

"FOOTPRINTS"
EPISODE #133
TIME FRAME: THE DAY AFTER [#132](#)

TEASER

INT: FITCH MANSION (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Katherine is quietly nursing a drink in the living room when the rattle of the telephone fills the house. She makes no move, not even after it rings a second time. The ringing ceases there, however, and the butler, Walter, enters with the portable phone in hand.

WALTER: Phone for you, Mrs. Fitch.

Katherine stands and meets him in the middle of the room, where she takes the phone from him.

KATHERINE: Thank you, Walter.

She waits until he is gone to raise it to her ear.

KATHERINE: Katherine Fitch speaking.

The voice on the other end spills out into Katherine's ear almost at once, busting with all sorts of vividly audible emotions.

ROBERTA: It's Roberta. There's something you need to know about - something bad!

INT: ANDY'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Meanwhile, Katherine's son, Andy, is seated on one half of his L-shaped sofa, holding a Pepsi in one hand. Brent Taylor is sitting across from him, sipping a beer.

BRENT: I cannot believe they lost!

He throws his arms up passionately and then slumps back onto the couch, taking another slug from the glass bottle.

ANDY: Don't feel too bad. After all, they've been losing all season-

Brent lunges forward, holding up a fist playfully. They laugh, but it dies off when a series of quick thuds sounds.

BRENT: Was that the door?

ANDY: I think so ...

He rises, setting his Pepsi down as he slowly makes his way over to the door. Another knock infiltrates the apartment.

BRENT: I guess it was.

Brent picks up the remote control and mutes the post-game show while Andy opens the door.

ANDY: Oh my ... What are you doing here?

Brent turns around and is shocked to see Danielle standing outside.

INT: CHASE HOME (FOYER)
AFTERNOON

Lauren is standing half-inside the open front door. Courtney stands barefoot on the wood floor.

COURTNEY: I'm definitely glad you dropped by. This was something I wanted to know about.

LAUREN: Like I could keep it to myself anyway!

She smiles and a little giggle escapes.

LAUREN: Did I just giggle?

COURTNEY: I'm afraid you did.

LAUREN: God, I am such a nerd. Hopefully I won't do anything stupid in front of Alex ...

COURTNEY: Calm down. You've been hanging around him for months and haven't embarrassed yourself once.

LAUREN: No, I guess not. But then again, this is a date. It's ... different.

COURTNEY: True.

She takes a thoughtful pause before bouncing a few steps closer to Lauren.

COURTNEY: But you look great. Don't worry.

LAUREN: Keep your fingers crossed!

COURTNEY: I will, I will.

She reaches forward to give her friend a quick hug.

COURTNEY: Now go on. You don't wanna be late.

LAUREN: Here goes nothing ...

She turns and heads down the driveway to her car.

ACT ONE

INT: MORIANI HOME (FOYER)
AFTERNOON

Nick steps across the foyer as the doorbell echoes through the house. This only adds to the underlying chilliness of the place, which simply looks cold. He pulls the door open just as the bell is rung a second time; it chimes as Nick's eyes fall upon Katherine Fitch.

NICK: Katherine?

KATHERINE: Yes, hello ...

Her words come matched with heavy breaths as she steps inside.

NICK: What's the matter?

KATHERINE: I just ... I needed to talk to someone. Something-something awful has happened.

She pauses, staring down at the floor while Nick shuts the door.

NICK: Well?

KATHERINE: Oh, I-

She looks up with a start, shaking her head as if to clear it so she can focus.

KATHERINE: I just received a call from Roberta Owens-you know, the woman I hired-

NICK: To take care of Danielle, I know.

KATHERINE: Yes. Well, she called me to say that ... oh, dear God, I can't believe this is happening.

NICK: What? What happened?

She turns to him with wide eyes, her face drained to an eerie whiteness.

KATHERINE: Danielle knows everything!

INT: ANDY'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)

AFTERNOON

Brent climbs to his feet as Danielle steps inside the apartment.

DANIELLE: I'm back!

ANDY: But ... how?

She smiles and gives him a peck on the cheek.

BRENT: Danielle, what's going on? I thought you were supposed to be on the road-

DANIELLE: Let's just say that's done now.

ANDY: What are you talking about?

