

NOBODY'S WATCHING CHANNEL 66

PILOT - "DAY 2"

by

Jarred Hodgdon

[www.jarred-hodgdon.com](http://www.jarred-hodgdon.com)  
[Jarrhod@gmail.com](mailto:Jarrhod@gmail.com)  
510-816-1414

FADE IN

INT. STUDIO - DAY

INSERT GRAPHIC - HA ! Channel 66

Female voices in a warbled chorus exclaim "HA".

MALE ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Humboldt Access. Channel 66.

Pull back from graphic on a monitor to reveal a TV studio set -orange hued walls, dingy brown desk. STOCK NEWS MUSIC comes up. A CAMERA PERSON throws a cue to the host, BYRON KLEIN (45, white) seated next to his panel, SHANE MUNCH (50, white) and RANDALL RUCKS (black, 60). They wear black turtlenecks and brown leather jackets. Randall is balding while Shane and Byron both have jewfros.

BYRON  
Good morning, this is *View on 66*,  
with news in Humboldt County from  
the revolutionary perspective.

Byron and Shane throw black power fists, Randall looks off.

BYRON (CONT'D)  
We gotta address the new Executive  
Director of this very station who  
y'know, yesterday, had his  
disastrous first day on the job--

RANDALL  
(fails to interject)  
I--

BYRON  
--Brother, Shane, my man, give the  
people the low down and what for.

A PICTURE of WENDELL TIBBS comes up on a monitor display.

SHANE  
Peace with you, my brother. With  
the unfortunate passing of our last  
E.D., Wendell Tibbs a power vacuum  
was left here at Channel 66. You  
perhaps new brother Tibbs the best,  
Randall.

RANDALL  
(tries to get a word in)  
Yes, I--

SHANE

--But we were idle, nestled in the comfort of our grief. The corrupt ass cable company, Superlink, seized the opportunity to glad-hand and cajole our station board behind closed doors to anoint a stooge for the cable company.

The "brothers" nod heads and throw around RIGHT ON'S.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

THREE CREW MEMBERS helm stations. The small control room is adjacent to the studio, connected by a window.

NOAH ZIMMER(30), the new H.A. Executive Director, has a ten dollar haircut and is overdressed in an ill-fitting suit.

In front of him, directing at the video switcher, is FRANCES O'HARA (33), She has short cropped hair, wears cargo pants and a British army sweater.

Noah nervously hovers - watches as he is berated.

BYRON

The rube seems to have no leadership or TV experience, and was probably installed in to bring down our channel.

NOAH

Okay. Cut to commercial.

FRANCES

I can't.  
(duh)  
This is non-commercial TV.

Noah grabs an intercom set to address the crew.

NOAH

Floor Manager. Jim right? Wrap them up. Tell them to move on.

FRANCES

(in headset)  
Belay that order, Tim.

NOAH

What? No. They can't just talk about me like that.

FRANCES

This is access. You can't interfere with their first amendment rights.

NOAH

But they're talking about me! I am the boss right?

FRANCES

It would seem so, yeah.

NOAH

(to himself)

This is only my second day on the job. I moved my whole life from Idaho for this.

Shane's face fills the frame of a monitor.

SHANE

Make no mistake. The honkey demon is in this studio and freedom itself is on his devil fork.

Randall is discomforted by the statement.

Noah grimaces. Sweat hangs on his brow. His eyes tremble with anger. Fists clench. MUSIC SWELLS -- Tension is epic!

Frances looks at Noah judgementally.

FRANCES

Relax, tenderfoot. It's just public access. Nobody watches Channel 66.

BEGIN TITLE SEQUENCE

INDIE-ROCK BANJO DRIVEN MUSIC

Montage of BTS production and studio footage from Humboldt Access shows with quick shots of Humboldt "landmarks" - dense redwood forest, hippies on a park bench, Humboldt County Line sign, Paul Bunyan and Blue Ox statue, bikers out front of a bar, a lighthouse on a beach, a shady marijuana grow room...

END TITLE SEQUENCE

INT. BULLPEN - DAY

The open room serves as the building's main entrance, office, kitchen, and community space - all rooms adjoin here. Drab decor and outdated furniture for a multi-use mess of a space. A prominent large photo, adorned with flowers, memorializes Wendell Tibbs.

CREW MEMBERS sit at a table at the common end of the room.

Frances sits as Noah peruses shelves of old tapes on the business side of the space.

NOAH

That was a little demoralizing,  
dontcha think?

FRANCES

I thought it was fun.

NOAH

No. Yesterday and this morning were  
bad. Today is a course correction.

FRANCES

Don't worry. We're just a broke old  
vacuum that makes a lot of noise.

