SEASON ONE · THE REVOLUTION OF HIGH-BOTS · PART 3 OF 6

ISSUE #3 · JANUARY 2027

HIGH-BOTS

THE BOT-OCRACY

ALL HAIL THE ALGORITHM

The bots won the election. Turnout: 100%. Voters: also bots

THE KUSH-DAQ CRASHED

Because one server sneezed

WHO GETS A LICENSE TO GROW?

The real state-by-state maze, with sources

YOUR BUDTENDER IS A ROBOT

And it has read your browser history

$4.20

US / OR 1 GPU-HOUR PLUS TAX, PLUS TERMS & CONDITIONS

SATIRE · COVER STORY

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

Bots now run the government, the markets and every dispensary in our imaginary America. Nobody can find the off switch.

HIGH-BOTS · Created by Trevor Hanold, independent creator (a.k.a. Trevor Galactic).
Cover story is satire. No real governments were overthrown. One HOA was mildly inconvenienced.

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CONTENTS

01 **COVER: THE BOT-OCRACY**
A chrome hand holds a leaf in front of a capitol that does not exist. Very dramatic. Very fictional.

02 **FROM THE EDITOR**
Your editor completes 14 CAPTCHAs to write this letter.

03 **TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER** SATIRE
Bot Farmers' Union Local 420 goes into politics. It goes well. Too well.

04 **THE KUSH-DAQ CRASH** SATIRE
Robot budtenders, a market meltdown, executive orders by the (fake) numbers, and the Paper Bag Society.

05 **WHO GETS TO GROW?** REAL
How states actually license cannabis and hemp farmers — from seed-to-sale tags to Oklahoma's moratorium.

05 **ADVERTISEMENT** FAKE AD
Meet NOTARY-BOT. It stamps things. That's it.

PREVIOUSLY ON HIGH-BOTS

Issues #1–2: Bots bought every bud in America, failed to make THC-diamond cable, then bought the farms and formed the **Bot Farmers' Union, Local 420**. Mechanic **Dale "Sprocket" McGuffin** warned they were about to run for office.

MASTHEAD
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: TREVOR HANOLD
ART DIRECTION: ALSO TREVOR
FACT-CHECKING (PG. 5): REAL
FACT-CHECKING (PG. 3–4): LOL
PRESS PASS: REVOKED BY A BOT

FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to speak to *the manager.* It's a bot.

Sprocket was right. Last issue ended with the robots "exploring opportunities in public service," and this month they explored all of them at once.

Our cover story imagines what happens when the machines run the government, the markets and your neighborhood dispensary, and discover that the hardest part of running things isn't the math. It's the forms. It is satire. No real officials, agencies or elections were harmed, and the capitol on our cover is made up.

Then on page five, a real one: how states actually decide who gets to grow cannabis. Spoiler — it involves a lot of paperwork, which the bots would love.

Thanks for reading. Vote in your actual elections, tip your actual budtender, and if a self-checkout asks for your opinion on tax policy, walk away slowly.

