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*Keeping Faith*  
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## ***More Great Plays Available From Original Works Publishing***

### **American Whup-Ass**

**by Justin Warner**

5 Males, 1 Female (with doubling)

**Synopsis:** The re-election campaign of Nevada Senator and former UNLV football star Wayne “Wall of Pain” Kight has hit some serious snags. His wife and campaign manager have been caught in a dalliance in the campaign bus, which his opponent, retired wrestler General Mayhem, mocks along with Kight’s attempt to save Nevada from a planned toxic waste dump. His poll numbers are slipping and life as he knows it is coming to an end; can accepting Mayhem’s challenge of an election-eve wrestling match at Caesar’s Palace save him? With the public clamoring for full contact, legislator-on-legislator wrestling action, winning re-election may cost him not only a few bumps and bruises, but also his relationship with his daughter and his dignity.

### **Great Western Wanderlust**

**by Eric Eberwein**

7-9 Actors Play 9 Roles

**Synopsis:** A bored Midwestern couple boards a cross-country train for an impulsive romantic getaway into the American West ... but no matter how far they go, they can’t seem to get away from the fantasies, fetishes and doubts below the surface of their marriage. *Great Western Wanderlust* comically chronicles the St. Louis-to-Los Angeles adventure of Greg and Kristi, two thirtysomethings hiding their true wants and needs beneath their stolid Midwestern upbringing. As their escape from suburbia turns into a vacation from hell, their trip west also changes their relationship – they feel the pull of freedom and adventure, and the classic American impulse to find their true selves on the open road.

# **KEEPING FAITH**

**A play in two acts**

**By Mark Scharf**

## **Cast of Characters**

(in order of appearance)

JANE

mid/late 50's middle-class suburban housewife and mother

ED

mid/late 50's, middle-class, husband and father

FAITH

18, engaged to be married to Hartsell Edward Thomas Williams IV

HARTSELL (HART)

45, engaged to be married to FAITH

### **TIME**

The present

### **PLACE**

A cheap motel room on a back road somewhere in Arkansas.

*KEEPING FAITH* is the Winner of the 2008 Robert J. Pickering Award for Playwriting Excellence

*Keeping Faith* premiered on March 6th, 2008 at the Old Tibbets Opera House in Coldwater, Michigan presented by the Branch County Community Theatre.

Directed by: J.R. Colbeck

Produced by: Jennifer Colbeck

Stage Manger: Al Cockrell

JANE - Jennifer Colbeck

ED - Carl D. Rifenburgh

FAITH - Beth Adcock

HARTSELL - Dave Winn

*KEEPING FAITH* opened on July 17th, 2008 at the Chesapeake Arts Center in Brooklyn Park, Maryland as part of the 27th Baltimore Playwrights Festival.

Directed by: CJ Crowe

Produced by: The Chesapeake Arts Center

Stage Manger: Ashlyn Thompson

Tech Director/ Lighting Design: Lauren Kolstad

Set Design: Gary Adamsen

Costume Design: Cybele Pomeroy

JANE - Marianne Angelella\*

ED - Pat McPartlin

FAITH - Erin Tarpley

HARTSELL - John Kelso

\* appeared courtesy of Actors Equity Association

*For my parents...*

## KEEPING FAITH

### Act One

*(After the house lights fade to black, a car's headlights are seen approaching and getting brighter and brighter through the closed curtains covering a large window on-stage. The lights are then switched off.)*

*(There is a PAUSE and then the door to a cheap motel room is opened, light dimly illuminating the room from outside. JANE appears in the doorway and switches on the light from a switch next to the door. SHE stands for a moment, framed in the doorway. SHE is dressed well, but not expensively; certainly too well for the cheap room she now surveys quietly. SHE tugs at the curtain to ensure it covers the window completely and switches on some table lamps.)*