DANIELLE: Guys, I'm done with touring. From now on, I'll be home for good.

BRENT: Danielle! Tell us what in the world is going on!

DANIELLE: Well ...

She flashes her fiancé and her brother a sly grin.

DANIELLE: I happened upon some information that I found very useful.

EXT: KING'S BAY MALL - CINEMA
AFTERNOON

Lauren catches sight of Alex as she approaches the front of the movie theater. She picks up her pace as she nears him.

LAUREN: Hey!

ALEX: Hey ... How's it goin'?

LAUREN: Good, I guess. How about you?

ALEX: Same old.

Silence threatens to throw a damper on the outing, but Lauren jumps right in and thwarts it.

LAUREN: So, what should we see?

Alex turns and scans the list of films posted behind the ticket clerk's head.

ALEX: Oh, uh ... I don't know. I don't care. You pick.

LAUREN: No, you.

ALEX: I don't know ...

He stares at the list, as if time is just going to deliver an answer.

ALEX: No, really. You go ahead.

LAUREN: You sure?

ALEX: Yeah. It's your pick.

LAUREN: All right ...

She considers the list of movies, scratching them off one by one. "Toy Story 2"? Nah. "American Beauty"? Seen it already. "The World Is Not Enough"?

LAUREN: Hey, about James Bond?

Alex nods agreeably.

ALEX: Sounds good to me.

LAUREN: You sure?

ALEX: Yes, I'm sure!

His words are shaken by a laugh.

ALEX: Now come on!

He takes her hand and pulls her up to the ticket window.

ACT TWO

INT: MORIANI HOME (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Nick leads Katherine to the burgundy leather sofa and helps her get seated before he goes over to the bar to mix up a pair of drinks.

NICK: So tell me, what happened, exactly?

KATHERINE: That woman - that stupid woman! - blew the whole thing with one idiotic mistake.

NICK: What'd she do?

KATHERINE: She was planning to quit working for me, so she left me a voice message. Apparently she must have dialed Danielle on the speed-dial instead of me ... that's what she thinks happened. So she left Danielle a message for me that basically revealed the entire plan!

NICK: She just left a message on the wrong machine and didn't notice a thing?

KATHERINE: I don't know - I get the impression she was intoxicated. That's what I should have expected from that woman.

NICK: So what are you going to do now?

KATHERINE: I'm not sure. I-I can't even bring myself to face Andrew. I can't imagine how he's taking this.

NICK: How badly can he be taking it? I think he's almost immune to shock where you're concerned.

KATHERINE: That may be true ... but it doesn't help matters any. This just sets me back a few more steps in trying to get Andrew to forgive me.

Nick cannot think of any response better than simply nodding his head and murmuring an "mm-hmm."

KATHERINE: What am I going to do, Nick? I've lost him forever!

INT: ANDY'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Brent and Andy have gathered closely around Danielle. Both men stand with arms folded, hooked on her story.

DANIELLE: So it turns out Katherine was paying Roberta to keep me on contract - and on tour. Roberta must have gotten tired of taking orders; God knows I could barely stand being employed by her. She left her a voicemail to tell her she was quitting - or at least she thought she did.

BRENT: Huh?

DANIELLE: It turns out Roberta dialed the wrong number with her speed-dial and left the message on my pager instead.

ANDY: Let me get this straight ... She didn't even realize she had the wrong person's voicemail?

DANIELLE: I guess not. From the way she described it to me, she didn't exactly have a clear head at the time.

Andy's skin drops a few shades of color and his expression grows nearly blank. The image of Roberta's face ... Roberta's lips ... so close to his own lingers on the screen in his mind, as if someone has hit the "pause" button and refuses to release it.

DANIELLE: Andy, what's wrong?

Andy swallows hard and then looks back at her.

ANDY: Oh ... nothing in particular. The whole thing is just sort of shocking.

DANIELLE: In a way, I guess. But haven't we just come to expect this sort of thing from your mother?

ANDY: True ...

His mind is clearly still wandering.

ANDY: When did Roberta leave this message for you?

DANIELLE: Oh, um, lemme check.

She pulls out her pager and scans through the list of messages quickly.

DANIELLE: Thanksgiving night.

