

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #96
TIME FRAME: IMMEDIATELY
AFTER [#95](#)

TEASER

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)
MIDDAY

HELEN, standing at the top of the staircase, has just overheard COURTNEY and ALEX discussing Don and Sally's trip.

HELEN: What were you going to tell me, Courtney?

COURTNEY: Mom, you'd better come down here. This is ... big.

Helen descends the stairs, curious as to what could be going on now. She knows it involves her husband somehow, judging by what she overheard.

HELEN: Have you found your mother, Alex?

ALEX: I think I know where she is.

HELEN: That's great! Where?

Alex and Courtney give each other tentative glances, trying to figure out how to approach this -- or if they even should.

PARIS, FRANCE
EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY
EVENING

DON and SALLY are hiding behind the museum. Propped up against a nearby wall is a plastic garbage bag containing the painting that Don stole.

SALLY: I still can't believe we're doing this. How could you steal this painting, Don?

DON: I don't know! I wish I could remember how I did it ... Maybe it would make returning it a little

easier.

SALLY: Yeah, well, it's too late for that now. Let's just go with the plan, okay?

Don nods in agreement.

SALLY: Pray that this works. Otherwise both of us could be spending a long, long time behind bars.

INT: FISHER HOME (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

MOLLY releases BRENT from her embrace. Almost simultaneously, JASON enters the house, having observed them through the screen door. Molly and Brent are both suddenly quite antsy.

MOLLY: Hey, Jason! You're back so soon ...

JASON: Courtney and Helen had something to take care of. What's going on here?

MOLLY: Nothing much ... nothing. I was just telling Brent some good news.

JASON: Which would be what?

MOLLY: I got a job!

JASON: Molly, that's great!

BRENT: Isn't it? I was just congratulating her.

There is a momentary lull in the conversation.

BRENT: I should be going, okay? I've got tons of stuff to take care of.

MOLLY: Okay. Thanks for dropping by.

BRENT: And thank you for saying yes. And again, congratulations.

He opens the door to leave.

BRENT: Bye, Jay.

JASON: See you later.

Brent exits. The screen door closes behind him, and seconds later Jason closes the front door as well.

JASON: We need to talk, Molly.

MOLLY: What do you mean?

JASON: I need you to tell me what the hell is going on here.

ACT ONE

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)

MIDDAY

A hesitant COURTNEY begins to explain the situation to HELEN as ALEX looks on.

COURTNEY: You might wanna sit down first, Mom.

HELEN: Why? What's wrong?

COURTNEY: Alex's mom -- she's in Paris.

HELEN: Paris?

COURTNEY: Yeah.

HELEN: Are you sure?

ALEX: Not totally, but the airline she works for said she got was headed there -- she got tickets there.

HELEN: Tickets? She wasn't travelling alone?

COURTNEY: No -- she was travelling with Dad.

This revelation brings back the nightmares Helen used to have when she first married Don, so soon after his first marriage ended: Would he get fickle and turn back to his former wife? Would their marriage fall apart just as his first one had? She hasn't experienced these feelings in so long; for so long she has believed her marriage to be as secure as possible.

With one shocking discovery, her faith in this security has been totally shattered.

INT: FISHER HOME (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

MOLLY is genuinely confused, unsure of to what JASON is referring.

MOLLY: Huh?

JASON: When I walked in here a few minutes ago, I got the distinct impression that something very strange was going on.

She quickly realizes that he is talking about her and Brent; a veil of embarrassment lands on her face, though she tries to maintain the necessary amount of cluelessness.

MOLLY: What do you mean?

JASON: Between you and Brent. Be honest with me, Molly: Is something going on between the two of you?

MOLLY: What?!? No, of course not!

JASON: Are you sure?

MOLLY: I'm positive. I am not having an affair with Brent, if that's what you're getting at. How could you even suggest something like that?

JASON: Because I know how close the two of you are -- and how screwed up his marriage is right now. Give me some credit: It's not an illogical thought.

MOLLY: Maybe not, but still ...

JASON: Why are you acting so defensive?

MOLLY: I'm not!

JASON: Yeah, you are. Just tell me the truth, Molly: Is there anything -- anything at all -- going on between you and Brent that shouldn't be going on?

ACT TWO

PARIS, FRANCE

EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

EVENING

Stealthily DON creeps up to the back door of the museum with the covered painting in his grasp. Heavy though it is, he moves remarkably quickly, spurred by a surge of adrenaline and horrific fear. He sets down the painting, propping it up against the wall beside the door, and knocks loudly upon the door. Then he sprints back to SALLY and the hiding place.