NOAH

I'm not like they said. I intend to  
prove myself to these people.

AT TABLE ACROSS ROOM

The core production CREW drink coffee and powwow. Their heads are cocked as they've been eavesdropping.

HAZEL (21), a transgender woman whom also identifies as a pixie, wears a colorful patterned dress, small pinned on wings and a white short haired wig.

HAZEL

What's he mean by these people?

TIM (50), short crop cut hair, outfitted in jeans and an army jacket. A loose cannon Gulf War veteran.

TIM

That person, the new guy. He's a  
hot steaming pile of dumbass.

HAZEL

Meh. He deserves a shot.

TIM

He wouldn't like the kind of shots  
I pack. Desert Storm 1994.

HAZEL

Like the real Iraq War, but with  
training wheels.

TIM

We lost good people.

HAZEL

And a little bit of the dying tumor  
that is the soul of the nation.

TIM

You're a red, pinkie, green commie.  
But you're one of the good ones.

Hazel pushes her cup of coffee towards Tim.

HAZEL

For your service.

Tim winks at Hazel and sips.

ON NOAH AND FRANCES

Noah tries to fix a mess of un-spoiled videotape.

NOAH

I can't get into a situation like  
that again. I need to learn about  
the producers.

FRANCES

You could watch the channel?

NOAH

I tried last night. The shows  
are... very boring.

FRANCES

Dude, this is access. A voice for  
the voiceless! Freedom of speech!

NOAH

Maybe some people are voiceless for  
good reason?

FRANCES

As the boss, you probably shouldn't say that. But look, not everyone's like the *View on 66* crew...

NOAH

Good. That's awful reassuring.

FRANCES

...Some of our producers are a little irrational and intense.

NOAH

(reacts, then)

Okay. New edict. I want to meet with each and every one of our producers before they go on air.

Hands in pockets, Noah stares expectantly at Frances.

FRANCES

Sounds nice. Probably a good idea.

NOAH

Can you help me set that up? I could really use a right hand man.

FRANCES

That's not my job and I'm already working way above my pay grade.

NOAH

Yeah. What is your job title again?

FRANCES

Cablecasting. Tape loading essentially.

NOAH

How much of your day do you do that?

FRANCES

Zero. I supervised the studio conversion to High Def last year so my job is completely irrelevant.

NOAH

Ah.

FRANCES

Seriously?

Frances points to the computer.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

You have access to Wendell's work and you've reviewed personnel and management files, right?

NOAH

Look, I said it. I'm drowning!  
(re: computer)  
I don't know the login password.

Frances yanks a Post-It off the monitor and hands it to Noah.

FRANCES

Here, password.

NOAH

That's just the kind of help I need until I hit the ground running.

Frances crosses her arms, looks away.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Help me learn the ropes and I'll get you a new job title that fits your role. Maybe a raise too, eh?

Noah flashes pride at his decision making.

FRANCES

I promised myself I'd hate you, wait it out for your inevitable failure and then celebrate as you hightailed it back to Idaho.

NOAH

But?

FRANCES

But what? You want me to break a promise?

NOAH

Hey. I'm not doing so bad for my second day. I was in sales at Superlink. This is new to me but I'm not stupid.

FRANCES

Fine. We'll give it a go.

NOAH

Great! First, I was thinking I need an office. A proper place to meet people.

Frances looks around.

FRANCES

There's really only one room that has even a little space.

NOAH

Anything. I'm easy.

Noah beams a smile. Frances leads him off.

ON TABLE ACROSS ROOM

Hazel and Tim watch Noah and Frances cross.

HAZEL

We should go help them.

TIM

I'm still having coffee.

HAZEL

Frances is about to murder this kid, I know it.

TIM

We should go help them.

Tim and Hazel rush to follow.

INT. PROP ROOM - MINUTES LATER

A crowded space with various couches, seats and set dressing stacked for storage.

Tim and Hazel move the desk into position. Hazel moves a chair under Noah's butt. He sits down as Frances looks at him, she has her arms crossed - *pleased by the humiliation*.

NOAH

So this was a prop room?

FRANCES

This is a prop room.

NOAH

No shame in that. I can do fine work here.

Tim scratches his head and looks at Hazel - *not sure*.

NOAH (CONT'D)

But. This room kinda reeks.

Everyone else looks at each other and shrugs.

HAZEL

You're probably just not used to  
this pacific northwest air.

NOAH

Now everyone shoo please. Time to  
roll up my sleeves and get to work.

The crew crosses to exit. Frances is the last to saunter out.

NOAH (CONT'D)

And shut the door please.

FRANCES

Sure thing. Boss.

This is a big task. A few large prop plants block the door  
open. Frances moves them one by one. Noah watches.

