

Expose

Pilot: Disappearance

Episode 1 x 01

Jordan Dawson

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BEDROOM - NIGHT

PRINCESS ANASTASIA VALERII lies awake in a bed next to PRINCE CEDRIC CALDWELL. Cedric has his arm wrapped around Anastasia. Anastasia rises when Cedric removes his arm. She is wearing a white night gown. Anastasia approaches the bedroom door with a bag of luggage. She is now wearing a black shirt and pants underneath a black coat. She waits at the door a moment then exits.

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. COURTYARD - NIGHT

A car's engine runs in courtyard. The headlights are off. PRINCESS ANASTASIA runs towards the car but stops a few feet away. PRINCE EVERETT CALDWELL emerges from the driver side of the car.

ANASTASIA

Is this it?

Everett nods. He comes around the car and opens the door. Anastasia waits. She turns around to look at Caldwell Manor. After a moment, she places her bags in the car and gets in. The car leaves Caldwell Manor.

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. PARKING LOT - NIGHT (LATER)

A car pulls into a parking space. GENE BROOKSHIRE emerges from the car. He begins to walk across the lot but stops after he notices an empty parking space. He continues across the lot.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. OFFICE - NIGHT

Gene walks through the front door of the office. TILLMAN sits at a desk.

GENE

We're missing a car.

TILLMAN

What?

GENE

Do you know anything about this?

Tillman shrugs.

GENE (CONT'D)

It's late. Why don't you go home?

(CONTINUED)

TILLMAN

What about the car?

GENE

It will have to wait until morning.

Tillman leaves. Gene goes to sit at a desk. Gene looks at a computer screen. On the monitor is the INTERFACE of a map. A DOT flashes on the map. Gene leans back in his seat.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BEDROOM - DAY

Sunlight shines through the window into a spacious bedroom. Cedric awakens.

CEDRIC

Good morning, my love...

Cedric notices Anastasia is not there. He rises.

CEDRIC(CONT'D)

Anastasia?

Cedric scans the room. He gets out of bed and heads toward the bathroom across the room.

CEDRIC(CONT'D)

Darling, are you here?

Cedric walks toward the center of the room. He notices the slightly open door on Anastasia's wardrobe. He opens it. Empty. Cedric rummages through the drawers of the wardrobe. He finds nothing.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR - DAY

Cedric runs down the hallway. He notices a guard standing at his position. Cedric slows his pace and regains composure. Cedric greets the guard. The guard returns the greeting. Cedric turns around a corner and starts to run again.

SERIES OF SHOTS: Cedric searching

1. Cedric opens a door, looks around, then leaves.
2. Cedric walks down a staircase.
3. Cedric stands in the middle of a room and looks around.
4. Cedric runs up a staircase.
5. Cedric closes a door behind him.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. DINING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Cedric peers around a corner. QUEEN JOANNA CALDWELL notices Cedric. Cedric ducks behind the corner.

JOANNA

What are you doing?

Cedric comes from behind the corner.

CEDRIC

Nothing, mother. The sun was in my eyes.

Joanna looks out the window and smiles. Cedric walks further into the room.

JOANNA

It is an especially lovely morning, is it not?

CEDRIC

Yes, indeed.

JOANNA

It is so fitting. To be greeted with such a morning on the day after your engagement, it's a sign of good things to come.

Cedric is silent.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

You are awfully quiet this morning.

CEDRIC

I suppose I just haven't fully awakened.

JOANNA

I'd imagine so. Last night was quite the occasion.

CEDRIC

We spared no expense.

Cedric wanders around the dining room.

JOANNA

Your engagement is deserving of a magnificent celebration.

(CONTINUED)

CEDRIC

Mmhmm.

JOANNA

What? You disagree?

CEDRIC

Perhaps it was all a bit too much.

JOANNA

You didn't seem to think so last night.

Joanna notices that Cedric is wandering about the dining room.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

What are you looking for, darling?
You seem uneasy.

CEDRIC

What do you mean, mother? I feel fine.

Beat. Joanna smiles.

JOANNA

The look on your face as you danced with Anastasia. There is no mistaking it. The love between you two is real.

Joanna approaches Cedric. She caresses his face.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

My sweet boy. I'm am overcome with joy for you and Anastasia. I never thought that things would turn out so well.

CEDRIC

You had doubts?