They watch from the shadows as seconds elapse without action. Finally a whispered dialogue strikes up between the two.

DON: Do you think they heard me?

SALLY: I don't know. I definitely did.

DON: Yeah, well ... Should I try again?

SALLY: No, stay put. What if you went over there and then someone opened it up and found you?

DON: Good point.

They continue to wait, but nothing happens. It is now pretty obvious that no one is going to respond to his knock.

DON: What now?

Sally looks around, an idea formulating in her brain. Her eyes rest upon a large rock, which she picks up and hands to Don.

SALLY: Go knock with this. Somebody's bound to hear you.

Don creeps towards the door and pounds on it with the rock. He retreats, and not long after, the door is opened by a SECURITY GUARD. He looks around and sees no one, but his eyes finally catch sight of the covered painting. He unwraps it, examines it, and then brings it inside. As soon as he shuts the door, Don and Sally both let out sighs of relief and begin whispering again.

DON: It worked!

SALLY: Thank goodness ... Now we've just got to be careful getting out of here.

DON: Let's go.

He begins to stalk off, but stops dead in his tracks when he hears Sally scream from behind him.

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)

MIDDAY

HELEN lowers herself down onto the step she is standing on, utterly stunned. Both COURTNEY and ALEX are silent.

HELEN: How do you know this?

ALEX: I called the airline and they told me my mom had gotten two tickets at a reduced price. I asked the name the other ticket was under, and the woman told me it was for Don Chase.

Seated on the stairs, Helen nearly gags. A feeling of illness has begun to sweep over her ... Still, her initial reaction of betrayal is now being overpowered by one of desperation. Her mind has begun to race as she considers alternate explanations.

HELEN: Are you sure the other ticket was for your mom? Maybe she just helped him get them for Don and me, and then something happened ...

She trails off, aware that this makes no sense. Finally, Helen gives in to the reality of the situation: Don lied to her, heading off to Europe with another woman without telling her about it.

ALEX: I'm sorry.

HELEN: Don't be. You didn't do anything.

COURTNEY: Mom, I'm sure this isn't as bad as it sounds ...

HELEN: It doesn't matter. Your father betrayed my trust -- and unless he has a damn good excuse, there's no way he can get it back.

ACT THREE

INT: FISHER HOME (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

MOLLY turns her back to JASON, feigning annoyance. Inside, her heart is pounding out of fear.

MOLLY: I'm not even going to answer that, Jason.

JASON: Why not?

He remains silent for a few seconds, letting the quiet eat into her, as if he is testing her; the results prove that she is definitely jumpy.

MOLLY: I already told you, Brent and I are not having an affair! I don't know how you could even suggest something like that!

JASON: It's not an affair I wanna know about.

She turns back around, baffled.

MOLLY: What?

JASON: I believe that you guys aren't having an affair. Both of you have too much respect for each other and Sarah to do that.

MOLLY: Then what are you getting at?

JASON: You have feelings for Brent, don't you?

A look of terror rushes onto Molly's face.

PARIS, FRANCE

EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

EVENING

DON turns around, horrified of what he might find. Has SALLY been attacked -- or worse, have they been caught?

Upon looking at her, he finds that nothing this awful has happened. He does, however, notice that her leg, exposed because she is wearing shorts, is bleeding.

DON: What's wrong?

SALLY: I cut my leg on this stupid thing!

She gestures toward the dumpster they had been hiding behind. She glances at the cut again, grabbing her calf and hopping up and down on the other foot.

SALLY: Ow!

DON: Shhh! Calm down!

He removes a handkerchief from his pocket.

DON: Here ... put this over it. Sit down for a few minutes and we'll stay hidden until you're ready to go, okay?

She nods, taking the cloth and pressing it over the wound. They make their way back behind the dumpster, Don following the hobbling lead of Sally.

DON: Just relax, okay?

SALLY: Thanks, Don.

She says this with an overly drippy amount of gratitude, tipping her head to the side and batting her lashes exaggeratedly. Don hardly notices, though, for his attention has been distracted by the sound of the museum's back door opening again.

The SECURITY GUARD again steps outside, holding the painting. He recovers it and, shaking his head, props it up against the wall again. He goes back inside.

Don and Sally exchange looks of puzzlement.

ACT FOUR

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)

MIDDAY

HELEN is attempting to hold back her tears while COURTNEY and ALEX are present. This fact is all too painfully apparent to both of them.

ALEX: I should probably get going ...

COURTNEY: Yeah, maybe it would be best. Again--

HELEN: No. Don't go.

COURTNEY: Mom, I think you need some time alone right now. We can work on sorting this all out later.