*(SHE sighs as she sees the flimsy furniture and dirty covers on two single beds. There is a table and two chairs in front of the window. SHE enters the room, closing the door behind her. SHE crosses to the bathroom, reaches inside and switches the light on inside. SHE leans into the bathroom and looks about. When she pulls her head out of the bathroom she visibly shudders.)*

*(SHE crosses to the front door and opens it, stepping outside and holding it open. ED appears in the doorway with FAITH in a fireman's carry across his shoulders. FAITH's hands and feet are bound and there is a cloth bag over her head. HE staggers into the room with her.)*

ED: Close the damn door! *(SHE closes the front door. HE nods his head towards one of the chairs by the table by the front window.)* Pull one of those chairs out here

away from the window. (*JANE crosses to the table and chairs and puts her hand on one of the chairs and looks at ED.*) That one's fine... Pull it out here by the end of the bed. (*JANE moves a chair to the end of the bed in the center of the room.*) Hurry up before my back breaks! (*JANE positions the chair carefully at the end of the bed so that it faces DSL. ED slides FAITH off of his shoulders into the chair so that she is seated. HE moans as he straightens up.*) She sure is damn heavy for such a lil' bitty thing.

JANE: Looks can be deceiving.

ED: No! Really?!

JANE: There's no need to be snide. No reason for you to yell at me either.

ED: I'm sorry. I'm very tense right now, you know? Can you understand that?

JANE: Of course I can understand that. Don't you think I'm tense? That's no excuse for...

ED: I said I was sorry. (*Beat. SHE looks at him.*) Didn't I say I was sorry?

(*Beat.*)

JANE: Apology accepted.

ED: Thank you. We need to work together on this.

JANE: Now that you mention it, I've been thinking about it all. I thought about it the whole time we were in the car...

ED: The time to change your mind was *before* we got into the car.

JANE: I haven't changed my mind. (*SHE crosses to FAITH*) I don't know what else we could have done.

ED: Well, that's reassuring.

JANE: But it occurred to me in the car that we're not going to get away with this.

ED: We already have.

JANE: Well, so far so good anyway.

ED: That's right.

JANE: But the other shoe has yet to drop. (*Beat as ED looks at her.*) I know, I know – “Oh ye of little faith.” (*ED says nothing.*) Get it? Oh ye of little faith?

ED: I got it. I'm choosing to ignore it.

JANE: Humor is wasted on you.

ED: You're not funny.

JANE: My friends all say I'm a laugh riot.

ED: A “laugh riot?”

JANE: Is there an echo in here?

ED: Stop it! Stop talking to me in clichés! I swear there's not an original thought in your head.

JANE: I am an original.

ED: You are driving me crazy.

JANE: That's not a drive – that's a short putt.

ED: Please stop! (*Beat*) Thank you. (*HE crosses to the front door.*) I'm going to get our things out of the car. Turn on the TV and see if there's anything.

JANE: Anything?

ED: About her. About us.

JANE: I don't see how it makes any difference.

ED: We need to know what's going on out there.

JANE: Why?

ED: So we don't get caught. Je-sus.

JANE: Don't do that.

ED: Don't do what?

JANE: You know I don't like it when you say his name...

ED: I doubt he really cares.

JANE: I care.

ED: Oh, for Christ's sake!

JANE: Ed!

ED: Once a Catholic always a...

JANE: That's right. I may not go to Mass as much as I did...

ED: You don't go to Mass at all – not even at Christmas.

JANE: I'm not proud of it.

ED: Can we discuss your lapsed Catholicism later? We do have some other concerns at the moment.

JANE: *(Looking at FAITH.)* Of course.

ED: Find the news on the TV.

