

= Martha Logan =

Martha Logan is a fictional character played by Jean Smart in the television series 24 . As the first lady of the United States within the 24 universe , she is the capable yet mercurial wife of President Charles Logan . Critics praised Martha Logan as the breakout character of the show 's 2005 @-@ 2006 season .

In developing Martha Logan 's character , the show 's writers drew upon the historic example of a prominent whistleblower in the Watergate scandal , Martha Beall Mitchell . Similar to the real @-@ life model , Martha Logan becomes contemptuous of her husband 's conduct in office and decides to go public and end his career . Martha Logan takes part in a plot to get her husband to confess that he conspired with terrorists . Yet her mental health problems undermine her credibility and raise the possibility that she may be forced into treatment at an inpatient facility . After the events of the fifth season she was committed to a mental health facility .

= = Concept and creation = =

The inspiration for Martha Logan was Martha Beall Mitchell , the wife of John N. Mitchell , Attorney General during the Nixon administration . Mrs. Mitchell was a key whistleblower who contacted the press to disclose facts about the Watergate scandal , and for a time her statements were discredited because people believed she had a mental illness . Nixon said that " Watergate would have not occurred without Martha Mitchell . "

Howard Gordon , the executive producer of 24 , said that , during character development , they " wanted an actress that had the strength and intelligence to be a first lady , yet have the unpredictability of never knowing when she might snap . " Jean Smart was their first choice . Smart later told The New York Times that she decided she was eager to play the role after reading the character 's introductory scene , and commented that in her almost 30 years of acting she had come across few roles that offered the possibilities that this one did : a character that is sexy , mysterious , and powerful , yet is mentally unstable and has lost her trust and respect for her husband .

Smart also said of the opening scene that : " It encapsulates that character in one moment and says so much about her impulsiveness . We could not have accomplished that with a dozen speeches . When I saw it in the script , I thought ' this is great , this lady is going to be fun to play . ' "

On her first day on set , Smart was shocked to learn the producers wanted to cut the scene , a decision she felt was a mistake . She said " They had done this brilliant thing and now they were going to undo it . They were just being practical . They said , " It would be hours to get you back , your hair , your make @-@ up . " Smart spoke to the hair and makeup artists and guaranteed producers they could get it right in two takes ; they did it in one , and the scene stayed in .

Jean Smart 's character and Martha Mitchell were both labeled " unstable . " Although the real Martha Mitchell was not mentally ill , the fictional Martha Logan is , and with Smart 's input the writers enhanced this aspect of the character . Smart has said of Martha that she is an impulsive , powerful , and capable woman , and that she is intelligent , but has some " chemical problems " .

= = Characterization = =

Martha received a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Stanford University . Prior to becoming a figure in politics , she served as a member of the Santa Barbara Museum Board of Trustees . She was once the most trusted adviser for the indecisive President Logan . She has also been portrayed as mentally ill , afflicted by depression and anxiety . Martha is a close personal friend of David Palmer .

= = Appearances = =

=== 24 : Season 5 ===

Prior to his death , Palmer asks to meet Martha to discuss a " matter of national security " involving Charles Logan . After his death , Martha believes that Palmer was killed to thwart the meeting , not knowing that her husband was involved in his murder .

Several hours later , Martha is frustrated to see her husband negotiating with terrorist Vladimir Bierko and his willingness to compromise Yuri Suvarov and his wife 's safety . Aaron Pierce eventually saves her from the ambush on the Suvarovs ' motorcade . Martha continues to question Logan 's motives as her husband attempts to prevent her from finding out about his role in Palmer 's death .

When Charles reveals that he was involved in the plot to assassinate Palmer , she is deeply shocked and says that she can never forgive him . Contemplating suicide , Logan comes into her room , begging for forgiveness . Rather than accepting his apology , Martha tells him that she is horrified to be his wife .

After Jack Bauer fails to obtain a confession from Logan , she screams in public that he is a murderer during Palmer 's funeral . Afterwards , President Logan hits her , and threatens to put Martha in an asylum for life . During his tirade , Logan acknowledges all of his misdeeds , unaware that there is a small listening device on his pen . The confession quickly reaches the Attorney General , who orders the U.S. Marshals to arrest Logan . As Charles is escorted away by agents , he turns to stare at Martha , who smiles at him in triumph .

=== 24 : Season 6 ===

Following Day 5 , Martha was admitted to a mental health facility in Vermont . Martha is romantically involved with Secret Service agent Aaron Pierce . After being persuaded to call Russian first lady Anya Suvarov to enlist her assistance in a diplomatic matter , Martha and Charles have a discussion , in which she verbally assaults Charles , and in a fit of rage , stabs him in the shoulder , severely injuring him . Several minutes after she is arrested , Martha calls Anya .

In a Reddit AMA writers Manny Coto and Evan Katz mentioned Aaron Pierce again , informing fans that Martha is currently " alive and well , being tended to by Aaron Pierce . "

== Critical reception ==

Joe Rhodes of The New York Times devoted a review to the character on February 19 , 2006 :

About the only thing viewers might not have been able to anticipate was that this season 's break @-@ out character would be a high @-@ strung , sharp @-@ tongued and off @-@ her @-@ meds first lady of the United States , a woman who screams , " I will have your family eating dog food out of a can " at Secret Service agents trying to keep her away from a presidential news conference .

Rhodes described Martha Logan 's debut scene as " perhaps the most memorable character debut in 24 history . " In the debut scene , she proclaimed , " I look like a wedding cake " just before dunking her face into the bathroom sink . Her marriage to President Logan was described by producer Howard Gordon as " one of the highlights of this year . " Smart was also nominated for an Emmy for her performance , Best Supporting Actress in a Drama Category , but lost the award to Blythe Danner .