HELEN: I don't want to take time! I want to find out exactly what's going on here, because I'm not throwing away twenty-plus years of marriage because of some stupid misunderstanding!

Her anger is beginning to leak through, but she keeps it in check.

HELEN: Alex, before you go, I want you to promise me that you'll figure out some way to get in touch with your mother. We need to know what's going on here.

ALEX: Sure.

He opens the front door.

ALEX: Again, Mrs. Chase, I'm really sorry.

HELEN: Don't be. Thank you for having the guts to come to us with this, even though you knew it could make a mess.

COURTNEY: Stay in touch, all right? We'll get to the bottom of this.

ALEX: As soon as I hear anything, I'll give you guys a call. See you later.

Courtney and Helen both give halfhearted waves as Alex leaves. The door closes, and at last, Courtney notices tears beginning to well up in her mother's eyes.

INT: FISHER HOME (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

MOLLY turns to simply walk away from JASON, but this action is more telling than she intended it to be.

JASON: You do, don't you?

She stops in her tracks.

MOLLY: Why are you doing this, Jason?

JASON: Because ... this family means so much to me. Molly, something like this could tear us all apart. What if Sarah found out?

MOLLY: She shouldn't be putting him through this, for God's sake!

JASON: Molly, I know you don't agree with what Sarah is doing -- frankly, neither do I. But you can't butt into her marriage. It's not right.

Molly nods. As much as she hates herself for feeling this way about Brent, and for despising her sister's actions the way she does, she can't help it. And as much as she'd like to cover it up, bury it, and pretend none of it ever existed, she is dying to share these feelings with someone.

ACT FIVE

PARIS, FRANCE

EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

EVENING

DON and SALLY stare at each other, then at the painting, and then back at each other in total bewilderment.

SALLY: What the heck?

DON: Why ... Why did he put that thing back outside?

SALLY: Let's just grab it and get out of here. I'll be fine to walk on this leg now.

DON: We can't just take it. What if they're waiting for us to come up and grab it?

SALLY: We can always think of an excuse. Just look casual.

She begins to walk towards the painting.

DON: Sally, we can't--Argh!

She turns back to him and finds him clutching his head in agony.

SALLY: Don, are you okay?

He moans for several seconds more before releasing the tight grip he has on his head. Breathing heavily, he stares straight ahead.

DON: Dammit!

There is a certain rage in his eyes, his movements, and his voice that frightens Sally. She responds, but timidly.

SALLY: What?

DON: How the hell did we get into this?

SALLY: What is wrong with you?

DON: This is all your fault! If you hadn't insisted on tagging along ...

She recalls his previous mood swings and, though scared, is confident that this will pass fairly quickly.

SALLY: Okay ... Let's just get the painting and get back to the hotel, okay? We'll deal with this later.

DON: Fine!

He practically shouts this in her face, but she is so surprised that he suddenly changed his mind about taking the painting that she disregards it. They scoop up the painting and rush off.

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)

MIDDAY

HELEN brushes away a few tiny tears as she looks up at COURTNEY.

COURTNEY: Do you wanna go lie down, Mom?

HELEN: Yes ... no. I don't know. What am I supposed to do with myself right now?

COURTNEY: Don't stress yourself out. Like you said, this could be some kind of misunderstanding.

HELEN: It's not.

COURTNEY: Huh?

HELEN: It can't be. This is just too much.

She takes a deep breath, trying to really process all of this.

HELEN: No, this is no coincidence. I swear, if your father has been carrying on with Sally behind my back, it'll be the last thing he ever does.

INT: FISHER HOME (LIVING ROOM)

MIDDAY

MOLLY is just about ready to break down in tears; JASON, though he might be expected to be angry, is reacting rather sympathetically.

JASON: How did this happen?

MOLLY: I don't know ... I didn't mean for it to. I swear.

JASON: Of course you didn't. I know you, Molly -- you would never do something like this.

She puts her arms around her younger brother, resting her head on his shoulder.

MOLLY: What is wrong with me, Jason? I do nothing but stupid things!

JASON: There is nothing wrong with you, Molly. Like you said, you never wanted this to happen.

MOLLY: But it's too late now ...

JASON: Maybe, but all you can do is keep this between the two of us, okay?

MOLLY: I have to ...

JASON: You do. I'm warning you: Please be careful. Otherwise this family could be blown to pieces.

Molly's eyes begin to tear as Jason holds her. She has plummeted from the emotional high she had hit not long ago about getting a job, to an awful low. How could she have let this happen?, she asks herself

as she sobs into her brother's shoulder.

END OF EPISODE #96

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