

"24" Recap: 11 PM -12 AM

Written by {ga=mitch}

Tuesday, March 31 2009 7:00 PM -

I said it in our movies & television message forum earlier this week ... the last four or five episodes of "24" have been as suspenseful as any stretch I can remember in seven season history of the hit show on FOX. And in this week's recap, Mitch starts off by talking in general about the show and its redeeming qualities despite some obvious (and humorous)plot holes. It may not be High Art ... but it is High Entertainment. It's one of our more popular columns of the week ... it's Mitch's recap of "24".



Jack Bauer doesn't speak any foreign languages, but he can make any foreigner speak English in a matter of minutes.

What I have been most amused with during this season's episodes has been the reader feedback. I'm getting several emails a week, and most have a rather common theme: They usually point out even more absurdities that I missed (or had glossed over)...and then the writer will almost always still bring up the fact that they love watching the show.

Which sums up everything pretty much perfectly. Given the banality that is network TV anymore, it's good to have a show that continually challenges the viewer to PAY ATTENTION.

This isn't "Grey's Anatomy", where the only thing you have to remember from week to week is who is sleeping with whom or who is angry at whom (answer to both?

I don't care).

If you are a fan of '24', you can't really be an idiot (current company excluded). It's not mindless entertainment.

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Granted, I've made a cottage industry out of poking fun of the holes in the plot, but think about it:

They have to put together 24 consecutive hours of programming, keeping the continuity as closely configured as possible...while STILL delivering the necessary action, suspense, and thrills needed to keep the audience tuned in.

Quite frankly, sometimes that creates the need for cutting a few corners in logic in terms of things like firewall modules, seaports on shallow rivers or old junkyards a few feet away from rich Senator's fancy houses.

The bottom line is that '24' has been using this pattern successfully for seven seasons now. So me years have been better than others, but it's still, more than anything else, a FUN show to watch.

The closest thing to it right now would be "Lost", especially when it comes to the devotion and patience you need to show to be a fan.

But in fairness, '24' has never had a season as bad the second season of 'Lost', and has been doing it for a lot longer without resulting to the hocus-pocus science fiction.

So I will continue to poke fun at things...because that's sorta my thing here. But I can only do that if the show remains something that people find interesting to watch.

And this week's episode fit the entire formula I just laid out to a "T".

It may not be High Art...but it is High Entertainment.

Recap

Once again, the writers need you to forget some things, time-wise. As in, at 10:59, Jack called in to Empty Suit Larry about being exposed to the bio-agent.

So here it is at 11:03, and Jack is surrounded by a team of CDC technicians in full body condoms.

Maybe

[Dr. Manhattan](#)

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teleported all of them to him.

Then a female doctor who appears to be in charge says the words my wife would love to be able to utter, "Mr. Bauer, I need you to get undressed" (I could come up with a few more condom themed comments here, but let's just let that one go, shall we?)

Jack then gets an anti-biotic shot administered by a gun that Dirty Harry would think was just about the right size, followed by a hose down by some car-wash cast off tools.

Hey, take it a little easy down there with that high pressured hose, will ya'?

At StarkRavingWood, JonVoight is twirling his figurative moustache while plotting the overthrow of the U.S. government. And Tony Almeida is getting pummeled by JV's goons. JV tries sweet talking him so that he can find out what the FBI may know, and JV is about as natural at that as Clay Aiken would be announcing a NASCAR race.

Evil Toady Greg Seaton seems to be having a few issues with JV, and makes it a point to talk to him about it right there in front of Tony.

I wonder if that will have any relevance later on?

Since it's going to take at least three hours to go through the vetting process to get a new Chief of Staff for President Taylor, she decides the most intelligent thing to do would be to have her conniving daughter take the job on a temporary basis. Brilliant idea! Had Jimmy Carter been wise enough to follow her lead and had appointed his brother Billy to be Chief of Staff, I'm sure he would have kicked Reagan's ass in the 1980 election.

Or if not, they would have at least had a little more fun watching the election returns while pounding down six-pack after six-pack of

[Billy Beer](#)

And quite honestly...after listening to Allison do the "please do this for Mommy" spiel to Olivia, I would have drank that nasty assed swillwater if nothing else was available (luckily for me...I still had a half bottle of Patron sitting nearby.

