

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #105
TIME FRAME: SHORTLY AFTER [#104](#)

TEASER

INT: HOSPITAL
MIDDAY

Having just assisted in a difficult surgery, a weary CLAIRE emerges from the operating room. She leans against the wall, accepting congratulations and offering compliments as the rest of the O.R. staff trickles by.

A receptionist, LEILA, approaches her.

LEILA: Claire, there's ...

She realizes she has not even been noticed and waves a hand in front of Claire's face to alert her to her presence.

CLAIRE: Oh, Leila. Sorry, I just kinda spaced out.

LEILA: It's no problem. I just wanted to tell you that there's someone in the waiting area who's been waiting for you for some time.

CLAIRE: Who?

LEILA: A man.

Even before she peeks past Leila into the waiting area, which she has a partial view of from where she is standing, she knows that it is RYAN who has been waiting for her. And she's right.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
MIDDAY

The final trays of baked goods now in the oven, HELEN and PAULA are in the process of cleaning up the mess they've left behind.

PAULA: We're almost done ...

HELEN: Thank goodness. It's amazing how every time I bake, I seem to forget all the cleaning up it requires until I actually have to do it.

PAULA: I know what you mean.

With a chuckle, she turns on the sink and rinses out a pan. When she is done, she turns to her friend again.

PAULA: Why don't you let me finish up here?

HELEN: That's not necessary, Paula.

PAULA: Yes, it is. It'll give you some time to call Don.

PARIS, FRANCE

EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

AFTERNOON

SALLY and DON are standing outside the entrance of the train station-turned-museum. Propped up along a wall and hidden from the view of others is the painting they are attempting to return.

SALLY: Are you sure you're feeling up to this?

DON: I feel fine now!

He begins to hop up and down, exhibiting several times more energy than he had just an hour ago.

SALLY: You're certainly looking peppy.

DON: Maybe it helped me to get outside, I don't know. But let's get this painting in there and get out of here.

SALLY: Sounds like a plan to me. Okay, here's what we're gonna do ...

She explains the plan. Then they head inside the museum, leaving the painting outside, hidden among the bushes.

ACT ONE

INT: HOSPITAL
MIDDAY

CLAIRE steps into the nearly empty waiting area and approaches RYAN. He attempts to get out a greeting, but before he can, she pulls him aside.

CLAIRE: Ryan, what are you doing here?

RYAN: I came to see you.

CLAIRE: Why?

RYAN: Because I wanted to. Do you wanna go grab a late lunch or something?

CLAIRE: I can't. I've got to work.

RYAN: Okay. Maybe--

CLAIRE: No.

RYAN: What?

CLAIRE: I can't do anything, Ryan. Not now and not ever.

He stares at her, crushed.

CLAIRE: I can't see you anymore.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
MIDDAY

HELEN picks up the phone and begins dialing. Each time she wavers with hesitation, PAULA shoots her a look that forces her to continue with the call.

Finally she is connected with the front desk of the hotel in France.

DESK CLERK: I'm sorry, there's no answer in that room. Would you like to leave a message?

HELEN: No, it's all right. Do you happen to know when the man in that room will be back?

DESK CLERK: I don't have any idea. He just stepped out with another of our guests, a woman, a few minutes ago.

PARIS, FRANCE
INT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY
AFTERNOON

DON speeds ahead of SALLY to the spot where the painting had hung before he removed it. He slows once they reach the entrance to the room it was in.

SALLY: I hope this works. If we get caught, we're done for.

DON: Don't be stupid -- we won't get caught!

SALLY: What makes you so sure of that?

DON: I'm just feeling confident.

He rushes ahead of her to where the painting used to hang. She takes her time in getting there, trying to maintain an air of subtlety.

SALLY: (to herself) What is wrong with him? One minute he can barely move, the next he's bouncing off the walls.

DON: Oh my god!

SALLY: What?

She briskly makes her way over to him and sees exactly what has him so stunned.

SALLY: I don't believe it.

ACT TWO

INT: HOSPITAL
MIDDAY

RYAN looks at CLAIRE in disbelief.

RYAN: What do you mean?

CLAIRE: Ryan, I can't keep meeting with you like this.

RYAN: Why? Claire, I've changed! You've got to trust me--

CLAIRE: I do. And I believe that you've changed, I really do. That's not the problem.

RYAN: Then what is?

CLAIRE: It's me.

RYAN: What do you mean?

CLAIRE: Every time I see you ... It brings up too many painful memories.

RYAN: Claire, I am so sorry for everything that happened between us. But that was fifteen years ago! We can be friends now -- I know we can.

CLAIRE: It's not just everything that happened with you. It brings back all those memories of my dad and everything he did.

RYAN: You can't punish me for the things your father did, Claire.