Paleness strikes Andy ten times harder than before.

DANIELLE: Why do you ask?

INT: KING'S BAY MALL - CINEMA
AFTERNOON

The James Bond theme fills the theatre, accompanying the quick action shots running by on the screen. The plot, though hardly developed yet, is already hopelessly lost on Lauren. She's too concerned with the young man seated to her left even to pay attention.

Alex, meanwhile, has his left hand propped up on the armrest. His face is resting in it, causing his whole body to lean further to the left. He is not oblivious to the fact that Lauren is also leaning as far left as she can. He, too, is trying to focus on the movie, but it's not so easy. Lauren's "subtlety" just isn't that subtle, and it's making him nervous.

He shifts in his seat, pulling himself to an upright position. Something flickers in anticipation inside Lauren - Is he going to make a move? The seconds drip away with excruciating slowness, but she realizes that he isn't going to do anything.

Then it's up to you, her mind concludes.

ACT THREE

INT: MORIANI HOME (LIVING ROOM)

AFTERNOON

Nick crosses over to the sofa, handing Katherine her drink before sitting down beside her.

NICK: You haven't lost him forever, Katherine. Calm down.

KATHERINE: Oh ...

A knot of innumerable, raw emotions catches inside of her, and for a minute it almost appears that she's going to explode. She takes a fast chug of her drink, though perhaps it lasts a bit too long. Finally she pulls the glass away from her lips, trying to steady herself.

KATHERINE: I shouldn't be throwing all of this out at you. You've been so kind, and how do I repay you? By storming into your home and burdening you with all of my problems.

NICK: You're not "burdening" me, believe me. I actually appreciate the fact that you feel you can tell me these things.

Their eyes hook together for just one intense moment - but Katherine is quick to break the lock.

KATHERINE: Yes, well, I need to focus myself. How am I going to get Andrew to forgive me now?

NICK: I think I have an idea as to how you can do that.

Katherine looks up from the depths of her drink, intrigued.

Meanwhile, Nick's words also catch the ear of his son, who happens to be walking by the room. Ryan pauses, equally interested.

INT: ANDY'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

DANIELLE: Why do you ask?

She looks into Andy's face, which he tries to conceal by brushing some imaginary lint off of his sweater. This also serves to buy him a little thinking time.

ANDY: No reason, really ... I'm just curious as to how you got this settled so quickly.

DANIELLE: Well, when I want something, I go after it full-on. So I called Roberta up and pulled the whole story out of her right then and there.

BRENT: So that's it? You made her tear up the contract?

DANIELLE: Not quite.

ANDY: Well, what, then?

DANIELLE: I struck a little deal with Ms. Owens.

BRENT: Uh-oh.

Danielle holds up a palm defensively.

DANIELLE: Don't worry. I didn't do anything stupid. I just told her that I wouldn't breathe a word of this to any of her bosses if she would let me keep my contract.

ANDY: Clever thinking, my dear.

BRENT: Then what are you doing home? Isn't part of the contract that you tour-

DANIELLE: Ah, you underestimate me. I had her agree to strike the touring clause from my contract ASAP.

ANDY: I am impressed!

He flashes her a warm smile and then pulls her into a hug.

ANDY: So that's all? You're home for good?

DANIELLE: I guess so.

ANDY: This is wonderful!

He sweeps her into another embrace. She wraps her arms around him, hesitantly at first - it's just been so long.

Brent isn't oblivious to the halfhearted expression on his sister's face.

INT: KING'S BAY MALL - CINEMA
AFTERNOON

Slowly, Lauren readjusts her body so that she's leaning up against Alex's shoulder. She pauses there for several seconds, hoping for the best but all too conscious of the possible worst. Thankfully, he doesn't move. She leans with a little more force and finally comes to rest her head on his shoulder.

A sigh lets itself release, albeit only inside of her. She's gone out with plenty of guys, but, she's found, it wasn't quite as hard to get close to any of them as it has been with Alex. Then again, though, all of those relationships fizzled in a few weeks or months. This time, though, maybe it will be different ...

She closes her eyes, her mind soaking up all the possibilities as she rests on Alex's shoulder.

ACT FOUR

INT: MORIANI HOME (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Katherine leans forward, hanging on Nick's every word. Outside the room, Ryan listens just as intently, though more out of curiosity than anything else.

