Hands down, it's the best show on television, and the premiere drew staggering amounts of viewers. Jack is back. And so is "24". Mitch is going to recap this season's episodes for us, and gets things started with a look back at Sunday night's two hour season premiere. Tomorrow, Mitch checks back in with his recap of last nights third and fourth hours, which left us all horrified at what took place at the conclusion.

Superman is one of the few individuals who could possibly survive a confrontation with Jack Bauer. But that is only because he can fly away .

From 6 AM to 8 AM, I consider myself lucky if I've showered, driven to work, and gotten logged into to the network.

Jack Bauer could do all of that in five minutes, and then have plenty of time left to save the country, kill various bad guys, and rescue a kitten from a tree (by twisting a knife into the trunk of it, the tree would willingly put the kitten down gently into Jack's arms).

Yes, Jack is back, but he's not quite as bad as ever…which I think will be a main storyline during the first half of the day/season; Jack getting his Mojo back.

Obviously, a very busy first two nights of the show, and it probably won't be as easy to do my normal recapping given the length and amount of territory covered, but I'll give it a shot, starting with Sunday night's show. You'll get the recap of the conclusion of the first four hours tomorrow.

Recap

6:00 AM – 7:00 AM

President Wayne Palmer? Now I realize that pretty much anyone would be better than Uber-Weasel President Logan, but come on! Michael-freaking-Dukakis had more charisma, leadership ability, and presidential timber than Wayne. And what milquetoast President would be complete without a sniveling, Constitution hating henchman? Say hello to Tom Lennox, played to annoying perfection by Peter MacNichol in the "is he a bad guy or just an asshole" role played last year by Samwise Gamgee. Also with the President is Karen Hayes, last year seen as the head of Homeland Security plotting to overthrow President Logan, now serving as President Palmer's National Security Advisor. Commit treason; get a promotion. What a country!

And Wayne could use a little bit of advise, because a bus has just went "boom" in LA, the eleventh terrorist attack over the past several weeks. SOMETHING must be done.

The Oval Office comes up with a two pronged stupidity attack. The first is to round up as many Muslims as possible and slap their asses into detention centers. That would certainly stop all the Muslims in the Middle East from hating us, wouldn't it? The second BRILLIANT! idea is to trade about 100 Chinese spies to secure the release of Jack Bauer, who will then be handed over to a terrorist who promises to drop a dime on his Big Kahuna Assad in exchange for the right to torture and kill Jack. And Wayne didn't even need Howie Mandell to help in out on this "Deal or No Deal".

So Jack steps off the C130 in shackles and really looking like shit; grunge band level greasy hair with a ZZTop length beard (argh! Musical mixed metaphors!), and more scars on him than on the combined knees of the entire Cleveland Browns roster. By the way, nice little visual metaphor of Jack as Christ…long hair, beard, and a body tortured beyond reason coming back to life. But Jack Bauer wouldn't have to walk on water. Water would be so scared of Jack that it would freeze and he could skate across it to find someone to kill.

Following the fastest shave and haircut in Human History, Jack has accepted his fate, and is on his way to Fayed's hideout, glad to be able to "die for something". Yeah…like that's going to happen. Oh, and during that time we learn that Curtis has a burr up his ass about something and that Bill Buchanan is now married to Karen Hayes. Hopefully they have a better time of it than other couples have had on "24" (see also, "the late Tony and Michelle").

An obnoxious phone rings at CTU. WTF is with that? Six damn years of the same idiotic ring tone for EVERY phone in that place? But if you think that is irritating, just wait until we wade in to Boring Subplot #1 for this season, the love triangle between Chloe, her equally abrasive Aussie ex-husband Morris, and middle manager Milo (back from Season One, and still looking so much like my son, aka Satan, that it's scary). Three people, and not one ounce of people skills amongst them.

Boring Subplot #2 is the obligatory "teenaged boy in danger" bit that we saw last year with Connie Britton and her stupid son. At least this time the boy, Scott, isn't quite as dumb, but he still has a bad choice for friends as his next door neighbor Ahmed is actually a terrorist disguised as a teenager. And played by the guy that was Kumar in "Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle". Sorry…I'm just not going to be able to get past that.

But back to the Bauer Bunker, where Jack is tied down, slugged a few times, a knife is stuck into his shoulder, a painful liquid (salt water? Peroxide?) is then poured on the wound, and then another object is stuck into Jack's back. I'm reminded of the scene in "Blazing Saddles" when Bart was about to put on his guns to go after Mongo. "No! Don't shoot him. That will only

make him mad". Fayed then tells Buchanan the location of Assad, after revealing to Jack that Assad is trying to broker a peace deal, and that he's the one who is actually behind the terrorist attacks.

Now THAT really chafes Jack's drawers. Despite being in agonizing pain, Jack manages to memorize the exact coordinates Fayed gives Buchanan and then, in one of the greatest scenes in television history, tears off his monitor so that he appears dead, which suckers the ONE guard watching him to come close enough…

To get his freaking jugular vein ripped out by Jack's teeth!!! Holy shit, Jack went all Lestat on him! Mike Tyson is a pussy…real men don't nibble on useless cartilage of an exterior appendage, they go for the gusto. Great sound effects of Jack spitting out the sushi as well. That will teach them to give Jack a crappy meal on the plane ride from China. "I got your plastic utensils right HERE!"

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM

You just don't tell Jack Bauer that he's going to "die for nothing", Fayed. Cause now he's out and of course the POS 1992 Ford he breaks into just happens to have a cell phone with a GPS in it, which he uses to call CTU and the President to tell them what he overheard. And just like every season, the dumb-ass President doesn't believe him, and orders the strike on Assad to proceed.