JOANNA

When it all first began, yes, I admit I was skeptical. The reasons behind the marriage were political after all.

CEDRIC

Our first meeting wasn't particularly romantic.

(CONTINUED)

JOANNA

I was just so afraid that you were putting duty before yourself again.

CEDRIC

I owe myself to my duty, mother.

JOANNA

You sound like your father.

Joanna walks toward a portrait of the late king hanging on the wall.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

He would always put his country first. There was nothing that mattered more to him. Not even me.

CEDRIC

Mother, don't say such things. I am certain father loved you dearly.

JOANNA

There is no question on whether your father loved me. I know he did. It's just that sometimes, I wish that he would have loved me as much as his kingdom.

CEDRIC

You must understand that father had his responsibilities. What worth is a king without his kingdom?

JOANNA

What worth is a king without his queen?

Cedric has no response. Joanna approaches Cedric. She holds his face in the palms of her hands.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Cedric, you must promise me to always put Anastasia first.

Cedric hesitates to respond.

JOANNA

Can you promise me that, my son?

CEDRIC

(CONTINUED)

I...

Joanna stares fixedly on Cedric.

CEDRIC(CONT'D)
I promise, mother.

Joanna smiles.

JOANNA
Where is she? In bed still?

CEDRIC
Yes.

JOANNA
Poor thing. Let her rest. She has
much ahead of her.

Cedric smiles. They hug.

JOANNA(CONT'D)
She'll be an excellent queen.

A look of utter despair comes upon Cedric's face.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. HALLWAY - DAY (LATER)

Cedric walks down the hallway. He looks toward the ground. He walks pass an open door and hears FOOTSTEPS coming from within. His posture straightens immediately. He rushes into the. . .

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. LIBRARY - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Tall, magnificent bookshelves tower over the room. Cedric bursts through the door.

CEDRIC
Anastasia?

He watches closely as Everett emerges from cover.

EVERETT
I'm afraid not, my brother.

Cedric sighs.

EVERETT(CONT'D)
Well... sorry to disappoint.

(CONTINUED)

CEDRIC
Forgive me. I didn't mean to
offend.

EVERETT
It's forgotten.

CEDRIC
I'll leave you in peace.

EVERETT
Are you looking for Anastasia?

CEDRIC
Sorry?

EVERETT
Were you not just looking for the
princess?

CEDRIC
No. I was just--

EVERETT
--calling her name for no apparent
reason?

CEDRIC
I...

Cedric struggles to explain himself.

EVERETT
What's going on, Cedric? You look
terrible.

CEDRIC
I don't know where Anastasia is.

EVERETT
Don't know? What do you mean?

CEDRIC
I'm sure she's here somewhere.

EVERETT
But you cannot locate her.

CEDRIC
No, I haven't yet.

EVERETT
This is troubling.

CEDRIC
I will just have to keep searching.
I'm sure she will turn up shortly.

EVERETT
Where do you think she would have
gone?

CEDRIC
I... don't know.

EVERETT
You haven't any idea?

CEDRIC
No.

EVERETT
Kidnap?

CEDRIC
No. No. It's not that.

EVERETT
How can you be so sure?

CEDRIC
I just am.

EVERETT
What if Anastasia has been
kidnapped? Who knows where they
would have taken her? You can't
just stand by idly. We must act
quickly.

CEDRIC
Everett, it wasn't kidnap.

EVERETT
What do you suspect happened then?

CEDRIC
She took her clothes.

EVERETT
What?

CEDRIC

Her entire wardrobe. It's empty.

EVERETT

She left of her own accord?

Both Cedric and Everett go silent.

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. COURTYARD - DAY

A troop of guards exit the palace and disperse across the courtyard. One guard appears to give instructions to the rest.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BEDROOM - DAY

Joanna sits on the bed. Her hands are cupped together in her lap. Her head faces downwards. Everett stands in front of Anastasia's wardrobe. Cedric looks outside at the guards who continue their search.

EVERETT

They've been at this all morning.
If she were here, then someone
surely would have found her by now.

JOANNA

Oh, stop that kind of talk,
Everett. We mustn't expect the
worst.

EVERETT

At this point, there really is no
other explanation. Anastasia has
fled the manor.

JOANNA

What delightful pessimism.

EVERETT

Hardly. I just refuse to allow
foolish hope blind my judgement.

