

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #63
TIME FRAME: IMMEDIATELY
AFTER [#62](#)

TEASER

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
MIDDAY

COURTNEY and JASON are kissing. An amused LAUREN looks on, happy for her friends. Suddenly a male scream sounds from outside, interrupting the calm scene in the kitchen. Courtney and Jason pull apart and turn to Lauren.

LAUREN: Did you hear that?

COURTNEY: Yeah -- it sounded like my dad.

JASON: Let's go see what's going on.

They exit the kitchen.

EXT: CHASE HOME (DRIVEWAY)
MIDDAY -- CONTINUOUS

DON is sprawled on the empty driveway, the toppled ladder several feet away. He groans in pain.

COURTNEY, JASON, and LAUREN burst through the front door. They catch sight of him almost immediately and rush to his side.

COURTNEY: Dad!

JASON: What happened?

DON: (weakly) I don't know ... the ladder ... I fell.

COURTNEY: Dad! Are you okay?

Don grunts a response, though it sounds neither positive nor negative.

LAUREN: I'll go call an ambulance.

She rushes inside, leaving Jason watching helplessly as a distraught Courtney kneels over her suffering father.

ACT ONE

INT: FITCH MANSION (ANDY'S BEDROOM)
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE and ANDY are seated on the bed. He is fiddling with her hair. She shifts restlessly, a look of discomfort on her face.

ANDY: Is something bothering you, Danielle?

DANIELLE: I'd be lying if I said it wasn't.

ANDY: I assume it's--

DANIELLE: --the whole thing with your mom. (pause) Yeah.

ANDY: Don't let it worry you. She doesn't run my life, you know.

DANIELLE: That's true. But she does run my job ...

ANDY: Don't get worked up over that. There are so many more jobs available -- jobs that are much better than being a maid. On the other hand, there's only one me.

He grins playfully at her. She is amused by his little crack, but her misery won't allow her to show any more than a brief smile.

DANIELLE: I know. That's what makes this so hard. I want to be with you, Andy. I really do. But everything is so mixed up now.

ANDY: We'll be fine, Danielle. This won't go on forever. The trick will be to keep my mother from finding out we're together -- for now.

DANIELLE: Yeah, you're right--

KATHERINE (OS): Andrew! Andrew, are you in there?

At the sound of his mother's voice out in the hallway, Andy scrambles off the bed. Danielle looks toward

the closed bedroom door in terror.

INT: HOSPITAL (WAITING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

COURTNEY is pacing the floor of the semi-crowded room while a seated JASON and LAUREN watch her nervously.

JASON: Court, sit down. You're not gonna do your father anything good by making yourself crazy.

COURTNEY: It's not gonna help me to sit down. I'll be as jumpy as I am walking around.

JASON: Well, then, you're not gonna do me any good if you keep making dizzy like that. (pause) Stop pacing already.

She halts.

COURTNEY: Fine. I just wish I knew how he was doing -- and I wish my mother would get here already. I talked to her like half-an-hour ago! She should be here by now!

LAUREN: Calm down, Courtney. She'll be here.

COURTNEY: What if something happened to her too?

JASON: Nothing has happened to her. She's fine and she's on her way.

COURTNEY: I hope you're right.

JASON: (grinning) I'm always right.

COURTNEY: In your own little world, Jay.

She snaps out of this momentary jocularly and returns to her previous anxiety.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): I wonder how my dad's doing.

LAUREN: We got him here as quickly as we could, Court. There's nothing else we could have done.

COURTNEY: I know. I just wish stuff like this would stop happening!

JASON: Life is full of disappointment.

COURTNEY: Yeah, for normal people! My life is full of complete and total disaster!

LAUREN: I'm sure your father is gonna be fine, Courtney.

COURTNEY: I hope so. (pause) But I swear, I'm gonna figure out what's going on here.

JASON: What do you mean?

COURTNEY: You guys know as well as I do that he didn't fall off that ladder all by himself.

