

"Footprints"

Episode #147

[A Few Days After #146, Afternoon]

[Previously ...](#)

*Danielle's father, Bob, and brother, Josh, arrived in King's Bay for her wedding.

*Helen urged Paula to tell her kids what has been bothering her.

*Matt told Sarah that he's pretty sure Molly has feelings for Brent. Later, Sarah worried about what this means for her - and the baby she's carrying.

TEASER

ST. LOUISE DE MARILLAC CHURCH-

Only a handful of people are seated, scattered throughout the pews, when Sarah and Brent walk into the main body of the church. If not for the light buzz of conversation floating in the air, the church would be totally silent - there is no organist there to provide background music as the guests wait. However, a string quartet is setting itself up beside the altar.

An usher, one of Andy's cousins, arrives with a smile and leads Sarah and Brent to their seats up front. He departs when they are seated.

"Place looks beautiful," Sarah comments, nodding her head in the direction of one of the many meticulously arranged bouquets of lilies and ribbons.

"Yeah, it does," Brent agrees. He leans against the wooden back of the pew.

"Doesn't it seem like it's been forever since we had our own wedding here?"

"Mm-hmm." And it does.

"It just makes me wonder ..." She pauses and leans back as well, tipping her head to rest it upon his shoulder. "Doesn't it feel like it's time we took the next step?"

"Next step?"

"Yeah - having kids."

He flinches enough to push her head up off his shoulder. Her neck jerks up so that she's facing him, and their eyes lock in a rigid spell of uncertainty.

BRIDAL ROOM-

"I still can't believe this," Bob Taylor says, his voice breaking already. "Your wedding day."

Danielle smiles warmly. "It had to happen eventually, Dad."

"I guess so," he sighs, admiring every last detail of her dress, hair, and makeup. She looks absolutely perfect. "I just wish your mother could be here ..."

"She is. I'm sure of it." Danielle takes her father's hands in her own. "She's always with us, no matter where we are. That's what you always used to tell me."

"I know," Bob says, a genuine smile peeking through the mask of melancholy that is looming over his face. "She must be, for you and your brothers to have turned out so wonderfully."

Dress be damned, Danielle thinks as she pulls him into a tight embrace.

ACT ONE

DRESSING ROOM-

Elsewhere in the church, Andy watches his mirror image adjust the black bow tie just a fraction of a degree. Satisfied with the result, he turns around.

"It's amazing how it takes a thing like this to put everything in focus, isn't it?"

Tim nods solemnly. "Unfortunately, that's usually how it works."

Andy glances back at the mirror and suddenly the bow tie looks all wrong. He resumes fiddling with it as he speaks. "I know she wasn't invited, and I probably would have kicked her out had she shown up anyway ... but it doesn't feel right without my mother here."

A moment of silence ensues before Tim says, "I'm really sorry that happened," as if it matters. "But look on the bright side," he continues. "It's made you realize that you need to fix things between you and her."

"And what if I don't have that chance? It doesn't look good, Tim. Even if she does wake up - there's no telling what shape she'll be in."

Tim shrugs, but it is a sincere gesture. "It's out of your hands now."

"I suppose it is," Andy admits. His shoulders slump in defeat and the bow tie is forgotten.

"But on the other hand, you're going to leave this church today married to the woman you love."

"Yeah," Andy says, but his voice is devoid of all enthusiasm.

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH-

Little Travis squeals as he watches Samantha, running towards him on wobbly knees, sink down onto her bottom amidst the tall grass.

Claire and Molly are standing just a few feet away, watching the kids, and the smile almost simultaneously.

"She's walking so well," Molly notes.

"Yeah, she is. It took Travis awhile to get the hang of it, but with her it was just-" She finishes the sentence with a snap of the fingers.

Molly shakes her head in wonder. "How do you do it?"

"Do what?"

"Act so great with Samantha," Molly says. "I mean, knowing that she's not your daughter - that Tim had her with another woman ..."

"It wasn't exactly a typical situation." Claire manages a small laugh. "But yeah, it was hard. It still is, sometimes. I think about how we're going to get her to understand the Diane situation ... How Travis will deal with the whole thing ... There are a million different angles to worry about."

