

"Footprints"

Episode #164

[The Day After #163, Midday]

[Previously ...](#)

*Bill told Paula that things can never be the same between them.

*Katherine accepted Nick's marriage proposal.

*Ryan was tempted to tell Claire the truth about the rape.

TEASER

THE FISHERMAN'S PIER-

The clamor engulfs Jason the moment he steps inside the kitchen. From the comparative calm of the restaurant's dining area, he steps into a whirlwind of shouts, bustling bodies, and general bedlam. He steps back against a wall for a moment, adjusting to the commotion as he searches for his target.

He spots Bill and makes a beeline for him.

"Dad!" Jason calls. "Hey!"

"Hey there," Bill responds, lifting his eyes momentarily from the dish he is preparing. "What can I do for you?"

"I've got something to talk to you about, that's all. But if you're busy-"

"Don't worry," Bill says. Putting the finishing touches on the plate in front of him, he hands it to a waiter.

"You sure?"

"Absolutely." Bill gestures at all the action around them. "Besides, in case you hadn't noticed, I've got a full staff here to keep this place going in the event that my kids decide to drop by at the peak of lunch hour - which seems to happen quite often."

Jason shares in his father's laugh, then says, "Maybe we should move out of the way."

"Of course." Bill leads his son over to the back wall. "So what's the problem? Did everything go okay up at the cabin?"

Jason hesitates. "That's not what I'm here to talk about."

"Then what is it?"

"You and Mom."

FITCH MANSION-

"My goodness! What are you doing here?"

Katherine ushers her son inside the mansion, quickly closing and locking the door behind him, as if to hold him in.

"I was just thinking about you," Andy says in a tone that advises her to calm down.

"I'm glad to hear that," Katherine says with a smile to confirm this fact. "And I'm glad you're here. I've got some news that I think will please you."

MORIANI HOME-

Ryan shakes up the contents of the glass he's holding. "I cannot believe it worked!"

"You make it sound like some devious plot," Nick says, settling into an armchair.

"It is a plot! As long as this thing goes through, our problem will be solved. We'll get that debt paid off and we can go back to business as usual."

"This isn't some 'thing,' Ryan," the older man snaps. "It's a marriage. And I'm going into it because I love Katherine."

Ryan lifts an eyebrow. "You sure about that?"

ACT ONE

THE FISHERMAN'S PIER-

Bill closes his eyes, as if trying to hold back an outburst. "Jason, please. I don't need you coming in here to plead your mother's case."

"That's not why I'm here," Jason says. "I talked to Mom this morning and I got the impression that I needed to talk to you about ..." He searches for the right word. "... us."

"Us?"

"Yeah." Jason takes off his Abercrombie & Fitch visor and toys with the velcro back as he explains, "She said you're really worried about how all of this is gonna affect the way we look at you."

Instinctive embarrassment nearly brings Bill to protest but he holds it off.

"Is that it, Dad? Is that why you're so mad at Mom?"

"It's not just that," Bill says. "I'd been warning her against doing this for I-don't-know-how-long. I told her it would turn everything upside-down, but she wouldn't listen."

"Nothing's been turned upside-down!"

"Sure it has!" Bill is about to fall back on the fact that he and Paula are now quarreling when he realizes that he can't very well use that argument in support of itself.

"Look what it's done to Sarah," he finally says. "She feels she was left out and now she's upset with all of us."

"She's pregnant, Dad. She's ... emotional." Jason pauses. "That's so weird, isn't it?"

"It really is. Especially since she's due so soon."

"I know," Jason muses before steering back on-topic. "But aside from Sarah, Mom telling us about her other kid hasn't changed anything."

"It's too soon to make that judgement, Jay-"

"This just keeps coming back to you, doesn't it?" Jason puts the visor back on his head and adjusts it. "Is that why you tried to get Mom to keep this a secret all this time? Because you didn't want to look bad?"

FITCH MANSION-

"Really?" For a second Danielle pops into Andy's head, but reality takes hold again quickly. "What is it?"

Katherine simply holds out her left hand. It takes Andy only a few seconds of examination before he asks, "Is that what I think it is?"

Katherine nods joyfully. "Why, yes, it is."

"You're engaged?" Andy's eyebrows move up towards his mop of sandy-colored hair. "Mother-

"It's wonderful, isn't it?" Katherine asks, looking over the impressive ring yet again.

"Wonderful?" Incredulity twists Andy's voice. "Hardly!"

Distress sweeps over Katherine's face. "What?"

"Mother, how could you? This is-it's-it's completely inappropriate!" Andy sputters.

MORIANI HOME-

"Of course I'm sure!" Nick spits. "I would never have had asked Katherine to marry me if I weren't in love with her!"

The force of his father's response takes Ryan by surprise. "Well, that's good," he says after a quiet spell. "At least you'll be happy while you're getting the money."

"This isn't about the money. I do love Katherine. Your ... suggestion about the money simply is a bonus to marrying her."

"Uh-huh." Ryan takes a gulp of his drink. "Can you put in some overtime loving her, then? These guys are killing us on interest. It'll help if we get the money as fast as we can."

"You wouldn't understand any of this," Nick fires back, standing. "Your obsession with Claire Robbins hardly makes you an expert on love."

Ryan looks as though he's been punched in the gut. The tables have turned.

