

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #109
TIME FRAME: THE DAY AFTER [#108](#)

TEASER

INT: SKATING RINK
AFTERNOON

JASON and COURTNEY step off the ice, both sweating from a strenuous practice.

COURTNEY: Okay, I'm beat.

JASON: Me too.

He takes a long drink of water from the bottle in his hand.

COURTNEY: Do you wanna do something tonight?

JASON: What did you have in mind?

With a devilish grin, he wraps his arms around her.

COURTNEY: I was thinking more along the lines of a movie or something, buddy.

JASON: Oh. Yeah, sure. Do you wanna call Lauren and Alex and invite them to come along?

COURTNEY: I don't know what a great idea that is, Jason.

INT: AIRPLANE
AFTERNOON

Not far from King's Bay, DON and SALLY sit side-by-side in the plane. His head is dropped to the side, his eyes partially shut, as he tries to get some rest despite his throbbing headache.

SALLY: Is your head still bothering you?

DON: You might say that. Jeez, will this thing just go away already?

SALLY: You know what the doctor said: You've got to try to eliminate as much stress as possible from your life.

DON: I have to say, having you around hasn't been much help.

SALLY: What? Don, without me you'd never have even made it onto this plane!

DON: I know. What I mean is, your presence on this trip has really complicated things with Helen.

SALLY: I know, and I'm sorry about that.

Her mind can't help but giggle at this lie, but she maintains a cool exterior.

SALLY: But please, just try to rest. It's the only way you're going to get better.

DON: I don't think I'm gonna be able to do that until everything with Helen is all right again.

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

AFTERNOON

In response to a knock on the door, CLAIRE enters from the kitchen. She casts a glance at TRAVIS and SAMANTHA, who are in the middle of the floor, playing with their toys. She pulls the door open and finds RYAN on the other side.

CLAIRE: Ryan? I thought we'd agreed that it's best if we're not around each other anymore.

RYAN: We did ... But first, there's something I need from you.

ACT ONE

INT: SKATING RINK

AFTERNOON

JASON gives COURTNEY a puzzled look.

JASON: Why? What's wrong?

COURTNEY: Nothing. I was just thinking ... You know, we could use a little time alone together.

She wraps her arms around his neck and draws him closer.

JASON: I can't say I mind that idea.

He plants a kiss on her lips.

COURTNEY: Besides, if they came with us ... I would definitely be distracted the whole night.

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

CLAIRE and RYAN stand facing each other from opposite sides of the open doorway.

CLAIRE: What do you want?

RYAN: There's ... well, there's this picture you've got.

CLAIRE: Which one?

RYAN: Actually, I don't know if you've still got it. Do you remember the time we went to the pumpkin patch?

CLAIRE: And we both fell in the mud? Yeah.

RYAN: I remembered that you wound up with the two framed pictures from that day. Do you have them ... or know where they are?

CLAIRE: Why, do you want one?

RYAN: I'd like one, yeah. It'll be a nice remembrance.

His tone is now more somber than polite.

RYAN: So, do you have them?

ACT TWO

INT: SKATING RINK
AFTERNOON

There is now a different look on JASON's face -- one of concern. COURTNEY strokes the side of his head reassuringly.

COURTNEY: Don't worry. It's nothing serious.

Jason is still skeptical. Could Alex have anything to do with this?

JASON: Then what is it?

COURTNEY: Lauren. She'd probably drive me nuts.

After letting out a sigh of relief, Jason resumes looking confused.

JASON: Why do you say that?

COURTNEY: She's ...

She hesitates.

JASON: She's what?

COURTNEY: She's got this thing for Alex.

JASON: Really?

COURTNEY: Yeah. She's totally nervous around him now. Like when we were watching the movie the other night, she was trying to get his attention the whole time.

JASON: Hmm ...

The expression on his face is not unfamiliar to her.

COURTNEY: What are you thinking now?

INT: AIRPLANE
AFTERNOON

SALLY reaches over and begins rubbing DON's temples.

SALLY: Does that help any?

Despite the fact that it does, Don can't help but feel uncomfortable.

DON: No, not really.

She pulls her hands away.

SALLY: Oh. The Advil didn't work either?

DON: I've been taking it for days and it's hardly helped.

SALLY: I'm just glad you were able to get out of bed for this flight. You've been in pretty bad shape lately.

DON: That's why it's important I get home to my family as quickly as possible. I've got to get everything in order.

SALLY: You mean with Helen?

DON: Yeah ... and everything else. Papers and documents and whatnot.

SALLY: Why?

He suddenly lowers his voice, as if he's got a secret to tell.

DON: I'm afraid I don't have much time left, Sally.

ACT THREE

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

CLAIRE motions for RYAN to come inside the apartment.

CLAIRE: Actually, I do. There's a box of old pictures and stuff in my closet ... Just let me run and get it.

RYAN: Thanks.

