

"Footprints"

Episode #174

[A Few Days After #173]

[Previously ...](#)

*In confessing her affair with Matt and the possibility that the baby may be his, Sarah also brought to light the feelings between Molly and Brent.

*Nick overheard a phone message that caused him to realize that Ryan has secretly maintained contact with his biological father, Stan, over the years.

TEASER

MORIANI HOME-

"What are you plotting?" Ryan asks as he strides into the living room.

Nick takes a moment to snap out of his reflective state. Ryan gets a chill as he watches his father staring straight ahead, eyes glassy as he idly stirs his drink.

"Plotting? No," Nick says as he relaxes and sits back in the armchair. "Simply thinking."

"Should I be worried?"

"Not necessarily." Nick brings the glass to his lips for a prolonged sip. "Have you seen Claire Robbins recently?"

"A couple of days ago," Ryan says. He pauses in the midst of pouring himself a drink. "What made you think of that?"

"My mind is just wandering. So tell me, are you making any progress?"

"I'm not sure. It's been what, over a year since we came to King's Bay? I should be getting some results by now."

Nick emits a deep, robust laugh. "Results? How do you expect to get results when you're not doing anything?"

"I am doing something! I've been trying to convince her that she can trust me. I think that's definitely working."

"There's a little something standing in the way of her trusting you completely, don't you think?"

Ryan takes a healthy swig of his drink. "I know, I know, the rape. I'm trying, Dad, I really am. Maybe she'll get over it ..."

"I doubt that it's something a woman 'gets over!'" Nick exclaims. "It's obvious that telling her the truth would only help you - so why don't you just do it?"

FISHER HOME-

"Look who's here!" Paula calls as she hurries into the living room. Bill is standing beside the open door and Sarah, baby and accompanying items in her arms, is trooping inside.

"What a nice surprise!" Paula continues, accepting the infant in her outstretched arms as Sarah puts down the rest of the baggage she has brought.

"I hope it's not a bad time," Sarah says. Her unhappiness is apparent.

"It's never a bad time for a grandchild," Bill answers with a smile.

"You're not busy or anything?"

"No, not at all," Paula says.

Bill takes his gaze off of the baby long enough to notice Sarah's demeanor. "Is something the matter?"

"Yeah," Sarah answers after a brief pause. "That's why I'm here. There are some really important things I need to tell you."

ACT ONE

MORIANI HOME-

Ryan turns his back to Nick. "It's not that easy."

"Why not?" Nick asks, rising to his feet. "Who are you keeping this secret for, anyway? Stan? Why does he deserve it?"

"Because he's my father, okay?" Ryan says hotly. "I'm not going to jail for this, but Claire might press charges if she found out it was him. I can't let that happen."

"Why not? It's not as if you even have contact with him anymore!" Nick knows that he has pushed the questioning as far as he can without coming out and saying that he listened to Stan's message for Ryan. Now it's up to Ryan ...

Ryan is momentarily silent. Knowing what he knows, Nick can tell that there is some deliberation going on inside the younger man.

"It's just the way it is!" Ryan finally exclaims. "I can't tell her, not now. It's too late. I just have to make her trust me some other way."

"If you say so," Nick shrugs. His mind is spinning at top speed: How close is Ryan with Stan these days? Did something else happen that's made him so determined to keep this covered?

There are more questions but they are shifted to the backburner by the ringing of the telephone.

"I'll get it," Nick says, moving towards the table upon which the phone is resting.

"Nick Moriani," he says as he raises the phone to his ear.

Ryan can tell by the change in Nick's facial expression that there is not good news on the other end.

FISHER HOME-

"There are some important things we need to know," Paula says. "Such as the name of our granddaughter."

"Have you finally decided?" Bill chimes in.

Jason comes bounding down the stairs. "Decided on what?"

"The baby's name," Paula says, looking over her shoulder at her youngest son.

"Yeah, I have," Sarah nods. She strokes the infant's cheek lightly. "Victoria Skyler."

"That's beautiful," Paula says as she smiles down at the baby.