NOAH

Just. Forget it.

FRANCES

No, no. I insist. Nothing to it.

Frances shoots him a fake smile and shuts the door - it  
becomes apparent there is a giant hole in it. From the other  
room Frances leans her head through the middle of the door.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Just holler if you need anything.

NOAH

(surprised)

That's fine.

(annoyed)

Thank you.

She pops her head out but then pops it right back through.

FRANCES

I'm your right hand man.

Thumbs up and then she departs.

Noah SIGHS - fires up the computer. It WHIRS to life.

Frances pops her head through yet again.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

Hey.

NOAH

What?!

FRANCES

Oh.

(curious)

I thought you wanted my help?

NOAH

I do. Yes. Sorry.

FRANCES

A few of us are going out to cover the water leg of the Kinetic Race, then it's back for the city council meeting tonight. Want to lend a hand and see the team at work?

NOAH

Race? No. Meeting? Sure.

Frances smiles and departs. Noah gets to typing.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Now to dive into these budgets and management files.

Hazel pokes her head through the hole in the door.

HAZEL

Hey, Spud?

Noah, frustrated, looks up.

NOAH

Yes?!

HAZEL

(fazed, then)

Lumpy Cheeks is here.

NOAH

They need an appointment and make it for tomorrow. And what kind of name is Lumpy Cheeks?

HAZEL

It's not his real name but his cheeks look lumpy and gross like chewed gum. I have a bad memory for names so I use mnemonics. Lumpy Cheeks Dice Player.

NOAH  
Dice player?

HAZEL  
Yeah. For Vice-Mayor.

NOAH  
Lionel Meeks, the Vice-Mayor?!  
Please, send him in immediately.  
And no more mnemonics.

HAZEL  
Okay, I guess. I'll have to think  
of something else.

NOAH  
When you forget someone's name just  
force eye contact and call them  
"you".

Noah straightens his hair and stands up.

Hazel returns with LIONEL MEEKS (55) - he crosses to Noah  
with arm extended for a handshake. He wears a sports coat  
over a t-shirt and jeans.

LIONEL MEEKS  
Ah! Noah. Settling right in. Things  
shook out well for you, like  
dandruff on a black sweater.

NOAH  
Sure, sure. I was just reviewing  
files, getting my feet wet.  
(wondering)  
Did you want to go over my plan for  
the channel? Prioritize?

LIONEL MEEKS  
No. I'm a one thing at a time kinda  
guy. Speed might win a marathon,  
but not in a bacchanalia.

NOAH  
Of course, I--

LIONEL MEEKS  
--Speaking of. I wanted to talk to  
you about one of our programs. Have  
you had a chance to watch *Peace  
Blast*?

NOAH  
Not sure. As it happens, I--

LIONEL MEEKS

--They're the long-haired ones. The hippy fellows.

NOAH

Right. No, I don't think I've caught *Peace Blast* yet.

(writing)

Here, I'll make a note to.

LIONEL MEEKS

They were naked on last nights show/ As much as I appreciate that as a civilian, I really don't see how that belongs on our channel.

NOAH

Naked? Like shirts off?

LIONEL MEEKS

Naked as in I know one of them is down a testicle while another fellow has a fascinating melanocytic nevus on his buttocks.

NOAH

This sounds extremely inappropriate. I'm aghast.

LIONEL MEEKS

To be fair, they did have their skins out.

NOAH

I get it, they were very naked.

LIONEL MEEKS

Their drums were in front of them. A drum circle. That kind of jazz.

NOAH

I jump from big band to smooth and ignore the middle period myself, but I understand. I'll put a halt to it immediately.

LIONEL MEEKS

I knew you'd be a sport.

Lionel Meeks throws a thumbs up and pats Noah on the shoulder. Noah walks him to the door.

NOAH

Say, do you smell anything strange?

LIONEL MEEKS  
 Not in the least.  
 (sniffs)  
 Kinda nice. Familiar.

Lionel Meeks exits, Hazel and Tim muscle through the door.  
 They grab a couch that was leaning on its side.

NOAH  
 Come on in guys. Setting up for a  
 show?

TIM  
 You on our ass or something?

NOAH  
 Hey, harsh. Um, just checking in.

HAZEL  
 Yeah, the show *The Crafty Couple* is  
 setting up.

NOAH  
 Great! I'm meaning to meet and  
 greet all our producers anyhow.

TIM  
 Daisies.

As Tim and Hazel cross to exit:

NOAH  
 Send them in, could you?

TIM  
 Sure, then I'll sit on a broomstick  
 and sweep the floor too!

Noah tries to comprehend this as the two exit.