"I can imagine."

"But it's worth it," Claire says, without missing a beat. "I love Tim and I love those kids ... I guess when you recognize that, you just find ways to make it work."

"And you've done that."

"I've tried."

"You've done it - very well," Molly assures her. "I envy that, I really do. Everything you have ... It's everything I want to wind up with."

"You'll get there." Claire pats her sister-in-law on the back and looks out to the horizon. The mountains and the beams of sun and the calm blue canvas of the sky - they all mold together, one harmonious mural.

Molly looks out there, too, but despite the beauty of the scene, she can't get over one more thing: How far away it seems.

ACT TWO

INSIDE THE CHURCH-

"Kids?" Brent's unsteady voice breaks the heavy silence between him and Sarah.

"Yeah," she answers. "I know we've talked about it a little before, but - doesn't it just feel like it's time?"

"Well, it ..." He trails off, too taken aback to come up with any meaningful response.

The color clears from his wife's face. "You really don't want to have kids?"

"I didn't say I-just not now," he says. "Not yet."

"Why not?" There is a steely undercurrent of annoyance swelling in her voice.

"Because," he begins, then finds he doesn't have a reason to verbalize. It takes him a moment to put some kind of explanation into words. "We're still both dealing with careers and stuff-"

"I think your career is pretty well established," she fires back. "And mine-it's not like I don't have options."

"Of course not. But the timing ... it isn't right. Now right now."

She flings her hands up in the air, barely his nose with the left one. "Is it ever going to be right? Every time we have this conversation - or any other one - about our future, we don't get anywhere. Don't you think it's time we started moving ahead a little, Brent?"

He fumbles for words, and that is all she needs to rise to her feet.

"You know what? Forget it. All I ever accomplish when I try to bring up things like this is to get myself frustrated."

Before he can say anything to hold her back, she has taken off. He watches her stride through the double doors at the back of the church.

Something tells him not to chase after her.

MAIN BODY OF THE CHURCH-

Bill and Paula barely miss their daughter's hurried exit. When they enter the church and look around, they spot Brent sitting alone up front.

"There's Brent," Paula says, pointing. "Sarah must be around here somewhere."

Before they get any further into the matter, the same usher approaches. He leads them to seats in the middle of the church, several rows behind their son-in-law.

"He looks upset," Paula notes. She strains to catch a glimpse of his face, which is turned just slightly to the side. "You don't think anything happened with Sarah, do you?"

Bill gives her a calming look. "I'm sure they're fine."

"You're probably right." She sighs and straightens herself in the seat, patting down the jacket of her light blue suit. "Travis and Samantha looked adorable, didn't they?"

"Yeah," Bill says, a smile crossing his face.

"It makes me so proud of Tim - and Claire, for that matter - the way they're raising the two of them. Especially with the whole Diane situation ... Doesn't it make you wish we could have dealt with things differently?"

A scowl appears on Bill's face almost instantly.

"Bill ... Don't start pouting now."

He turns to her sharply, adjusting his voice to a commanding but hushed tone. "I'm not pouting! I'm just tired of you bringing ... that up every time you get the chance. It's not amusing, Paula."

"I never claimed it was," she says, growing more defensive. "But while we're mentioning things we're tired of ... I am getting very frustrated with you telling me to be quiet every time I mention it. You've been so good about it for so many years, and now ..."

"Now you start bringing it up every five minutes!"

"Well, what would you like me to do? Forget about it?" She shakes her head in disgust. "This really is just a pride thing with you, isn't it?"

"I think it's a little more than just-"

"No, that's what it comes down to, isn't it? You don't want anyone to think any less of us - of you."

He sits back, looking shocked. Or maybe just startled that it is actually being said.

"You know what, Bill? I am sick and tired of keeping it all hush-hush and under wraps. Don't you think it's important enough that we shared it with the kids?"

He doesn't answer.

"Because I do."

ACT THREE

DRESSING ROOM-

"You don't sound so excited about it." Tim buries his hands in the pockets of his pants and awaits an explanation from Andy.

