

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #97
TIME FRAME: THE DAY
AFTER [#96](#)

TEASER

INT: HOSPITAL
AFTERNOON

CLAIRE rounds a corner, waving to another nurse as they pass each other. Her shift is already over ... She can't wait to head home. Of course, Tim won't be home from work yet, but she can get dinner going and spend some time with the kids.

She runs a hand through her long, brown hair, contemplating the peace she has finally found with her husband and children. It doesn't matter that she isn't Samantha's real mother -- she has worked through that. What matters is that they were all together, that they have each other.

She would have given anything to have a family like this as a child. Woefully she spends a few seconds pondering the calamity of her youth. Perhaps all that misery had made this all the more precious ...

There is only one thing that might get in the way of her happiness now: Ryan Moriani. Claire has no intentions of letting him do any such thing.

INT: RECORDING STUDIO
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE stands outside the recording booth with ANDY by her side. Their arms are linked together. Since he talked her into accepting the contract, they haven't been happier. There has been nothing to interfere or to distract them from each other. Neither can wait for the wedding, though it is still many months off.

DANIELLE: I hope that was all right ...

She has just completed the vocals for the first song scheduled to appear on her debut album. Her excitement over the experience is clearly juxtaposed through her words and movements with her nervousness as they wait for the producer and engineer to emerge from the booth.

ANDY: It was fine. You sounded great -- almost as good as you look.

DANIELLE: Shut up.

She facetiously waves a hand at his compliment.

ANDY: You know you like it ...

He presses his lips against her cheek, provoking a giggle from his fiancée.

DANIELLE: Andy! I've got to stay focused here!

He kisses her neck as she squirms playfully.

ACT ONE

INT: FITCH MANSION (LIVING ROOM)

AFTERNOON

Absently sipping a cup of tea, KATHERINE lounges on the sofa, pillows piled around her. She is too preoccupied to do anything today -- she turned down an invitation to lunch with an old friend for fear of appearing troubled. The last thing she needs is for anyone to pick up on her displeasure over her son's engagement to Danielle Taylor.

She knows what an excellent job she has done of playing the caring mother in the last few weeks. It's not that she doesn't care, though; in fact, that's exactly the problem. She just doesn't like the idea of her son marrying someone who was not too long ago their maid, and whose career aspirations extend only to being a singer.

According to what Roberta told her, today is the day that Danielle would go into the studio to begin recording her album. They could have it done in a few short weeks, Roberta had assured her -- and then Danielle would leave, going on tour to promote it.

Katherine finds herself genuinely hoping that Danielle finds success ... that way, she might realize how separate her world really is from Andrew's. The thought of their relationship crumbling to pieces sends a tremor of delight racing through Katherine.

KATHERINE: Perhaps it's time to put the next phase of my plan into action ...

INT: HOSPITAL

AFTERNOON

CLAIRE has just signed out. She begins walking towards the exit when an all-too-familiar face captures her attention. She stops to speak with RYAN, more out of worry than anything else.

RYAN: Just the lady I wanted to see. How was your day, Claire?

CLAIRE: Fine -- although I've got to get over to my in-laws' and pick up the kids now.

RYAN: Oh, that's too bad. Do you have plans this evening?

CLAIRE: Nothing special, no. I'm just gonna spend a quiet night at home with my husband and kids. Why?

RYAN: I've got an extra ticket to the opera, and I remembered how much you loved it. I was hoping I'd catch you here before you got off-duty.

CLAIRE: Well, you barely caught me.

RYAN: Hey, it was fate.

He flashes her a charming smile.

RYAN: So what do you say? Are you gonna join me at the opera tonight?

ACT TWO

INT: RECORDING STUDIO
AFTERNOON

ANDY removes his arms from DANIELLE as the producer, TOM WHITE, steps out into the hallway.

DANIELLE: How was it?

TOM: Absolutely perfect! You'd be surprised how many people take an entire day to record vocals for one song ... you did it in just a few hours.

DANIELLE: Do you wanna try the next song?

TOM: That's what I was gonna ask you. Do you wanna try it, or should we call it a day?

Danielle doesn't even miss a beat in responding.

DANIELLE: No, let's go. I've been waiting years to do this, and I'm not gonna waste any time.

TOM: Great. We've got to get set up, so it'll just be a few more minutes, okay?

DANIELLE: Okay.

TOM: I'll signal to you when we're ready to start.

Danielle nods as Tom goes back into the booth.

DANIELLE: Isn't this amazing?

A broad smile on her face, she looks up at Andy.

ANDY: It is. I'm so proud of you.

DANIELLE: Thank you for letting me do this, Andy. It means so much.

ANDY: Look, it was your choice. You shouldn't have felt that you had to choose between me or your career.

DANIELLE: I guess it's just the way I was raised. I had so much responsibility as a kid that anything fun always came second to what had to be done.

ANDY: Well, don't start thinking like that again. From now on, you're going to be totally and absolutely pampered.

DANIELLE: I can't object to that.

He plants another kiss on her, this time on the lips.

INT: HOSPITAL
AFTERNOON

RYAN is instantly aware of the negative response CLAIRE is going to give, evidenced by the lowering of her eyes and the uncomfortable shuffling.

RYAN: What -- you don't like opera anymore?

CLAIRE: No, I do. As much as I hate to admit it, it's one thing my father and I had in common.