INT/EXT. CHANNEL 66 VAN - DAY

The van travels down MAIN ST. of the City of Eureka.

Frances drives, Hazel is the passenger.

HAZEL  
 That's cool of you to be so nice to  
 him. Considering.

FRANCES  
 Everyone keeps reminding me!  
 (mimicking)  
 (MORE)

FRANCES (CONT'D)

You paid your dues. It's your turn.

(glares at Hazel)

The thing about dues? Sometimes you don't gotta pay 'em. You can put em in the bank, withdraw those dues later. With interest.

HAZEL

Yeah. Like, that's what I'm doing with my white privilege.

FRANCES

It doesn't work like that.

HAZEL

Exactly. Neither do dues. If ya don't use dues, ya lose dues. You become a dues doormat.

FRANCES

The board voted. He was hired. What should I do? Quit? Stage a coup?

HAZEL

No way! I would do exactly what you're doing.

FRANCES

Good. I feel better.

HAZEL

But I'm an idiot. I volunteer at the station for free.

Frances grimaces.

FRANCES

You're about to earn your wages. Looks like a madhouse down here.

The van pulls up to the crowded parking lot adjacent to the Humboldt Bay and Samoa bridge.

INT. PROP CLOSET OFFICE - DAY

Noah suspiciously mulls over DAN SWEETS(50) and PAM SWEETS(50), seated across the desk. They look the part of a clean-cut couple - matching homemade sweaters and haircuts.

NOAH

So, it's just a craft show?

DAN  
We prefer the term D. I. Y.

NOAH  
Oh, D.O. you?

The couple GIGGLES. Noah breaks a smile and softens.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Are we talking origami? Needlework?

PAM  
Sure. Just fun projects people can  
do around the home!  
(exhausted)  
Garden! Kitchen! Garage stuff!  
Things to bring a family together  
and help them save money.

Noah shows a flash of suspicion over Pam's intense energy,  
but is otherwise reassured.

NOAH  
Sounds like a wonderful show, and  
this is what you'll be wearing?  
(re: their clothes)  
And they'll stay on?

DAN  
Yeah. Are these okay?

NOAH  
Sure. They're great.

Dan and Pam stand up.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
One last thing.

They look expectantly.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Do you smell something strange?

The couple looks paranoid. Shakes their head "no".

They cross to exit.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Of course not.

PAM  
(to Dan)  
I think he may be illuminati.

Noah waves to their backs.

NOAH  
Nice to meet you!

Noah gleefully puts a check mark on a list. He flips through a Rolodex to find a number. He punches it in on a desk phone.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Since this is going so well.  
(into phone)  
Hello. Yes, this is Noah, the new  
E.D. at Channel 66. I was wondering  
if I could setup a meeting with you  
about your show?  
(listening, then)  
This shouldn't have anything to do  
with that. But what exactly is  
Altamont?

EXT. EUREKA PUBLIC MARINA - DAY

From a tall umpire stand a RACE OFFICIAL calls the event to order through a bullhorn.

RACE OFFICIAL  
The splash test water entry has  
commenced! The Kinetic sculptures  
shall enter the water to make their  
way across the Humboldt Bay. Now  
scream for your favorite team!

The CROWD teems with energy and ROARS.

Hazel and Frances stand at the fray beside a camera and tripod. They look bored.

HAZEL  
The entries always look the same.

FRANCES  
I've been covering this for ten  
years. Maybe I should just pull up  
stakes and move somewhere my  
talents will be appreciated. This  
job, and place. It's all so boring.

REVEAL - Dozens of not boring Kinetic sculpture's floating in the Humboldt Bay, nest to the Samoa bridge. They all look colorful and amazing. People float inside the dozen or so pedal bikes sculpted into things like a rainbow, a dragon, a pirate ship, and a U.F.O.

## RACE OFFICIAL

Next up, your Vice-Mayor, Lionel Meeks makes his water landing in his sculpture, Lucky-Seven's.

On the Samoa bridge, PEOPLE hoist his Kinetic Sculpture up with him inside it. It's sculpted as a PAIR OF DICE.

Lionel is thrown off the bridge and YAHOO'S with excitement.

His vehicle SPLASHES into the water, briefly capsizes, then rights itself. The Vice-Mayor waves from inside.

The CROWD CHEERS.

## HAZEL

(profoundly)

Dice. Player. I have ESP.

## INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Noah enters to check in on the production. A CREW is present, Tim is on the production switcher. We can see and HEAR the *Crafty Couple* show taking place on monitors.

## NOAH

Can I help? How's the show going?

Tim looks him up and down.

## TIM

Good. There hadn't been any interruptions.

## NOAH

(saving face)

I don't know how the previous E.D. worked, but I am hands on.

