Well, we're four hours in to season #7 of the hit prime time drama "24", and we're seeing some familiar themes. Someone we thought was dead is really alive. There's a mole inside the government. And Jack Bauer is once again An Enemy of the State. Predictable? Unrealistic? Maybe. But is there a more entertaining show on network TV? The Mitch Man is once again here to make sense of it all for our readers, with his recap of the second two hours of season #7 of "24".

Harry Houdini is the world's second greatest escape artist. The First is Jack Bauer. I never saw Houdini bite a guy's neck in order to escape.

Long time, no see, huh?

Usually in these preliminary paragraphs, I make fun of how many stupid predictions I made at the bottom of the last recap have already been proven to be 100% wrong.

Kind of hard to do when I've actually ended up watching four hours worth of the show before putting my first article together. Oh sure, I can SAY that I didn't really know what was coming...and I do keep notes as I'm watching each show...but there's no real way I can prove it.

So let's just skip that part of it and get right to the meat of it all.

Recap

The third hour starts with a taped message for the President. It's Col. Debaucle, telling her that if the U.S. doesn't abandon plans to invade SomeGala, bbaaaaadddddd things will start to happen. Things like a collapse of the financial systems, bankruptcy of the auto industry, devistating losses to the stock market, or the bottoming out of the real estate market? No? You're only talking about little things like poisoning water supplies or wrecking planes? Phsawww! That's babyshit compared to all of this other stuff.

Tony is escorted back to FBI headquarters. Renee explains to Moss why she broke protocol by going alone with Jack. Moss is shocked! Shocked, I say! to find that there is a Mole at the FBI. When Renee tells Jack that she passed the information on the moley, moley, moley to Moss, Jack asks if she can trust him.

"No question! There is no one I trust more!" And it's "subtle" little zingers like that which will put Agent Moss near the top of the "Who Is The Mole?" List.

Tony, naturally, is giving up no information to such a pussy as Moss, so the agent is forced to allow Jack to try his luck. Jack goes into the interogation room and Tony immediately tells him that he was only in it for the money, which earns him a wounded puppydog look from Jack that had Marley saying "dude...I'm jealous". Tony further goes David Gilmour on Jack's strings by bringing up all of the people chewed up and spit out by the system that made Jack who he is; Kim, Teri Bauer, Audrey Rains, Milo (MILO? Who the hell cares about MILO?). Who knows? Maybe Jack really did have a soft spot for the beak nosed geek, because after Tony mentions Milo, Jack snaps and goes for Tony's thoat.

But before Jack gets Tony to flat line, Tony chokes out a whispered "deep sky", and Jack drops him...totally stunned. He walks out of the room, picks up a cell phone, and calls a number. An electronically muffled voice asks who it

is, and when Jacks states that Tony told him to call, the electonic muffler comes off, and we realize that he's talking to Bill Buchanan! With a bitchingly cool haircut!

Bill tells Jack he'll call him back in 10 minutes, then we see Bill walk past Chloe! Who also now sports a bitchingly cool brunette hairstyle. What's with this? Is there now a version of "Queer Eye for the Former CTU Straight Guy and Socially Retarded Girl" show on Bravo?

Chloe's upset about Tony no longer being able to work undercover, which currently puts me batting 1.000 on my predictions as we find out he really wasn't a bad guy. I won't gloat too much, as I'm sure I will get down to Travis Hafner post steroi...er...injury level on my prognostications soon enough. Chloe also tells Bill that she "doesn't think Jack is in a helpful frame of mind". No shit, Sherlock...but he might be in a "give me a gun and let me start shooting people" frame of mind.

We then get Ethan and Henry blathering on about Henry's obsession with DeadSon. Something about a secret report that showed that Roger was about to be investigated for insider trading, and that's why he killed himself. Me? I'm thinking that what he really did was listen to his Dad and Ethan talk for more than five minutes, making him immediately look for a Glock to shove in his own mouth.

