

FADE IN

by  
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based on:  
Channel 79

by  
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Episode #3:

Whiskers vs. Commandos

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**WHISKERS VS. COMMANDOS**

FADE IN:

INT/EXT. NON-DESCRIPT MID-90S AUTO - DAY

LU O'NEIL, black, late 40s, former GM of Channel 79 jockeys a cell phone and Daytimer as she turns into the Channel 8 parking lot.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

BRAD FRANKLIN, mid 40s, Channel 8's Station Manager walks across the Channel 8 parking lot

SOUND: car backfire

Brad looks toward Lu's car.

**LU**

Oh, hell. Do not do this to me. I will kick your pistons up between your tappet rods, you miserable piece of --

The car backfires and a cloud of blue smoke issues forth.

Brad watches as Lu bails out, cell phone in hand, and begins to kick the hell out of the car.

**LU**

(shouts)

You [BLEEP] [BLEEP] sorry [BLEEP] worthless [BLEEP] douche nozzle of a [BLEEP] [BLEEP] [BLEEP] --

Brad strolls up enjoying the show.

**BRAD**

Let me guess... it's Bring Your Tourette's Syndrome to Work Day.

**LU**

How would you like to be up to your knees in parkin' lot?

Brad walks to the back of the car.

**BRAD**

I'll push, you steer.

**LU**

Where to?

**BRAD**

That parking space over there or  
back into the street where the  
cops can tow it.

Brad waits, then makes a "Well?" sign?

**LU**

I'm thinkin'. I'm thinkin'.

**BRAD**

I was jerking your chain about  
putting it back into the street,  
you know.

**LU**

I know, but this piece of crap car  
belongs to that piece of crap  
husband I used to be married to.  
If the cops tow it, maybe they'll  
arrest the bastard when he comes  
to get it and I can get my back  
child support.

**BRAD**

You been watching a BET after  
school special or something?

(indicates)

Get in the car, I'll push. It'll  
be fun -- like Driving Miss Daisy,  
only backwards.

**LU**

This car won't go backwards.

**BRAD**

Meant not that.

**LU**

Push the damn car, Yoda.

Brad pushes the car. Lu steers. She talks to him through  
the open driver's door.

**LU**

Can't wait to tell my girl friends  
I had a white man pushing from the  
back.

**BRAD**

Baby got back.

**LU**

You damn skippy and it's a fine  
looking --

The car's tires ram into the parking curb. Lu is thrown  
into the steering wheel. Yells in pain.

Contents of the car spill into the parking lot. Brad hits the trunk and falls to the ground.

**BRAD**

You know that big pedal in the middle of the floor board?

**LU**

Shut the hell up. I hit my head.

Brad quickly gets up, dashes to Lu, concerned.

**BRAD**

You okay?

**LU**

No, I'm not okay. I been attacked by that [BLEEP] steering wheel.

(off the rearview mirror)

Now I'm gonna have a big-ass bruise.

Brad smiles and starts to say something, thinks better of it.

Lu waggles her finger at him.

**LU**

Let it go.

**BRAD**

Yes, Miss Daisy.

(looks around)

What's with all the film cassettes?

Brad starts picking up the cassettes which litter the parking space.

**LU**

I did about 85 interviews at the county fair on what people think about the presidential race.

**BRAD**

Really? That's great.

**LU**

Well, we still gotta work on the sound a little because of the fair noise, but if you use headphones or speakers --

**BRAD**

Yeah, blah blah blah the technoids'll fix that.

But what you're telling me is that you got interviews from Joe Six Pack? What'd you find out?

**LU**

That the candidates don't have one damn clue about what the voters are really thinking. And it ain't just Joe Six Pack.

Lu gets out of the car carrying an arm-load of papers, a backpack, and her Daytimer. She closes the door and she and Brad start walking toward the entrance to Channel 8.

**BRAD**

Yeah? So what are they all thinking?

**LU**

It's all over the map. I don't think anybody's really focused on anything, yet. The politicians are just talking to fill air time, no body's listening yet.

