

"CASE #19685:'CINDERELLA'"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. LANDSCAPE - DAY

It's an overcast FALL afternoon. The sidewalks are empty, and the camera begins to pan further into an official security building.

VOICE OVER (V.O)

As the camera pans through the empty halls of the building:

A woman has been arrested and charged with child abuse, both physical and psychological. She has been identified as the WICKED STEPMOTHER.

Fades to another hallway and slowly pans through it as the voice says:

In her confession, the wicked stepmother named CINDERELLA'S FATHER (CF) as an accomplice, and claims that he is also to blame for what has happened to the children. Cinderella's father has been arrested for neglecting the three children in his care. He is now being questioned to determine whether or not he should maintain custody of the three children.

The camera stops panning and stops at a grey metal door marked "Ever After Interrogation Room #3".

INT. INTERIGATION ROOM - DAY

The DETECTIVE and Cinderella's father are in a dark room with caged windows and dark grey cement walls. There is a table in the middle of the room with a yellow legal pad, a water jug, and two cups in the centre. There are two metal chairs on either side of the table, and a bright string light dangling from the ceiling. Cinderella's father is sitting in the chair closest to the window. The detective is seated on the table, beside C.F.

DETECTIVE

Do you know why you're here today, sir?

CINDERELLA'S FATHER

(As he stares down at the table, breathing heavily, playing with his hands)

...

DETECTIVE

Sir.

CINDERELLA'S FATHER

(he continues to play with his hand, picking at the skin around his nails)

...

DETECTIVE

Are you planning to stare at the table the entire time you're here?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(he shrinks in his seat)

...

DETECTIVE

Alright.

(He leans forward into C.F.'s ear)

I only have one word of advice for people like you: cooperate.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER (V.O.)

People like me?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(begins to cry as he mumbles)

I haven't done anything.

DETECTIVE

It's a little late to be crying, don't ya' think?

(He gets up and walks to the other side of the room and leans against the wall, arms folded.)

Three little girls are scarred for life, because you weren't ever home. Two little girls have been mutilated, because you weren't paying attention. Do you think **you** have the right to cry?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(still crying, his head snaps upwards, no longer staring at the table. He's making eye-contact with the detective)

What was I supposed to do?! Not work!?

DETECTIVE

Don't yell at me. It's not making you look good.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(He sinks back into his seat)

...

DETECTIVE

Now, your wife's already confessed to what she did, but I have to honest - I think she's covering for you.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

Excuse me? I -

DETECTIVE

A man like you works hard, don't you?

Beat.

You're a tradesman, right? Work's stressful for a tradesman. Gone for days at a time, dealing with people you don't like, people that don't like you. Job's probably started to piss you off, huh? Do you always yell when you're angry, sir?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I would never - !

DETECTIVE

What else do you do when you angry, huh?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I would never hurt my children. I **trusted** that woman to take care of my child. I **trusted** that she would love both my daughter and **her** children. Why would this be my fault?

Beat.

DETECTIVE

How often are you home, sir?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I - I haven't been home, as often as I should have.

DETECTIVE

So you weren't ever home.

(he begins to scribble on his note pad)

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

But i-it's not like I haven't been around. Why am I the one you're questioning when I haven't done anything?

DETECTIVE

Because, sir, that's the problem. Negligence is considered a crime here.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(He sighs deeply and sinks
further into his seat.)

Beat.

DETECTIVE

(he stops scribbling)

Have you noticed anything about the way
your wife treated your daughter?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I...

DETECTIVE

You what?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

She wasn't ... always the kindest.

DETECTIVE

You're going to have to elaborate.

CINDERELLA'S FATHER

She - she would uh - she would never let
her go out. She always had to stay home
when she wasn't at school.

DETECTIVE

And that was fine with you?

CINDERELLA'S FATHER

Cindy never complained. She never - She
always said Cindy was too nice for the
world. She always said that the world was
too dark a place to be so bright and
forgiving.

DETECTIVE

And that confession wasn't enough for you?
It didn't raise any flags?

CINDERELLA'S FATHER

I figured it was because she was worried,
I-

(he hangs his head and stares
at the table as he mumbles)

I didn't have a choice.

Beat.

DETECTIVE

(sighs deeply)

Look, quite honestly, this isn't looking
too good for you.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I couldn't be home.

Beat.

I'm the one that makes the money, **I'm** the
one with the job - she didn't work. She
had her duty, and I had mine.

(quietly, to himself)

Cindy was always too kind, always so
sweet. Ever since her mother died, sh -
she never would have told me that anything
was wrong.

(He begins to cry).

I knew something was wrong.

DETECTIVE

So why didn't you do anything?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

(he looks up at the
detective, not as angry and
as hostile as before.)

What was I supposed to do? I needed
someone to take care of my baby.

DETECTIVE

That's a lot to expect from a woman you married so quickly, isn't it?

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

I took care of her kids like they were my own, when I could. I bought them whatever they asked for, I **loved** that woman. All I needed was for her to return the gesture and love me **and** my daughter.

Beat.

DETECTIVE

But you've got a lot of money, don't you? Done really well for yourself. Why didn't you hire someone? Interview someone and search for official help.

CINDERALLA'S FATHER

What would the difference have been? Hired help or a wife, they should've both loved and taken care of my daughter.

FADE OUT:

THE END