

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #90
TIME FRAME: SHORTLY
AFTER [#89](#)

TEASER

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

CLAIRE emerges from the bedroom, dressed nicely but not too glamorously for her dinner with Ryan. TIM, who is sitting on the couch playing with SAMANTHA, takes one look at her and whistles.

TIM: Well, well. Somebody's looking good tonight.

CLAIRE: Thank you, thank you.

She takes a mock curtsy.

TIM: So where exactly are you going? All you said was that you have to go out tonight.

CLAIRE: I have a dinner ... to go to.

TIM: With who?

His question, asked innocently enough, makes Claire quite nervous.

PARIS, FRANCE
INT: HOTEL ROOM
MIDDAY

DON is lounging on the bed of his hotel room, which is so spacious and beautifully decorated that one might mistake it for the bedroom of a large house. He flips through television channels, trying to find something other than CNN that is in a language he can understand.

There comes a knock on the door, which he promptly answers. Outside, he finds SALLY. She comes inside without invitation.

SALLY: So how are we doing today?

DON: Pretty good. I just find myself wishing that I had taken French instead of Latin in high school.

His voice, in its pitch, volume, and all, indicates that he is in a normal mood.

SALLY: I had three years of French, but I have to say, it's not that helpful when you're trying to understand someone actually speak the language.

DON: I'm glad you dropped by. I needed to hear someone besides Larry King speaking English.

SALLY: I've had enough CNN to last a lifetime! I swear, I'm going to hunt down Greta van Sustren and strangle her!

They share a comfortable chuckle.

SALLY: So I was thinking ... Do you wanna take a look at some of those museums today?

DON: Actually, I'd love to -- but there's something I need to do first.

SALLY: What?

DON: I have to call Helen.

Sally looks terrified, knowing she got lucky that he dozed off on the airplane before he could call his wife.

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)
EVENING

COURTNEY and LAUREN are staring at the young MAN in the doorway. He has just asked to see either Don or his mother -- Sally Marshall.

COURTNEY: Sally Marshall? I don't think we know anyone by that name.

MAN: Your dad does -- at least he should. Here ...

He pulls out his wallet and flips open to a picture of Sally, holding it up for the girls to see.

MAN: This is my mother. You don't recognize her, do you?

Courtney in particular studies the picture for a moment before gasping.

COURTNEY: I know her!

MAN: You do?

Courtney nods.

ACT ONE

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

CLAIRE is suddenly fidgety as TIM waits for her answer.

CLAIRE: We, uh ... It's a business dinner.

TIM: A business dinner? You're a nurse.

CLAIRE: I mean, it's business-related. One of the doctors is retiring, and a group of us are taking him out to dinner.

TIM: Oh, okay. What time do you think you'll be in?

CLAIRE: I'm not sure. Probably not too late.

TIM: Okay. Just call me if anything comes up.

CLAIRE: Of course.

She picks up her purse off the table and heads for the door, but turns back to give her husband and stepdaughter (SAMANTHA) goodbye kisses.

TIM: Love you.

CLAIRE: I love you too. I'll see you later.

Claire exits the apartment.

INT: APT. BUILDING (HALLWAY)

EVENING -- CONTINUOUS

CLAIRE steps out into the hallway and shuts the door. She leans back on it for a moment, worry written all over her face.

CLAIRE: (quietly) I hope nothing goes wrong ... I'd hate for Tim to get mixed up with Ryan. It's too complicated -- I'd hate to drag the past into the present.

She stands up straight and sighs before walking off down the hallway. Little does she know exactly what she's getting herself into.

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)
EVENING

The young MAN stares at COURTNEY in relief -- and LAUREN looks at her best friend in surprise.

MAN: You do? You know my mom?

COURTNEY: I've met her, yeah, but her name wasn't Sally.

MAN: Huh?

COURTNEY: Oh, what was it?

She racks her brain for a minute before recalling the situation fully.

COURTNEY: She said her name was Joan Rivers.

LAUREN: What?

COURTNEY: Yeah, Jason and I were downstairs and the doorbell rang. We came up a little later and found my dad visiting with this woman -- I know it was your mom. I remember the face. Anyway, she introduced herself as Joan Rivers.

MAN: She was using an alias of some kind -- but why?

LAUREN: And why such a strange one?

COURTNEY: I thought it was odd, but I figured maybe she just coincidentally married someone by that

name.

MAN: You don't know how my mom knows your dad, do you?

HELEN: What?

They all turn to find HELEN at the bottom of the stairs, curious about what is going on.

COURTNEY: This man -- he's looking for his mom. Apparently she knows Dad.

HELEN: What's her name?

MAN: Sally Marshall. She--

HELEN: Oh my God!

ACT TWO

PARIS, FRANCE

INT: HOTEL ROOM

MIDDAY

As SALLY tries to conceal her horror and simultaneously think up a diversion, DON makes his way to the telephone.

DON: I really do feel terrible. Don't get me wrong -- I appreciate you getting the ticket for me, and it's nice to have you along -- but it's just not the same without Helen. I need to at least talk to her.

Sally fumes at this remark. Meanwhile, Don picks up the phone and begins to dial.

SALLY: Isn't it gonna be hard to get through? You'll have to deal with all these French operators and stuff.

DON: Hey, it's worth a try.

As Don begins dialing the first string of numbers, Sally frantically tries to think of some way to stop this call.