He locks his eyes on her, letting his pleading gaze penetrate her.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)

MIDDAY

Scrubbing pans over the sink, PAULA is startled by the sound of HELEN slamming the phone down. She turns around to her friend, setting the pan down.

PAULA: What's wrong?

HELEN: He's not there.

PAULA: So you can talk to him later.

HELEN: The desk clerk said he went out with another guest -- a woman. I wonder who that could've been, huh?

PAULA: I still think you're reading a little too much into this. After all, Don does share a past with Sally -- and at one point, from what you've told me, he thought her son might be his.

HELEN: Which is exactly what makes this all the more painful. Sally's son, Alex, told us that Don left his mother after she had another man's child. He'd never told me exactly what broke us that first marriage, but I only imagined it couldn't be pleasant. The part that I don't understand is this: If Sally hurt him that badly, why has he let her back into his life so easily? And why is he pushing me away?

PAULA: I don't know, dear.

Tears begin to dribble down Helen's cheeks as she ponders this mystery. Paula quickly dries her hands off and puts her arms around her sobbing friend.

HELEN: What did I do wrong?

PARIS, FRANCE
INT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY
AFTERNOON

SALLY and DON are staring at the painting that they left outside just moments ago.

SALLY: What the hell?

DON: Do you think somebody found it and brought it back in?

SALLY: I suppose it's possible ... I'll go check.

She dashes off. As he studies the painting, Don notices aspects of it that he hasn't seen in the past few days that they've had it at the hotel. Something is definitely different about it, he is certain.

An out-of-breath Sally returns to the room and waits until she reaches Don before speaking. Even then, she tries to keep her voice down.

SALLY: Don, you're not going to believe this ... but the painting is still outside!

ACT THREE

INT: HOSPITAL
MIDDAY

CLAIRE breaks the stare between herself and RYAN.

CLAIRE: It's just too much for me, Ryan. I appreciate you coming back and trying to make things right ... At least I can rest a little easier knowing that I've got some closure about our relationship. But to have you in my life full-time as a friend, I think it might be too painful.

Ryan opens his mouth to speak, but holds his words as the receptionist, LEILA, approaches them, holding a cordless phone.

LEILA: Claire, your husband is on the phone.

Claire takes the phone. Leila departs, but Ryan moves just a few feet away. He turns his ears toward the conversation, attempting to pick up whatever he can without appearing to be snooping.

CLAIRE: Hey, Tim. What's up?

Over the phone, she can sense his hopefulness.

TIM: Nothing much. I've got an idea, though ...

CLAIRE: And what would that be?

TIM: I've got about an hour for lunch. I was thinking that maybe I'd come over there and we could eat together in the cafeteria.

Claire suddenly panics. She looks quickly at Ryan, who does not appear to be listening at all.

CLAIRE: You can't come here, Tim!

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
MIDDAY

HELEN pulls herself out of PAULA's embrace and grabs a tissue to dry her eyes.

HELEN: I've got to get myself together. The girls are upstairs ...

PAULA: You're entitled to be upset, Helen. Whatever it is that's going on, it's beyond your control.

HELEN: Yeah, but I've got to be strong. Besides, Courtney and Lauren are upstairs. I'd hate for them to come down and see me all broken down again.

PAULA: Look, you'll talk to Don later, okay? I'm sure you'll be able to work everything out.

HELEN: I hope you're right. Maybe this is just one big misunderstanding.

PAULA: Exactly.

HELEN: I just don't get it ... Why does this have to happen now? Dammit -- Why can't the past just stay buried?

Her words, spoken innocently enough, strike a chord inside Paula's brain.

PARIS, FRANCE

INT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

AFTERNOON

Having delivered the news that the painting is somehow inside and outside the museum simultaneously, SALLY is just as dumbstruck as DON.

SALLY: What in the world is going on?

DON: I don't know. I've got to have a look at that other painting, though.

SALLY: Why?

DON: There's something wrong with it.

He leads her outside.

EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY

AFTERNOON

DON and SALLY walk back over to the spot where they'd stashed the painting. They pick it up and

move around to the other side of the shrubbery, where Don begins to examine it.

DON: I was right.

SALLY: What? What is it?

DON: This isn't the real painting.

ACT FOUR

INT: HOSPITAL
MIDDAY

RYAN can't help but let his guard down and turn around after hearing CLAIRE's outburst. Realizing what she has just said, she tries to calm herself.

TIM: Why not?

CLAIRE: Because ... It's insanely busy around here. I don't think I'm gonna have time to eat this afternoon.

TIM: Are you sure?

CLAIRE: Almost positive. It's not a great idea for you to drive all the way out here and then not even be able to see me.

TIM: Okay ... I'll see you tonight. I love you.

