

= Through the Looking Glass ( Lost ) =

" Through the Looking Glass " is the third season finale of the ABC television series Lost , consisting of the 22nd and 23rd episodes of the third season . It is also the 71st and 72nd episodes overall . It was written by co @-@ creator / executive producer Damon Lindelof and executive producer Carlton Cuse , and directed by executive producer Jack Bender . When first aired on May 23 , 2007 , in the United States and Canada , it was watched by an average of 14 million American viewers . Like the previous two season finales , it was two hours long with advertisements , twice the length of a normal episode . It was edited into two individual episodes when released on DVD . The season finale is considered by some to be one of the best episodes of television ever broadcast . The episode garnered a number of awards and nominations , including three Primetime Emmy Awards nominations and a Directors Guild of America Award nomination .

The episode begins its narrative in late December 2004 , over ninety days after the crash of Oceanic Airlines Flight 815 . The battle between the crash survivors and the dangerous and mysterious island inhabitants referred to as the " Others " comes to a head as ten of the Others attack and are then ambushed at the survivors ' camp and are subsequently killed . Meanwhile , Jack Shephard ( played by Matthew Fox ) leads most of the survivors to the island 's radio tower to communicate with a nearby ship . Intercut with this story are off @-@ island scenes spotlighting Jack , who has become suicidally depressed and addicted to painkillers . In a twist ending , it is revealed that these scenes are flashforwards to sometime in the future , after Jack has left the island , rather than flashbacks as in previous episodes of Lost .

= = Plot = =

The Others intend to attack the camp and kidnap pregnant women for scientific research . The survivors are tipped off by the " Other " Karl ( Blake Bashoff ) and plan to kill the Others with dynamite @-@ rigged tents . Sayid Jarrah ( Naveen Andrews ) , Jin Kwon ( Daniel Dae Kim ) , and Bernard Nadler ( Sam Anderson ) remain at the beach , tasked with shooting the tents while the rest of the survivors journey with Danielle Rousseau ( Mira Furlan ) to the radio tower to communicate with Naomi Dorrit 's ( Marsha Thomason ) nearby ship . The Others arrive , and while Sayid and Bernard detonate their tents , Jin misses his target , which results in their capture . After hearing only two explosions , James " Sawyer " Ford ( Josh Holloway ) and Juliet Burke ( Elizabeth Mitchell ) turn back to see if they can help . Hugo " Hurley " Reyes ( Jorge Garcia ) , who was not allowed to accompany Sawyer and Juliet because of his weight , drives the van he found onto the beach , and the captives gain the upper hand , killing the remaining Others with the help of Sawyer and Juliet . Tom ( M.C. Gainey ) surrenders but Sawyer shoots him anyway .

In The Looking Glass , a research station of the Dharma Initiative , Charlie Pace ( Dominic Monaghan ) is captured by the resident Others Greta ( Lana Parrilla ) and Bonnie ( Tracy Middendorf ) . Ben Linus ( Michael Emerson ) learns of Charlie 's infiltration and sends Mikhail Bakunin ( Andrew Divoff ) to the station to kill the three to preserve the signal jamming . Mikhail arrives and kills Greta and Bonnie , only to be shot through the chest with a spear gun by Desmond Hume ( Henry Ian Cusick ) who emerges from a closet where he had hidden after diving down a short time after Charlie . Getting the code from Bonnie before she dies ( the notes to the middle eight of " Good Vibrations " by The Beach Boys ) , Charlie disables the jammer , and is contacted by Penny Widmore ( Sonya Walger ) via video transmission . Penny informs Charlie that she does not know Naomi , and did not send the boat that Naomi claims to be from . Despite his injury , Mikhail manages to swim out of the station and blasts the window of the jamming room with a grenade , killing himself and flooding the communications room . Charlie locks the door to save Desmond from drowning with him , but before he drowns , Charlie writes on his hand so Desmond can read : " NOT PENNY 'S BOAT " .

