

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #101
TIME FRAME: A FEW
HOURS AFTER [#100](#)

TEASER

INT: KING'S BAY MALL
EVENING

Amid torrents of laughter, JASON, COURTNEY, LAUREN, and ALEX step out of the movie theatre. They break away from the crowd of exiting moviegoers as they begin walking through the mall.

LAUREN: That was horrible!

JASON: Are you nuts? It was hilarious!

LAUREN: Uh-uh. Alex, what do you think?

ALEX: All I know is that I'm still laughing. I don't know if it's because the movie was so funny or so cheesy.

JASON: What do you think, Court?

COURTNEY: Totally sucked. Sorry, hon.

She throws her arms around Jason, clinging to him as they walk.

JASON: Fine, fine, I lose. What do you guys wanna do?

LAUREN: I'm starving!

ALEX: Me too.

COURTNEY: Let's go get some food.

Courtney begins leading the way through the throng of shoppers toward the food court. She is stopped by a large WOMAN with hair that fits over her head like a helmet. The other three come to a halt behind Courtney.

WOMAN: Excuse me, miss. There are a few questions I'd like to ask you.

NEW YORK
INT: RESTAURANT
EVENING

It is late enough so that the dinner crowd has mostly cleared out, but the diners who have dropped by for a late meal are plentiful enough to create a warm buzz of conversation throughout the restaurant. SARAH and MATT are seated across from each other at one particular table. Though their entrees were served nearly fifteen minutes ago, Sarah has hardly touched hers. This fact is not lost on her dining companion.

MATT: Got something on your mind?

SARAH: As usual, yes.

MATT: Could it be ...

He presses his fingers to his temples and makes a buzzing noise, pretending to wrack his brain.

MATT: ... Oh, I don't know, Brent?

SARAH: But of course.

She puts down her fork, dropping all pretenses of eating.

SARAH: Answer me one question: Am I a moron?

MATT: Why do you say that?

SARAH: Because ... When we spoke the other day, he was trying to clear things up, and all I did was antagonize him.

MATT: You can't go on like this. It's time you did something about this mess, Sarah.

INT: HOTEL BALLROOM
EVENING

The room is already packed with police officials, their significant others, and other high-ranking locals when BRENT enters the room with MOLLY by his side.

MOLLY: This is quite the crowd, huh?

BRENT: You nervous?

MOLLY: Nah ...

She catches the smile on his face, urging her to tell the truth.

MOLLY: Maybe just a little.

BRENT: Relax. Come on, let's go mingle.

He takes her by the arm and they enter a ring of people fraternizing nearby. A portly, bald man, HAROLD, seems thrilled to see Brent, and he immediately interrupts the conversation to acknowledge him.

HAROLD: Hey, Brent! It's nice to have you around at these things again!

BRENT: I'm glad to be back.

Seemingly at once, all the people seem to notice Molly's presence.

HAROLD: So, uh, where's the missus, Taylor?

ACT ONE

INT: MALL
EVENING

COURTNEY looks at the WOMAN in confusion for a few seconds before noticing the clipboard in her hands and the nametag pinned to her shirt which reads "Bertha." JASON, LAUREN, and ALEX all exchange looks of slight annoyance at this holdup in getting their dinner.

BERTHA: If you'll just answer a few questions for a survey, we'll give you five dollars.

COURTNEY: Yeah, sure.

BERTHA: All right, follow me.

She leads them into a nearby door, and Courtney falls back into the pack of her friends as they walk.

LAUREN: You had to agree to take a survey, didn't you, Court?

She says this in a whispered voice, not wanting to agitate the large woman.

COURTNEY: Hey, I'm getting five bucks for this!

Lauren makes a crazy face at her friend, shaking her hands as if to sarcastically say, "Big deal!"

Following Bertha, they stop at another door.

BERTHA: Please wait here for a moment.

She steps inside the door and pulls it closed before any of the four can get a look inside.

ALEX: This is kinda spooky.

JASON: So is that woman. She's like a damn drill sergeant.

COURTNEY: Will the two of you shut up? This could be fun.

Jason and Alex each raise an eyebrow at her.

