

G U N S M O K E

"Mannon"

Written by

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SECOND REVISED FINAL DRAFT  
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GUNSMOKE-TV

"Mannon"

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SETS:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE  
EXT. LONGBRANCH  
EXT. DODGE STREET  
EXT. STABLES  
EXT. DOC'S OFFICE  
INT. LONGBRANCH  
INT. STABLES  
INT. DODGE HOUSE LOBBY  
INT. MANNON'S ROOM  
    (DODGE HOUSE)  
INT. HALLWAY (DODGE HOUSE)  
INT. DOC'S ROOM  
INT. DOC'S OFFICE X  
INT. KITTY'S ROOM  
INT. GENERAL STORE  
STOCK:

RATTLESNAKE

CAST:

MATT DILLON.....James Arness  
DOC.....Milburn Stone  
KITTY.....Amanda Blake  
FESTUS.....Ken Curtis  
NEWLY.....Buck Taylor  
SAM.....Glenn Strange  
LOUIE.....James Nusser  
BURKE.....Ted Jordan  
BARNEY.....Charles Seel  
HOWIE.....Howard Culver  
DOUGHERTY.....John McLiam  
HALLIGAN.....Charles Wagenheim  
LATHROP.....Woody Chambliss  
ROY.....Roy Barcroft  
MANNON.....  
SUE..... X

DODGE CITY TOWNSPEOPLE  
TOWNSMAN (sil.)

GUNSMOKE

"Mannon"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LONG SHOT - HORSE AND RIDER REARING - DAY 1.

We SEE a horse rearing in panic - silhouetted against the sky on a far hill.

SMASH CUT TO:

2. INSERT OF RATTLESNAKE (STOCK) 2.

QUICK CUT TO:

3. MANNON ON HORSE 3.

Already he is flashing the gun from its holster: an incredibly fast SHOT.

4. SHOT OF SNAKE 4.

Death coil.

5. BACK TO MANNON 5.

as he holsters his gun, dismounting. Great leisure in his movement. Unemotional detachment. Mannon is a powerful, filthy man; evil incarnate. Bestiality is written on his face; dark-complected; in his thirties. The horse bolts slightly in nervousness and we can see that it limps badly at a front leg. Mannon kneels, inspects the leg, rises: all quite casual. He slides the cinch loose and lets the saddle fall to the ground. Slips off the bridle; tosses it on the saddle. Removes the gun again.

6. SHOT OF MANNON 6.

The gun is at his hip, canted up listlessly. He squirts a SHOT as though at a tin can.

7. REVERSE ANGLE - MANNON 7.

Mannon walks toward us and INTO CAMERA, as he chews contentedly, starts a mumbling, discordant SONG:

CONTINUED

7. CONTINUED

7.

MANNON

"John Wesley first saw light of  
day in 1853  
And for fifteen years he learned  
of life upon his Pappy's knee..."

8. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - FESTUS - DAY

8.

He rides along on Ruth, war sack (looks like a laundry bag) hanging down either side of the saddle front. He stops in reaction to O.S.

9. LONG POV SHOT - MANNON

9.

as he walks toward us, down a hill. We can barely HEAR Mannon's dissonant rendition.

MANNON

"...then on a fateful Sunday morn,  
'it was in the month of May  
He shot a man between the eyes  
and rode upon his way..."

10. ANGLE ON MANNON FROM FESTUS

10.

Festus turns Ruth toward Mannon and spurs off.

11. ANGLE FROM MANNON

11.

as Festus draws up. Mannon has stopped the "singing." Watches, flat, cold. (NOTE: both hands hold on to the horn of the saddle, across his back.)

FESTUS

Howdy...

No answer, just a nod.

FESTUS (CONT'D)

Horse took lame?

MANNON

(nods)  
Had to shoot him...  
(gestures)  
...back a ways.

CONTINUED

11. CONTINUED

11.

FESTUS

Give you a ride into Dodge, if  
you'd like. Ol' Ruth here's  
stout enough t'carry us both.

MANNON

Ridin' double's not the most  
comfortable.

FESTUS

Foot, it's be my pleasure.