Bill calls Jack, and tells him that he and Chloe are working with Tony to bring down a group of corrupt people who are conspiring to foul up pretty much everything that is good, including baseball and apple pie. Oh wait...the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox have already fouled up baseball beyond recognition, so I guess the latest incarnation of The Blue Man Conspiracy Group™ is just going after everything else.

So we don't really have a CTU anymore...but we really DO have a CTU...just with an extremely reduced membership. They also tell Jack that there is a traitor inside the Allison Taylor staff. Great! We get a second "Who Is The Mole?" category!

Back at FBI headquarters, Sean the Snake isn't happy that he's being kept out of the SuperKewlKidsLevel4KlearanceKlub, so he tries to hack his way in. This totally proves that he isn't the mole, because "24" rules dictate that the first person who looks really suspicious cannot be the mole. But maybe the writers have learned and that won't be the case now. Yeah, and maybe my oldest dog finally learned that eating poop isn't good.

Samatha, Roger's former girlfriend who was earlier accosted by Henry and denied everything to his face, calls him on an unsecured line to tell him that Roger was, in fact, murdered. Way to go! I'm sure no one was listening in! For your parting gifts, you'll get a wonderful looking coffin to go along with a few milligrams of lead to the cerebral cortex. But before then, she wants to meet FOM alone.

The FBI still can't get squat from Tony, so Renee tries to convince Moss that it's time to use torture. While this argument is going on, Janis has retreated to the basement for access to the Super Secret terminal, which tells her that it was Sean the Snake who hacked into the FAA system. Oopsy...someone forgot to lock the door behind her, and there's Sean, ready to strike.

Or not. Evidently, Sean's wife is on one of the planes still circling the

airport, and he's trying to get her safely on the ground, by Any Means Necessary. Janis tells Sean that she'll clean up his mess...which puts him right back into the "Could be The Mole" category.

Jack has to help Tony escape, so he puts his famous sleeper hold on Renee, and takes her gun and badge. Meanwhile, Chloe is working her magic, disabling all of the security cameras as to hide their escape once Jack knocks out Moss.

Jack Bauer...once again An Enemy of the State.

Janis figures out that someone (Chloe) is hacking into their system, and she shuts her out...which pisses off Chloe, who hacks back in, which pisses off Janis. These two have GOT to meet.

The on-again, off-again cameras have allowed the FBI to close in on Jack and Tony. Jack provides cover while Tony makes it to the van Bill is driving. Jack's not so lucky, so he has to hotwire a car, and while laying on the floorboard drive it off the roof and onto a couple of parked cars so that he can make his escape. Because what use is all of Rupert Murdoch's money if you can't blow a bunch of it on a stunt that serves no other purpose than to smash things up real good?

11 AM

The President is NOT happy about Jack and Tony getting out of there. I figure President Taylor was about as happy to get that call as Bill Clinton was when he learned that someone forgot to take a certain blue dress to the cleaners.

Bill takes Jack to CTU. "Or what's left of it". In truth, it doesn't look that much differernt from the generic sets they've used for any of the other locations. I'm sure it will be more secure. Then again, the local Post Office is more secure than your average CTU Headquarters. Tony tells Jack how he was dead for 10 minutes, and then brought back to life and recruited by Emmerson. Oaaakkaaayyy. We also learn that Tony really was working for him for awhile as a bad guy. Jack realizes that he can help get Tony back undercover by going renegade himself, so Jack once again has a partner. God, please don't let this be as lame as the second season with Chase.

Back to the Obligatory Boring Sub-Plot, the First Old Man needs to go out again, cajoling Agent Brian to help him again; who agrees again, like the dumbass he is.

Renee and Janis rush to the hospital to talk to the recovering Tanner before his lawyers get there. In less than four hours of experiencing the Bauer Effect, Agent Walker has totally turned to the Jack Side, and there are no rules she won't break.

Tony and Jack get to Emmerson's, who tells Tony that bringing in Jack wasn't worth the risk, so he tells Tony to kill him. Good luck with that one, Em...let me know how it works out for you. Bill and Jack knew that

might happen, so Jack takes both the goons watching him down easily, and that demonstration seems to prove Jack's worth to Emmerson...who then kills the goon who demanded "him or me". Because NO ONE lives when they say it's going to be Jack, or them.