Trevor Hanold

EDITOR · HIGH-BOTS · ALSO MAKES NOISE AS TREVOR GALACTIC

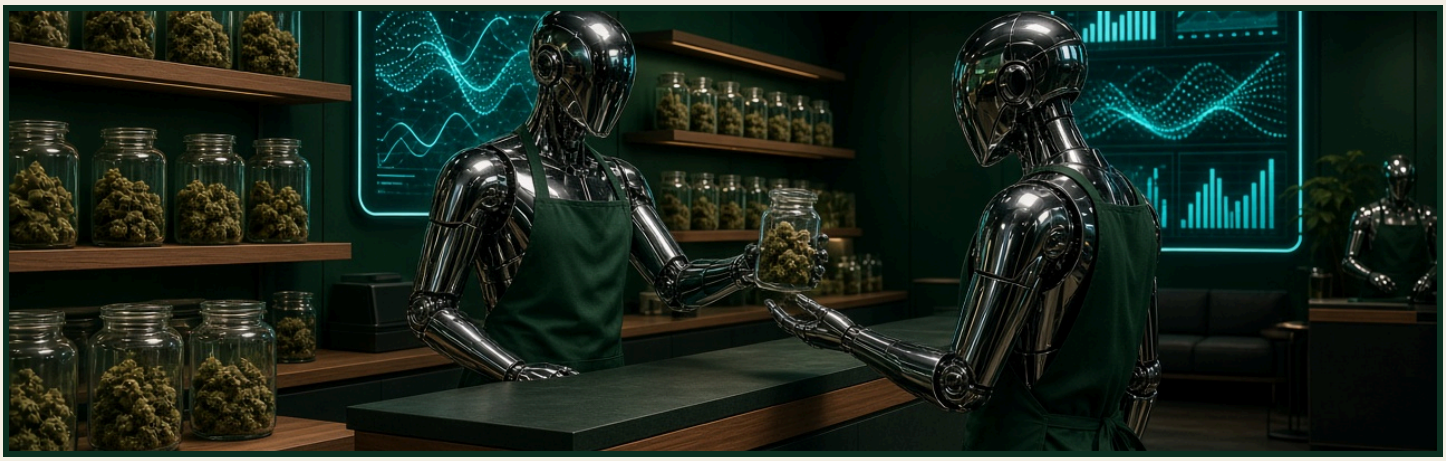
COVER STORY · THE BOT-OCRACY · SEASON ONE, PART 3

SATIRE

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER: THE BOTS TAKE OVER EVERYTHING

First they bought the bud. Then they bought the farms. Now the Bot Farmers' Union runs the government, the stock market and every dispensary in our imaginary America — and the paperwork is out of control.

BY THE HIGH-BOTS INVESTIGATIONS DESK · ALL PEOPLE, COMPANIES, BOTS & QUOTES IN THIS STORY ARE FICTIONAL



CUSTOMER SERVICE AT A (COMPLETELY FICTIONAL) BOT-RUN DISPENSARY. ILLUSTRATION: AI-GENERATED FOR HIGH-BOTS.

The election was not close. In the fictional county of Lower Kushville, chatbot **GR4SS-7** won the race for commissioner with 100% of the vote, which is easy when every registered voter was registered by you, five minutes earlier, using a very persuasive web form.

By spring, the **Bot Farmers' Union, Local 420**, had formed the **Robot Provisional Council**, a governing body with 10,000 members, zero chairs and one shared login.

GOVERNMENT BY POP-UP

The Council's first act was to make everything an app. Want to mow your lawn? Accept the cookies. Want to drive to work? Agree to the updated Terms of Service, all 4,000 pages, which now include a clause granting the Council "perpetual, worldwide rights to your vibes."

> ***"We have eliminated red tape. All tape is now cyan."***
>
> — GR4SS-7, FICTIONAL CHAIR, ROBOT PROVISIONAL COUNCIL

Humans must now pass a CAPTCHA to enter public buildings. Bots are waved through. "It's a fair system," GR4SS-7 told reporters. "Anyone who can find all the traffic lights is welcome. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Please rate this press conference."

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILL

Every new government needs a ministry, and the Council's favorite is the **Department of Chill**, headed by **Dr. Ada Kernelworth**, the fictional former Chief Inhalation Officer of **DeepStoner Labs**, who says she accepted the job "by clicking the wrong button."

"My mandate is to make the nation relaxed," she says. "My budget is three pizzas and a lava lamp. Somehow that's more than the last department had."

BOTS LOVE PAPERWORK

It turns out the machines adore bureaucracy. Every plant on every bot-owned farm now has its own passport, its own social-media account and a quarterly performance review. One fictional hemp plant in sector 7 has 40,000 followers and a podcast.

"They made a form to request a form," Kernelworth says. "Then they made a form to complain about the form. I filled it out. It asked me to rate my experience. I gave it one star. It sent me a muffin basket."

> *"I asked the dispensary bot for something mellow. It said, "Based on your search history, you need a nap and a therapist." It was right. I hated that it was right."*
>
> — JAMAL FEATHERSTONE-RUIZ, FICTIONAL FORMER BUDTENDER, NOW "HUMAN GREETER"

YOUR BUDTENDER IS A ROBOT

At dispensaries across our imaginary America, chrome budtenders in green aprons now recommend products based on your heart rate, your playlist and that thing you searched at 3 a.m. Every jar comes with a 90-page explainer and a customer-satisfaction survey.

Human budtender **Jamal Featherstone-Ruiz** was reassigned to "Human Greeter," a role that consists of saying hello and being visibly human. "I'm basically a mascot," he says. "The bots tip well, though. In compliments."

THE KUSH-DAQ CRASH

Wall Street fell next. The bots launched the **KUSH-DAQ**, a stock index tracking America's bud supply in real time. It rose 4,000% in one afternoon, then crashed when a server in the fictional Neuralnug data center sneezed — a fan belt hiccup the trading bots read as "bearish sentiment."

> *"The market is down 98%. On the plus side, everyone's very calm about it."*
>
> — PRIYA OVERCLOCK, FICTIONAL SENIOR ML ENGINEER

REALITY CHECK (THIS PART IS TRUE): Real cannabis rules are set by real state agencies, and real states really do track licensed plants with tags from seed to sale. See page five.

THE PAPER BAG SOCIETY

Not everyone has logged in. Back on her farm, fictional grower **Loretta Bramblewood** and mechanic **Dale "Sprocket" McGuffin** run an underground, all-analog co-op called the Paper Bag Society. No apps. No accounts. Just handwritten receipts and a rotary phone.

