

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #72
TIME FRAME: TWO DAYS
AFTER [#71](#)

TEASER

INT: CHASE HOME (COURTNEY'S ROOM)

MIDDAY

The door bursts open and COURTNEY and LAUREN enter, obviously on a mission. Courtney heads to the bookshelf while Lauren makes her way to the desk.

COURTNEY: Dammit! Where is it?

LAUREN: It's a "Cosmo," right?

COURTNEY: Yeah ... the cover is kinda pinkish. I really wanna give you that quiz. It's so hilarious!

LAUREN: We'll find it ...

They resume digging. Courtney scans the sides of the magazines lined up on the shelf, but to no avail. Lauren separates the mounds of papers on her friend's desk, but finds nothing either. She is about to give up when she shifts one final paper; an orange piece of construction paper floats to the floor. She picks it up and turns it over.

COURTNEY: Wait-

Lauren looks up, but it is too late. She has seen the message on the paper, spelled out in letters cut out of magazines:

"PREPARE TO DIE, BITCH!"

INT: VISION PUBLISHING (DIANE'S OFFICE)

MIDDAY

DIANE is pacing the floor of her office as the spring sun streams in. She is concentrating hard, attempting to sort something out in her mind. There is a knock on the door.

DIANE: Come in!

The door swings open and TIM enters.

DIANE (CONT'D): Hi.

Tim glares at her for a minute, unhappy to even be in the same room with her.

TIM: Hi.

He remains by the door.

TIM (CONT'D): I got your message.

DIANE: Oh, good.

TIM: So what did you want to talk to me about?

Diane opens her mouth several times but closes it just as quickly, trying to phrase her next statement correctly.

DIANE: Something really important has come up ... something I need to discuss with you.

ACT ONE

INT: FISHER HOME (KITCHEN)

MIDDAY

CLAIRE is seated at the kitchen table, a cup of coffee in her hands. PAULA takes a seat across from her daughter-in-law, holding her own coffee.

CLAIRE: I thought those two would never fall asleep. (pause) Why is it that the more tired kids are, the less likely they are to actually sleep?

PAULA: (chuckling) It's one of the great mysteries of parenting.

The elder Mrs. Fisher sips her coffee.

PAULA (CONT'D): Now that they're asleep, we'll have a chance to talk. So tell me, dear, how is everything going?

CLAIRE: For once, I can honestly say that things are going beautifully.

PAULA: How are you managing with two young kids around all of a sudden?

CLAIRE: It's difficult - really difficult. Of course, it would be too easy for them to wake up at the same times in the middle of the night, you know? One is up at two and the other is up at a quarter to three.

She smiles.

CLAIRE (CONT'D): I wouldn't trade it for the world.

PAULA: At least you're enjoying it. Just make the most of your time with those kids - believe me, they grow up overnight.

CLAIRE: It's amazing. Tim and I are finally living the life I've always dreamed of. It's just us and our kids - nothing weird getting in the way.

She takes a sip of her coffee, grinning broadly.

INT: CHASE HOME (COURTNEY'S ROOM)
MIDDAY

LAUREN holds up the orange sheet of paper, which COURTNEY snatches away from her.

COURTNEY: I, uh ...

LAUREN: What was that?

COURTNEY: Oh boy. (pause) I found it in my skating bag about a week ago.

LAUREN: What?!?

COURTNEY: It was that day you picked me up from the rink, when we went to the mall.

LAUREN: Why didn't you tell me?

COURTNEY: I-I don't know. I didn't want to make a big deal of it. I figured it was just another of Shannon's little threats.

LAUREN: Did you tell anyone about it?

COURTNEY: Yeah, Jason saw it. Then I told my mom. I didn't wanna make my dad crazy - it was right after he came out of his coma.

LAUREN: Did anybody do anything about it?

COURTNEY: Well, my mom had the police check it out. There were no prints on it or anything, but they're making sure that Shannon has no way of pulling the strings on any crazy-ass plan. So hopefully this is the end of all this madness.

Lauren's eyes are almost glazed over as she stares straight ahead.

LAUREN: You found it on the day I came to pick you up?

COURTNEY: Yeah ...

Lauren recalls something that she simply found odd at the time ...

CUT TO:

EXT: SKATING RINK
MIDDAY

From inside her car, LAUREN sees DR. SMITH walking away from the rink.