*(HE exits out the front door, closing it behind him.)*

*(JANE crosses to FAITH and kneels in front of her, holding her bound hands in hers.)*

JANE: Are you all right? *(FAITH does not respond or move in any way.)* Can you breathe in there? *(no response)* Oh, dear Lord! *(JANE stands and puts her hand on FAITH's chest. SHE feels her heart beat and then sighs loudly.)* You worried me there for a second or two. I worry about you being able to breathe under that hood, but Ed insisted. He absolutely insisted... *(No response. JANE steps back from her.)* You brought this on yourself, you know. You knew what would happen. This is your fault. You knew and you wouldn't stop. You just wouldn't listen. *(No response)* You can hear me, can't you? *(No response.)* I'm sure that hood thingy muffles things a bit. But you should be able to hear me now. I'm right here in front of your face. *(No response. JANE puts HER face inches from FAITH's*

face.) I said I'm right here in front of your face. (FAITH does not respond in any way.) Nod your head if you hear what I'm saying. (No response) Nod your head. (No response) Nod your head, young lady. (JANE stands up and crosses behind FAITH. SHE puts her hands on FAITH's shoulders) I can't tell if you can't hear me or if you're continuing to be defiant. (SHE puts her lips next to where FAITH's ears would be inside the hood) Nod your head if you can hear me!! (No response. JANE stands up and grabs FAITH's head by the chin and the back of her head and forces it to nod back and forth.) I said. Nod. Your. Head.

*(The front door opens and ED enters carrying a suitcase in each hand with a smaller one stuffed under his arm. HE sees what JANE is doing and drops the suitcases on the floor and closes the door behind him.)*

ED: What in the hell are you doing?

*(Beat.)*

JANE: Exercising her neck. *(SHE nods FAITH's head back and forth.)* She's been locked up in that trunk for hours – it's just got to be stiff.

ED: Looked like you're trying to break it.

*(JANE lets go of FAITH's head.)*

JANE: Serve her right if I did. 'Causing all this trouble. I can't believe the things we've had to do.

ED: We had no choice.

JANE: (*Into FAITH's ear.*) You hear that?! You gave us no choice!  
(*SHE swats FAITH on the back of the head and sits on the edge of the bed with her arms crossed.*)

ED: Was that necessary?

JANE: Was tying her up and throwing her in the trunk of the car *necessary*?

ED: Yes, it was. Did you think she was going to come with us all nice and quiet?

JANE: Not her. She makes me so mad...

(*SHE moves to swat FAITH again but ED stops her by grabbing her arm.*)

ED: Stop that! (*Beat. THEY lock eyes.*) You need to calm down. Just leave her alone. She can't do anything right now.

JANE: I'm as calm as I'm going to be under the circumstances.

ED: Take a Xanax or something...

JANE: I don't want to take a Xanax.

ED: Then take a shower and cool off.

JANE: I am not taking a shower in that bathroom.

ED: What's wrong with the bathroom?

JANE: It's *disgusting*.

ED: You're exaggerating.

JANE: Take a look.

*(HE crosses to the bathroom, leans in, switches on the light and looks around.)*

ED: It's not that bad.

JANE: Probably catch something in there. Some filthy fungus or bacterial infection...

ED: It's not that bad.

JANE: Yes, it is. Why can't we hide out in a nice motel?

ED: Because people don't ask questions in a place like this. *(Beat.)* I thought I told you to turn on the TV.

JANE: I got distracted.

ED: By what? Her? She can't talk. Hell, she can't even move.

JANE: I don't like the way she's sitting.

ED: The way she's sitting?

JANE: It's... it's defiant. She's sitting there with this... this *attitude*.

ED: Turn on the damn TV, Jane.

JANE: You turn it on.

ED: I make allowances because I know you're tired. But you have got to get a hold of yourself.

JANE: Get hold of myself? How am I supposed to do that? I don't even know where I am...

ED: You're with me...

JANE: And her! You and me and her – stuck in this nasty motel room in... in... where the hell are we now?

ED: Arkansas.

JANE: Arkansas?! Why are we in Arkansas?!

ED: Calm down, Jane.

JANE: I don't know anybody in Arkansas – do you?

ED: No, I don't. That's why we're here. Nobody knows us.

