

"Footprints"

Episode #167

[About An Hour After #166]

[Previously ...](#)

*Matt went to confront Sarah about the baby, but she interrupted him by going into labor.

*Jason and Courtney agreed to put the night at the cabin behind them and reconciled.

*Bill received advice from Sarah and Jason that made him rethink his attitude regarding Paula.

TEASER

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

"How is she?" Molly asks hurriedly as she rushes toward the gaggle of Fishers that has assembled in the waiting room.

"She's coming right along," Bill says. "From what Brent said, it won't be much longer."

Molly looks around. "Where is Brent?"

"He's in with Sarah," Paula pipes in. Jason, standing with Courtney on the other side of Paula, gives Molly a warning glance.

Molly tries to ignore it. "Can I go back there?"

Bill points down a short hallway. "The delivery room is on the left back there. You can't go in, obviously, but the blinds might still be open, so you might be able to see in."

"I'm gonna go do that," Molly says almost immediately. She breaks off from the group and heads down the hallway.

Tim turns to Paula, whose coloring has become very pale. Her hands are clenched together tightly.

"Don't get so worried, Mom," he says. "Everything's fine. Claire would have told us if something were wrong."

"I know," Paula says without much conviction. "But I won't be able to calm down until that baby is born and we know everything is all right."

ACT ONE

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

The passage of further time has sent Courtney down to the cafeteria. Jason needs to be with his family now, and Court couldn't help feeling a little bit out of place upstairs. She lifts her eyes from the candy bar she has been nursing and is pleasantly surprised by what she sees.

"What are you guys doing here?" she asks as Alex and Lauren join her at the otherwise empty table.

"We went by your house," Alex explains, "and your mom said Jason's sister was in labor and you guys were here, so we thought we'd come keep you company."

"We say everyone up in the waiting room and they said you were down here," Lauren adds.

"Well, I'm glad you're here," Courtney says. "I felt a little out of things, you know?"

Lauren steals a piece of Court's candy bar. "Glad to be here." She pops the tiny chunk of chocolate into her mouth and crunches away. "So I'm assuming you went and met Jason like he asked ..."

"Yep. We got to talk everything out."

"And ... ?"

"It's all better. I just told him how weird he was being and how it creeped me out."

"You're talking about what happened at the cabin?" alex interjects.

"Yeah," Courtney nods, her confusion showing.

"Jason and I were talking that night," Alex explains. "He was in the guest room and I ... I couldn't sleep, so I was wandering, and he told me what had happened."

"Did he seem sorry?" Courtney asks as curiosity takes hold of her.

It suddenly strikes Alex how much confusion he might be able to cause with a little lie, but he just as quickly realizes that it's not going to get him anywhere. "Yeah, he really did."

ACT TWO

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

Back in the waiting room, Paula has moved herself into a chair. She is hunched forward, her lips drawn together tightly and her gaze roving over the rest of the room without focusing on any one thing for too long.

"Are you all right?"

She looks up, a bit startled, and finds Bill looking awkward. His hands are jammed into his pockets and his face is wearing a cover of uncertainty.

"I'm fine," Paula says, almost snapping at him. Although she has spent many private moments hoping he would come to her like this, with at least a hint of the former kindness, her immediate reaction to him now is one of annoyance.

"You just look really intense," he says shakily.

"Do you blame me? Our daughter's in there having a baby that got very little care for the first two trimesters! There's no telling how that baby is going to come out!"

"Everything will be all right." He plants himself in the seat beside her, watching the whole time for some sign of protest on her part. There is none. "They didn't find anything wrong in the tests they did do."

"I know ..." But she still doesn't sound very convinced.

"It'll all be okay. You have to have faith in that." Bill puts on an uneasy grin, and Paula realizes that it's the first genuine sign of affection he's shared with her in weeks. "Besides," he adds, "this grandparent thing is getting to be old hat for us."

"Yes ... yes, it is," Paula says thoughtfully.

ACT THREE

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

"This is so weird," Molly says as she stares through the glass at the action-packed scene playing out inside the delivery room.

"I know," Matt agrees. "I think it's just 'cause it's all happened so fast."

"Yeah." Molly pulls her eyes from the glass and turns to Matt. "So how'd you get here, anyway? Did Brent call you?"

"Actually-" He pauses momentarily, thinking there is something he should be covering up but then realizing there isn't. "-I was the one who brought her in."

"Really?"

"Yeah. I had just dropped by the apartment and we were talking and all of a sudden ... So I threw her in the car and I somehow managed to get her here in one piece."

Molly chuckles. "I can just picture you, all in a frenzy, trying to get her here - screaming, 'Baby on the way!' and running red lights and stuff."

"I did what I could," Matt says, refocusing on the delivery room. "But it looks like it's all up to Sarah now."

"Breathe, c'mom, breathe!"

Sarah looks up at Brent with harsh eyes, though there is a strong trace of affectionate sarcasm in them. "What do ya think I'm going? Huffing like a freakin' lunatic for fun?"

"Just keep breathing," Brent says with a laugh.

She does, though it is interspersed with grunts.

"All right, Sarah, it's time to really push!" the doctor calls out.

Sarah looks up in horror but Brent meets her eyes with a comforting look.

"Come on," he encourages her. "You can do this."

She bites her lip hesitantly, but he urges her on with another look. His hand settles over hers and picks up her fingers.

"She's pushing really hard now," Molly observes aloud.

"Jeez," Matt says, watching. "It looks really ... intense."

"Well, she is having a baby."

Matt takes his focus off Sarah for just a second, enough time to make a face at Molly. She giggles.

It fades quickly. "Can you believe this? Brent and Sarah are about to become parents."

The comment lingers in the air as a nurse comes in front of the window and begins closing the blinds. Molly casts a final look over at Brent, who glances up from Sarah for a split-second and then returns his eyes to his wife quickly. As the blinds shut completely and visibility is lost, Molly is sure he saw her. But why no reaction?

"Yeah ... parents," Matt finally says, the words sounding both thoughtful and hesitant.

"Here we go!" the doctor shouts, as Sarah strains every fiber of her body in pushing. A bead of sweat rolls into the corner of her eye and she tries to blink it out, even though hundreds more seem to be waiting further up on her forehead.

"We've got a head!"

Sarah shoots a look up at Brent, almost in shock, and he smiles warmly. It is all the encouragement she needs.

"There we go ..." she hears the doctor say after what seems like an eternity of seconds to her muscles. The doc's voice is softer now and something feels different to Sarah.

"It's a girl!" comes the announcement from somewhere in the room. Sarah is too dazed to try and figure out who said it, but she feels a million things besides weariness swelling up inside of her.

"Did you hear that, Brent?" she puffs. "We have a daughter!"

Brent is speechless.

Sarah feels his hands grip hers more tightly. For the first time in - well, longer than she can remember - everything is perfect.

END OF EPISODE #167

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