

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #87
TIME FRAME: IMMEDIATELY
AFTER [#86](#)

TEASER

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. BUILDING (HALLWAY)
MIDDAY

CLAIRE is standing in the open doorway, a look of utter concern and panic upon her face. The MAN who has been tailing her around town is now standing before her.

CLAIRE: I don't believe it ... What are you doing here?

MAN: I came to see you.

CLAIRE: Don't say that!

MAN: I'm back, Claire.

CLAIRE: No! No, you're not!

She rushes behind the door to the apartment and begins to shove it closed. Unfortunately, the man is able to prop it open simply by leaning his shoulder against it.

MAN: You're not gonna get rid of me that easily, Claire. Not this time.

INT: SARAH & BRENT'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
MIDDAY

BRENT stares incredulously at SARAH.

BRENT: How can you say that? Doesn't my opinion mean anything to you?

SARAH: You'd be surprised just how little.

Her voice drips with sarcasm.

BRENT: I don't get you sometimes. Why are you so determined to prove Matt innocent?

SARAH: Because I truly, honestly believe that he is! This is something I have to do!

BRENT: Even at the expense of your marriage?

This comment, which sounds eerily like an ultimatum, hits Sarah exactly how it was intended to.

ACT ONE

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

With a final push against the door, the MAN forces his way inside the apartment. CLAIRE simply stands back, too shocked to act.

MAN: So, are you glad to see me?

CLAIRE: Glad?!? How can you even ask me something like that?

MAN: It's been too long.

Her eyes peek up at him with clear hostility. That awful face ... It had been the source of so many painful memories ...

CLAIRE: Not long enough, if you ask me.

MAN: What is wrong with you? I thought we could put everything behind us.

CLAIRE: After what you did to me? After the way you disregarded every ounce of love I used to have for you? Good luck!

She pulls the door open and points out into the hallway, but he does not take the clue.

MAN: Like I said, I'm not leaving that easily, Claire.

CLAIRE: You have to. Now get out, Ryan.

INT: SARAH & BRENT'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

BRENT does not even waver as he awaits SARAH's response.

SARAH: What kind of question is that?

BRENT: A very reasonable one. Are you really willing to risk the well-being of our marriage just to defend someone you hardly know?

SARAH: This isn't about Matt! Why can't you understand that?

BRENT: Oh, how silly of me ... What exactly is it about, then?

SARAH: You and me! I mean, if you can't trust my decisions -- or at least respect them -- then what kind of marriage do we have?

BRENT: You know what? I really don't wanna deal with you right now. Go ahead and do whatever the hell you want!

Without another word, he heads out the door and slams it.

Sarah is practically beside herself, upset about the argument but at the same time having no second thoughts about her decision to assist Matt.

EXT: SARAH & BRENT'S APT.

MIDDAY -- CONTINUOUS

MOLLY and MATT are standing in silence when BRENT storms out of the apartment. He walks right past them.

MOLLY: Brent--

She grabs his shoulder, but he just brushes her off and keeps going.

MATT: You know what? I'm gonna get out of here. It was a mistake to even come to Sarah.

MOLLY: Do what you have to. I'm gonna go try and talk some sense into Brent.

Molly speeds off after her brother-in-law, leaving Matt standing outside the apartment. Despite what he has said, he is unsure if he should leave without speaking to Sarah once more.

ACT TWO

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
MIDDAY

RYAN remains solidly in his place, despite CLAIRE's gesturing out into the hallway.

RYAN: Will you hang on? I'm not here to cause you any trouble ... I just wanted to see you again.

CLAIRE: Well, you've seen me, haven't you?

RYAN: We need to talk, Claire.

CLAIRE: About what? As far as I'm concerned, there's nothing we can talk about.

RYAN: What is this? You're just playing dumb?

CLAIRE: No, I remember perfectly what you did to me. But that isn't anything I want to dredge up. I'd prefer for it to stay as hidden as possible.

RYAN: I've changed. I really have.

CLAIRE: I don't care if you've changed or not. You raped me!

The sound of that dreadful word forces Ryan to shiver involuntarily.

EXT: APT. BUILDING (PARKING LOT)
MIDDAY

BRENT, still fuming, rushes ahead blindly towards his car. Seconds later, MOLLY comes running out and catches up with him.

MOLLY: Brent, hang on!

BRENT: Why?

MOLLY: Because we need to talk.

BRENT: Talk? About what?

MOLLY: Well, for starters, what are you doing storming out of here like a bat out of hell?