MANNON

Not mine.  
(and)  
Step down.

FESTUS

What?

MANNON

I said, step down.

Festus' hand drifts to his thigh and the gun there, and,  
touch narrowly:

FESTUS

Don't much take to your tone  
or your words.

MANNON

(smiles, and:)  
Down.

FESTUS

(disgusted; hand  
still near gun)  
Guess this world's got all  
kinds.

In a flash, Mannon goes for his gun. Festus' gun does  
not quite clear his holster - and Mannon FIRES. Festus  
is knocked out of the saddle. Again an incredibly fast  
draw.

12. CLOSE - FESTUS

12.

Awe in his eyes.

13. P.O.V. - MANNON

13.

Calmly holstering his gun.

14. ANGLE - FESTUS

14.

Eyes go shut. Mannon drops his rig onto the ground and mounts Ruth; drops off Festus' war sack. As he rides away:

MANNON

"...singin' of John Wesley Hardin,  
a gunman he became. Oh, yes, John  
Wesley Hardin lived with all that  
glory and fame."

CAMERA SETTLES on the unconscious Festus as Mannon's voice  
FADES, still singing:

MANNON'S VOICE

Oh-h, John Wesley, they run when you  
arrive. Oh-h, John Wesley, they're  
scared 'cause you're alive..."

We HOLD FOR TITLES, then:

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

15. EXT. LIVERY STABLE - DAY

15.

Doc pulls his buggy up and stops. It's abboiling hot day, and he mops his face - a weary man. Spots LOUIE nearby in some shade, staring down the street.

DOC

What you doin', Louie?

LOUIE

'Lo, Doc.

(then)

I was just sittin' here tryin' t'figure something out.

DOC

What's that?

LOUIE

The relative values of sitting here in the shade thinkin' of a cool beer and of walking down to Miss Kitty's and earnin' one by doin' some chores.

DOC

Come to any conclusions?

LOUIE

Thing is: walkin' down there, I get all heated up, an' it's hot enough already.

DOC

It's hot all right.

LOUIE

Problem is: I get thinkin' of a cool beer, I get kinda heated up, too...

DOC

That's a problem.

LOUIE

Bigger problem is: maybe Miss Kitty wouldn't have no chore for me to do an' I'd walk all the way down there for nothin'; get twicet as heated, thinkin' an' walkin' and end up more thirstier'n I am already...

CONTINUED

15. CONTINUED

15.

DOC  
(a 'look', then)  
You've been taking lessons today.

LOUIE  
Huh?

DOC  
Somehow what you just said sounds like Haggin logic.

LOUIE  
I ain't seen Festus all day.

DOC  
You haven't.

LOUIE  
Nope.

DOC  
Well then, maybe he isn't back from hunting yet...  
(a hopeful gleam)  
Maybe he's staying a few more days, and in that event it's a cause to celebrate. You put my horse up for me and come on over to the Longbranch. I'm buying.

And Doc heads away. Louie scrambles to lead Doc's horse into the stable, then:

16. INT. LONGBRANCH - KITTY AND SAM - DAY

16.

The saloon is empty. Kitty is at the far end of the bar with Sam, counting bottles. Beat - they look up as Doc ENTERS.

KITTY  
Doc. How's Mrs. Weller?

DOC  
(looking around, nods)  
Fine. She can say her baby was born on the hottest day of the year, and I haven't even seen a thermometer...

SAM  
You're right. Hundred 'n three at ten o'clock.

CONTINUED



16. CONTINUED

16.

DOC

Well, I'm buying for the thirsty ones....And I'll buy a round every day Festus stays away.

(nod)

Matt get in?

KITTY

Tomorrow or the next day, I suppose.

DOC

They call a man all the way to Ellsworth to give a deposition in a trial in this weather. Ridiculous.

SAM

Ridiculous?

DOC

The heat!! They coulda waited a day or two!

(subsiding)

Anything can wait a day or two.....

KITTY

Including Mrs. Weller?

Amused looks - then:

17. EXT. DODGE STREET - MANNON - DAY

17.

as he rides Ruth down the main street, eyes straight ahead, slow, oblivious, and still mumble-humming:

MANNON

"...he drew his gun then blazed away. And sulphur filled the air. The men who called him out that day, he killed without a care."