SALLY (THINKING): What am I gonna do? If Don gets through to Helen, he'll explain that I'm here with him as just friends, and there won't be any confusion! No, that's not gonna do at all. I have to figure out how to stop him from talking to her!

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)
EVENING

HELEN's outburst has attracted the undivided attention of COURTNEY, LAUREN, and the young MAN at the door.

COURTNEY: What, Mom?

HELEN: Your dad knows Sally Marshall, all right.

COURTNEY: How?

HELEN: He--

Helen interrupts herself. This is something she has known about for so long, but she and Don never found it to be something Courtney needed to know. Has the time finally come?

MAN: Wait ... Are you Don's wife?

Helen nods, still struggling with how she will explain the situation to Courtney.

MAN: What do you know about their relationship?

He is fully aware of his mother's long-ago marriage to Don, but wants to be sure that he won't be blowing any long-standing secret.

HELEN: I know that my husband was married to your mother.

COURTNEY: What?

MAN: It was twenty years ago.

COURTNEY: What are you guys talking about? Mom, what's going on?

HELEN: Your dad-- He met Sally in college, from what I understand. They dated for a while, but she got involved with someone else. A few years later, they got married. It was a short marriage, and apparently it fell apart pretty abruptly.

MAN: I don't know why. I was just a little boy then.

HELEN: What's your name?

MAN: Alex-- Alex Marshall.

HELEN: Well, Alex, I'm Helen Chase. This is my daughter Courtney, and this is her friend, Lauren.

Courtney and Lauren give Alex friendly yet awkward waves.

HELEN: Alex, how old are you?

ALEX: Twenty-one -- I'll be twenty-two in a few months.

HELEN: That can't be.

ALEX: What? Why?

Noting her daughter's presence, Helen decides to bite her tongue momentarily.

HELEN: Can I speak with you in the kitchen, Alex?

ALEX: Yeah, sure.

He follows as Helen leads the way.

Courtney, meanwhile, turns to Lauren in shock.

LAUREN: I can leave, if you'd like. It would probably be a good idea, huh?

COURTNEY: No, stay. Something very odd is going on here -- and right now, you're about the only one I feel I can trust.

ACT THREE

INT: RESTAURANT
EVENING

CLAIRE enters and consults with the MAITRE'D for a moment. He directs her to a table where RYAN is already seated. Once the maitre'd exits, greetings are exchanged.

RYAN: You're here! I was beginning to worry you wouldn't show up.

CLAIRE: The thought crossed my mind ... but I had to come.

RYAN: Because you want to trust me again, right?

She is unable to answer this, but he makes it easy by continuing without much of a pause.

RYAN: Well, you've done the right thing. This dinner is going to be exactly what we need -- a chance to sit back, relax, and catch up on the last fifteen years.

Despite his unwavering optimism, Claire is unable to maintain a convinced smile upon her face.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
EVENING

HELEN, appearing overly anxious, leads ALEX into the kitchen.

HELEN: Alex, there's something I need to know.

ALEX: What?

HELEN: I'm not sure even you know the answer -- but it's worth a try.

ALEX: Go ahead.

HELEN: Okay ... Your mother was married to Don around the time you were born -- or at least when you were an infant, right?

Alex nods.

HELEN: Is it possible ...

Her constant pauses are indicative of her nervousness.

HELEN: ... that maybe ... Don is your father?

ACT FOUR

PARIS, FRANCE
INT: HOTEL ROOM
MIDDAY

SALLY is unable to think of a way to keep DON from calling home. He sits on the bed, the phone to his ear, although it is obvious that he is in the process of waiting.

DON: This is taking forever!

SALLY: That's how international calls are.

DON: Well, it's crazy.

She folds her arms and squirms, now desperate.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
EVENING

ALEX has a quick response for HELEN's question.

ALEX: No -- I mean, I've never been led to believe that. My dad has always been a guy who's too busy to do anything but send us money. I wished Don was my father ... and I bet my mom has too. That's the reason ... their marriage fell apart.

HELEN: What?

Before he even answers, she realizes that Sally must have cheated on Don.

HELEN: Oh ...

ALEX: Believe me, if Don were my father, it would make things a lot easier. I've always kinda felt that it was my fault they broke up.

HELEN: You didn't choose to be brought into the world like that.

ALEX: I know. But I only feel worse because my mom led Don to believe I was his for a while, and even after he found out, he treated me like a son.

HELEN: No wonder he never talked about why the marriage ended.

She breathes a sigh of relief, after minutes of anxiety that felt like hours.

HELEN: I just needed to clear that up. If Don had had a son out there all those years who he ignored, I would never be able to trust him again.

ALEX: I know how you feel.

The telephone rings. Helen quickly picks it up.

HELEN: Hello?

DON: Hey!

On the other end, a broad smile crosses DON's face at having reached his wife.

HELEN: Don! How are you?

DON: I'm fine. How about you?

HELEN: Much better, now. How's Europe?

DON: I haven't been anywhere yet, but it's beautiful.

He can sense her melancholy reaction to this.

DON: Don't worry, Helen. Someday we'll come here together.

HELEN: I know.

She snaps out of her momentary funk and is once again aware of Alex's presence.

HELEN: Listen, Don, there's someone here you might want to talk to ...

DON: Who?

HELEN: Just listen.

She hands Alex the phone. He puts it to his ear as Don waits to find out who it is.

END OF EPISODE #90

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