They both give her confused looks.

ACT TWO

INT: FITCH MANSION (ANDY'S BEDROOM)
AFTERNOON

ANDY and DANIELLE have scrambled at the sound of his mother's voice out in the hallway.

KATHERINE (OS): Andrew, are you in there? I need to speak with you!

ANDY: Uh-- just a second, Mother! I'm just--

The door swings open and KATHERINE steps inside.

KATHERINE: There you are.

Andy looks around, assuming they've been caught. To his astonishment, Danielle is nowhere in sight. He breathes a sigh of relief and begins fiddling with his collar.

ANDY: I was just getting changed.

KATHERINE: Oh, I didn't mean to barge in.

ANDY: Of course not. (pause) So, what did you need to see me about?

KATHERINE: I was wondering if you could come down to the study and help me sort out some of the material for our taxes.

ANDY: All right.

Katherine begins leading the way downstairs. Once she is gone, Andy takes one last sweeping view of the room, and, not seeing Danielle, follows his mother, closing the door behind him.

Upon hearing the sound of the door closing, Danielle climbs out from underneath the bed.

DANIELLE: (sotto voce) That was close.

She sighs and pushes her messed-up hair out of her face.

INT: HOSPITAL (WAITING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

JASON and LAUREN are perplexed by COURTNEY'S last statement.

LAUREN: What do you mean, he didn't fall by himself?

COURTNEY: Isn't it obvious? Someone pushed him off that ladder!

JASON: Who would push your father off a ladder?

COURTNEY: Oh, I don't know ... maybe the same person who broke the window and cut the phone lines at the cabin?

JASON: That's crazy, Court--

COURTNEY: Is it? Doesn't it seem a little odd that two weird things have happened around me in the past few days?

LAUREN: That's a little ... out there.

COURTNEY: Think about it! It makes perfect sense!

JASON: I don't know ...

LAUREN: Who would do something like that?

COURTNEY: That's even easier than the last question!

They give her blank looks, not understanding.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): It's Shannon!

ACT THREE

INT: FITCH MANSION (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE is straightening up in the living room when WALTER, the butler, enters.

WALTER: Good afternoon, Danielle.

DANIELLE: Hi, Walter. How's it going?

WALTER: Pretty well. Thanks for asking. And you?

DANIELLE: I'm okay ... There is one thing that's been bothering me, though.

WALTER: What would that be, if you don't mind my asking?

DANIELLE: No, not at all. (pause) Actually, there's a question I'd like to ask you. You've been with the Fitches a long time, haven't you?

WALTER: Twenty-eight years and counting.

DANIELLE: Wow. I was wondering, is there any particular reason why Mrs. Fitch is so controlling with Andy?

WALTER: I can't recall a particular instance that began it -- it's been going on his entire life. She's always been protective of him -- he is the only child, after all. She began to let up as he got older, but once Mr. Fitch passed away, she only got worse.

DANIELLE: Hmm. It just seems like she doesn't want him to have a life of his own.

WALTER: It's rather an odd predicament. I believe that she would love him to have his own life and be happy, but she wants to be able to observe everything that happens.

DANIELLE: I see. (pause) Well, thanks, Walter. It's just been bothering me a little bit.

WALTER: I suppose I've gotten used to it in all my years with the family. Mrs. Fitch gets what Mrs. Fitch wants. It's just always been a part of life here -- and I suppose it always will be.

His words drive into Danielle, suggesting that there may be no future at all for her and Andy.

INT: HOSPITAL (WAITING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

JASON and LAUREN stare at COURTNEY as if she has two heads.

JASON: She's in jail, Courtney.

COURTNEY: Shannon doesn't let little things like that get in her way -- if she's even still behind bars, that is.

LAUREN: She hasn't escaped, Court.

COURTNEY: I'd like to think not, but who knows with her? She's a freakin' lunatic!