Tim rises and backs away from the console.

## TIM

Great, go for it.

Noah's eyes go wide. He looks at the banks of buttons, then up at the monitor.

## NOAH

(accusing)

That's unprofessional...

Noah sits. Tim watches from behind.

*So many buttons* - Noah fakes competence.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. STUDIO - SAME

Dan and Pam have a hell of a mess out on a table - plants, broken pottery and plates. Dirt is everywhere.

PAM

Victory gardens don't have to support imperialism. We use our revolutionary planter box Victory Gardens to subvert the tools of capitalism in our efforts to bring down the state!

Noah mashes buttons, color bars appear on the screen.

Tim "ooohs".

NOAH

Whoopsie.

Noah makes it worse and cuts to black. Tim reaches over him and resets the studio camera.

TIM

Here.

Pam plants an upside down flag in the planter box dirt.

DAN

It's also a really good activity with kids and the whole family. You can grow spices for cooking.

Pam points a finger at the camera, accusatory.

PAM

Kids ain't never too young to learn the truth. You go and tell them, 9/11 was an inside job.

NOAH

Did she just say September Eleventh was an inside job?

Tim reaches over, cuts from a wide-shot to a close-up on Pam.

TIM

You can't listen to what they're talking about when you direct.

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

Go in to the close-up when she's being emphatic. Watch the monitors and follow the action.

Noah is frustrated. He turns towards MATT (25) the deaf audio board operator.

NOAH

Are there any normal characters around here?

TIM

He's deaf.

NOAH

How's he run an audio board?

TIM

He uses his eyes like you should be doing. Get the tight shot on the demonstration, dude!

Tim reaches over and takes a close-up camera as Pam puts a Buddha figure in her garden. She lights it on fire.

Noah jumps back.

NOAH

Nope. We aren't going to have fire in the studio!

Noah hops up and races into the studio.

Matt and Tim CHUCKLE at each other.

TIM

He's so dumb that he might just grow on me.

Noah charges at the set with a fire extinguisher.

DAN

What'r ya doin', man!

PAM

Facist! Get away from my garden. He's just self-immolating!

Noah EXTINGUISHES the fire - white powder everywhere, including on Dan and Pam.

Smoke dissipates, Noah turns and faces directly to a camera.

NOAH  
 Sorry, viewers. You may know I'm  
 the new Executive Director, Noah  
 Zimmer. I'm a good guy...

In the control room it's apparent that Noah is facing the  
 wrong camera - we see him in profile.

MATT  
 He's looking at camera three.  
 Should you take it?

TIM  
 Naw, this is great. He doesn't even  
 know how a camera tally works.

NOAH  
 I'm not here to interfere with your  
 show, unless it's an issue with  
 safety. Like fire.

Dan and Pam look angered.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
 Well, carry on. The show must  
 continue!

Noah races off set, leaving the destruction.

DAN  
 Our garden. Dead.

PAM  
 Viva la revolucion.

Pam picks up her burnt monk.

INT. PROP CLOSET OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Noah tries to open the door from the outside.

CLICK CLICK - It's locked. He sticks his head through the  
 hole and sees THREE HIPPIES sitting on a prop couch.

NOAH  
 Hey. You're in my office and you've  
 locked my door.

The hippies are LYLE (65), BASTION (65) and SMITHY (60) - Old  
 school longhairs, dressed like they just came from 1967.

BASTION  
 Reach through, friend.

Noah reaches through, struggles to grab the handle.

Smithy crosses the room and OPENS the door just as Noah has hold of the handle. Smithy pulls it open, dragging Noah as he hangs halfway through the door.

SMITHY  
Greetings, man.

Noah pulls himself out, KICKS the door and enters.

NOAH  
Who are you?

LYLE  
Can you close the door, Jack?

NOAH  
It's Noah, thank you very much.

Noah complies, but-

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Why was it closed anyhow?

BASTION  
There's a lot of noise out there in the world--

LYLE  
--we gotta protect our headspace.

NOAH  
Super duper, fellas. But your head space currently seems to be in my office space.

Noah rocks on his heels.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Or did you mistake my office for the local hop house?

SMITHY  
You called me , old man.

NOAH  
(changes tone)  
Ah, yes! *Peace Blast* right? Also I've just turned thirty, thank you.

SMITHY

You talk like an old man.

(points)

Watch out for that.

BASTION

Used to be you couldn't trust anyone over thirty but there's been a paradigm shift and you're right on that cusp.

NOAH

You can trust me.

(smile)

I'm cool, daddy-o.

The hippies exchange glances - *what a square.*

LYLE

Why is it for which you had us hoof it here?

NOAH

Gentlemen. We've received a few complaints in regards to your particular program.