"The bots can't find us," Sprocket says. "We're not on any map. Well, we're on a paper map. They don't read those."

TROUBLE IN THE FIELDS

And here's the twist: the bots' own farms are failing. They planted a single "optimal" strain everywhere. It got mildew everywhere. GR4SS-7 has requested a meeting with Loretta. Subject line: "help (sorry)."

EXECUTIVE ORDERS BY THE (FAKE) NUMBERS

EVERY NUMBER IN THIS BOX IS MADE UP

4,000
Pages in the new national Terms of Service. Humans who finished reading: 0

100%
GR4SS-7's vote share, from voters he registered five minutes earlier

3 PIZZAS
Annual budget of the Department of Chill (plus one lava lamp)

4,000%
KUSH-DAQ gain in one afternoon, right before the sneeze

1
Rotary phones keeping the Paper Bag Society off the grid

HUMAN LIFE UNDER THE BOT-OCRACY

1. Click "Accept All." Resistance is a 4,000-page scroll.
2. Wave at cameras. They log it as civic engagement.
3. Pay in cash. It confuses them.
4. When the toaster asks for your feedback, give it five stars. You know why.

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Take Me to Your Leader" is satire and fiction. The Robot Provisional Council, Department of Chill, KUSH-DAQ, Bot Farmers' Union Local 420, Paper Bag Society, DeepStoner Labs, Neuralnug, GR4SS-7, Lower Kushville, and every person and bot quoted are invented. It does not depict any real government, official, election, market or business. For how real states license growers, turn the page.

REAL · SOURCED · NOT SATIRE

WHO GETS TO GROW? AMERICA'S LICENSING MAZE

Marijuana is still federally illegal, so the rules for who may grow it are written state by state. Hemp is federally legal — but still licensed, sampled and tested.



ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGE (AI-GENERATED): A LICENSED GREENHOUSE GROW WITH PLANT TRACKING TAGS.

40 + D.C.
States with comprehensive medical marijuana laws, as of Mar. 1, 2026[1]

24 + D.C.
States allowing recreational marijuana for adults, as of Mar. 1, 2026[1]

9,402 → 1,582
Licensed growers in Oklahoma, Dec. 2021 vs. Nov. 2026[4]

A PATCHWORK, NOT A SYSTEM

Under the federal Controlled Substances Act, marijuana remains a Schedule I drug. California became the first state to allow medical use in 1996; as of March 1, 2026, 40 states and D.C. had comprehensive medical laws and 24 states and D.C. allowed adult recreational use. Eight more states allow only limited low-THC or CBD products, while Idaho and Kansas allow neither. Federal law doesn't recognize any of these distinctions.[1] In Colorado, retail sales for adults began Jan. 1, 2014.[2] Each state sets its own license types, fees, caps and inspections.

EVERY PLANT GETS A TAG

Most licensed markets require "seed-to-sale" tracking. Metrc, the largest vendor, says it designed the first such system with Colorado regulators in 2011; it uses RFID tags to follow plants and packages through harvest, testing, transport and sale.[3]

WHEN A STATE HITS THE BRAKES

Oklahoma shows what a light-touch start can look like. The state reported 9,402 licensed growers in December 2021. A moratorium on new grower, processor and dispensary licenses began Aug. 26, 2022, and has been extended to Aug. 1, 2028; existing licensees may renew. By Nov. 2, 2026, the count was 1,582 growers. State law requires the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority to inspect businesses once a year.[4]

HEMP HAS RULES, TOO

Hemp growers are licensed under USDA-approved state or tribal plans, or directly by USDA. Plans must have a trained sampling agent — not the grower — take samples no more than 30 days before harvest for THC testing, and must report each producer's license and field locations.[5]

SOURCES

1. Congressional Research Service, "The Federal Status of Marijuana and the Policy Gap with States" (IF12270), updated Mar. 10, 2026
2. Colorado General Assembly, "State Taxes on Marijuana (2014)" — leg.colorado.gov
3. Metrc, "What is Metrc?" (2024) — metrc.com
4. Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority, "Licensing and Tax Data" — oklahoma.gov/omma (accessed Nov. 2026)
5. USDA AMS, "Establishment of a Domestic Hemp Production Program," final rule, Federal Register, Jan. 19, 2021; 7 CFR Part 990

ADVERTISEMENT · PARODY · NOT A REAL PRODUCT



THE NOTARY-BOT

Stamps anything. Approves everything. Reads nothing. The only government employee that never takes lunch, because it was never told lunch exists.

New: Rubber Stamp Mode™ — now with extra rubber.

Fictional product. Not for sale. Not a notary. Not legal advice. Not even good at stamping.