"No, I am," Andy says. "I am. I just wish the timing was better."

"Because of your mom? Andy, you can't put the whole world on hold because you feel bad about how things have gone with her ..."

"It's not that." Andy wraps his hands around the back of his neck and lets his elbows stick out in front of him. "Part of it is, obviously, but that's not what ... what has me so upset about today."

Tim asks for further clarification by narrowing his eyes.

"I just feel like, lately - since my mother was shot, it seems - there's been so much tension between Danielle and myself. We fought about it and then we made up, but it's still ... there."

Tim gives him an earnest grin. "You can keep waiting and waiting for that perfect moment, Andy, but it's never going to be completely right. You just have to make today as good as it can be and then move forward. Everything will come together, I promise - you and Danielle are going to be fine."

To Andy's surprise, Tim's words give his spirits quite a boost. For the first time today, his face relaxes into a sincere, hopeful smile.

BRIDAL ROOM-

Bob and Danielle share warm expressions as they separate.

"You have made me so proud, Danielle," he says, his voice little more than a whisper. "From the time your mother passed away-the way you took on so much responsibility so gladly. I know your brothers would never have turned out so well had it not been for you."

"I don't know about that," she counters softly. "I mean, Brent has been fine, but Josh ... You've had to deal with so much with him over the last few years. I can't help but think that had I done a better job ..."

"You couldn't have," Bob cuts in. "He's been difficult, yes, but it's not like he's gotten himself into major trouble."

"But it's been so much stress for you-"

"And it would've been a lot more if not for everything you did." With that, he puts an end to the topic. "Look at everything you've accomplished in the last year, since you moved to King's Bay. You found Andy, your career took off-you've done a lot, Danielle. Don't sell yourself short."

She sighs, but her only response is, "I know."

"What's the matter? I can tell something else is bothering you."

"I'm not sure," she admits with hardly any hesitation. "I guess it's just ... This isn't how I pictured everything turning out."

"Why not? You're about to marry a great man, you're on your way to becoming a star as a singer-"

"That's just it! It looks perfect, doesn't it? But I hate singing." She sees Bob's confused look. "I don't hate singing, but this whole professional thing is crazy. It's one appointment after another. There's nothing ... pure about it."

Bob waits for more, but she doesn't offer it. Finally he asks, "And what about Andy?"

She shakes her head and shrugs almost nonchalantly, as if it just doesn't matter anymore.

ACT FOUR

MAIN BODY OF THE CHURCH-

Bill groans. "Why is this suddenly such a hot topic, Paula? We've lived more than thirty-four years with it! It's not as though it just happened."

"No, it's not," she agrees. For a moment, it appears to Bill that she is going to relent - but she quickly does away with that thought. "But that doesn't mean it hasn't been on my mind every single day of those thirty-four years. Until now, I've just had reason enough to keep it in the back: The kids weren't old enough to know about it, the time wasn't right, and all that. And no, the time wasn't right until recently. But I think they're all mature enough to deal with it now, don't you?"

He stumbles in responding. His first instinct is to shoot back "no," but a "yes" makes sense to him. Still, he can't say it.

"I just wish you would let me do this," she says. "You have no idea how relieved I would be to have it out in the open."

The dark veil of despondency still lingers over Bill's face. "Doesn't the thought of telling them frighten you in the least bit?" he challenges her. "You can't honestly believe that it's going to be all roses."

"I don't!" The words dive out of her mouth unchecked and she pauses, looking around to make sure no one is looking. She continues in a hushed voice, "But it's a risk I'm willing to take, I thought we had agreed that someday, we would tell them."

Bill doesn't answer. The fight drained out of him, he simply looks in the other direction.

FOYER-

Brent swerves to the side just in time to avoid the flailing arms of a large woman who is speaking quite excitedly about some sort of social scandal. Unharmful, he keeps walking, but a strangely amused grin pulls at his lips nonetheless. He has just managed to suppress it when he catches sight of Molly, coming from outside. They make eye contact and head to some point in-between them at an increased pace.