LYLE

What?!

BASTION

There are all kinds of people that dance with the horned serpent out there, man. They're still fighting this peace vibration we put out.

SMITHY

All we transmit is beauty.

Smithy touches Noah's chest.

SMITHY (CONT'D)

For those with a cold, dark heart, the *Peace Blast* is like a mirror that reflects their sorry vibrations.

NOAH

The complaints didn't pertain to your message of peace and beauty, per say. They more regarded all of the... nudity.

LYLE

Like my body is profane? Turn on the TV! The bile they pump out through commercials and corporate news is the real profanity.

NOAH

I'm with you, I am. We're copacetic. I'm hip. It's just a matter of public standards, community standing...

BASTION

If you're cool with it, how's this?

Bastion drops his pants and underwear- it all hangs out.

SMITHY

Or this?

LYLE

Me too.

Lyle and Smithy follow suit, naked from the waist down.

NOAH

(ew)

Yeah. That's fine. Great.

LYLE

So, you're cool with us hangin' our banana skins on the fence?

Noah nervously looks around.

NOAH

There could be workplace, H.R. or Board of Health issues, but I'm cool. Totally cool.

SMITHY

But not on TV?

NOAH

Right! I'm not the man, just the messenger for the man, man. But I really dig what you guys are doing.

BASTION

But you don't want us to do it!

The three hippies are up, ready to leave.

LYLE

Don't waste your Shakti on him.

SMITHY  
Meet the new boss, more fascist  
than the old boss.

At the back of the room Lyle opens what had appeared to be a prop door.

LYLE  
C'mon boys.

The door is open, smoke wafts in.

NOAH  
That's a prop door.

LYLE  
Looks pretty real to me.

The hippies exit.

BASTION  
Open the doors of perception.

Noah is dumfounded.

NOAH  
The smoke. It did smell in here!

INT. DR DOOBLITTLE'S - CONTINUOUS

Noah rushes in. The hippies are sitting on a examination table as DR LITTLE (45) puffs and passes a joint. He's big and bearded, wears a t-shirt that depicts hospital scrubs.

DR LITTLE  
Close the door, kid.

NOAH  
You're the one stinking up my office.

DR LITTLE  
No, this is my office.

NOAH  
The next door office? Isn't this a medical clinic?

Dr. Little exhales and extends his hand. They shake coolly.

DR LITTLE  
And what kind of clinic do you think is named Dr. Dooblittle?

NOAH  
Pediatric?

DR LITTLE  
Medical Cannibus.

NOAH  
Really?! Oh God. That's really a  
thing in California. I've just not  
seen one yet.

DR LITTLE  
Welcome. Usually the next part is I  
administer an examination.

NOAH  
So, your name is Dooblittle?

Dr. Little starts writing on a pad.

DR LITTLE  
Naw, just Dr. Little. The doob bit  
is a marketing touch. Here.

The Doctor tears off some paper and hands it to Noah.

NOAH  
A prescription? For what?

DR LITTLE  
Weed. For chronic anxiety.

NOAH  
You think I have anxiety?!

DR LITTLE  
I think it's contagious. You're  
putting me on edge, dude.

Puff, puff, exhale.

DR LITTLE (CONT'D)  
And I smoke the good stuff.

BASTION  
He's a stick in the mud and he  
totally harshed us.

NOAH  
It's this easy to get a  
prescription?

DR LITTLE

Well, no. You gotta give me ninety  
bucks and I'll have to like,  
lamine you a card.

NOAH

Just forget it.

Noah hands back the prescription. Crosses to the door.

NOAH (CONT'D)

If you could keep the smoke levels  
down to a dull haze I'd appreciate  
it. And I'm going to have this door  
fixed closed.

(to hippies)

Until then, please keep passage  
confined to the front door.

Noah exits.

DR LITTLE

But half my business comes through  
that inconspicuous door!

The hippie crew shakes their heads mournfully.

INT. BULLPEN - DAY

Noah rushes in. Paces around with nervous energy.

NOAH

What I'm doing here? I gotta go  
home. I can stay with my folks.

(stops, realizes)

I'm high. I got a contact high! No!  
I promised myself. D.A.R.E. !

Hazel walks through the front door, carrying camera gear.

Paranoid, Noah jumps behind a desk.

Hazel crosses, but notices him.

HAZEL

You okay, Spud?

NOAH

I think I'm high.

Hazel moves in close to his face to stare eye-to-eye.

HAZEL  
No. You're stone sober.

NOAH  
I know my body. I most definitely  
am not.  
(calms)  
But. You think I could pass?

HAZEL  
Sure. Just act cool.  
(looks around)  
I won't tell anyone.

