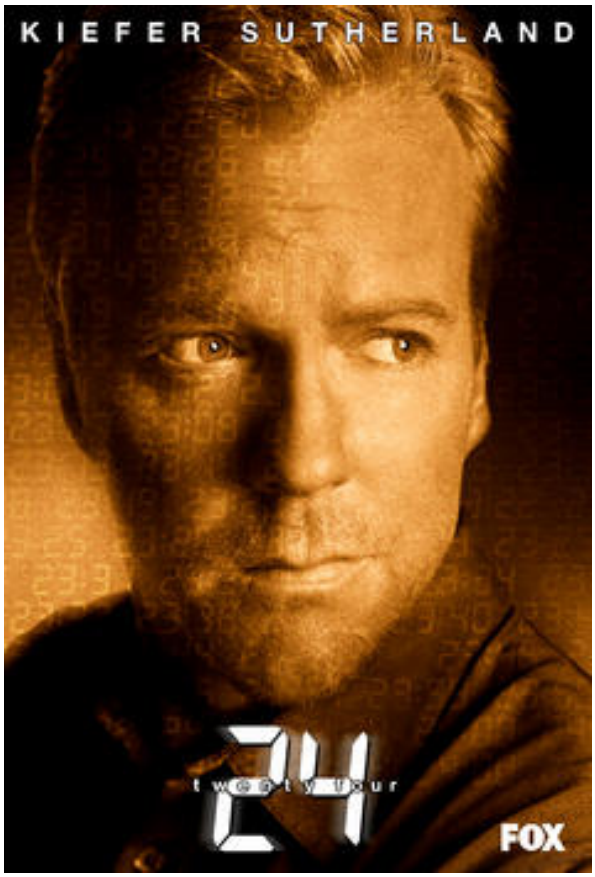

It's been awhile since I've had guest commentary in here, but Gary Benz has once again showed that not only is he a very talented writer with a firm grasp on All Things Cleveland Sports…he's also one sick individual with a mind as warped as a cheap 2 x 4 left out in a monsoon for a month.

This week, Gary contemplates the fate of the newly departed (but not yet dead) BubbaHastings. Like me, Gary is a sneaking suspicion that we haven't yet seen the last of the former head of CTU, and that he may have to come back to fill his Lt. Dan destiny of dying in service to his country…or in service to his writers, which would really suck.

Once that's completed, Gary suggests that he can perhaps duplicate his feat from Forrest Gump, and be the driving force behind the opening of BubbaHastings Unshrimp Restaurants, that would be CTU themed. You go in, and every time you give the "analyst/waitress" your order, she invariably says "dammit". If you are really lucky, there will be a random analyst/waitress that is a mole for a rival restaurant, and instead of bringing you a BauerBurger, she instead brings you shrimp scampis. And just for fun, at least three people at any table of more than six have to die.

This is a wonderful idea with one glaring problem: No one in "24" ever eats.

Recap

I come to praise Renee, not to bury her. But I am still totally pissed at the “leadership” of those at “24” for the decision to kill her off.

So, Jack…your first wife was killed almost right in front of you…you’re long time girl friend ended up as loony as Syd Barrett after being tortured in China after trying to find you when you were kidnapped, and now the latest love of your life was murdered ten minutes after you finally consummated what had been smoldering for over a year.

You officially now have worse luck with significant others than what I had. At least my exes don’t die off on me…they are content to just try to kill off my bank account.

Two relationships going sour, you could write off to bad luck, but after the third, you might have to face the sad probability that it’s YOU.

Jack starts out looking mournfully at Renee’s body, and then has to deal with the World’s Stupidest Nurse who is trying to track down Renee’s next of kin. But he’s only allowed to get a few sniffles out before the phone rings and it’s Chloe. She gives Jack all the details that she heard from Renee about recognizing FakeEMT from her days as a moll for the Russian Mob. My spider-sense tells me that means we’ll be seeing Vitaly Corleonovich again, removing himself from the Milk Carton (seeing Juergen Prochnow’s name on the “special guest” list might have tipped me off as well).

Ethan’s showing off his Jack Bauer recuperative skills, and is back to work, showing no real ill effects from that pesky little heart attack he had less than three hours ago. Although he almost had another one when Allison told him that Charles Logan is operating under a “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” condition. Logan meets up at an outdoor restaurant with Douchebagovich, who starts out by basically telling Logan to eff off. Logan shows that he still has humongous cajones by telling Douchebagovich that he KNOWS that he and other Russians were assisting Hassan’s opposition in his murder. Logan says he has iron-clad proof that he will share with President Taylor unless Douchebagovich agrees to his blackmail.

How did ABC miss the boat by not casting Gregory Itzin as a Visitor on “V”? The man is the perfect reptilian creature without morals. Who cares? This is the best thing that has happened to the show this year. I’m hoping that when Ben Linus gets back off the island from “Lost”, that he joins up with Charles Logan as they create their own little consulting firm, called the Lizard Men Conspiracy Group.

Jack is at the court room where Corleonovich is being arraigned, and gets some face time with the mobster. Jack’s got just a little, itty-bitty burr up his ass, and to prove it, for the second time this season he asks someone to “look into my eyes” so that they can see that he would have “no problem in taking out your family if you don’t tell me what I want to hear”. Of course this “bluff” works, and Vitaly tells him what Logan already knows; that the Russian government is behind it all. He also tells Jack that Dana was working for them...making her the biggest Russian screw up since the general who proposed invading Afghanistan.