"So whose choice was it? Yours or Brent's?" Bill asks.

"That's what I need to talk to you guys about," Sarah says shakily.

Paula looks up at her sharply, now concerned. "What do you mean?"

"I think you'd all better have a seat." Sarah takes her daughter back from her mother as Paula, Bill, and Jason all move to the couch.

"What's going on?" Jason asks.

Sarah rocks the baby very deliberately. "About the name - I chose it myself."

"Is that the problem?" Paula asks. "Brent doesn't like it?"

"Brent didn't have a say," Sarah explains. "He ... he moved out."

ACT TWO

MORIANI HOME-

"I'm working on it," Nick says into the phone as he casts Ryan a troubled look. "You'll have the money soon enough."

Ryan begins pacing over the Berber carpet. He listens as Nick adds, "That's fine, I'll pay whatever interest is necessary. I'm a man of my word - I will get the money, believe me."

With any luck, Ryan thinks as he takes another hit from his glass.

"I've come through before, haven't I?" Nick can be heard asking the faceless entity on the other end of the line.

"You'll get the money," Nick says after waiting for the response. Ryan can tell by the intensity of the words that his father is trying hard to hold himself in check.

A few more words are exchanged before the call ends. Nick pushes the "off" button on the portable phone as forcefully as he can, leaving no doubt in Ryan's mind that were this ten years ago, Nick would have hung up by slamming the phone loudly onto the receiver.

"That didn't sound good. Is there trouble?" Ryan asks, already cringing at the answer that he knows is coming.

FISHER HOME-

Paula jerks forward with a gasp. "What do you mean, Brent moved out? Did you two have a fight?"

"If only it were that simple," Sarah says.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Paula demands. "Sarah, what's going on?"

"Calm down," Bill says, placing a hand on his wife's shoulder. "Sarah, explain this before your mother has a coronary."

"Why did he move out?" Jason asks.

"It's really complicated." Sarah brushes a few loose strands of dark blonde hair back behind her ears. "Brent and I are kind of waiting to see where our marriage is going."

Despite Bill's efforts, Paula is still frantic. "Why? What happened?"

"There was some stuff that ... I didn't tell him. That I told him after Victoria was born."

"Like what?" Paula asks.

Sarah is clearly struggling to put this into words. "I-When I got back from New York-" She takes a deep breath. "The baby may not be his."

"What?" Paula nearly leaps off the couch.

Bill's face is a shade lighter now and he is watching his daughter with disbelieving eyes. "You mean, you had an affair?"

Sarah sighs, rocking the baby some more. "It's not-"

"That's exactly it."

All heads turn to the doorway, where a freshly arrived Molly is now standing. "That's exactly what happened," she says, shooting her sister a disgusted look.

ACT THREE

MORIANI HOME-

"Esposito really wants his money," Nick says. He pauses for a thoughtful moment before slamming his fist against the wall. "Damn him! Damn this whole situation!"

"He's not going to ... do anything, is he?" Ryan asks nervously.

"Don't ask me!" Nick examines his son's face. "You're really worried about this, aren't you?"

"Uh, yeah," Ryan says, his sarcasm thick. "Aren't you?"

"Of course. But I'm used to dealing with things like this, Ryan. It'll be resolved one way or another."

"That's exactly what worries me!"

Nick responds with a questioning glance.

"What the hell are these guys going to do to get their money?" Ryan wonders aloud. The fright is apparent in his voice as he continues, "We've never been in serious trouble like this. Not that I can remember, anyway. I just want it to be over, that's all."

"I'm going to meet with some of his guys right now," Nick says. "I'll convince them to wait. We're going to get this money, don't doubt that."

"Didn't Katherine getting shot worry you in the least bit?"

"Of course! But that was just them getting initially nervous. They're over that now - they know I can be trusted."

Ryan tosses up his hands. "Trusted? That's the stupidest thing I've heard in a long time, Dad."

"What?"

"This is the mob! Maybe it's just business as usual to you, but I'm not used to dealing with situations like this. Dodging cops - that's one thing. But when we're up against these guys, it's different. I don't like it."