Emphasis on the word

had

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Wild Tim Guarnere breaks up this tender moment by coming in and telling her that Larry's on the phone with important information. Tim doesn't know what Larry has to say, which struck me as rather odd.

Security not have been clued in immediately?

Why would the Secretary of Homeland

Come to think of it (and thanks, Al for bringing this to my attention), why is it that Empty Suit Larry is getting all of these direct lines to the President?

Does he not report to anyone?

Where is the Director of the FBI?

Hell...where is Larry's immediate supervisor?

A lower level supervisory agent suddenly gets unfettered access to everything, and you think someone higher up on the FBI food chain wouldn't be controlling this?

Had this been a few decades ago, old J. Edgar wouldn't have even had time to get out of his little black dress and sensible pumps before taking charge of the whole ball of (bikini) wax.

Be that as it may (there is a need to keep the budget down, so maybe they couldn't hire too many actors), Larry also tells the President that he has completed his investigation and conducted the trial, and Jack Bauer was found innocent of killing cRyan Burnett and Senator DeadRed Mayer. And before hanging up the phone he also found OJ guilty, Robert Blake innocent, and [Phil Spector](#) certifiably Looney-Tunes. He also has to cleanse his palate for the major crow he's going to need to be eating as he releases Renee from custody, telling her that she and Jack were right about everything...and that Jack was exposed to a deadly virus, causing Renee to once again go into that super-sad porcelain doll look she's given almost as many times as Jack has stolen a vehicle.

However, she only lets two tears fall before she reverts back to ass-whopping mode.

"When are we moving on Starkwood?"

Heh.

JV...you are in sooooo much trouble now.

Aaron Pierce comes off the milk carton, and is persuaded by FSP to be her personal Secret Service bodyguard. Excellent! Get the old guy whose shooting arm is in a sling due to a bullet he took only a few hours ago!
Which also means that he's under the influence of some major boffo drugs!

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Get that man an Uzi, and let him go at it!

And by the way...I think I can say without fear of repudiation that the only person I know at this moment that is better at being a conniving, whining, pain in the ass than Olivia is Jay Cutler.

Less than 10 minutes after being told of the threat from StarkRavingWood, the entire Cabinet and the Joint Chiefs of Staff are looking over a detailed report about the company, the weapon, the facility, and what JV had for lunch today (I'm guessing eel). And I thought that I could type fast. Good thing that everyone was hanging around close-by, just in case (although in fairness, given the White House attack just a few hours earlier, in this case, probably most of these people really would be close at hand).

Also on hand is the head of the CDC, who announces that the weapon appears to be something that causes "dementia and body spasms". Damn! They've found a weapon that can turn people into Pittspuke Steelers fans?!?!

Those EvilCorporate Bastards!

Oh yeah...and there is no cure. (Unless you're Jack Bauer).

YES!!! A plot twist that wasn't telegraphed worse than a Derek Anderson screen pass! Just when one of JonVoight's goons was about to plug Tony, he gets shot in the back.

By Greg?!

Seems like the little Igor-Lite has determined that his Master has gone a bit too far.

I guess this makes sense, though.

Since Jack is temporarily sidelined with that whole little cough-due-to-cold thingy, someone has to handle the real macho stuff, so Tony gets to carry the Action Ball for awhile.

Good news! Jack isn't contagious! Bad news: he's dead man walking...unless someone can

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find some last minute miracle cure.

But it would be too

much to hope for something like that, wouldn't it?

Renee comes in to debrief him, and for the second time tonight we have a knock-out looking woman gawking at Jack's bare chest.

And for the second time Jack assures them that all those scars on his chest and arms came from earlier "incidents" and that he's not melting down like the bad guy who got dipped in toxic waste in "

[RoboCop](#)

".

Pop quiz; who WAS that baddass?

Answer: Paul McCrane, who later lost two rounds with a helicopter as Dr. Rocket Romano in "ER".

Bonus Question; who was his boss?

Answer: none other than Kurtwood Smith, the man just riddled by bullets as Sen. DeadRed.

Thus ends this week's version of The Three Degrees of Jack Bauer.

Jack says that only pansies need Six Degrees.

Tony and Greg contact the FBI, with Gregggy asking for immunity for giving up the location of the weapon. I wonder if the White House will grant it? I also wonder if Dick Vitale will get worked up on his next segment on ESPN?