After coming back from commercial, Logan gets the phone call from the President telling him that the Russians would agree to sign the Peace Treaty in five hours. Ethan asks him how he was able to do it, and Charles smugly responds “I told him that peace is in all of our interests”…resulting in a great look from Allison that just screamed “bullshit!”, followed by a look that was more like “oh, my gawd, what did we get ourselves into crawling into bed with this snake”?

Chloe asks Cole to sit in while Jack questions Dana, as she’s well aware that Jack may snap her neck like a twig if he thinks she had anything to do with Renee’s death. Yeah, like Cole would be able to stop him. In fact, I’m hoping to see them tag-team her, and Jack can snap her neck while Cole puts a bullet into her skull.

Let’s just wait and see if Jack gets that chance, however, as Logan’s chief flunky gets a call tipping them off to Jack finding out about Dana and Moscow’s involvement. Logan doesn’t want to relinquish his Richard Nixonesque “redemption” in the minds of the American Public as a savior, least of all to the man who “torpedoed my presidency”, and vows to stop him.

But he can’t stop him in time, as Jack starts questioning Dana, and she makes the mistake of telling Jack that she was sorry to hear about Renee, which causes Jack to go downright apeshit on Dana’s face. No, Jack does not care if the traitor is a female, he’ll torture anyone. Chloe

freaks a bit watching this, but Cole tells her to let things play, and Dana off course gives up the goods, wanting to get her immunity deal back on, now that the deal she had to save Hassan is about as worthless as a Circuit City stock certificate.

Logan goes back to President Taylor demanding her to Stop Jack Bauer…something Allison will not do just on Charles saying "pretty please", so he has no choice but to spill the beans about the involvement of the Russian government. Allison also asks a very good question…how did Logan obtain this information? He responds with a very shady answer, one that makes me think that the Blue Man Conspiracy Group is alive and well and still pushing their agenda of fluorinated water and New World Order.

Logan's suggestion is that for the "Good of Peace" (and the good of their ego), they need to go into full Cover-Up Mode. You would think that someone as "moral" as she is would refuse this, but guess again, as it looks like Allison is considering it, telling Ethan that she's going to CTU to talk to Jack. And Richard Nixon's Ghost gives a high-five to John Mitchell's Ghost.

In truth, is this that surprising? After all, Allison was willing to let 50,000 Jets fans perish in order to keep her precious "peace agreement" on track…so she probably has no qualms in sacrificing Jack Bauer, the American People, the Kamistralian people, Mrs Hassan, international law, or the last remaining speck of decency left in her corrupt body to keep this thing going.

A President conducting obvious illegal activities? Yep, another "original" plot twist from my favorite writers on the planet.

She goes to CTU to talk to Jack alone, leaving the Secret Service agents outside the door (as if they could stop Jack from re-running his Dana's Greatest Hits routine on her if she pisses him off too much). She doesn't agree to immunity to Dana, and she won't allow Jack to question Dana further. Jack naturally tells her off, making her at least the seventh President he's done that too, but she's hearing nothing of it. And personally, I wish I had heard nothing of this lame "greater good" philosophical "argument" about justice versus peace. Once again, there is no such thing as compromise in the land of "24"; everything is always an Absolute. Yawn.

Shoe on the Other Foot Time. Why in the Hell wouldn't Allison just tell Jack to back off for five hours until the treaty was signed, and then he could quietly continue his investigation?

Why? Because this is “24”, and if a writer puts together a segment of a script that makes sense, the other writers give him a wedgie.

Odds of Jack listening to the President? Roughly the same odds as Lindsey Lohan passing up a drink or a line of blow.

President Taylor re-iterates her order to Chloe that Dana is not to be questioned by anyone, and all of this pretty much tells Chloe what’s going on…although Cole doesn’t quite get it. But that’s OK, Cole is confused by the Infield Fly Rule.

So as we wrap up what might have been the most boring hour of this season (and believe me, that’s saying a lot), we get all of our split screen shots as we anxiously await The Big Revelation of this hour. Which comes from Jack pulling a gun on his “escort” and stealing the helicopter so he can go Rogue. As he takes off, Chloe gets all Official on him and warns him that he’ll be “forced down” if he doesn’t return right away.

Welcome to Stupidville. Where moronic writers believe that we WANT to see Jack Bauer become an Enemy of the State for something like the 20th time.

The next original moment this show has this year will be its first.

Final Thoughts

The previews for next week were bad enough, but to make things more groan inducing, let me give you a quote from the official “24” site from Fox about what’s happening next week…

President Allison Taylor faces impossible choices and much to the dismay of CTU, she enlists a private security firm to complete a sensitive task.

Ah, yes, the ever popular “private security firm”…full of morally bankrupt individuals who the audience will feel no pity for when Jack treats them like ants at a picnic.

Sadly, this is the only way these idiotic writers can come up with to avoid forcing Jack to attack (and kill) U.S. soldiers…or the FBI…or NYPD…you know; the law enforcement agencies that are SUPPOSED to take care of something like this. Oh, no…can’t make Jack unsympathetic, so let’s once again totally invent some Stupid Shit.

I have no idea how any of us are going to survive the next six hours. And I’m not talking about “us” as a mythical person living in the United States under President Taylor, concerned about a big showdown between the US and Russia…no, I’m talking about the few thousand of us poor souls left in American watching this tripe.

The weather keeps getting nicer outside, and this show keeps getting worse.

Bauer Body Count

21.

Escorted Feet First From the Island

Only the last remaining bits of hope I had for this season.

Expiration Dates / Chances of Survival (Bitter Writer Edition)

At this point…I’m hoping that they still have enough nuclear rods left over to kill everyone.