As Claire heads off to the bedroom, Ryan steps inside. He watches TRAVIS and SAMANTHA playing

on the floor, blissfully unaware of all the troubles of the world. If only things could be like that again, Ryan wonders. If only I could have in my life what those kids have in theirs -- Claire.

INT: AIRPLANE
AFTERNOON

SALLY looks at DON in panic.

SALLY: What?!?

DON: I don't know how much longer I'm going to be around.

SALLY: What do you mean?

DON: I'm worried. These headaches and this fatigue -- they're not going away.

SALLY: Like the doctor said, it's stress-related. You've just got to calm yourself down.

DON: That's not going to happen, Sally. Look at everything that's happened -- first Courtney went through the nightmare of being attacked, then she was nearly killed, I fell off that ladder, you and Alex both came back into my life, and now Helen doesn't even trust me! There's no end to the calamities all around me!

SALLY: Don't say that, Don. We're going to calm you down and get your health back up to normal.

DON: I just hope that's possible.

Sally turns and looks out the window. I'm going to be the one who's there to nurse you back to health, she thinks with a grin.

ACT FOUR

INT: SKATING RINK
AFTERNOON

JASON smiles, aware that COURTNEY knows what he's thinking.

JASON: Why don't we help get the two of them together? I mean, it would do Lauren good to be with a guy she really likes ...

COURTNEY: ... and Alex is a really nice guy. But what do you have in mind?

JASON: I don't know. I just think it would be cool if we give Lauren a little hand.

COURTNEY: Definitely. There's just one thing that worries me.

INT: AIRPORT
AFTERNOON

The plane is now unloading. Passengers filter out through the gate, searching the crowd of people for whomever has come to meet them. Others, like DON and SALLY, simply continue walking.

SALLY: I'm going to go see Alex. Do you want to come?

DON: I'd like to ... but I think it would be better if I went home and got some sleep.

SALLY: You're probably right. Maybe we'll come visit you tomorrow, okay?

Don wants to say no, but his urge to see the boy he once thought might be his son is too great.

DON: Sure. That would be nice.

Soon they arrive at the baggage claim and stand side-by-side as they wait for their luggage to appear.

SALLY: Just promise me that you'll relax once you get home. It would kill me if anything happened to you because of this trip.

DON: I'll try ... but I've got to deal with Helen first.

ACT FIVE

INT: SKATING RINK
AFTERNOON

JASON is curious as to what problem he has overlooked that COURTNEY has seen.

JASON: Huh?

COURTNEY: Alex doesn't even live here, Jay. What if he goes back to school in the fall?

JASON: That's not our business to worry about. All we're gonna do is help Lauren get a shot at a relationship with Alex, right?

COURTNEY: Right.

JASON: So if it doesn't work out or whatever, fine. I just think that after she's been such a great friend to us, we owe this to Lauren.

COURTNEY: I guess so.

She jumps up into his arms.

COURTNEY: This is gonna be fun!

JASON: Let's not get carried away. We're not gonna do anything over-the-top.

COURTNEY: Fine. I just wanna see my best friend get a shot at happiness.

INT: CHASE HOME (KITCHEN)
AFTERNOON

The sound of the front door opening and closing echoes through the silent house. After dropping his bags near the front door, DON walks into the kitchen cautiously.

DON: Helen? Courtney? Is anyone home?

The silence is eerily disturbing, and Don finds himself with shivers running up and down his spine. Something isn't quite right, he's certain.

He peeks around the house, but determines that nothing seems out of place. Once he returns to the kitchen, however, something catches his eye -- something on the table. It is an envelope with his name on it.

Don rushes over to the table, fighting his own fatigue, and removes the note from the envelope. Tears well up in his eyes and anger inside his body as he reads it:

"Don, I got your message that you'd be home today. Please gather your things as quickly as you can. I'll

be home from work at 6:00 and I'd rather you weren't here when I get home."

Painfully, he reads the all-too-familiar signature of his wife at the bottom of the note.

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

RYAN looks around the room, keeping a watchful and somewhat mournful eye on TRAVIS and SAMANTHA, who continue to play. What a home Claire has built for herself -- what a life, he realizes somewhat bitterly. She's grown so much ... She's turned into a woman who possesses the traits he loved in her as a girl and so much more. It's going to be hard to leave her behind, he knows, but he also can't bring himself to disobey her wishes.

It's kind of funny, he thinks to himself with a smirk. I can bring myself to lie to her about my business, about my being involved in the mob with my dad, but if she asks me to do something like walk out of her life forever, I do it without hesitation. Just for her.

Suddenly he is pulled from his thoughts by something shocking. CLAIRE emerges from the bedroom, holding the framed photo.

CLAIRE: Here, I found it--

RYAN: Claire, grab the kids and get out of here!

CLAIRE: What?

He points to the flames ripping across the carpet, straight out of the bedroom.

RYAN: This place is on fire!

END OF EPISODE #109

[Next Episode](#)