INT: HOTEL BALLROOM
EVENING

As the crowd of people, including HAROLD, await his explanation, BRENT tries to remember all the ways he'd explained this in his mind throughout the day, preparing for this moment. Still, he is so tongue-tied that MOLLY jumps in for him.

MOLLY: She's out of town. I'm her sister, Molly.

HAROLD: Nice to meet you, Molly.

She shakes hands with a number of people. Side conversations take over, and the circle breaks up, leaving Molly, Brent, and Harold alone.

HAROLD: So you were kind enough to escort this big lug tonight, Molly?

BRENT: She's doing me a huge favor. You know how much I hate these events.

HAROLD: Don't let anyone hear you say that! You're gonna be the hero of the night once they announce you're taking your old job back ... That idiot Warner nearly ruined the department inside of a few months.

BRENT: I'm not surprised. Hey, why don't we find our seats?

HAROLD: You guys are up with the mayor and that crowd. Have fun!

The jokingly taunting nature of this statement isn't lost on Brent, who sneers back at his friend. He takes Molly by the arm and escorts her to the empty table. Once they are seated, they begin talking again.

BRENT: Thanks for bailing me out back there. I guess it doesn't look too great if I just show up with a woman other than my wife without any explanation.

MOLLY: No problem. And you're right ... it wasn't that hard to just speak up.

BRENT: I told you.

They share warm smiles.

NEW YORK
INT: RESTAURANT
EVENING

SARAH sighs, dropping her chin into her hand. MATT reaches across the table and takes her other hand.

MATT: You don't need to be going through all of this.

SARAH: Then why am I? I mean, it feels like nothing could possibly go the way I want.

MATT: Life's a bitch, right?

This forces a short laugh out of her.

MATT: Look, why don't you just get Brent on the phone and apologize to him?

SARAH: Because ...

MATT: Because what?

SARAH: ... nothing.

MATT: Exactly. There's no reason you should be agonizing over your marriage when one phone call could turn everything around.

SARAH: You know, you're right. I've got to take care of this right now.

She stands and quickly exits the restaurant. An amused Matt watches her departure before signaling for the check.

ACT TWO

INT: MALL

EVENING

JASON, LAUREN, and ALEX are all seated on plastic chairs squished together against a short section of wall on one side of the small room. COURTNEY leans against the wall across from them, awaiting whatever it is she has agreed to do. At present, they are the only people in the room.

LAUREN: This room is making me sick.

She gestures up at the blank walls, coated in a shade of white that has somehow acquired a grayish tint.

JASON: What exactly are we waiting for, Court?

COURTNEY: I don't know. I presume somebody's gonna ask me some questions.

JASON: About what?

Courtney responds with a shrug.

LAUREN: Hopefully it'll be quick, whatever it is.

ALEX: As long as I can get out of this chiropractic torture chair soon, I'll be happy.

He shifts around, trying unsuccessfully to get comfortable in the rigid plastic chair.

COURTNEY: Just hold your horses, all of you.

Just then, a small MAN enters. His tiny spectacles are perched on the edge of his nose, and the cheap fluorescent lighting creates a gleam on the top of his bald head. His nametag identifies him as Martin.

MARTIN: All right, miss. I just have a few questions to ask you.

Jason, Lauren, and Alex all turn to each other, trying to suppress their laughter at the nerdy drone that is his voice.

NEW YORK
INT: HOTEL ROOM
EVENING

The door bursts open and SARAH enters. MATT follows behind her tentatively.

MATT: Are you sure you wanna do this?

SARAH: I'm ready.

MATT: I'll be in my room, okay?

SARAH: Okay.

She picks up her cellular phone and begins dialing.

MATT: Why are you calling home on that?

SARAH: I get the best long-distance coverage with this thing. You wouldn't believe it.

She listens to the phone as Matt waves and leaves the room. Unfortunately, after four rings the answering machine picks up. Sarah ends the call with the press of a button.

SARAH: I don't believe it ... Where could he be?

She dials another number, a determined expression on her face.

ACT THREE

INT: HOTEL BALLROOM
EVENING

Dinner is now in full swing. BRENT and MOLLY are seated beside each other at the head table; the MAYOR is on-stage, beginning his speech.