"Don't start panicking on me now, Ryan-"

"I'm not panicking! I'm being realistic! This is dangerous!"

"I'm well aware of that."

"Are you?" Ryan shouts. "Are you really?"

"Yes! Ryan, I'm going to get this money!"

Ryan takes a deep breath, doing his best to calm himself. Tension that he wasn't aware existed is now filling his muscles. "This thing with Katherine better work."

"It will," Nick says firmly.

"Not if she finds out why you're really marrying her."

Nick swallows hard as his son's words sink in.

FISHER HOME-

"Will you please just shut up?" Sarah snarls at Molly.

"I'm not going to keep lying for you," Molly says with a shrug. "If you're going to tell them what happened, at least be honest."

Sarah's free hand curls up into a fist. She clenches her teeth as her face reddens.

"I've gotta go," she stammers, quickly grabbing for the bag she brought with her.

Paula stands with an arm outreached. "Sarah, wait."

"No. I'll come back later - when I can say what I have to say without being interrupted." She shoots Molly a nasty look and bustles out, her arms maintaining a tenuous hold on everything she needs.

"What was that?" Paula demands as the door slams.

"She's having trouble dealing with the truth," Molly says haughtily.

"What happened?" Bill asks. "Brent's not the baby's father?"

"Actually, she never bothered to find out." Molly shrugs. "I guess it made it easier for her to avoid taking responsibility for anything."

"Molly, stop," Paula says.

Bill rises to stand beside his wife. "So who is the other ... prospective father?"

"Matt - you know, Matt Gray."

Paula, Bill, and Jason all respond with looks that ask, "What?!"

"I don't know," Molly continues. "The whole thing is really ... messy. But the way I see it, she made her own bed and now she has to lie in it."

ACT FOUR

MORIANI HOME-

"Katherine's not going to find out," Nick asserts. "And it doesn't matter, anyway. I'm marrying her because I love her. It just happens to fit in nicely with solving our problem."

"Uh-huh," Ryan responds with a sarcastic nod.

"I need to go. I can't make these guys wait." Nick swiftly gathers up his things and makes a hasty exit.

Ryan shakes his head as he stares at the closed door. "I don't know who you're trying to fool..."

FISHER HOME-

"Why would Sarah do something like this?" Paula's face drops into her palms.

Molly fishes for a response for a moment before shrugging.

"Hey, Mol, can I talk to you alone for a minute?" Jason asks.

"Yeah, sure."

He nods in the direction of the staircase and she takes the hint. The siblings move upstairs quickly.

Jason leads her into his room and closes the door. A new expression has manifested itself on his face and Molly, seeing it, suddenly has a bad feeling about where this is going.

He turns around sharply. "Why are you being such a bitch to Sarah?"

"What?" Molly narrows her eyes. "Jason-"

"I know what's going on, Molly," he says. "This is about you and Brent, isn't it?"

Her response is an exaggerated "Huh?"

"Look, I don't know what the deal is with Sarah and Brent. But I see what you're doing - you're letting these feelings for Brent get in the way."

"What are you talking about?"

"Stop acting all offended and just listen to me for a minute." He places his hands gently on her shoulders. "I can tell that you're still hung up on Brent. But I'm warning you, stay out of his and Sarah's problems."

"I'm Brent's friend!"

"And you're Sarah's sister! You can't be taking sides in this. You shouldn't be."

"Sarah's the one who screwed up-"

"Maybe so. But that doesn't magically make it okay for you to be open about these feelings now."

She yanks herself away from him.

"I know this probably isn't the most comfortable thing to discuss," he says as she turns her back. "But please, Mol, promise me something. Promise me that you will stay as much out of this as you can. Their marriage isn't over yet."

Molly doesn't say anything.

MORIANI HOME-

Ryan is halfway up the staircase when the doorbell's chime fills the foyer. He quickly backtracks and undoes the locks on the door.

He can practically feel his jaw drop the moment he opens the door.

The first thing that tumbles out of his mouth is, "What are you doing here?"

END OF EPISODE #174

[Next Episode](#)