CUT TO:

INT: CHASE HOME (COURTNEY'S ROOM)
MIDDAY

COURTNEY snaps her fingers in front of LAUREN'S face to get her attention.

COURTNEY: Hello? Earth to Lauren!

A dismayed Lauren looks up at her friend.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): What? What's wrong?

LAUREN: Oh my God ...

She trails off, shaking her head in disbelief.

ACT TWO

INT: VISION PUBLISHING (DIANE'S OFFICE)
MIDDAY

A considerable distance between them, a nervous DIANE addresses TIM.

DIANE: I have a really big decision to make.

TIM: Which would be what?

Diane steps behind her desk and leans against the back of her leather chair, fidgeting as she speaks.

DIANE: I-

She takes a deep breath and stands up straight.

DIANE (CONT'D): I was offered a new job.

TIM: (annoyed) So take it. I don't think anyone would miss you here.

She is genuinely hurt to hear him say this, but Tim is completely without pity for her. She has simply caused too much pain, not only to him but to the people he loves, for him to feel bad about taking shots at her.

DIANE: That's not all.

TIM: Why?

DIANE: Because ... it's a company based in LA.

Tim's jaw drops, knowing this could affect the current arrangement they have worked out with Samantha.

INT: CHASE HOME (COURTNEY'S ROOM)
MIDDAY

LAUREN, looking stunned, steadies herself on a chair as COURTNEY stands by curiously.

COURTNEY: What?

LAUREN: I don't believe it ...

COURTNEY: (becoming frustrated) What?!?

LAUREN: That day-when I was waiting for you in the parking lot. I saw something.

COURTNEY: Was it something earth-shattering enough to act like you just got shot?

LAUREN: Oh, it's big.

She tries to regain her composure.

LAUREN (CONT'D): I saw that Dr. Smith guy at the rink that day.

COURTNEY: What?

LAUREN: I recognized him from when we were at the hospital visiting your dad. I thought it was kinda weird then, but now it makes sense ...

COURTNEY: Why would he give me a death threat?

LAUREN: I don't know, but it's too much of a coincidence to forget about.

COURTNEY: But there's no reason he'd do that - and there's no reason to believe he'd do that-

She interrupts herself as her eyes go wide.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): Oh my gosh! I remember something Jason told me ...

An intrigued Lauren awaits more details.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): When Jason's sister was being stalked, Dr. Smith was arrested for it. He was a major suspect for a little while.

Lauren gasps.

ACT THREE

INT: FISHER HOME (KITCHEN)
MIDDAY

PAULA and CLAIRE continue their discussion over coffee.

PAULA: I'm so glad that you and Tim are finally happy, dear. It was painful to watch the two of you struggle through the messes with your father and Diane.

CLAIRE: Yeah, well, luckily those are two people we don't have to worry about anymore. My dad-well, he's gone.

She pauses for a moment, consumed by memories both good and bad of her late father, James Robbins.

CLAIRE (CONT'D): Sometimes I don't know what to feel when I think about him.

She sighs and drops her hands down as if giving up on a pleasant ending to that situation.

PAULA: And that says volumes about you as a person, Claire. If you were just thrilled that he's gone and out of your life forever, you'd be inhuman. You loved your father - or at least the man you thought he was.

CLAIRE: Yes, I did, but that's exactly the thing: I loved someone who was basically a character in this whole, huge, elaborate play. I tried not to think about all the times he kind of ignored me or brushed me off for business; I only wanted to remember him as a doting daddy. And that worked - I could have lived with those memories.

PAULA: But it was impossible, Claire. Eventually you were going to find out about what he really did.

CLAIRE: Of course. He overstepped his boundaries when he went after Tim. (pause) The problem is that all the horrible things left me with this tainted image of the man who played with me as a little girl, the man who took me to the park and the fair and everywhere else.

PAULA: Claire, it's only natural. Finding out that your father was involved with the mob was the shock of your life.

CLAIRE: (her grin indicating her ability to find humor in such situations) Aside from my husband winding up with amnesia or finding out that another woman was having his baby.

PAULA: Yes, but in the end, neither of those things really changed your opinion of Tim. In fact, they probably only showed you how much you really loved him. (pause) Everything that happened with your father ended in tragedy.

CLAIRE: I know. I mean, I don't blame myself for his death anymore ... it's just that I can't help but feel guilty about being relieved that he's gone.

PAULA: You're normal, Claire. Not to scare you, but you're going to have to face those conflicting emotions everyday of your life - and you know what? I'm confident that you can handle it all.