18. SHOTS OF BURKE, BARNEY, ROY, SAM

18.  
THRU

18C. outside their establishments, occupied variously. We see each stop in quizzical reaction to Mannon O.S.

19. FULL SHOT - MANNON

19.

as he turns into the stable. And as he does so, we see Burke, Barney and Roy walk out into the street (mesmerized) from their separate directions.

MANNON

"...Singin' of John Wesley Hardin, a gunman he became. Oh, yes, John Wesley Hardin lived with all that glory and fame."

20. EXT. STABLE - DAY

20.

as Mannon ENTERS, dismounts. Louie watches dumbfounded. Mannon flips him a coin.

MANNON

Git ole John Wesley here a pillow.

The coin has bounced off (awestruck) Louie's chest. Mannon looks at him: a man amongst idiots. Louie comes to.

LOUIE

...John Wesley...

MANNON

(nods)

Got a place to change skins?

LOUIE

(indicates woodenly)

...Dodge...House...

Mannon stares at him a beat, grunts, and walks OFF.

21. ANOTHER ANGLE

21.

as we see Burke, Barney and Roy appear at the door. Stop. Same agape expressions. Mannon stops. Looks at the new idiots. A beat, then turns.

X

22. P.O.V. - LOUIE

22. X

Same expression.

23. BACK TO SCENE 21

23.

Mannon turns back, steps slowly to Burke (slightly in front), takes his arm, puts a coin in his hand.

MANNON

...lead 'em in singin'....

Walks through and O.S. as they turn, watching zombies.

24. FULL SHOT - GROUP

24.

As they watch a traumatic beat, THEN EVERYBODY STARTS BABBLING AT ONCE. A couple of beats and then:

ROY  
Quiet! Quiet!

Quiet, then:

BURKE  
Isn't that Ruth?!

ROY  
'Course it's Ruth.

BARNEY  
Where's Festus?!

ROY  
Who's he?!

LOUIE  
Never saw him before.

BURKE  
Well, what's he doing on Puth?!

LOUIE  
I'm gonna get Mr. Newly.

And he scoots away.

25. INT. DODGE HOUSE - HOWIE AND MANNON - DAY

25.

Mannon is at the desk, scowling at the pen Howie proffers.

HOWIE  
Welcome to Dodge...

X

Obviously, Mannon cannot write, then:

HOWIE (CONT'D)  
Just make your mark.

Mannon does so; returns the pen, then:

HOWIE (CONT'D)  
Name?

MANNON  
Mannon.

Howie starts to write; stops. Looks up. Mannon looks at him a beat, then sighs in vanishing patience. Howie collects himself, as:

HOWIE  
Oh, excuse me. Excuse me. It's that, well, Mannon's a name to remember in parts of Kansas.

25. CONTINUED

25.

MANNON

That so.

HOWIE

Indeed. You know I was in Lawrence that time. They said Will Mannon was Quantrill's killing arm more than any of the others. So you can see why the name of...

(drains off under Mannon's stare)

...oh, sorry, no need to bother you with such 'n all.

(back to business)

First name, please...

MANNON

...Will...

Howie looks up, straightens in trauma. Mannon takes the key from his hand.

MANNON (CONT'D)

(flat)

...plenty a hot water...

26. INT. MANNON'S ROOM (DODGE HOUSE) - DAY

26.

There is a big tub in mid-room. Around it or clustered to one side are six or seven steaming buckets of water. Mannon stands over the tub carving up a bar of lye soap, the bits dropping into the tub. He intersperses this with a little water, joshing the mixings with a booted foot: it was harder getting lather out of those lye cakes than...well...All the while he mumbles "The Ballad of John Wesley Hardin."

MANNON

"...oh-h, John Wesley, they run when you arrive. Oh-h, John Wesley, they're scared 'cause you're alive...

"John Wesley had a string of girls, from here to Abilene. They all just waited for his call..."

He breaks off at the KNOCK on his door.

MANNON (CONT'D)

...come...