JASON: She's about to be sentenced for a number of crimes she pled guilty to, including two counts of first-degree murder! There's no way they're letting her out of that jail.

LAUREN: It won't happen, Courtney. I'm sure this wasn't Shannon's doing.

COURTNEY: I wouldn't be so sure ...

She cuts herself off, seeing HELEN enter the waiting room frantically.

HELEN: I got the message you left on my voicemail! What happened?

LAUREN: Don fell off the ladder while he was working on the gutter--

COURTNEY: (making air quotes) "Fell" off the ladder.

HELEN: What do you mean, Courtney?

COURTNEY: I'll explain later. (pause) Anyway, we're waiting for the doctors to tell us how he's doing. No one's come out to talk to us yet.

HELEN: Oh my God.

She clasps her hands over her mouth, trying to absorb the situation.

HELEN (CONT'D): How-- What kind of condition was he in when they brought him in?

COURTNEY: He mumbled a little to us while we waited for the ambulance. He was still breathing and everything.

HELEN: I just hope he's all right. I don't know what I'd do without him.

COURTNEY: Neither do I, Mom.

She puts her hands on her mother's shoulders and they stand quietly for a few moments. Jason and Lauren stand by the side respectfully.

DR. SMITH enters the waiting room and, recognizing Courtney, makes his way over to them.

COURTNEY: Dr. Smith! Do you have any news about my dad?

HELEN: What condition is he in?

Out on Dr. Smith's solemn countenance.

ACT FOUR

INT: FITCH MANSION (DANIELLE'S ROOM)
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE is curled up in an armchair, reading, when the phone rings. She promptly picks it up.

DANIELLE: Hello?

On the other end is BRENT, in his hotel room in New York.

BRENT: Hey, Danielle! How's it going?

DANIELLE: Brent! Hey! I'm okay, I guess.

BRENT: I take that to mean something's wrong.

DANIELLE: (caught off-guard) What are you talking about?

BRENT: You may be my sister, and I may love you, but you're not that great an actress, I've gotta tell you.

DANIELLE: Is it that obvious?

BRENT: Yep. (pause) So, is it anything you want to talk about?

DANIELLE: Yeah, it couldn't hurt to get this off my chest.

BRENT: Problems with Andy?

DANIELLE: Andy himself is not the problem -- it's his mother.

BRENT: Uh-oh.

DANIELLE: Exactly. Apparently she's told him she doesn't want him getting involved with "the help."

BRENT: I see. So, he broke up with you?

DANIELLE: No, he told me he has no intention of doing that.

BRENT: And she hasn't fired you yet, I presume?

DANIELLE: No. I don't think she's even aware that I know about her not wanting us to be together.

BRENT: So what are you guys doing?

DANIELLE: We're trying to keep it a secret and pretend we're just friends. (pause) I just don't like having to creep around this stupid mansion every time I wanna be alone with him for two minutes.

BRENT: Yeah, I could see how that might get annoying.

DANIELLE: Oh, it's more than annoying. I'm about ready to lose it, let me tell you.

She sighs deeply.

INT: HOSPITAL (WAITING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

DR. SMITH takes a deep breath, preparing to tell HELEN, COURTNEY, JASON, and LAUREN about Don's condition.

DR. SMITH: Mr. Chase is-- well, he's out of immediate danger. He has some broken bones and a few cuts and bruises, but there was really very little trauma to the head.

HELEN: That's wonderful!

She observes his stern face.

HELEN (CONT'D): Isn't it?

DR. SMITH: Of course it is. However, he's lapsed into a coma.

COURTNEY: What?!?

DR. SMITH: Your father is unconscious, I'm afraid.

HELEN: Is he going to be all right?

DR. SMITH: It's too soon to tell. Like I said, he's not in any absolute danger right now. The trouble might come later, if he doesn't come around in a few hours.

JASON: My brother was in a coma for a while -- you remember.

Dr. Smith nods.

JASON (CONT'D): Is there any chance of Don -- Mr. Chase -- having amnesia when he wakes up?