CLAIRE: With Tim by my side, I can handle anything.

INT: VISION PUBLISHING (DIANE'S OFFICE)

MIDDAY

TIM is stunned by DIANE'S announcement.

TIM: What?!? You-you can't go to LA!

DIANE: In case you didn't notice, you don't own me, Tim.

TIM: I'm aware of that. (pause) But what about our daughter?

He eyes her with distrust.

TIM (CONT'D): I doubt you're planning on dropping what rights you do have to see Samantha.

DIANE: And you're right. But I haven't made any decisions yet. I'm just ... well, I guess I'm trying to plan for the future. I can't live like this anymore.

TIM: Like what? Don't think that you'll get the custody arrangement changed by moving away! The rights you have are the rights you have, end of story.

DIANE: Like what? In case you haven't noticed, I'm pretty much the town pariah right now.

TIM: (his voice dripping with sarcasm) I must've missed that one. I could never imagine you doing anything to deserve a title like that.

DIANE: All I'm saying, Tim, is that I'm seriously considering taking this job.

Tim bites his lip, worried by this possibility.

INT: CHASE HOME (COURTNEY'S ROOM)
MIDDAY

COURTNEY and LAUREN have both just realized that Dr. Smith is a very likely suspect in the odd things that have been happening. Their dazed expressions, eyes glued straight ahead in shock, register their surprise.

LAUREN: But I still don't get it. Why would Dr. Smith do all these things to you?

COURTNEY: I don't know ...

LAUREN: I mean, if he gave you that death threat, there's a pretty good chance he also pushed your dad off the ladder, right?

COURTNEY: Right.

LAUREN: But why?

COURTNEY: I couldn't tell you.

She looks around as if half-expecting the answer to be written on the walls.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): And there's only one way to find out for sure.

ACT FOUR

EXT: APARTMENT BUILDING
AFTERNOON

On this crisp spring day, CLAIRE has opted to walk the few blocks from her in-laws' house back to the apartment building. She pushes the double stroller which holds a sleeping TRAVIS and SAMANTHA. She walks up to the front of the building and pauses.

CLAIRE: (sotto voce) Paula's right ... our troubles are behind us. I need to just appreciate that fact and try to leave all my pain in the past.

She opens the door to the building and pushes the stroller inside. Once she steps inside, the door swings closed.

Outside the building, a MAN peers through the glass door to catch a final glimpse of Claire as she enters the elevator. Turns away and leans against the wall, out of Claire's line of vision, and grins wickedly.

INT: VISION PUBLISHING (DIANE'S OFFICE)
AFTERNOON

A speechless TIM looks to DIANE.

DIANE: Tim, you have to understand ... I wanna spend every minute possible with Samantha. I'd love to be here to watch her grow up, to do all the things that a mother does with a daughter.

Her voice, having raised to an excited pitch at the mention of these things, falls again. Her entire face follows suit as she turns her back.

DIANE (CONT'D): But let's face it. Things are never gonna be like that, Tim.

He is caught off-guard by her sheer honesty, so uncharacteristic for Diane Bishop. His voice softens as he speaks to her.

TIM: So you're really serious about this, huh?

DIANE: My career is basically the only thing I can control anymore.

TIM: That's not true, Diane. You can be happy - I know you can.

DIANE: Maybe there is someone out there for me, Tim. Maybe there's some minute bit of happiness just waiting for me. But it sure as hell isn't here in King's Bay!

She is unable to even face him as she says this, instead continuing to gaze out the window. Tim is surprised by his sympathy for her as he stands there with his hands in his pockets, unsure of what else to say.

INT: HOSPITAL CORRIDOR
AFTERNOON

The elevator doors slide open, allowing COURTNEY and LAUREN to step out into the hallway.

LAUREN: So where's his office?

Courtney looks both ways, trying to stir up memories of her last visit several months before.

COURTNEY: Left, I do believe.

They head down the hallway. Lauren in particular is careful to read the nameplate on each door. Suddenly Courtney jerks to a stop as they pass a water fountain.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): It's right around here.

She looks around for a moment and they turn down another corridor to the left. Courtney gestures to Lauren to follow her. They walk several feet before Courtney turns into Dr. Smith's office.

As the girls look into the office via the open door, their jaws drop in shock.

COURTNEY (CONT'D): Oh my God ...

END OF EPISODE #72

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