(counts off on her fingers)

I got an elderly white woman that marched with Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King, thinks Obama's THE guy. But I also got a black middle-aged truck driver who don't even know Obama's name -- go figure that one. I got a guy saying don't vote for Hillary because she ain't gone through menopause yet and it'll kill us all, but I also got a woman who's pissed off at Oprah for endorsing a candidate like she does books. I got a state legislator who hopes the next president is doing God's work like George Bush is, and an Army strategist that wants the politicians to admit they failed and let the military finish the job in Iraq. And that don't even count the UFO investigator or the guy who says Americans will take the same jobs as illegal immigrants if only the employers would pay more. I'm telling ya, you can't make this shit up.

[add: dancer against abortion; charlamagne; gay miserable marriage like the rest of us (well, that's hopeful)]

[SCRIPT NOTE: THE UNDERLINES INDICATE WHERE WE'LL LINK THE VIDEO CLIPS.]

**BRAD**

A UFO investigator?

**LU**

AND a night club dancer, a retired dairy farmer, teachers, college students, blue collars, white collars, no collars, conservatives, liberals, bigots, zealots, old, young, --

**BRAD**

Yeah, yeah, I get the idea. But you got all those people, on tape, giving their opinions?

**LU**

Got everybody's opinion except the candidates. Why is you can get three networks and two cable outlets to show up for a politician eatin' chili and all you get is one cub reporter for the opening of a Boys and Girls Club?

**BRAD**

Because the Boys and Girls Club got to choose first?

**LU**

You know what I mean.  
(nods)  
Get the door.

Brad opens the door to

INT. CHANNEL 8 - RECEPTION AREA - DAY

STEPHANIE, early 20s, attractive, sits at the reception desk, at the end of a phone call.

**STEPHANIE**

And thank you for calling KRAM 8, Eye on the Northwest.

**LU**

(aside to Brad)  
You have GOT to do something about that call sign.

**BRAD**

Fight the battles you can win...Stephanie, this is Lu O'Neil who'll be working with us on campaign coverage.

**STEPHANIE**

Oh, great! Will she be working with the other people waiting for you?

**BRAD**

They're here already?

**STEPHANIE**

Yeah. They're having a meet-and-greet with some of our reporters in Studio A.

**BRAD**

How's that going?

**STEPHANIE**

Like the Whiskers and Commandos.

Brad and Lu look at each other, confused.

Stephanie can't believe these two cretins don't get it.

**STEPHANIE**

Hello?

(a beat)

Culture coma.

(a beat)

Whiskers and Commandos?

(a beat)

Flower was killed by a snake so Rocket Dog took over in time to fight the Commandos?

(a beat)

Meerkat Manor? Just the hottest show on the Animal Planet. Does either of you even have a television?

**BRAD**

So, Whiskers and Commandos are enemies?

**STEPHANIE**

Well, duuhhh...

**LU**

Maybe we'd better get in there.

INT. STUDIO A - CONTINUOUS

Modern television studio, camera equipment, boom mics, lights, a news set.

10 or 12 people argue back and forth. Looks like a straight-up tie so far.

**LU**

Oooo, high school detention. I remember this.

Brad and Lu wind their way through the mob to the news desk.

HEARD DURING THE WALK THROUGH:

-- "You think subscribing to NPR is patriotic? What are you: the few, the proud, the enlightened?"

-- "I'm not voting for Giuliani because he said his wife might sit in on cabinet meetings, and -- Hey! -- I'm not voting for HER."

"Well -- Hey! -- you ain't voting for cabinet members either, so chill out."

-- "McCain's too old? How about 'Night of the Living Dead' Thompson?"

-- "Yeah, I like him fine. Got good ideas and lots of energy. I just hope he loses fast so he and his wife have some time left together."

-- "No way. Obama's people actually said he was the black sheep of the Cheney family? What do you want to bet he gets invited to go on the annual hunting trip with Dick?"

-- "Screw 'em all, I'm voting for Colbert."

"You know he's just a comedian, right?"

"Yeah, but at least we'd be laughing WITH a president, instead of AT him."

END WALK THROUGH

Brad and Lu lean against the news desk. Brad tries to start the meeting, but nobody's listening.

**BRAD**

Excuse me.

(he's ignored)

Excuse me, could I have your attention, please?

(no one even looks)

Excuse me, but we --

Lu pulls out a police whistle and blows it like an approaching train. People stop talking, cover their ears, groan in pain.