DR. SMITH: It's a possibility, given the nature of the injury.

HELEN: So is that pretty much where we stand right now?

DR. SMITH: Yes. There's not much more I can tell you right now.

HELEN: Okay, thanks.

DR. SMITH: Of course.

He exits the waiting room.

COURTNEY: That's great, Mom, isn't it? Dad should be okay.

HELEN: I hope you're right, Courtney.

ACT FIVE

INT: FITCH MANSION (DANIELLE'S ROOM)
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE is wrapping up her phone conversation.

DANIELLE: Okay, Brent, I'll talk to you later. Bye.

BRENT (OS): Bye.

She hangs up the phone, and almost simultaneously there is a knock on the door.

DANIELLE: Come in.

She does not move from her chair as the door opens a crack and ANDY peeks in.

DANIELLE (CONT'D): Hey. Come on in.

He steps inside and shuts the door carefully behind him.

DANIELLE (CONT'D): So, did your mom wanna take a few minutes out of her day to degrade me behind my back again?

ANDY: No, she actually wanted to deal with the taxes, surprisingly enough.

DANIELLE: She really is crazy! Who the hell does their taxes a month and a half before they're due?

They both share a short laugh before Andy moves closer to her. He kneels beside the chair, taking her hand in his.

ANDY: Don't worry about this whole situation. It'll all work out -- I promise it will.

DANIELLE: Maybe there's a way to may work out sooner rather than later.

ANDY: What do you mean?

DANIELLE: What if I quit my job? I'm sure I could get another job, even if I have to live off what I set aside for my demo tape for a little while. I can always put that off another few months -- Lord knows I've waited long enough.

ANDY: Nonsense. Why don't I just pay for your demo tape?

DANIELLE: No, I'm gonna do it myself. I appreciate the offer, though.

ANDY: Well, either way, I'm not gonna let you quit your job without having something to fall back on.

DANIELLE: Andy--

ANDY: No buts about it.

She opens her mouth to speak again, but he puts his index finger over her lips to quiet her. Taking advantage of the brief silence, he kisses her gently.

INT: HOSPITAL (WAITING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

COURTNEY, LAUREN, JASON, and HELEN are gathered in the waiting room.

JASON: Did anyone else notice how ... normal Dr. Smith was acting?

COURTNEY: Yeah, it was strange. He's usually so eccentric.

LAUREN: Maybe the powers-that-be told him that if he's gonna be in control of people's lives, he needs to act like a normal person.

JASON: It's possible.

They stand in silence for a moment.

HELEN: I can't believe this is happening ...

COURTNEY: I can.

HELEN: What are you talking about, Courtney? You've been dropping these ominous little hints since I got here.

COURTNEY: I was telling Jason and Lauren before, I think Dad was pushed off that ladder.

Helen is stunned by this possibility.

HELEN: How could that be?

COURTNEY: Two words: Shannon Parish.

HELEN: But she's in jail!

LAUREN: That's what we said.

COURTNEY: She's not gonna let jail get in the way of getting her revenge on me for getting Jason and putting her behind bars! (pause) She hired someone to attack me -- what's to say she wouldn't do it again? Except this time, she's sending me all these little "warnings" -- first the incident at the cabin and now having Dad pushed off the ladder!

The others just stare at her, unwilling to believe this.

INT: HOSPITAL ROOM
AFTERNOON

A comatose DON is lying in the bed, hooked up to various machines. The door opens; DR. SMITH enters and approaches the bed slowly.

DR. SMITH: (quietly) Mr. Chase ...

He stands over the bed with a taut look on his face, looking down at the unconscious Don.

DR. SMITH (CONT'D): (quietly) Mr. Chase, wake up. You have to. (pause) You have to wake up.

He glances towards the door nervously and then looks back at Don. He swallows anxiously.

Out on the doctor's uptight mien as he stares down at the comatose patient.

END OF EPISODE #63

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