JOANNA

I see no difference.

EVERETT

I suppose you wouldn't, mother.

JOANNA

What is that supposed to mean?

(CONTINUED)

EVERETT

Humph. Nothing, really.

JOANNA

Do not forget to whom you are speaking, young prince. I will not tolerate such disrespect.

EVERETT

Forgive me, mother. I would do well to watch my tongue.

Joanna and Everett glare at each other a moment. Beat.

JOANNA

This just doesn't make any sense. Why would Anastasia run away?

EVERETT

It's a mystery indeed.

JOANNA

Perhaps she went back to Wistoria? Cedric, what do you think?

No response.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Cedric, dear. Are you all right?

CEDRIC

What will happen if they don't find her?

JOANNA

Darling, you mustn't--

CEDRIC

I was going to marry her.

JOANNA

Don't worry. We will find her.

Joanna hugs Cedric. He does not return the hug.

EVERETT

And what will become of our country if the princess does not return?

A grim look suddenly comes upon Cedric's face.

(CONTINUED)

EVERETT(CONT'D)

This marriage was meant to unify our two countries. If Anastasia does not go through with it, it will surely mean the end of Eleguard.

Cedric walks off to the other side of the room.

EVERETT(CONT'D)

I understand that you are distraught, but have you thought about what you are going to do if she does not come back?

JOANNA

(to Everett)

You talk as if her disappearance is permanent.

EVERETT

And what if it is?

Joanna scoffs at Everett.

EVERETT(CONT'D)

Now is not time to fall apart, Cedric. You're country needs you now more than ever.

JOANNA

And what about Anastasia? Does she not need Cedric, also?

EVERETT

The condition of our economy has been declining for years. Our people riot in the streets. They mock the crown. They think of us as incompetent fools. If they were to see you now, Cedric...

(beat)

I ask you brother...I implore you. Rise above this and show the public just what it means to be a true king.

Silence. Cedric walks across the room to a bedside dresser. He opens the top drawer and finds a ring box. He opens the box. Inside lies a sparkling diamond ring. Cedric stares at the ring.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BALLROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Cedric kneels before Anastasia with the ring box in the palms of his hands. Anastasia appears to be shocked. They are surrounded by numerous guests in a extravagantly decorated room. Anastasia smiles then nods. Cedric SHOUTS in pure joy and sweeps Anastasia off her feet. The crowd applauds.

EVERETT(O.S.)

She's gone.

The smile on Cedric's face vanishes.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BEDROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Cedric, Everett, and Joanna stand in the bedroom as they were before.

EVERETT

She's gone, brother. But your country still remains. We can renegotiate with Wistoria. This unification must happen...with or without the princess.

Cedric returns the ring case to the bedside dresser.

CEDRIC

My love for Anastasia is unlike anything I've ever experienced before. I will not cast it aside as if it were a piece of trash.

Joanna smiles. Everett is inscrutable.

JOANNA

If the search of the manor is unsuccessful, then we will just have to look beyond.

CEDRIC

I agree, mother. We should begin searching outside of the manor.

JOANNA

I'll inform the guards.

She begins to exit.

JOANNA(CONT'D)

And don't you worry. I have absolute faith that we will find her.

(CONTINUED)

Joanna leaves. Cedric approaches Everett.

CEDRIC

In all the time that I have walked
this Earth, I have never felt
anything like what I feel for
Anastasia. I will not rest until
she is found.

Cedric stares at Everett. Everett remains still.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. HALLWAY - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Everett exits the bedroom and begins to walk down the
hallway. A BUTLER, hides behind a column against the wall.
Everett notices him.

EVERETT

Morning.

BUTLER

I'm sorry, sir. I did not mean to
intrude.

EVERETT

Intrude? Upon what?

Everett continues walking down the hallway.

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. ENTRANCE GATES - DAY

A MOB of angry citizens riot just outside of the gates of
Caldwell Manor. Several GUARDS attempt to control the mob. A
few men in the mob SHOUT towards the manor.

MAN

Down with the crown!

SECOND MAN

The royal family is useless!

MAN

They don't care about us!

A few guards approach the shouting men.

GUARD

Quiet! Quiet at once, all of you!

SECOND GUARD

Leave this property immediately!

A guard attempts to arrest a man in the mob but he resists.
The guard throws the man to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Look, my fellow countrymen!
Oppression! Injustice! Tyranny!
This is how they treat us!