Who do you think will get there first? Apache helicopters or Jack in a rusted out LTD?

Congratulations! You've seen this show before! Of course Jack gets there first, convinces Assad that he's trying to help them, exposes the traitor Omar who was carrying the transponder from Fayed, and gets them out seconds before the choppers do a little urban renewal.

Once clear, they conveniently find an abandoned house (whose owners JUST took off in a U-Haul), and Jack gets to work plying information out of Omar. But Omar says he doesn't know anything, and Jack backs off, saying he knows Omar won't talk. Assad responds by showing the right way to do it…jabbing a knife into Omar's knee and twisting, prompting him to spill it all. Assad thanks him for the intel by planting the knife just below Omar's ribcage.

Jack is so beaten down that he's incapable of torturing people the right way, and friggin' Dr. Bashir from "Deep Space Nine" has to do it for him? Those Chinese bastards!!!

On to Subplot #3, which may or may not yet receive the title of "Boring". Sandra Palmer, little sister to the Prez, and an attorney for the "Islamic-American Alliance" is pretty pissed that jackbooted thugs from the FBI are trying to access the organizations database without a warrant. The smarmy FBI agent didn't think he needed no stinkin' warrant, but having been rebuked, he comes back later with one, and then arrests Sandra and her boyfriend Walid, the head of the IAA after she destroys the files. Another wonderful case of needing to suspend logic. Doesn't anybody in 24Land actually make backups of their computer files and store them offsite?

Meanwhile, back at Boring Subplot #2, Kumar is attacked in his house by the Stereotypical Racist Redneck Construction Guy, who is promptly shot dead for all his trouble. ScottyDon't comes in and sees the aftermath (included a wounded Kumar), and promptly gets a gun pointed in his face for all his trouble.

Assad and Jack are hot on the trail of baddies using the info obtained from the now room temperatured Omar. They spot two Fayed-aliers in business suits heading towards the subway. Assad tells Jack that one has a bomb strapped to his chest and the other is the handler, who will leave and head back to Fayed. Of course it's up to Jack to stop the bomber, which he does by kicking his ass through the back window of the train, and the only the bomber is killed. Chuck Norris's roundhouse kicks got nuthin' on Jack.

Back at CTU, we find they weren't so lucky in Chicago and Baltimore as suicide bombers in those cities succeeded. CTU also gets almost simultaneous news that it was Jack that foiled the bomber in LA, and a voice transmission is intercepted from Fayed and they now know that Jack was right all the time…eliciting a "D'OH!" from President Palmer-Lite.

Got to give them a little credit…most seasons it takes them four or five hours to finally believe in all things Jack. Only took them two this time.

Best Line: "I don't think I can do this anymore." Sure you can, Jack. Killing and torturing bad guys is just like riding a bike. Just a lot bloodier.

Best Scene: Jack playing McGruff and taking a bite out of crime. I guess he remembered all his Vampire Training from "Lost Boys".

Jack's Current Body Count: 2. Much like Victor Martinez, Jack is starting out slow, but will soon get in a groove and get his average back to 5 – 10 an episode. For now, as the Official Scorer, I'm crediting Jack with a kill for the terrorist on the subway, as it is obvious that the bomb didn't kill him, it was the force of Jack's double-footed kick to the chest that crushed all his ribs and destroyed his heart a second or two before the bomb exploded.

Who's the Traitor?: In 24Land, there is always a CTU mole, and there is always a traitor somewhere in the government…it's as much of a Law as is the Law that states whenever I hit a fantastic drive off the tee, it must be immediately followed by a shank on the second shot.

Current "Favorites" in order of probability:

1. Nadia. Blame it on the new chick.

2. Milo. He was probably out partying with the Taliban between Season 2 and Season 5.

3. Morris. Just a little too sleazy…but that may just to be to throw us off the trail.

4. Sandra Palmer. Hey, those Palmer women just can't be trusted. But she has a long way to go to get into Sherry Palmer's league.

5. Tom Lennox. For the moment, I'm thinking he's a red herring potential baddie…and will actually turn out to be good.

Life Expectancy?: Unscientific wild assed guesses on how much longer certain people will still be breathing.

Curtis – 2 hours. His early surly attitude and the fact that Roger Cross hasn't been listed prominently on the credits or Fox promotions doesn't bode well. EDITORIAL NOTE. Yeah, I know that this looks a bit bogus given the results of Monday's show…but I really, truly did pick this out at the end of Sunday's show. Trust me! (but I figured he went up with the bomb…no way I would have guessed he'd go out the way he did).

Assad – 6 hours. He's either going to turn on Jack, and then killed by him, or he's going to die

defending Jack…joining a club that has about 1,000 members.

Graham – 6 hours. Given the previews we've seen where he whines to Jack "you're hurting me", and Jack responds, "trust me…I'm not", I'd say the former Dr. Romano would rather have another arm cut off by a helicopter than whatever Jack's going to do to him.

Walid – 8 hours. If Sandra is a mole, he's toast. If she isn't a mole, then he's still toast as then he'll be killed by a bad government agent, and his death will further inflame the country.

Milo or Morris – 10 hours. The one that is the mole will kill the one that isn't, leaving Chloe to lust after Jack unencumbered by any former lovers.

Fayed – 14 hours. That's about the usual time frame when the guy you thought was the main baddie buys the farm, only to find out there is someone worse pulling the strings.

Mike Doyle (Rick Schroder) – 16 hours. All I know of his character is that he is a CTU agent that hooks up with Jack later in the year. They never seem to make it through the day.

President Logan – 22 hours. He shows back up towards the end, a la David Palmer in Season 4, and either nobly sacrifices himself…or does something else stupid and has his throat ripped out by a rabid Tom Lennox.