

"Footprints"

Episode #169

[Several Hours After #168]

Previously ...

\*Sarah gave birth to a daughter. Brent tried to put some distance between himself and Molly.

\*As they awaited the birth of their grandchild, Bill showed signs of softening towards Paula.

TEASER

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

Brent's face begins to come into focus. "There she is," he is saying, a smile on his face as he looks down at Sarah.

She rubs her eyes and then looks around the hospital room for a few seconds. "Brent," she says quietly.

"I'm right here ... Mom."

She can't help bursting out into a grin. "I still can't believe it. Can you?"

"I'm getting used to it," he says. "I've been peeking at her in the nursery all day."

"All day? How long was I asleep?"

"Just a couple hours." He strolls over to the foot of the bed. "You know, I was thinking about something - we can't call her 'her' forever. We've got to come up with a name."

"Oh, yeah," Sarah says absently.

"I've had a couple of ideas," Brent says, pulling a folded piece of paper from his back pocket. "I wrote 'em down, just in case ..."

The names on the list aren't Sarah's main concern, though: She can't shake the thought that maybe it should be Matt standing in front of her with a wrinkled piece of paper, excitement radiating from him as it is from Brent.

ACT ONE

FISHER HOME-

"I feel like I should be going to bed now," Bill chuckles as he comes into the kitchen. "So much excitement today ..."

Paula sets the cup of tea down in front of her on the table. "What's going on with you?"

Bill flashes her a puzzled look.

"I thought nothing would ever be the same between us," Paula nearly spits. "Now you're acting as though everything is back to normal."

Bill pulls up a seat at the rectangular table, the seat to his wife's immediate right. "Would it be so bad if we were?"

For a moment Paula appears taken aback by something resembling relief, but it quickly hardens. "I didn't think that was possible."

"Of course it is," Bill says. "Paula, I love you. We've made it through so much - I don't see why we can't come through this together."

Now Paula really does brighten. "Are you serious?"

Bill nods. "I don't want to spend the rest of my life acting like I don't care about you, not because of a thing like this. If we can just put it behind us-

"No!" Paula jerks back to an upright position, pulling away from him. "It's not that easy, Bill."

## ACT TWO

### KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

Sarah's mouth rounds with a noisy yawn. "Can we wait on this, Brent?"

"Wait? Why?"

"Because-" She drops her head back down onto the pillow. "-I'm exhausted. I don't want to rush the choice or anything."

Brent begins folding up the list. "Okay, sure. We'll do it in the morning."

"Thanks," she smiles. "Hey, would you mind if I nodded off again? You wouldn't believe how ... pooped I am."

"Sure, yeah," Brent says. "Look, I'm going to head home to get clothes and stuff. I'll be back later tonight."

"No, don't."

"What? Why not?"

She closes her eyes. "Go get some good sleep. I'll be fine. I can call if I need anything."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm positive." Another yawn. "Besides, I'm not gonna be very good company."

It takes her only a few more seconds to get rid of him, and as the door closes, she lets out a genuine sigh of exhaustion.

How the hell am I supposed to keep this up? she thinks as her eyes close again and her world fades to nightmares.

### ACT THREE

#### FISHER HOME-

"What do you mean, it's not that easy? I want to drop all of this. I want it to be the way it was before all this," Bill says.

"Things have changed!" Paula cries, practically leaping to her feet. "I want you to at least acknowledge that! I don't want to pretend that this was never an issue!"

She is about to storm out when he grasps her arm.

"At least sit down, Paula," he urges.

"No. If you have something useful to say, say it. Otherwise, I'm tired of arguing about this!"

"Fine." He closes his eyes, collecting himself. "What do you want me to say?"

"This isn't about you saying something just to please me!" She yanks her arm away from him. "You've got to stop this for the right reasons. If you just recite some lines ... That won't actually repair anything!"

Bill is looking away from her now, unable to meet her gaze. Continued silence convinces Paula that there's nothing left to be said, and she exits.

Bill can feel the burning inside of him, the urge to call her back. But as much as he'd like to make everything right, he just doesn't think he can admit what he knows he must.

END OF EPISODE #169

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