With that accomplished, it looks like it will be the FBI and a team of Navy SEALS to invade...but not Jack....which is another huge surprise, as I was positive that he'd talk his way onto the team.

Earlier this season (including last week), I made several references to the movie "The Rock". I was thinking about that again when they mentioned Navy SEALS "helping"...because wasn't it a group of SEALS that "helped" Nic Cage and Sean Connery when they invaded Alcatraz? Thought so...and I get the feeling that this group will render about the same level of assistance.

So the miniature strike force moves in with three helicopters...and you would think that maybe those super stealth types might have been a little wiser than three large and loud ones that had to ask permission from the tower? Where the hell was Airwolf when you needed it? Because it

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MIGHT have been possible that in a facility that housed 1,500 mercenaries, there could have been a couple of Surface to Air missiles laying around.

Fortunately for our heroes, the Stinger crew was on the other end of the compound catching American Idol, so the Good Guys were able to land, disarm the guards, and bust into the building, finding....

Nada. Zip. Bupkis.

Seems like Greggy played them for suckers, sending them to the wrong side of the compound to give JV and his Evil Scientist Club a chance to finish arming the Weapon. Tony wants to go Full Bauer on Greg...and I'm thinking that E.S. Larry may finally be warming up to the idea of blow torches and pipe wrenches when all of a sudden, multiple armed vehicles surround the troops, demanding their surrender.

See? That's what you get when you don't let Jack lead the strike force.

Final Thoughts

Smooth move on the setup with Gergy...in truth, I should have seen it coming. The little argument JV and Gergy had in front of Tony did seem a little contrived...but hell, most of "24" is contrived anyway, so who knew?

Even with the scenes for next week...I'm really not sure where this show is going for the last seven hours...knowing that next week will be spent in a stand-off between JV and the Prez. That fact alone puts this season above the past two (or three).

I now know where the Dreamworks animators went to get their inspiration for the look Antonio Banderas's Puss-In-Boots character gave whenever he needed to make everyone go "aaahhhh". Check out [this picture](#) , and tell me it isn't the exact same look we've

seen multiple times from Renee.

Bauer Body Count

25. Didn't get a chance to do anything this week...although I'm sure the terrorist anti-body count is racking up numbers quicker than Eddie Van Halen playing Guitar Hero.

Odds of Survival

Greg Seaton (100:1) - Liar, liar, pants on fire is going DOWN.

Jon Voight (50:1) - Looks like next week will be the big scene chewing night for him as he rants and raves against how evil the President is. Rush Limbaugh will follow up with a lawsuit over copyright infringement.

Navy SEAL team (35:1) - Because unless Charlie Sheen is involved, that seems to be their only purpose in movies and television; cannon fodder.

Empty Suit Larry (25:1). He said his redemptive apologies to Renee...now it's time to go out a hero.

Tony (20:1) - It won't be anytime soon, as Tony has to act as Jack's Action Proxy until they find The Cure (or The Knack, or The Ramones)

Olivia's Weasel-Like Reporter Friend (15:1) - Not even worthy of a name yet, but it looks like he blackmails FSP into the sack next week. Afterwards, Olivia eats him, washing it down with a nice Chianti.

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Board Room Dougie (10:1) - I almost forgot who he was...and it's only been a week.

Janis (8:1) - Just because she's not getting that many lines doesn't mean that I forgive her for annoying the snot out of me.

Aaron (4:1) - Never bring a one armed bodyguard to a gunfight.

The Milk Carton

Have you seen me?

Chief of Staff Ethan - It's only been a week...but it may be another three or four hours before he's needed to right the wrongs Olivia is about to do.

Sean the Snake - If the holding room they have him stashed in is as "secure" as Renee's...he may be half-way to Miami by now.

First Old Man - It wouldn't break my heart if he took the rest of the show to recover.

Martha Logan - If Aaron is back for any period of time, I want the damn dirt on what my favorite "24" crazy person has been up to.

Chloe O'Brian - That's just WRONG.

VP Hayseed - Kind of went into hiding after his screw up regarding the White House attack, didn't he?

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Sister Ironside - Probably still sitting in her wheelchair at the hospital, unable to go anywhere because Renee and Jack forgot to call her a cab (c'mon...I have to have at least ONE totally crass and politically incorrect comment every week, don't I?)