MAYOR: On behalf of the King's Bay Police Department and City Hall, I'd like to thank you all for being here. The proceeds from this dinner ...

He continues speaking, but at the table, Brent is barely focusing on what is being said. His mind has wandered, as usual, to his wife. Annoyed as he is at her for not being here with him tonight, he finds himself almost relieved. After all, if she hadn't wanted to be here, it would have been a miserable evening for them both. He glances over at Molly, who appears to be paying full attention to the mayor's speech. They've been having a wonderful evening so far, Brent realizes happily.

Molly, meanwhile, is not as pleasantly focused on the speaker as she appears to be. In fact, she is a bit disgusted by her ability to completely fake interest in things as of late. She has to admit to herself, the whole relationship with Brian had been one enormous tug-of-war within herself; she was constantly trying to keep herself focused on it, while knowing full well that she cared for Brian only as a friend. She recognizes what a great time she is having, but is just as aware that it is for one night only ...

Her mind returns to the room as she hears the mayor announce Brent's name. Brent rises and makes his way up onto the stage, where the mayor greets him with a handshake.

MAYOR: We're glad to have you back on top of the force, Brent.

As applause fills the room, Brent looks out over all the crowd -- but strangely, he sees only one face: that of his dinner date.

Moments later, when Brent has returned to the table, the applause has died down. Molly stands and gives him a hug.

MOLLY: I'm so proud of you, Brent.

He returns the hug, but his face reverts to its previous weariness.

BRENT: I'm glad somebody is ...

NEW YORK

INT: HOTEL ROOM
EVENING

MATT tosses his jeans into a drawer and, after closing it, pulls the drawstring on his sweatpants a little tighter. He finds himself wishing that the dinner hadn't been interrupted ... He'd been looking forward to some relaxing time with Sarah. All they've done lately is chase dead-end clues, it seems. At least Sarah would get a chance to clear her mind regarding Brent, though-

His thoughts are interrupted as someone knocks on the door.

MATT: Come in!

SARAH enters the room, her prior eagerness replaced by anger.

SARAH: Damn him!

She slams the door shut.

MATT: What?

SARAH: Brent! I can't believe I even considered trying to meet him in the middle. He doesn't even care!

MATT: What do you mean?

SARAH: That bastard!

MATT: Slow down ... Start at the beginning.

He puts his hands on his shoulders to steady her.

SARAH: He wasn't at the apartment, so I called his sister. She said he's at that stupid police dinner ...

MATT: Big deal. You're not still mad about him going back to the police force, are you?

SARAH: No, it's not that.

MATT: Then what is it?

SARAH: He's there with my sister!

ACT FOUR

INT: MALL
EVENING

MARTIN is busily reading questions off a clipboard, maintaining a steady monotone the entire time. COURTNEY tries to sound polite while answering, but privately finds this hilarious. LAUREN, JASON, and ALEX are now actively attempting to conceal their laughter, as Martin asks his next question.

MARTIN: All right, then ... Do you have dry skin?

COURTNEY: Uh, not really, no.

MARTIN: Hmm. Well, if you did, what products would you use to treat it?

This question strikes Jason, Lauren, and Alex as so ridiculous that it sends them rushing for the door.

COURTNEY: Where are you guys going?

JASON: We're, uh, gonna go wait outside.

Before she can even respond, they are gone. Martin continues his inquiry.

Out in the hallway, Jason, Lauren, and Alex pull the door shut before bursting out into unbridled laughter.

LAUREN: What a dork! How was Courtney keeping a straight face?

JASON: I don't know, but I couldn't take it anymore.

The laughter swells up again and lasts for quite a while longer. Once it has subsided, they move towards another door at the end of the hallway.

JASON: Let's just wait for her right outside. I-

Before he can get another word out, he finds that BERTHA has jumped in front of the door to block them, her face gnarled into a devious-looking knot.

INT: HOTEL BALLROOM

EVENING

With dinner now concluded, much of the crowd has settled into conversation. A number of couples have taken the dance floor, BRENT and MOLLY among them.

BRENT: I can't thank you enough for coming with me tonight.

MOLLY: It's my pleasure. Can't do me any harm to get out a little, right?