BRENT: Let's just say I've had enough of your sister.

MOLLY: Because of the Matt thing?

BRENT: Partially, yeah. But I am sick and tired of dealing with all these wild ideas she works up.

MOLLY: It's part of who she is, Brent.

BRENT: Is that so?

MOLLY: You, of all people, should know that.

A frown pulls Brent's mouth downward as he considers this -- after all, how well does he really know Sarah?

BRENT: Should I?

ACT THREE

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

A momentary silence has fallen over both CLAIRE and RYAN after her last comment. His discomfort forces him to break it rather quickly, though.

RYAN: Do you still honestly consider that a rape?

CLAIRE: Of course I do! What else would I call it?

RYAN: Oh, I don't know ... Doesn't the fact that you were totally willing to do it count for anything?

CLAIRE: Totally willing? Hello! I was absolutely dazed and confused!

RYAN: But it's not like I forced you to do it!

CLAIRE: Maybe not, but you knew damn well exactly how upset I was about my father.

RYAN: Yeah, I heard about his ... demise. I'm sorry.

CLAIRE: Don't be. And don't try to change the subject. If you wanna talk, I think this is definitely top priority.

Ryan says nothing, unable to make anything sound right no matter how he tries to justify it in his mind.

CLAIRE: You took advantage of me and you know it!

RYAN: Maybe, but I was desperate, Claire! I couldn't bear to lose you!

CLAIRE: Oh, yeah. That was a pretty slick way of endearing yourself to me.

RYAN: I was a stupid teenager! I had a chance, however ridiculous, of hanging onto you for at least a little while longer. Why wouldn't I have taken it?

CLAIRE: Someone with a little more self-control might have, Ryan.

RYAN: Well, excuse me, but do recall how I was brought up? My father is a mobster, for God's sake!

CLAIRE: Yeah, how is Nick? Still up to his old tricks?

RYAN: I don't know. I try not to get mixed up in that.

CLAIRE: Wow, I'm surprised. It looked like you were right on course to follow in your dear old dad's footsteps.

RYAN: That's what I'm trying to tell you, Claire. I'm not the same person I was back then. Every day I wish I hadn't done what I did to you ... I can't change the past. None of us can.

CLAIRE: I'm all too aware of that.

He takes her right hand and clasps it in-between both of his.

RYAN: What I can do, however, is leave the past in the past -- and work to have the clearest future I possibly can.

INT: SARAH & BRENT'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

A stunned SARAH is just standing in the middle of the room, arms folded, with her eyes focused down on the floor, when the door slowly slides open. MATT peeks his head inside.

MATT: Are you okay?

SARAH: To tell the truth, no.

He makes no further movements, remaining half-inside the doorway.

SARAH: Come in, you bozo.

MATT: You sure?

SARAH: I'm positive. You're the only one I can bear to talk to right now.

Matt steps cautiously inside the apartment, taking care to close the door gently.

MATT: You're just angry at Brent, that's all.

SARAH: It seems like my marriage is just one big argument lately.

MATT: You guys are just having some rough times. Everyone has them.

SARAH: I just don't understand why Brent can't -- won't -- understand where I'm coming from. It's not like I'm hurting him by doing this. I'm helping you because I want to -- end of story.

MATT: Maybe that's not how he sees it.

SARAH: How so?

MATT: What Brent is seeing is that you're trying to defy him for the sake of defying him.

SARAH: Well, maybe he should look a little harder.

MATT: You know what? My being here has caused nothing but problems. It was stupid to begin with -- I hardly even know you. I'm just gonna get out of here and go back to New York. I'll deal with this on my own.

He doesn't even hesitate in heading for the door. Just as quickly, though, Sarah's voice halts him.

SARAH: No, Matt. You can't leave.

ACT FOUR

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
MIDDAY

CLAIRE pulls her hand out of RYAN's hold.

CLAIRE: Whoa, whoa. Hold it right there.

RYAN: What?

CLAIRE: First of all, did you honestly think you could just waltz on in here and get me to welcome you back with open arms?

RYAN: No -- yes - maybe. I don't know. I was hoping, I guess.

He speaks with the sort of unceasing flow that suggests words that have been worked out mentally so many times, but really cannot come out right until they are actually spoken.

RYAN: I know I did some stupid things -- the worst of which was taking advantage of you that night in Chicago. No matter how I try to justify it, it was wrong, plain and simple. But you have to understand, I've grown up. I'm not the same guy I was fifteen years ago. There's only one thing that's stayed the same: My feelings for you.