John Locke ( Terry O 'Quinn ) , one of the survivors , has been shot by Ben . Finding his legs paralyzed again , Locke is about to commit suicide , when he is stopped by what appears to be Walt Lloyd ( Malcolm David Kelley ) . Meanwhile , Ben tells Richard Alpert ( Nestor Carbonell ) to lead the

rest of the Others to the " Temple " and then leaves the Others , with his adopted daughter Alex ( Tania Raymonde ) ? Rousseau 's daughter and Karl 's girlfriend ? to meet up with the survivors to persuade Jack not to call Naomi 's ship for rescue .

Kate is upset about Sawyer not wanting her to come back to the beach with him to rescue Sayid , Jin and Bernard . Jack tells her it is because Sawyer was trying to protect her . When she asks why Jack is defending Sawyer , Jack informs Kate Austen ( Evangeline Lilly ) that it is because he loves her . Kate also witnessed a kiss between him and Juliet . Ben and Alex intercept Jack 's group ; Ben informs Jack that Naomi is not who she says she is , and making contact with her boat will be disastrous for everyone . Ben orders the shooting of Sayid , Jin , and Bernard , and when Jack hears three shots , he attacks Ben and punches him in the face repeatedly . Unknown to Jack , the shots were fired into the sand , following earlier orders from Ben . Rousseau meets her sixteen @-@ year @-@ old daughter Alex , who was kidnapped by the Others shortly after her birth , and they tie Ben up . The trek party , now able to get a signal , arrives at the radio tower . Rousseau disables her distress signal , freeing the frequency for Naomi . However , Naomi is knifed in the back by Locke , who threatens to kill Jack if he calls Naomi 's boat . Locke cannot bring himself to kill Jack , who communicates with George Minkowski ( Fisher Stevens ) on Naomi 's boat . Minkowski tells the survivors they will be sending rescue .

In the flash sequences , Jack is shown to be depressed , bearded , heavily drinking and addicted to Oxycodone . After reading about the death of someone he knew , Jack appears to be ready to commit suicide by jumping off the Sixth Street Viaduct bridge . However , he is distracted by a car crash and goes to save the victims . Later , Jack visits the memorial service for the person he read about and finds himself to be the only attendee . In the last of the flashes , Kate appears and Jack discusses the island with her . It becomes clear that the sequences are actually flashforwards rather than flashbacks . Jack tells Kate about the memorial service . Kate says that she did not know about it , but she would not have attended even if she did . Jack also talks about using the " golden pass " they had received from Oceanic Airlines to fly back and forth across the Pacific Ocean every Friday , hoping that he will crash in the island . Jack laments that they should have never left and must return . However , Kate disagrees and leaves , not wanting to continue a conversation that they have apparently had before .

= = Production = =

The episode 's title is an allusion to Lewis Carroll 's novel *Through the Looking Glass* and a reference to the fictitious Dharma Initiative station featured in the previous episode . Shooting began on April 13 , 2007 and ended on May 7 , 2007 . The writers were so far behind schedule that parts of the episode were shot while later parts were still being written . Filming mostly took place on Oahu , Hawaii , with additional scenes shot in Los Angeles . The hospital scenes were filmed on the same sets used for the ABC show *Grey 's Anatomy* .

Despite not being mentioned in the official press release , then @-@ 15 @-@ year @-@ old Malcolm David Kelley returned to reprise his role as 10 @-@ year @-@ old Walt Lloyd , and received credit as a " special guest star " . Kelley 's character had left the island in the second season finale , only 26 days prior to the events of " *Through the Looking Glass* " ; however , Kelley had not filmed an episode in over a year . In his single scene , Walt has visibly aged , appears taller and has a deeper voice . The producers had hoped that Harold Perrineau , who plays Walt 's father Michael Dawson , would return in this episode , but he was busy filming the pilot for CBS ' *Demons* . Damon Lindelof and Carlton Cuse lent their voices for the unseen roles of the flight captain and newscaster , respectively .

This episode concluded the story arc about Charlie 's death , which began earlier in the season when Desmond prophesied Charlie 's death . Throughout the season , Charlie escaped death ; however , Desmond told Charlie that he had to die in order for his girlfriend , Claire Littleton , to get rescued from the island . The storyline of Charlie 's death was conceived while producing the latter part of the second season , after the storyline of Charlie 's drug addiction finished . The news of his character 's death was broken to Monaghan two episodes in advance , to which Monaghan felt "

relief " for knowing the future of his job on the show . On the night of Monaghan 's second @-@ to @-@ last day on set , he was presented with a canoe paddle that had been made by the cast and crew . Monaghan hoped to return to Lost as a guest star in flashbacks or dreams .