They continue swaying to the music silently, holding each other tighter than either may be conscious of, until another man comes up to them. A handsome man in his mid-30's, RANDY's reputation as the Lothario of the KBPD is not at all lost on Brent.

RANDY: Hey, Taylor, mind if I cut in?

Brent looks immediately hesitant, but Molly flashes him a look telling him it's fine. She'd been speaking to Randy a little earlier in the evening.

BRENT: Yeah, go ahead.

He steps away, and Randy puts his arms around Molly as they begin dancing. Brent watches them from the side of the room, not hearing their conversation as his mind swirls in thought. Suddenly, however, he is all too aware of what Randy is saying.

RANDY: So, what's a pretty lady like you doing here with her brother-in-law, anyway?

Molly glances over at Brent, as she has been doing throughout the dance with Randy, and is sure that she sees something gleam in his eye as he watches them. Could it actually be jealousy?

ACT FIVE

INT: MALL
EVENING

The gruff BERTHA stands between JASON, LAUREN, and ALEX and the exit.

BERTHA: Where exactly do you three think you're going?

LAUREN: Outside. We were just-

BERTHA: I'm afraid I can't allow that. Not now.

The three young adults exchange baffled looks. The sheer ridiculousness of this statement has lulled them into silence.

BERTHA: Please, just wait here.

She heads to the other end of the hallway and turns into a side room. The three wait several seconds before speaking to be sure she is well out of earshot.

ALEX: This is just getting weirder and weirder ...

JASON: Should we make a break for it?

LAUREN: No, I'm sure she's got men stationed all over the place.

They share a giggle, but don't allow it to become anything louder than that. Soon Bertha returns - with COURTNEY in tow.

BERTHA: Your friend here is all finished.

Courtney waves her five dollar gift certificate in front of her.

BERTHA: And I'd like you all to have a free sample.

She hands them all small packets of skin cream.

BERTHA: Now have a nice evening.

The quartet rushes for the door without even a goodbye.

INT: HOTEL BALLROOM
EVENING

After what has seemed like several unbearable hours, the song draws to an end. BRENT immediately makes his way over to MOLLY and RANDY. Molly is surprised that she instinctively pulls away from Randy with Brent nearby.

RANDY: Thanks, Molly. I'll be looking forward to talking to you later, okay?

Molly nods, smiling. She keeps this up until Randy is gone.

BRENT: You're not really falling for that crap, are you?

MOLLY: What's so bad about him?

BRENT: He's a slut!

A laugh escapes Molly's lips.

MOLLY: Really?

BRENT: Totally. That guy has wormed practically every woman on the force into bed.

His voice has escalated considerably as he explains this.

MOLLY: Just so you know, no, I'm not interested in him. Calm down.

BRENT: I'm calm.

MOLLY: Sure you are. So are you gonna dance with me or what?

BRENT: Let's do it.

He again wraps his arms around her and pulls her tight. They move in rhythm to the powerful ballad, but also in rhythm with one another.

Brent is again surprised by how tightly he is holding her. This feels so right ... No, it doesn't. It can't, he reminds himself. He allows himself to hear nothing but the music -- not his conscience, not his heart -- for the rest of the dance, instead just falling into the music.

However, when the song comes to an end, a more upbeat piece comes on. Molly begins swinging him around immediately, and he again feels something jump inside of him. Just as quickly, though, he silences it.

That can't happen, he scolds himself. It just can't.

NEW YORK

INT: HOTEL ROOM

EVENING

SARAH practically falls into MATT's arms.

SARAH: How can he do this, Matt?

MATT: Do what? He probably just took Molly because you're not there!

SARAH: Dammit! This always happens!

MATT: What always happens?

SARAH: Just- nothing.

That long-ago memory of Brent and Molly's kiss burns at her brain, and suddenly it feels as though it was just a few moments ago.

SARAH: Damn them! Both of them!

She presses herself against Matt again.

SARAH: I don't believe he would do this to me!

BRENT: He hasn't done anything wrong, Sarah.

SARAH: He's done plenty wrong! As far as I'm concerned, this marriage is over.

She stares up at Matt with rage in her eyes, as he struggles to figure out exactly what is going on. He is certain that there's more to this than meets the eye.

END OF EPISODE #101

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