CLAIRE: I love you too.

Hearing Claire say these words, Ryan can't help but cringe. Seconds later, however, she hangs up the phone and he approaches her again.

RYAN: What was that all about?

CLAIRE: I didn't want Tim to find you here. Look, Ryan, you've got to leave.

RYAN: Don't worry, I will.

He wants to take her in his arms, hug her, plant a kiss on her ... but he knows it's impossible. Instead, he shakes her hand warmly.

RYAN: Have a good life, okay?

Claire nods.

RYAN: Goodbye.

CLAIRE: Goodbye.

As Ryan walks off, Claire can't help but feel a little sorry for him. She watches him get in the elevator and leave ... hopefully out of her life forever.

PARIS, FRANCE
EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY
AFTERNOON

A confused SALLY stares at DON incredulously.

SALLY: It's not?

DON: It can't be ... I could tell after I saw the one inside. Sally, the painting has been inside the museum all this time.

SALLY: Then how did we get this one?

DON: I don't know! But I never stole it -- I couldn't have. The one inside is definitely the real one.

SALLY: Where did this one come from, then?

DON: I don't know.

SALLY: Think, Don. Try to remember. I'd rather not have anymore crazy surprises.

DON: How ...

His thinking aloud is interrupted by the twinge of pain he feels in his right temple. At first it is just a quick shot, albeit very sharp. Soon, however, the pain has begun to shoot through the rest of his head, and the all-too-familiar pounding returns. He grabs his head in an attempt to subdue it.

SALLY: Don, what's wrong?

DON: My head ... I was just trying to remember what happened that night.

SALLY: Are you okay?

DON: I'm fine-- I'm just--

He collapses onto the ground.

ACT FIVE

INT: VISION PUBLISHING (TIM'S OFFICE)
MIDDAY

TIM is still feeling a bit rattled from his earlier conversation with Claire. What was wrong with her? She had practically snapped at him not to come to the hospital, and then tried to cover it up by acting like it was nothing.

Tim, however, knows better than that. The last time she'd acted this way was when he'd been thinking of taking that job in Chicago, and she'd been evasive about her father contacting her -- and her reason for not wanting to move there: She'd been raped there as a teenager.

TIM: I'm definitely seeing shades of that right now ...

Whatever the case may be, one thing is all too clear: Something is definitely not right with Claire.

INT: CAR
MIDDAY

PAULA is now driving home. She is drained -- perhaps from dealing with Helen's fragile emotional state. Or perhaps, she thinks unhappily, it is because of the intense strain that has been on her brain since Helen made that comment: "Why can't the past just stay buried?"

It is possible -- or at least until the last few months, Paula had thought so. This has always weighed so heavily on her mind, for all these years, but lately it has almost become unbearable. She can barely keep it to herself anymore. After all, there were so many questions left unanswered; now that life is finally slowing down a bit, she finds herself more and more driven to find some answers.

One thing is becoming quite obvious to her: It is going to be a battle to keep the past in the past.

PARIS, FRANCE
EXT: LE MUSEE D'ORSAY
AFTERNOON

SALLY leans down over DON, who is down on the pavement. At least there isn't really anyone around to see this, she thinks. The last thing they need is to make a scene.

Seconds later, Sally has managed to get Don to open his eyes. The spark she had observed in him when they arrived at the museum has faded; in its place is the dull weariness she had seen in the hotel room.

SALLY: Don, are you all right?

Before he even answers, he slowly pulls himself to a sitting position.

DON: I guess. Let's just get back to the hotel--

SALLY: Should we leave this painting here? I'm dying to know where it came from.

DON: I know.

SALLY: What?

DON: I can remember. I don't know what happened, but whatever just came over me brought back glimpses of that night.

SALLY: So what did happen, then?

DON: After you left, I looked around a little more. But I was so excited to see that painting that I kept going back to it. I was really energized -- like I was when we got here today.

He speaks slowly, each word dragging itself out from his lips.

DON: So I went back to the hotel and I painted it from memory, I guess.

SALLY: Huh?

DON: That's all I can remember ... I never stole the painting.

SALLY: So you mean to tell me that this thing we've been panicking about and trying to return is nothing more than a forgery?

DON: I guess.

SALLY: You really are in bad shape. Look, let's go back to the hotel. Tomorrow we'll get you to a doctor, and once we figure out what's wrong, we can get on with having some fun.

DON: After I see a doctor, I'm going home, Sally.

SALLY: Why?

Besides the fact that I can't stand you? Don says to himself.

DON: Because ... I miss my family. And I'm not in great shape, as you can tell.

SALLY: Once you see a doctor, I'm sure you'll be fine.

DON: I'm not so sure of that, Sally.

END OF EPISODE #105

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