RYAN: So what's the problem?

CLAIRE: I can't do that, Ryan.

RYAN: Do what?

CLAIRE: Just leave my family alone for the night -- another night -- to go to the opera.

RYAN: You deserve some time to yourself, Claire.

CLAIRE: Maybe, but not to go gallivanting around with an ex-boyfriend without telling my husband about him.

RYAN: Your husband doesn't know I'm here?

CLAIRE: No ... I haven't been able to tell him.

Though smiling inwardly, Ryan succeeds in appearing concerned on the outside.

RYAN: Claire ...

CLAIRE: What was I supposed to say? I told him about ... you know.

This reference to the rape, or whatever it was, is fully understood by both of them.

RYAN: I understand. Look, I'm not trying to make trouble. It's just ... I've missed you. If nothing else, you were my best friend as a teenager. We were both dealing with the reality that our fathers were criminals, and neither of us had a mother around.

CLAIRE: Well, as I recall, I did go to stay with my mother at one point -- and we all know how that turned out.

RYAN: Again, I'm sorry! It was stupid -- I was stupid! You know I wasn't trying to hurt you ... I just couldn't bear the thought of not having you in my life.

CLAIRE: So what is it you want now?

She awaits his answer. Ryan doesn't even flinch, knowing exactly what he must say.

ACT THREE

INT: RECORDING STUDIO
AFTERNOON

ANDY is now waiting alone. Danielle has gone back into the booth to continue working, and he watches peacefully as she does the thing she loves most: sing. Lately, he's found it odd that he finds contentment in such simple things, just because Danielle is involved ... There's no two ways about it: he's head-over-heels in love with her.

ROBERTA OWENS, the record executive, approaches him.

ROBERTA: You must be Andy.

ANDY: That's right ...

She extends a hand as she introduces herself.

ROBERTA: I'm Roberta Owens.

He shakes her hand.

ANDY: Roberta! Hi!

ROBERTA: It's so nice to finally meet you. Look, I'm really sorry about what happened on the phone the other day. I had no idea that you didn't know about the contract -- I didn't mean to cause any trouble.

Though she throws him a falsely apologetic smile, she perceives some mystification in his face.

ANDY: How did you know that Danielle hadn't told me about the contract?

Roberta strains to maintain a straight face, realizing she has made a major slip-up.

INT: FITCH MANSION (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

KATHERINE holds the telephone in her hand, hesitating for the third or fourth time this hour.

KATHERINE: What if this doesn't work? Something could go wrong ...

She knows there are holes in her plan, and she feels she has come too far to throw it all away with an impulsive action. No, it's better to take time and think these things over. Everything has come along so beautifully thus far; it is not worth ruining, she tells herself.

She places the phone back on the receiver.

ACT FOUR

INT: HOSPITAL
AFTERNOON

RYAN's answer comes quickly, to CLAIRE's surprise. She had been expecting him to fumble in an attempt to cover something up; instead, he launches right into an explanation.

RYAN: What do I want? I have to admit, in a perfect world, I would want you. But that's not gonna happen, right? So if nothing else, I'd like to at least get back the friendship we had.

Despite the reservations she has always thought she would have about this, Claire feels herself oddly drawn to him.

CLAIRE: I'd like to, Ryan. It's just so complicated ...

RYAN: I understand that. I do. And I know I don't even deserve another chance, after what I did to you. So I'm begging you ... please, give me that chance. Please be a part of my life again -- any part.

Several silent seconds pass.

CLAIRE: I really should get going.

RYAN: Claire, please -- just promise me you'll at least think about ... about letting me be your friend again.

CLAIRE: Okay. And now, I've got to get home.

RYAN: Fine. I'll be in touch, okay?

Nodding, she departs.

Ryan stands there by himself, gazing after her even after she is long-gone. He knows he can't bear not

having Claire in his life any longer ... He had missed her so much all these years.

This latest exchange has only strengthened his resolve: He needs to be close to her again.

INT: RECORDING STUDIO
AFTERNOON

ROBERTA's mind races as she attempts to cover up her slip -- otherwise, ANDY might figure out what's going on, she realizes painfully.

ROBERTA: How did I know? Danielle told me ... yeah, she explained it to me over the phone.

ANDY: Oh.

ROBERTA: Anyway, I just hope I didn't cause any trouble.

ANDY: Everything's fine, believe me. I'm here, aren't I?

ROBERTA: Good point. I should be going ... but I'm glad I got the chance to meet you. I've heard so many great things about you.

ANDY: Does Danielle really talk about me that much?

Not just her, but your mother, too, Roberta thinks.

ROBERTA: Yeah. I can tell she's really in love.

ANDY: That's always reassuring.

ROBERTA: Anyway, I've got some stuff to take care of. Tell Danielle she's doing a terrific job, would you?

ANDY: Sure.

With a casual final wave, Roberta walks off. As she walks down the hallway, she breathes a sigh of relief. Andy seemed to have bought it all ... Thank goodness. If she blew this now, Katherine Fitch would probably have her career ruined.

But she'd covered up well. No, neither Andy nor Danielle has any inkling as to what is really going on.

That's the way it should be. Before long, Katherine's plan will be in full effect -- whatever it is -- and Danielle will just be a memory to Andy Fitch.

Roberta grins deviously as she continues walking.

END OF EPISODE #97

[Next Episode](#)