GUARD

That's enough from you!

MAN

I will not be silenced! Down with
the crown!

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. FOYER - DAY

Joanna watches the riot through the window.

JOANNA

Mindless brutes.

Cedric approaches.

CEDRIC

Mother, what on Earth is going on
out there?

JOANNA

More riots. Will we ever have peace
from these vicious insurgents?

Cedric looks outside. A guard runs by.

CEDRIC

Hold on a moment, guard.

THIRD GUARD

Your highness.

CEDRIC

What progress have you made in the
search for the princess?

THIRD GUARD

My apologies, sir, but the riots
have forced us to momentarily
suspend our search.

CEDRIC

What?!

THIRD MAN

Please, your highness. Do not be
upset. We simply do not have enough
personnel to fight the riots and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

THIRD MAN (cont'd)
continue the search for the
princess.

Cedric storms off.

CEDRIC
This is madness!

THIRD GUARD
I'm afraid I must excuse myself,
prince. I am needed at the front
gates.

CEDRIC
This has gone on long enough.

Cedric rushes to the front door of the manor.

JOANNA
Where are you going?

Cedric continues to make his way out the front door.

THIRD GUARD
Prince, you mustn't! It is
dangerous.

Cedric exits. The guard follows him to. . .

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. COURTYARD - DAY

Cedric stomps down the steps of the front porch. The guard
is directly behind him.

THIRD GUARD
Please, your highness. You must go
back inside.

The guard grabs Cedric by the arm. Cedric yanks him off and
continues to walk toward the front gates. Cedric walks to
the. . .

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. ENTRANCE GATES - DAY

Cedric approaches the mob. The guard holds captive the man
from before.

MAN
(snide)
And would you look at this! The
royal prince himself.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD

Do not disrespect his highness!

The guard throws the man toward the crowd.

CEDRIC

Are you the one causing all of this commotion?

MAN

What are you going to do about it, huh? You've done nothing for your country! Worthless fool!

SECOND GUARD

Watch your tongue!

CEDRIC

I demand that you gather this unruly crowd and leave this place at once!

MAN

You demand?

The guards form a barrier around Cedric. Suddenly the man lunges forward through the guards and grabs Cedric by the arm. The man begins to raise his fist but the guards subdue him before he can make the assault.

MAN

Get your hands off of me!

Some other guards grab Cedric and move him away from the crowd. Suddenly, a brick launches from somewhere in the crowd. It flies towards Cedric. A guard standing a few feet away notices the brick.

SECOND GUARD

Your highness! Look out!

The brick hits Cedric against his forehead. He falls to the ground. He looks up at several guards surrounding him then loses consciousness.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

A black car pulls up to a booth at a gate. The window of the car rolls down.

GATEKEEPER

Sir, this entrance is for authorized personnel only.

(CONTINUED)

Gene emerges from the car window. He produces a BADGE upon which there is the official "CREST" of the royal crown.

GATEKEEPER(CONT'D)

My apologies. Please, come through.

GENE

Actually, I was hoping that you could help me. Do you know anything about the arrival of some suspicious characters here last night?

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. ENTRANCE GATES - DAY

Riots continue at the gates of Caldwell Manor. The crowd is larger than before. Guards attempt to control the revolt. People SHOUT indistinctly from the crowd.

VOICE(O.S.)

The princess has run away!

SECOND VOICE(O.S.)

Not even she believes in the nobility of the crown!

VOICE(O.S.)

It's time that the monarchy end!

The guards try to quiet the crowd to no avail.

INT. CALDWELL MANOR. BEDROOM - DAY

The SHOUTS of the mob outside resonate in the bedroom. Cedric walks out of the bathroom wearing a towel. There is a bandage on his forehead. He hears the commotion outside and lowers his head. Cedric sits at the vanity. He begins to remove the bandage from his head. He winces. Beneath the bandage is a large wound. He replaces the bandage with a new one.

SERIES OF SHOTS: Cedric gets dressed

1. Cedric opens his wardrobe.
2. He buttons up a shirt.
3. He tucks in his shirt.
4. He attaches cuff links to his shirt.
5. He ties his shoes.
6. He puts on a tie.