Noah smiles.

NOAH  
Thanks. Anyhow. How'd it go?

HAZEL  
Interesting actually. I discovered  
out there today that my latent  
clairvoyance is awakening.

Noah's curious.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
It turns out the Vice-Mayor really  
is a dice player.

NOAH  
I'll just have to watch the  
footage. But. Where's Frances?

HAZEL  
She's in the back of the van.

NOAH  
Is everything alright?

HAZEL  
Oh, yes. Yes.

Noah MMMM'S - *not so sure.*

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
She's taking a moment to de-stress.

NOAH  
I get it. I need a little siesta  
every little while myself too.  
Right?

HAZEL

Sorta.

INSERT - INT/EXT. PARKED VAN - SAME

A FEMALE SCREAM. It is the opening of an aggressive SONG playing on the van radio.

Frances is in the back of the van, propping herself up with tension - hands pressed against one side of the van, feet pressed against the other. Kind of like planking, but suspended in the air.

She starts to rock the van rhythmically by bending her knees. Slight and slow at first - gradually building speed.

The van SQUEAKS as it rocks and rocks and rocks. A PASSERBY carrying grocery bags takes note but keeps walking.

BACK TO SCENE

NOAH

I've put a lot of responsibility on her and asked a lot haven't I?

HAZEL

Don't be dim. She's a powerful goddess. She can take on anything.

NOAH

Of course she can. I just--

HAZEL

--Her mentor and friend just died, so she's got that to deal with. Then, this place. It's her home, her life, and she's seen it thrust into uncertainty.

NOAH

Wow, I--

HAZEL

--And now, someone else has the job that she could be kicking ass at.

A flash on his face - *Noah gets it.*

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Sorry.

NOAH

No. It's just that, I didn't realize or think about it that way.

The front door opens, Frances walks in -*seems fine and dandy.*

FRANCES

Hey, guys.

Noah looks to Hazel, composes himself.

NOAH

Frances. Can I talk to you in my office?

FRANCES

Sure. The prop room over here?

Frances and Noah cross and walk into:

INT. PROP ROOM OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

They settle into the set couch rather than the desk.

NOAH

I had a cursory glance at the books and I've seen enough to know I can raise payroll by at least ten-thousand annually.

Frances leans in - *intrigued.*

NOAH (CONT'D)

You're new title is Program Manager. Truly my right hand man.

(smiles)

I want the whole staff to get a two-dollar per hour raise, what's left is going to go into your salary.

FRANCES

You're shitting me.

NOAH

Is that okay?

Frances is stoked but tries to hide it.

FRANCES

Yeah. I mean. We're both going to have a lot on our plate but I'm definitely ready for the role.

(MORE)

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
(swallows)  
Thank you.

They smile at one another. Frances moves to exit.

NOAH  
I'll sort out the payroll details  
and let you know where the final  
numbers land.

Frances turns around.

FRANCES  
That's okay. It's pretty easy to  
figure.

Noah looks curious. Frances pulls out her phone.

FRANCES (CONT'D)  
(calculating on phone)  
Ten-thousand divided by fifty-two,  
multiplied by two and we get three-  
hundred eighty-four point six one.  
I'll be getting almost four-hundred  
dollars more each check!

NOAH  
(confused)  
But, now factor in the two dollars  
per hour for everyone else, and--

FRANCES  
--Silly. You and I are the only  
employees here. Everyone else is a  
volunteer. Y'know how public access  
works!

NOAH  
Volunteers? But that means you'll  
be making more than me.

FRANCES  
That's funny! Well, I promise to  
earn my keep, boss.

Frances spins around and exits the room with some extra pep  
in her step. She shuts the door.

Noah is shocked with regret. He robotically rises, stumbles  
and falls into his seat, his head falls on the desk.

Frances peeks through the hole in the door to sneak a look -  
a wily smile across her face.

INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - LATER

Frances and Noah are in the back of the room operating cameras. Rows of seats are filled with CITIZENS.

NOAH  
(whispers to Frances)  
Noise complaints and building  
permits. A dull City Council  
meeting is just what I needed.

Lionel Meeks officiates from a podium. Six other COUNCIL MEMBERS sit at a long table.

LIONEL MEEKS  
If that's it for new business we'll  
move on to public comment.  
(looks at card)  
Dr. Little?

Dr. Little rises from his seat.

DR. LITTLE  
I hate to narc, Lionel, but the  
guy next door to my medical clinic  
is threatening to barricade my back  
door. It's a fire exit!

NOAH  
Fire exit?! It's a door to my  
office!

FRANCES  
Prop room.