**LU**

(to Brad)

Part-time playground attendant. Go ahead.

**BRAD**

OK, everybody done sniffing and biting?

(they are)

Alright. Let's get down to it. What we're here for is to start putting together alternative coverage of the presidential race.

(checks his notes)

Okay, so who TiVo'd the Dearborn Republican debate?

Everyone looks around.

TERRY DUNCAN, reporter, late-30s, penny loafers and khaki pants preppy raises his hand.

**TERRY**

Yeah, uhh... that'd be me, but there's kinda of a problem, Brad.

**BRAD**

"I didn't watch it" kinda problem? Or "power-outage and it didn't record" kinda problem? Or "Ellen DeGeneres' the dog ate the TV" kinda problem?

**TERRY**

Yeah -- like that. See, my step-son programmed it for me and it kinda got mixed up a little.

**BRAD**

How little?

**TERRY**

Well, the debate was on at 4PM Eastern, and Josh -- that's his name -- got the times mixed up and wound up recording it at 8PM local, which isn't even the right time difference, but well, there it is.

**BRAD**

So what we'd get instead?

**TERRY**

You're not going to believe me.

**BRAD**

Oh, go ahead. I'm pretty gullible.

**TERRY**

8PM, Thursday night, NBC. We got --

SPUD, late teens, dressed like a skateboarder, iPod earbuds, couple of obvious piercings.

**SPUD**

-- THE BIGGEST LOSER! Dude, I love that show. It's about redemption, rebirth, renewal. It's like so introspective. That's like a totally reasonable mistake to make, dude. I mean, you watch these debates and it's not about who's going to win, but like who's going to lose and get voted off the island. So like, Josh is waaay ahead of the curve, man -- cause he's probably scopin' it in his head like that and just spaced it.

**BRAD**

Spud, is it?

**SPUD**

Yeah, it used to be "Fries" cause I was into the curlies. But now I'm all about the baked, dude.

**BRAD**

You're not a registered voter, are you?

**SPUD**

I am like so registered, dude -- I oughta be the poster child for registered dudes, dude.

**LU**

Scary, huh? But he's our top citizen reporter.

**BRAD**

So, ahhh -- Spud -- did YOU watch the debate?

**SPUD**

No way, dude. No time for that.

**BRAD**

Perfect. So I guess we'll kick it up on the web --

**SPUD**

Podcasted it. Listened to the whole thing while I was half-pipin'.

**BRAD**

Like, wow.

**SPUD**

Yeah, wasn't all that exciting 'til Rudy and The Mitt came off the rails over the line item veto? Like, Rudy thinks it's just unconstitutional crap but The Mitt's used it like 800 times as Governor of Massachusetts.

Brad's mouth drops open.

**LU**

Close your mouth, your generation's showing.

**SPUD**

And then The Mitt freaked 'em when he said he'd check with his suits before he kicked the shit out of somebody. I mean it totally weirded me out because the whole country is like, "We shoulda never gone into Iraq" but then they slap The Mitt around because he says he's going to see if busting somebody's chops is straight up righteous before he does it. Crazy, huh?

Unbelieving, Brad just stares at Spud.

**LU**

Brad's gonna need a minute to think that over, Spud.

**SPUD**

Okay. I'm going back under the buds.

Spud plugs back into his iPod and wanders off.

**TERRY**

Brad, are we going to be teaming up -- you know Channel 8 people with Channel 79 people?

Brad's still watching Spud wander off.

Lu pokes him with her elbow.

**BRAD**

Huh? Yeah, right -- we're gonna break into teams --

**TERRY**

(shouts)  
Dibs on Spud!

Terry runs to Spud and grabs him. Others are in hot pursuit and begin to shove each other as they pull and push to capture Spud.

Brad hops off the desk and starts toward the melee.

Lu stops him.

**LU**

I don't know nothing 'bout no meerkats, but I know a feeding frenzy when I see one.

**BRAD**

Natural selection, presidential race -- it's like holding two mirrors up face to face.

Lu takes Brad's arm and leads him toward the door.

**LU**

Come on White Chocolate -- if you gonna do white-boy rap, we gonna have to get you an outfit.

FADE OUT

over the continuing shove-fest over Spud.