"Hey," Molly says, taking a moment to note the handsome crispness of his appearance. "What's up?"

"I'm trying to find Sarah," he explains, sounding exhausted. "She just stormed off a couple of minutes ago."

Molly resists the urge to answer with a sarcastic What now? and instead asks, "Why?"

"I ... Wait. Come here." He pulls off to the side, into a little hallway, and then into an even smaller alcove so that they are out of both the sight and earshot of the guests flooding into the church.

"I'm getting the impression this is pretty serious," Molly says uncertainly.

"It is," he sighs. "She-she brought up the idea of having a kid."

Something inside Molly explodes and it shows on her face, but Brent is too distracted to notice it.

"I mean, it came out of nowhere," he continues, not even looking at his sister-in-law. "Just, 'Oh, you know, why don't we have a baby?' Like this is the place to discuss it. And when I didn't completely jump at the idea, she got all pissed and ran out."

Molly can think of so many ways to stick up for her sister, but she just doesn't feel like doing it anymore. Instead she says, "Then maybe that should be a sign to you."

ACT FIVE

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH-

A cool breeze has sprung up in the time that Tim has been inside the church and it hits him the moment he steps through the doors and outside. He hadn't noticed how stuffy the church had grown, with all the guests arriving, and the light air comes as pleasant relief. He relishes it as he strides over to Claire, who is quietly and very contentedly watching the children at play.

"Feels like the perfect day for a wedding, doesn't it?" he comments as he takes a place beside her.

"Yeah, it does," she says, turning to him with a smile. "How's everybody doing inside?"

"No major commotion, as far as I saw. Andy seemed a little ... on edge, though."

"Can you blame him?" The breeze flips a vine of hair across Claire's face and she pushes it away. "He's taking this thing with his mother really hard."

"I know. I wish she'd wake up - that would really calm him down. He feels so guilty about the way he's been with her."

"It's not like she didn't deserve it," Claire responds, but she knows that it's much easier saying that as an observer.

"I just hope everything is okay. He's having some jitters, but they'll pass." He shakes his head. "He really wants this situation with Katherine resolved. I think if they can find out who shot her and bring them to justice, it'll help him a lot, too."

Claire is silent as she looks out over the front yard of the church, recalling her visit with Ryan the other day.

"It would just be a shame if she died now," Tim continues. "There's so much that's been left unfinished. Andy needs resolution."

If I get lucky and this thing with the Morianis pans out, he'll at least have someone to blame for the shooting, Claire thinks. Tim looks right at her, but she averts her gaze guiltily.

ALCOVE-

"What do you mean?" Brent knows perfectly well what Molly is saying, but they have had so many close calls like this that he just needs to hear her make an excuse to know that everything isn't falling apart.

She shocks him. "Maybe it's a sign that you and Sarah need to end it before ... you get too deep in it."

"I think we've already passed that point, Mol," he says with a nervous laugh.

"But if you get a child involved ... That's something else entirely, Brent." She looks up at him and their eyes connect. "You've had so many ups and downs and back and forths-"

"And we pulled through all of them."

"And you moved right onto the next one. So say you get over this hurdle - what next? What about when you have a kid and you finally come to the point where you say, 'You know what, this isn't worth it anymore'?"

He is speechless. She has just put into words the exact sentiments he has been trying to keep buried the

whole time - in fact, every time something like this has happened with Sarah. Molly has usually been the one to coach him through it - and on the rare occasions when he began to let it out, she has been the one to stabilize him. To hear her echoing his thoughts now, and to feel himself falling into step with every one of her words, is overwhelming.

"This has gotten to the point of being too serious to ignore," she says forcefully. "It's time you made a choice."

And in that moment, the haze lifts off of Brent's brain and away from his eyes: Everything seems so clear. He and Molly drift closer in towards each other, uncertainly but steadily. Their lips meet, burn together, and in that moment, the choice is made.

Just a few feet away, the woman brushes a wisp of blond hair out of her face and ducks back behind the corner, unseen.

END OF EPISODE #147

[Next Episode](#)