ACT TWO

THE FISHERMAN'S PIER-

"It's not that I didn't want to 'look bad,'" Bill counters, working hard to keep his voice down. "I was

worried about what it would do to the whole ... dynamic of our family."

Jason tilts his head skeptically. "You mean, you thought it would, like, undermine your authority?"

Bill exhales heavily, obviously fed up. "Why are you trying to turn this around and make me some sort of bad guy?"

"I'm just trying to understand you," Jason says. "You never react to stuff like this. When Sarah eloped with Brent, you didn't like the idea, but you worked on dealing with it."

"I wasn't going to ruin my relationship with Sarah over it."

"Exactly." Jason brings his folded hands up in front of his mouth and then drops them. "So why are you willing to let this ruin your relationship with Mom?"

"I didn't want it to be like this, Jason!" Bill stops himself. He glances around and lets a moment pass before he continues, in a more controlled voice. "Your mother brought this on all of us."

"Brought what on all of us?"

"This-this confusion," Bill answers, closing his eyes as he pinches the bridge of his nose. "I think you'd better go, Jay."

"No! I'm not going until we're both on the same page."

FITCH MANSION-

"Why is this so inappropriate, Andrew?"

"Because it is! Because of Father ..." Andy's rage is lost in the waves of bittersweet reminiscence.

Katherine's confrontational front gives way to a softer concern. "What about your father?"

"I ... I thought you loved him."

"I did! I do, Andrew. To this very day." Katherine glances again at her new ring; it suddenly feels heavy, awkward. "But your father is gone. He has been for years. Am I not entitled to move on with my life?"

Andy's initial opposition is fading and he manages a nod, albeit one tempered by reluctance.

"I need someone in my life," Katherine continues, despite her son's sign of acceptance. "If all I have is you - well, we've seen what can happen. I'm lonely. Being with Nick gives me some sort of focus again."

Andy is quiet.

Another thought strikes Katherine. "You loved Danielle, correct?"

The question catches Andy off-guard. "Yes ..."

"But you realize that you can't be together. Eventually you'll feel that you need to move on. You may still love her, but the fact of the matter is that she's not coming back."

Andy leans in closer. "How did you know that?"

MORIANI HOME-

Feeling suddenly inadequate seated on the sofa, Ryan stands to match Nick. "What I have with Claire is a lot more than an obsession!"

Nick responds with a laugh that is both hearty and condescending.

"What?"

"You're kidding yourself," Nick says. "Don't you realize that? If it's not an obsession, what is it?"

"It's ..." As much as Ryan wants to use the label "love," he knows he can't. "It's important. I need her and I know she needs me."

"Needs you? She can't stand you!"

"Then why does she keep letting me in? She's getting - acting - angry because she's trying to convince herself that she doesn't need me or her past."

"I hate to be the bearer of bad news," Nick says, "but I don't think she'll be lightening up anytime soon, seeing as how she thinks you raped her and all."

Ryan sighs, frustrated by the note of humor in Nick's voice.

Nick pats his mustache. "If you want her so badly, why don't you just tell her the truth? Why are you still protecting that moron Stan?"

ACT THREE

THE FISHERMAN'S PIER-

"I don't get this, Dad," Jason says. "This isn't like you."

"It obviously is, or I wouldn't be acting like this."

"But why? What trouble has Mom done by telling us about this?"

"A lot!" Bill turns his back abruptly.

"Okay, Dad, look. I guess I can understand why you'd think we'd, like, lose respect for you because of this thing. But I haven't, I can tell you that."

Bill turns to face him again. Jason sees a flash of hope in his father's face but he is already on his way to tear it down.

"But with the way you've been acting, you might be right. I could lose a lot of respect for you - for making such a mess out of this." Jason swings around and leaves without allowing his father a chance to respond.

Bill looks around him. The bustle hasn't quieted down at all, but he feels a million miles away from it all.

FITCH MANSION-

Katherine furrows her brow in confusion. "Excuse me?"

"How did you know that Danielle isn't coming back?"

His mother obviously isn't connecting the dots, so Andy explains, "Danielle called me last night. She's going back on tour."

"Oh. I'm sorry. I know this must be difficult for you ..."

"Of course," Andy says, his eyes focused down on his fingers. "But I think it might be better this way. If

she were to come back - I might not be able to let go."

"It is better this way," Katherine agrees. Tentatively she opens up her arms.

Just as tentatively, Andy steps into her embrace. "I'm sorry," she whispers. "But you'll be better off this way ... I promise."

MORIANI HOME-

"I know you don't like him, but he is my father," Ryan protests.

He can see a change in Nick the moment Ryan uses the phrase "my father" in reference to Stan.

"He's an asshole, Ryan," Nick says. "Need I remind you how much you hated living with him that summer?"

"Can you blame me?"

"After what happened with Claire? No. And I understand why you thought it would be a good idea to keep the truth from Claire - originally. But after all this time? It's been years! You certainly don't owe Stan anything-"

"Still ..." Ryan sets his drink down on the bar.

"Still what? He hasn't even bothered to keep in touch with you. For all we know, he's in jail again. Why worry about loyalty?"

Ryan looks away. He picks up his drink, takes a final swig, and slams the glass down violently before storming out.

END OF EPISODE #164

[Next Episode](#)