KATHERINE: What? What should I do?

NICK: Give up.

Her eyebrows lift in surprise, raising her hair a few centimeters as well.

KATHERINE: What?

NICK: Give up on all these schemes and plots and plans. They're not getting you anywhere, none of

them.

She considers his words in silence.

NICK: Think about it. How many different tricks have you tried to split up your son and that woman?

Katherine responds with a self-conscious sigh.

NICK: And it hasn't exactly worked out the way you hoped it would, has it?

KATHERINE: No, I suppose not.

NICK: Then why don't you just stop with all of it? Drop this ... vendetta you have against Danielle Taylor. Let your son find his own way. If they truly aren't meant to be together, then I'm sure life will butt in. It always does.

This manages to trigger the slightest of grins on Katherine's face.

NICK: And just have faith that things will get better between you and Andrew.

She wants to protest, but finds that the words just aren't there.

Outside, Ryan is still listening. An amused smirk has taken up residence on his face as he listens to his father coaching Mrs. Fitch through her crisis.

KATHERINE: You know, I really should be doing. I have a million things to get done, and I've wasted enough of your time-

NICK: Katherine, you haven't wasted any of my time. It's been my pleasure.

She stares at him silently, trying to figure out what to say. Finally she speaks, as she rises to her feet.

KATHERINE: Thank you.

Nick simply nods.

KATHERINE: But if you'll excuse me, I really do need to be on my way.

NICK: Go right ahead.

He stands as well, and accompanies her out of the room. Ryan backs around a corner just in time to

avoid being seen. Nick opens the door for Katherine.

NICK: Good luck. And please, keep in touch.

With a sincere nod, she exits. No sooner has Nick shut the door than does Ryan appear.

RYAN: Well, well, well, Dad ...

NICK: What?

RYAN: Don't play dumb with me. I can see what's happening.

NICK: What? What's happening?

Ryan laughs in amusement, and he notices that his father can't keep a smile off his face, either.

RYAN: Somebody's got a little crush, from what I see.

NICK: What? Ryan, that's-

RYAN: True. Come on, Dad.

NICK: Fine, fine. You have to agree, she is a lovely woman.

RYAN: Yeah, she is. I'm glad to see you have something besides business to keep you interested.

Nick scratches his head and then rests his chin in his palm thoughtfully.

NICK: I just hope business doesn't wind up hurting her.

INT: ANDY'S APT. (LIVING ROOM)
AFTERNOON

Andy lets go of Danielle, but holds her at arm's length for a moment, simply to admire her.

ANDY: Oh, this is terrific!

He gives her another brief hug.

ANDY: I'm just going to go grab another drink. Either of you want anything?

Both Danielle and Brent shake their heads. Andy exits.

BRENT: Welcome home, sis.

DANIELLE: Thanks.

The same lukewarm reaction Brent saw in her face before drifts to the surface again.

BRENT: Is something the matter? You look-

DANIELLE: No, no, I'm just tired.

He examines her for a minute.

BRENT: Are you sure?

DANIELLE: I'm positive. Now would ya shut up and give your sister a hug?

Brent obliges happily.

INT: KING'S BAY MALL - CINEMA
AFTERNOON

Alex resists the urge to flinch at the feel of Lauren's head pressed against his shoulder. There's nothing wrong with it, he figures, but then again-that would be giving her the wrong idea, wouldn't it?

He isn't worried by it for long, though, because his mind once again floats off to his conversation with Jason yesterday ...

JASON: So we're cool, then?

Alex nods his head deliberately.

ALEX: Yeah.

JASON: Cool. I just don't want things to get weird between us, you know?

This time, Alex responds with only a nod.

JASON: It's not like it's anything we need to get all freaked out about. I mean, we were drunk and everything ...

So maybe we were, Alex thinks. I was, I know that much. Maybe that was all it was - the liquor getting the best of me.

And besides, his mind adds, it was a one-time thing. It's never gonna happen again.

Something inside drives him to lift his arm and place it over Lauren's shoulders. He pulls her in just a little tighter, unconsciously giving her shoulder an extra little squeeze as he does so.

END OF EPISODE #133

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