(CONTINUED)

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Cedric stares at himself in a full body mirror. His tie is crooked. A woman's hands appear to adjust the tie. Cedric puts his hands over the woman's hands. His eyes close for a moment. Cedric opens his eyes and looks into the mirror. He is alone in the room. A tear rolls down his face. He begins to sob.

EXT. CALDWELL MANOR. COURTYARD - DAY

Gene waits by a car parked in the courtyard. Joanna is waiting on the porch. A few guards stand in position nearby. Cedric comes through the front door.

JOANNA

My handsome prince.

Cedric barely manages to smile. Joanna hugs him. She inspects the bandages on his forehead. Cedric winces.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Oh! I'm sorry. It's still sore.

CEDRIC

It will heal in time.

JOANNA

Are you sure you want to go back out there to face these people?

CEDRIC

It is my responsibility. They've somehow learned of Anastasia's disappearance. I must assure them that our country is not in jeopardy.

JOANNA

These people are hostile, Cedric. They won't listen to reason.

CEDRIC

They are just scared, mother. I need to show them that there is no reason to worry.

JOANNA

You've become such a brave young man.

They hug.

(CONTINUED)

CEDRIC
I must be off.

JOANNA
Please be careful.

Cedric nods and makes his way to the car. Gene opens the back door for him. He gets in. Cedric waves goodbye to his mother as the car leaves the manor.

INT. CAR - DAY

Gene drives while Cedric sits in the back. Gene looks at Cedric through the rear view mirror.

GENE
You haven't spoken a word, prince.
I suppose this speech has you
worried.

No response.

GENE(CONT'D)
Prince?

CEDRIC
I honestly have no idea what I'm
going to tell them, Gene.

GENE
Sure you do. You've always been
good at these things. It's just a
case of the nerves.

CEDRIC
It's more than just that.

GENE
You have nothing to worry about. I
will be there to protect you should
things go awry. Not to mention the
royal guard as well.

CEDRIC
I've never had to fight a battle
like this before.

GENE
It's going to be all right.

CEDRIC
No, Gene! It's not! This entire
situation is out of my control.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CEDRIC (cont'd)
There is absolutely nothing I can do. How am I supposed to confront these people and tell them that our country is safe when the truth is that it's not? If Anastasia does not come back, then Elegaurd is finished. And, and... my brother! God, my brother! He has it made up in his mind that we can renegotiate the unification. I don't see how. We need Anastasia for this work. We need her! I need her!

Cedric calms down.

CEDRIC(CONT'D)
I need her. Even in all of this madness...the only thing I want is Anastasia. I don't care what happens to Eleguard. I just need her back.

He holds his head in his hands. Gene says nothing. After a moment Cedric, looks out the window.

CEDRIC
Where are we going?

GENE
Don't worry. We will arrive shortly.

CEDRIC
That's not what I asked. You're not driving toward the town.

GENE
I think I know what happened to Anastasia.

CEDRIC
What?

GENE
I noticed a car was missing the night she disappeared. It seemed rather suspicious so I tracked the car and-

CEDRIC
-And what? What did you find? Where is she?

(CONTINUED)

GENE
She's left the country.

CEDRIC
What!? To where?

GENE
It appears Los Angeles.

CEDRIC
Los Angeles!? In America?

GENE
That's the one.

The car stops.

GENE
Get out. We're here.

CEDRIC
What? Where are we?

Gene gets out of the car. Cedric looks out the window and sees that they have arrived at the...

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Gene opens the back door.

GENE
Come on. We're going to get the princess.

CEDRIC
Excuse me?

GENE
(pointing to a plane)
Our plane is there.

CEDRIC
What is the meaning of all of this?

Gene pulls Cedric out of the car.

GENE
You want to get Anastasia back, right?

CEDRIC
Of course I do.

(CONTINUED)

GENE

Here is your opportunity.

CEDRIC

But what about Eleguard, our people?

GENE

I thought you didn't care about them.

CEDRIC

This is insane, Gene.

GENE

Don't you love her?

CEDRIC

I do but...

GENE

I can't force you to do something you don't want to do, but I don't want to watch you lose Anastasia either.

Cedric is silent.

GENE(CONT'D)

It's your decision.

Gene awaits Cedric's answer. Cedric stands still a moment and thinks. He looks to the ground and then looks back at the way from which they came. After a moment, Cedric walks pass Gene toward the plane. Gene smiles and then follows Cedric. They both board the plane.

END.