Though tempted to shoot back with some sarcastic comment, Claire's intelligent side gets the best of her and she bites her tongue.

RYAN: I've tried to move on -- God knows I've tried. But everything I've wanted in a woman, everything I'm looking for, I had in you.

CLAIRE: You know what's funny? You say you've changed. How are you to know that I haven't?

RYAN: I don't know that. But I what I've been hoping is that you've just grown, that everything I loved about you then has matured into things I'll love even more.

CLAIRE: Well, I have changed, Ryan. For starters, I'm married.

His shoulders and eyes drop simultaneously.

RYAN: That's what I was worried about. I saw that you've got two kids.

CLAIRE: Actually, only one is mine. The other is my stepdaughter. But yes, I'm happily married.

His last remark hits another note inside her head.

CLAIRE: You noticed I have kids, you said? That means you're the one who's been following me around.

RYAN: You knew about it?

CLAIRE: Not really. I had this awful feeling -- I thought my father was back! But the flowers you left for me at the hospital proved to me that someone was watching me.

RYAN: I couldn't bring myself to talk to you then. I just left the flowers and ran.

CLAIRE: Well, you did a damn good job of freaking me out. I--

She is interrupted by knocking on the now-closed door. Both of them turn to it. From outside, Claire hears her husband's voice.

TIM: Claire, I'm home!

A look of panic strikes her.

EXT: APT. BUILDING (PARKING LOT)
MIDDAY

MOLLY has stopped BRENT right next to his car.

MOLLY: What's that supposed to mean?

BRENT: All I'm saying is that I'm finding out there's a lot more to Sarah than I knew before.

MOLLY: She's a complicated person, Brent.

BRENT: A little too complicated, if you ask me. It's like trying to talk to a brick wall when you try to convince her of something.

MOLLY: Believe me, I know it better than almost anyone. I grew up with her. That's just the way she is.

BRENT: Yeah, well, I don't like it.

He gets into his car.

MOLLY: Where are you going?

BRENT: I just need some time alone, okay?

He pulls the door closed and starts up the car. Molly steps back onto the curb as Brent drives away.

MOLLY: (to herself) I hate to see you hurting like this, Brent ... especially when my sister is at fault. But what can I do to stop it?

ACT FIVE

INT: TIM & CLAIRE'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

CLAIRE is horrified at the sound of her husband's voice. She turns to RYAN in desperation, her voice low.

CLAIRE: You need to get out of here!

Understanding the urgency of the situation, Ryan lowers his voice accordingly as he responds.

RYAN: Just go out and meet him in the hallway. I'll take care of myself.

TIM: (from outside the door) Claire!

CLAIRE: Coming!

RYAN: Just go!

Though hesitant, Claire pulls the door open and steps out into the hallway. She immediately throws her arms around TIM and kisses him right on the lips.

CLAIRE: Hey there.

TIM: Hey.

CLAIRE: So how was your trip?

TIM: It was fine ... but I missed you.

CLAIRE: I missed you too.

TIM: C'mon, let's go inside.

Before she can hold him back, Tim has stepped through the door. She follows, and is relieved to find that Ryan is nowhere in sight.

TIM: So how has everything been around here?

CLAIRE: Fine ... nothing out of the ordinary.

Looking past him momentarily, she spots Ryan through the window, out on the fire escape. He waves goodbye before slinking away.

Tim again hugs Claire.

TIM: I'm so glad to be home.

Claire utters an affirmative noise, but as she rests her head on Tim's shoulder, her uneasiness is quite visible.

INT: SARAH & BRENT'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

Halfway to the door, MATT turns back around to face SARAH.

MATT: Why? I'm not doing this because I'm angry or anything, so don't ask me to stay because you feel bad. I understand what a huge sacrifice this would be, and to be perfectly honest, I'm surprised you even agreed in the first place. But I think it would be best if I just left.

SARAH: No. This is something I wanna do.

MATT: Are you sure, Sarah?

SARAH: I'm positive. And I know exactly what our first move should be.

MATT: What?

SARAH: We're flying to New York tomorrow to get busy on your case.

This catches Matt completely by surprise.

MATT: You can't do that.

SARAH: I can do whatever the hell I want. No one, especially Brent, is the boss of me.

Her raw fury in mentioning her husband gives these words a menacing undertone.

SARAH: So what do you say? Do we have a deal?

MATT: Definitely.

She flashes him an excited face, which he uneasily returns.

END OF EPISODE #87

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