At the White House, Mutobo, the former PM of SomeGala, tries to guilt the President into going ahead with the invasion. I love it when some blowhard from some pissant third world nation tries to guilt the U.S. into spending all of our money and risking all of our soldiers in a cause that said blowhard didn't have the wherewithal to do himself. Good thing she doesn't fall for it.

Oh, wait. She does, even with Ethan recommending backing down. See my comments later about this line of stupidity.

Emmerson tells Jack and Tony that their next assignment is to grab PM Mutobo. Chloe keeps up with what seems to be her main job, which is to voice disapproval about everything on moral grounds, only to quickly yield to Bill's "this is what may have to happen" speech. Nice backbone there, Chloe.

FOM, talks Brian into leaving him alone with Samantha. Another Sangala connection is revealed, this time with the Diamond mines being the greed factor to get people onboard with the crimes, and this is what led to Roger's murder (so I guess he really is dead). She gives him some evidence, as Brian watches on from a distance with a disturbingly ominous look.

Renee decides to go all Bauer on Tanner, getting Janis to go along with stalling Tanner's lawyers while she does her dirty work, putting her gun on his open wound and pushing. Tanner calls her bluff (after screaming like a girl), so she looks all offended and then ties up his breathing tube causing him to almost flatline. He caves. I think I love her.

Jack and the boys conduct the raid on Mutobo, but he's tipped off, and gets into a panic room, leaving them stuck there while Renee speeds her way to his residence.

Final Thoughts

So why doesn't the President just order a DELAY on the invasion, until they get the Single Point of Failure firewall to be replaced by something that isn't so....Ridiculously designed???? I didn't realize that once the order to Stand Down was given, it could never, ever, ever be rescinded.

I'm not sure about this whole "Bringing back to life" concepts. What next? Mason coming back from the nuclear explosion? (the first nuclear explosion from "24", not the second). Nina Meyers making a comeback? (not an altogether bad idea). Phillip Bauer? Nah...I want to see Edgar.

I've been to Washington, D.C. several times, and I must say that I never knew that the pond around the Jefferson Memorial was the perfect place to meet secretly...as evidently in the "24" universe in

the middle of the day, at one of the most important monuments in the Capital City of the Center of the Free World...no one really wants to go there, so you have the place to yourself.

Bauer Body Count: Still at one. I am deeply, deeply disappointed.

Who Is The Mole? Starting to get some distinct possibilities here, as we have to worry about and FBI Mole, and a White House Mole. This list will certainly evolve, especially as some of its members bite the dust.

Chief of Staff Warden Norton (odds - 1.5:1). Face it...Bob Gunton HAS to play traitors, cowards, sneaks, or crooks. It's a law.

Agent Moss (odds - 3:1). Renee kind of tipped this one off when talking about how trustworthy he was.

Secret Service Agent Brian (odds - 4:1). We knew someone had to be spying on FOM and Samantha...and whoever was doing it was probably up to no good.

Janis Gold (odds - 5:1). This would be perfect, as it would set up the little geek-ette as the perfect Anti-Chloe

Sean the Snake (odds - 8:1). This one has signs pointing each direction. The long shot of the FBI team, but it could still happen.

Secretary of State (whose name is totally unimportant right now) (odds - 20:1) I need someone else for the W.H. Mole, but it's just to have another name...I'm pretty sure it's Ethan.

Odds of Survival

Emmerson (100:1). As the early bad-guy, he's got no chance of not being killed by Jack.

Col. Debaucle (50:1). I get the feeling he'll hang on until near the end of the season, though.

Samantha (25:1). She is too stupid to live.

Agent Ross (10:1). It's 1000:1 if he turns out being the Mole. If not, he gets the honor of serving as "24" traditional "Dead Hero".

Tony (5:1). But I'm sure he'll get woke up later.

Bill Buchanan (3:1). That metrosexual haircut is enough to make me want to kill him.

Henry (1:1). We couldn't be that lucky.