LIONEL MEEKS  
Noah? It's the doctor's turn. If  
you want to talk, please submit a  
speakers card. Now Dr., you may want  
you talk to the City Inspector,  
file for an injunction. I'm coming  
to your office Tuesday for a check-  
up, I'll bring you his info.

NOAH  
(points at Dr Little)  
If there is a fire it'll be his  
fault!

LIONEL MEEKS  
Noah?! I took you for a swell guy.  
Don't speak without a card.

NOAH

Dang.

LIONEL MEEKS

Moving on.

(reads card)

Dan and Pam Sweets.

NOAH

Oh no.

Dan and Pam rise from their seat.

PAM

I told you week after week, that cell tower on A Street, next to the Presby church is cooking my brain! I can feel my thoughts getting irradiated.

NOAH

Thank goodness.

LIONEL MEEKS

Pam, you know we convened a special committee that's looking into it. Do you have anything new?

DAN

Sure do! That new Humboldt Access guy over there destroyed our set today right when we were on TV!

NOAH

Oh no.

LIONEL MEEKS

Noah?

A GREEN-HAIRED LADY (77) hops out of her seat and points.

GREEN-HAIRED

Yeah! I was learning how to make a Victory Garden and that guy came in and blew it away!

FRANCES

(surprised)

Is that true?

NOAH

There was a fire on set. I acted rationally!

The CROWD is getting up out of their seats, VOICES rising.

LIONEL MEEKS

Fire? And you want to block the  
exit? Noah! We'll need to talk  
tomorrow. Now. If there's nothing  
else, let's adjourn for the--

The back doors BURST open. Lyle, Bastion and Smithy parade  
into the room. Completely naked and carrying protest signs:

NO FREE BUNS = NO FREEDOM

I HAVE AN ASS, NOAH IS AN ASS

WATCH PEACE BLAST ON CHANNEL 66!

KYLE, BASTION, SMITHY

(protest chant)

*Hey, hey, new E.D. This-is-my-body.*  
*Hey, hey, new E.D. This-is-my-body.*

The room is GOING NUTS. Onlookers are either pissed off or  
join in excitedly.

Noah is horrified - Frances is shocked.

Lionel looks dumfounded at first but then breaks out CACKLING  
with laughter and points at the naked, chanting hippies.

The Peace Blast crew makes their way down the aisle.

NOAH

The cameras!

Noah races out in front of the cameras. He does a frantic  
dance to try and block the nudity out of frame.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Mr. Meeks, this has nothing to do  
with me.

BASTION

You suck, Noah!

The room is near RIOT.

INT/EXT. CHANNEL 66 VAN - NIGHT

Frances drives. Noah covers his face in depressed exhaustion.

FRANCES

You can't tell people to keep their clothes on. FCC rules don't apply to access television.

NOAH

I know. Our freedom of speech principles. Speech which coincidentally seems pointedly aimed against me.

FRANCES

Tomorrow's another day.

NOAH

Nobody watches Channel 66 anyhow.

FRANCES

Actually. People do watch the City Council meetings.

NOAH

Super.

FRANCES

Don't worry. You'll show 'em. And there is one more thing I'd like your help with tonight.

This peaks Noah's curiosity.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

The lights come up. It's just Frances, alone on a stool, looking right into the camera.

FRANCES

Good night, Humboldt. It's me again, *Lone Frances*.

INTERCUT WITH

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

Noah is alone behind the switcher. The lights dimmed, he is rapt with attention directed at Frances on the monitor. But he's learned something - evident as he ably punches up the graphic:

LONE FRANCES

FRANCES

If you've stood by these last few weeks as I've cried about Wendell, well, thanks for hanging in there. I felt like it wasn't just my friend and boss that left us, but maybe our channel left us too.

Noah cuts to a close-up camera.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

He wasn't a guy with a plan. He was just a good man that tried to do good things everyday. I've been feeling the pain of lost ambitions that I didn't even know I had. And as soon as I felt the call of my ambition, destiny was stolen from me.

Noah reacts.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

But the would be thief and adversary? He's just another good guy trying to do good work. I was the asshole. This time anyhow. Here's to you new guy.

Frances flips off the camera. Breaks a smile.

Noah smiles too.

Frances throws a peace sign with her other hand.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

See you tomorrow, Humboldt Access.

Noah reaches over and fumbles with a console to bring the studio lights down.

NOAH

And fading to black.

He punches some buttons on the switcher. The monitors go dark.

With the monitors dark, the studio dark and the control room dark they are both in near pitch black.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(yells)

Hey Frances? How do I shut off the live broadcast feed?

He FUMBLES around, KNOCKS something over.

NOAH (CONT'D)  
Where's the light switch in here?

CRASH. Noah falls over.

FADE TO BLACK