Jack Bender stated that Matthew Fox " really commits body and soul into the story he 's telling " and Fox questioned whether he had ever been more tired than while shooting the double episode . Like the other Lost season finales , the final cliffhanger scene was given a codename ? " The Rattlesnake in the Mailbox " ? and kept top secret . After Lindelof and Cuse wrote the scene , only Fox , Lilly , Bender , and co @-@ executive producer Jean Higgins were given copies of the script . The scene was shot with a green screen in an abandoned Honolulu parking lot with the airport edited in . Despite the security measures , a complete and detailed episode synopsis was uploaded online over a week before the episode aired . Disney investigated the leak . The leak prompted Lindelof and Cuse to enter " radio silence " , which was temporarily broken at Comic @-@ Con International 2007 . The funeral parlor that Jack visits is called " Hoffs / Drawlar " , which is an anagram of " flashforward " . The idea of flashforwards was conceived by creators Lindelof and Abrams during the show 's conception . However , Cuse and Lindelof only started fleshing out the idea at the end of the first season , after they realized that flashbacks would eventually stop being revelatory and knew that they would eventually have to switch to flashforwards . With the announcement that the series would conclude 48 episodes after " Through the Looking Glass " , they felt comfortable playing flashforwards as early as the third season finale .

Post @-@ production wrapped on May 21 , 2007 , only two days before it aired on television . The score was composed by series musician Michael Giacchino , while popular music was also featured throughout the episode . Charlie also sings a song in the episode that was written by Dominic Monaghan , who plays him . A Lost season finale is approximately twice as long the average Lost episode . Due to the episode 's length , it was split into two parts in some countries and when released on DVD . Unlike most episodes , this episode did not feature a " previously on Lost ? " recap at the start of the episode when it first aired ; however , it was originally preceded by a clip @-@ show titled " Lost : The Answers " , which recapped the third season . Cuse said that he and Lindelof think the finale is " very cool [ and ] we 're very proud of it . " Stephen McPherson , the president of ABC Entertainment , called " Through the Looking Glass " " one of the best episodes " of the series . Buena Vista Home Entertainment released " Through the Looking Glass " on the season 's DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc sets on December 11 , 2007 in Region 1 . A featurette called " Lost : On Location " features cast and crew discussing production of select episodes , including " Through the Looking Glass " . The episode was rerun for the first time on January 30 , 2008 with on @-@ screen text in the lower third of the screen , similar to VH1 's Pop @-@ up Video . These pop @-@ ups were not written by Lost 's writers due to the 2007 ? 2008 Writers Guild of America strike ; they were written by the marketing company Met / Hodder . This enhanced edition was viewed by almost 9 million Americans .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In the U.S. , the episode brought in the best ratings for Lost in fifteen episodes . The two @-@ hour Wednesday broadcast on ABC made Lost the fourth most watched series of the week with an average of 13 @. @ 86 million American viewers , below the third season average of 14 @. @ 6 million . The first hour was viewed by 12 @. @ 67 million , and the audience increased to 15 @. @ 04 million in the second hour . The episode received a 5 @. @ 9 / 15 in the key adults 18 ? 49 demographic . In the United Kingdom , the episode attracted 1 @. @ 21 million viewers , and was the second most watched program of the week on the non @-@ terrestrial channels , beaten only by Katie & Peter : The Next Chapter . In Australia , Lost was the thirty @-@ seventh most viewed show of the week , bringing in 1 @. @ 17 million viewers . In Canada , the episode placed sixteenth for the first half , with 911 @, @ 000 viewers and fifteenth for the second half , with 938 @, @ 000

viewers . The episodes were broadcast before and after American Idol .

