

"Footprints"

Episode #170

[Shortly After #169]

[Previously ...](#)

*Sarah could not put aside her doubts over the new baby's paternity.

*Katherine assured Andy that it will be best for him to move on without Danielle.

*Nick discovered that Ryan has maintained contact with Stan, his biological father.

TEASER

FITCH MANSION-

The echoes of the doorbell chime are just fading as Katherine steps down from the bottom stair onto the wooden floor of the foyer. She is just behind Walter, the butler, who deftly undoes the locks and opens the door. Having peeked out the upstairs window at the sound of the car arriving, she already knows who to expect.

Nevertheless, a smile takes command of her face when she sees Nick.

"Hello!" he calls out, stepping inside. Katherine comes forward and they join hands.

Walter quickly closes the door and exits, bestowing a polite smile upon the couple.

"To what do I owe this honor?" Katherine beams, leading him towards the living room.

"I just wanted to see my lovely fiancée," he answers. "So, how have you been?"

"All right, I suppose."

"What's the matter?"

She gives him a sideways glance. "The matter?"

"You just seem a little melancholy," he explains. "Is something wrong?"

"No, no," she says. A pause follows. "Not especially."

"What is it?"

"I ..." Katherine sighs. "I told Andrew - about the engagement."

"And?"

"He wasn't thrilled."

"Ah." Nick strokes his mustache thoughtfully. "I suppose that's to be expected. He'll warm up to the idea, I'm sure."

A quiet "hmph" is the only response Katherine gives.

"Katherine, don't do this to yourself. Or rather, don't let Andrew do this to you."

"Do what to me?"

"Talk you out of this," he says. "Out of being happy. He's ... he's looking at marriage through a very jaundiced eye right now. It's only natural that he wouldn't be the biggest supporter of this engagement."

"Perhaps." Katherine sighs. "How has Ryan responded to the news?"

Nick feels his throat tighten.

ACT ONE

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

"You awake?" Matt asks the mop of dark blonde hair as he slips into the room.

"Yeah," Sarah answers, rotating her head so that her face is visible. She initially sounds groggy, but her expression reveals that it may be boredom.

"What's up?" she asks as he comes closer.

"I dunno," he says, pacing past the bed and then back in the other direction. "How do you feel?"

"Fine. Tired, a little. And sorta ... weird. But fine, considering that I basically just shoved a watermelon out of my body."

He grins, albeit a bit uncomfortably. The pacing ceases and he leans against the wall, arms folded.

"When I come to see you before - at the apartment - there was something I really needed to talk to you about."

"Yeah, I kinda got that impression." Sarah pushes her hair back unnecessarily, dropping her eyes away from his.

"We still need to talk," he says. "I really need some answers - honest answers - about the baby."

Sarah can't bring herself to look directly at him. "What do you mean?"

Matt swallows the lump that has filled his throat. Combatngc a dry mouth, he finally brings himself to say it. "I know all about Dr. Brandt."

ACT TWO

FITCH MANSION-

"Ryan is very happy for me," Nick says, moving past Katherine and into the living room.

"And how about that Claire woman?" Katherine asks. "Have you managed to convince him to give up on her yet?"

"Unfortunately, no." Nick turns to face her again. "Actually, I'm concerned that his chances with her might be more realistic than I thought."

"What do you mean?"

"There was a ... a misunderstanding between them years ago," Nick explains carefully. "I just recently found out that Ryan has kept himself from clearing it up because of some ... old loyalties."

Intrigued, Katherine comes closer. "So you think he may clear it up now?"

"That's what I'm afraid of. And I've been encouraging him to do just that, because I didn't understand the reasoning if he takes my advice seriously ..."

"Then you think he may have a chance with this woman?"

"Possibly. It would get him a lot closer than he is now, I'll say that much." He pauses, patting his silver mustache. "But I've been thinking about it, and there may be benefits to him telling her." Namely, Claire might not feel so compelled to have us thrown in jail.

"So you're not certain which one you want."

"Exactly." He throws his head back. "I envy you, Katherine. You didn't want Danielle in your son's life,

and she wound up removing herself. I wish my situation were that easy."

A glimmer of self-satisfaction shows through on Katherine's face. "Sometimes you need to do what is necessary."

Suspicion narrows Nick's eyes. "I thought Danielle chose to leave King's Bay on her own."

"Oh, she did. But it's thanks to me that she won't be coming back."

His expression begs further explanation.

She is all too glad to fill in the blanks. "Danielle has accepted a spot on a world tour. I called that Roberta Owens woman and offered her a final payment if she would talk Danielle into staying away from King's Bay."

"So Roberta earned her money?"

"Oh, yes," Katherine laughs. "Yes indeed."

ACT THREE

KING'S BAY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-

"You have to understand about that," Sarah argues, thinking quickly. "It's not that I didn't want the baby. But I thought if I told Brent I was pregnant ..." She trails off, burying her head in her hands.

"It's not that," Matt says firmly. "Not that you considered an abortion. It's why that concerns me."

"I already told you why - I was worried about how Brent would react-"

"That's crap! You know it as well as I do!" His voice is bold, infused with so many things. The one that rattles Sarah's bones is the most apparent: the anger.

"Matt-"

"No! Let me finish. I really don't think you would have considered aborting Brent's baby. You know his personality, regardless of this Molly thing. He would have stayed with that baby just like he's stayed with you!"

Sarah actually gasps. To hear someone say it - someone besides herself - is a painful blow. "Take that back!" she shouts.

"I'm right, aren't I? You never would have seriously considered aborting Brent's baby, and I really don't think this was some pathetic bid for attention."

"I would not do something like that for attention!"

"No, amazingly, I don't think you've sunk that low yet!" he spits.

"Matt, why are you suddenly acting like I'm some terrible villain?" The answer is perfectly apparent to her, though, and the awful possibilities of her nightmares are bubbling closer to the surface with every beat of her rapidly pulsing heart.

"Because obviously, you've gotten low enough that you're able to keep something this important from someone you consider to be such a good friend!" His entire body is trembling now. "How could you not tell me that I might be a father?"

Sarah's terrified expression is all the confirmation he needs.

END OF EPISODE #170

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