFIRE, CRICKETS.

MUSIC: A SOULFUL TUNE ON HARMONICA. WE MAY RECOGNIZE IT AS THE SHOW'S MUSICAL THEME.

MUSIC: THE TUNE STOPS.

DANNY
Feelin' better, Craig?

CRAIG
Better. Sunset's hurtin' my eyes,
though.

MUSIC: CRAIG RESUMES PLAYING.

SAL
I'm just glad we're almost back in
Austin.

DANNY
I reckon we'll hear the
celebrations from here.

GIANCARLO
Humiliate one little invading army,
and everyone dances in the streets.

SOUND: APPROACHING HOOFBEATS.

MIKE
Stop! Who goes there?

STETSON
Y'all know my name.

GIANCARLO
You're alive!

MIKE
Is it true? Did you shoot down
Santa Ana?

STETSON
I reckon so -- though there's three
dozen men claim they did the deed.

DANNY
You should be in town, celebrating!

STETSON
I'm a wanted criminal.

GIANCARLO
But you were framed by -- who,
Rufus?

STETSON
Rufus is dead. Killed by his own
men in the battle.

DANNY
So where will you go?

STETSON
West for now. Beyond that, who
knows? Somewhere out there.
Somewhere I can do some good. I
reckon that'll suit me fine.

SOUND: STETSON TURNS HIS HORSE AROUND.

MIKE
Goodbye, sir.

STETSON
'til we meet again.

SOUND: STETSON GALLOPS AWAY. MUSIC: CRAIG STOPS PLAYING.

CRAIG
Who was that man?

GIANCARLO
That... was Stetson McGraw!

SCENE SIXTEEN: OUTRO

MUSIC: THEME MUSIC.

ANNOUNCER
On behalf of Radio Theater, we hope
you've enjoyed "The Adventures of
Stetson McGraw". And in the
future, when you want thrilling
tales of high adventure, tune your
dial to Radio Theater!

MUSIC: FADE OUT.