= = = Critical response = = =

The episode garnered universal critical acclaim and is largely considered to be one of the greatest television episodes of all time . The Los Angeles Times wrote that the episode was " an unusually action @-@ packed and sanguinary spring cleaning that ? left a host of ? characters ? dead " , Access Atlanta said " it was deeply satisfying . The first hour started a bit slow but the second hour had great twists , wonderfully emotional moments , both happy and sad " , and the Associated Press said that " the powerful season @-@ ending episode redeemed the series with the shrewdness and intrigue that made it so addictive in the first place . " The San Francisco Chronicle wrote that " not only was the pace fast , the teases taut , and the answers plenty , the writers took a compelling gamble ? [ by telling ] viewers that in the future ? maybe all ? of the people on the Lost island get off . They get their wish . But in Jack , our guide through this series , the writers definitively say , ' Be careful what you wish for . ' " The San Jose Mercury News called the finale a " jaw @-@ dropping exercise in good storytelling . " The Pittsburgh Post @-@ Gazette commented that the flashforward " twist gave the saga renewed momentum as it begins its march toward a 2010 finish . " The season finale was summed up as " a mind @-@ blower , for sure , a radical two hours that gave us major fake @-@ outs , an army of dead bodies , the possibility of rescue [ and ] diverse portraits of heroism " by The Boston Globe , who added that the death of Charlie was " the most touching loss of the series so far . " The Palm Beach Post and Wizard named it the " Best Cliffhanger " of 2007 . The Chicago Tribune called it " a qualified success " with excellent pacing and action , however , the flashforward scenes were thought to be uninteresting and " clumsy " . Time ranked the episode as the best of 2007 and the " Rattlesnake in the Mailbox " as one of the ten best scenes of 2007 television .

The Futon Critic placed the episode first in the site 's annual " 50 Best Episodes " list . E ! said that " Through the Looking Glass " was possibly " the best episode ever of the entire series . " TV Guide described " Through the Looking Glass " as " a dizzying exercise in adventure , sustained tension and time @-@ shifting rug pulling [ that was ] spectacularly produced , amazingly directed and gloriously acted . " IGN gave the double episode a perfect 10 / 10 ? the best review of the season ? saying it was " nothing short of a masterpiece of storytelling with a brilliantly paced narrative . " IGN would conclude that the flashforward was the " Biggest Shock " in 2007 television . Both IGN and The Los Angeles Times would later declare " Through the Looking Glass " as the second best Lost episode , behind " The Constant " . BuddyTV praised the unpredictability , saying that " no other show can even attempt to do what Lost does . " BuddyTV would later call " Through the Looking Glass " the best finale of 2007 and Charlie 's death the saddest TV death of 2007 . " Through the Looking Glass " was TV.com 's " Editor 's Choice " for " Best Episode " of 2007 . AOL 's TV Squad gave the episode a 7 / 7 , noting that " the writers followed through on Desmond 's premonitions and successfully delivered the highly anticipated game @-@ changer . " Television Without Pity gave the third season finale an " A " . The Sydney Morning Herald wrote that Lost " may have unjumped [ the shark ] with [ the ] flashforward . " Entertainment Weekly ranked it as one of the top ten episodes of 2007 , saying that the cliffhanger " [ revealed ] new dimensions to [ Lost 's ] creative world . " Zap2It questioned " whether to be deeply frustrated ( again ) , really , really confused ( a distinct possibility ) or just in awe of the incredible mind- ( ahem ) show runners ? have pulled off . " The writing for Locke was criticized , and one IGN writer said that " it seems irrational that he would go and [ stab Naomi ] in the back without explaining himself . " Lindelof stated " that we might be willing to give [ Locke ] the benefit of the doubt for any action he took in response to [ lying , gutshot , in a pit of Dharma corpses for two days and on the verge of taking his own life ] , even if considered slightly ' out of character ' . " Film and television director and writer Kevin Smith said that " to do [ 3 ] seasons and then suddenly throw a massive curveball is just so dramatically satisfying , you just take your hats off to the writers in a big , bad way . "

= = = Awards = = =

This episode was nominated for Outstanding Directing , Outstanding Writing , and Outstanding Single @-@ Camera Picture Editing for a Drama Series for the 59th Primetime Emmy Awards , but failed to win in any of the categories . This episode was also submitted for consideration for Outstanding Drama Series " ; however , it was not nominated . For his work on this episode , Jack Bender was nominated for the Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directing ? Drama Series .