JANE: Of course! People in Arkansas don't even know who they are – so how could they know us?

ED: What are you talking about now?

JANE: What do people from Arkansas call themselves? Are they “Arkansans?” Or are they “Arkansawyers?” Or does it depend on who they're talking to? Maybe they're “Arkansans” in Missouri but they're “Arkansawyers” in Kansas. Or maybe they just don't know who they are! I can't believe you have driven us to Arkansas.

ED: Arkansas is a beautiful state.

JANE: It's not beautiful in here!

ED: Calm down! People can probably hear through the walls.

JANE: So what? They've never heard a woman talk before...

ED: You're yelling...

JANE: Women don't yell in Arkansas?

ED: We don't want to draw any attention to ourselves.

JANE: Because of *her*.

ED: That's right.

JANE: What are we going to do with her?

*(beat)*

ED: I'm not sure yet.

JANE: I thought you had a plan.

ED: I got us this far, didn't I? I solved the immediate problem...

JANE: Oh, yes – the immediate problem. *(Putting her lips next to FAITH's ear.)* Do you have any idea how much trouble you've caused?!

ED: Jane! *(Small PAUSE. JANE sits on the end of a bed.)* That's not helping. I need you to help.

JANE: What do you want me to do?

ED: First, I want you to calm down.

JANE: All right, all right.

ED: Practice your breathing exercises.

JANE: They don't help.

ED: Yes, they do. I've seen them help. C'mon – breathe in slowly... (*HE breathes in slowly and SHE then does the same*) And exhale slowly... (*THEY both exhale slowly.*) Breathe in slowly...

JANE: Ok, ok – I know what to do.

ED: Then do it.

(*JANE does her breathing exercises as ED retrieves the suitcases from the floor and sets them down on one of the beds.*)

JANE: I am not sleeping in one of these beds...

ED: Breathe!

JANE: I'm getting dizzy.

ED: Then stop. Just... just stop everything, all right? Can we just be quiet for a while? I need to think. (*JANE crosses her arms and silently stares at ED.*) Thank you.

JANE: I'm thirsty.

ED: There're some sodas left in the cooler in the car.

JANE: All you brought was cola. I'm sick of cola.

ED: I saw a soda machine next to the office.

JANE: I would like a ginger ale.

ED: Your legs aren't broken.

JANE: I think it's better if I stay here. No one has seen me. The manager already saw you when you got the room.

ED: All right, all right. *(HE crosses to the door.)* Leave her alone.

*(ED exits out the front door, closing it behind him.)*

*(JANE gets up from the bed and pulls back the curtains a little to peek after ED. SHE then crosses to FAITH and circles her. SHE finally stops standing behind FAITH and leans over and blows a stream of air onto FAITH's head. FAITH doesn't react.)*

*(JANE picks up the bottom edges of the hood and slowly pulls it up revealing FAITH's face. A bandana has been tied as a gag in her mouth and around her head. FAITH's eyes are scrunched closed.)*

*(JANE circles FAITH so that SHE can see her face. JANE leans in close to her face.)*

JANE: Boo!

*(FAITH's eyes open as ED enters through the front door.)*

ED: What are you doing?!

*(JANE jumps back.)*

JANE: She needs to breathe – she can't breathe with that thing on her head.

ED: She can breathe just fine!

*(HE puts the hood back down.)*

JANE: I don't think...

ED: That's right: You don't think.

JANE: There's no reason to be nasty with me because you're mad at her.

ED: You're the one who took her hood off!

*(JANE pulls the hood up.)*

JANE: She could suffocate.

*(ED pulls the hood back down.)*

ED: How long has she had it on?

JANE: What?

ED: How long has she had the hood on?

JANE: I don't know...

ED: What time did we leave Indiana? Do you remember that?

JANE: Yesterday, I think...

ED: You "think."

JANE: Everything is a blur...

ED: Is she dead?

JANE: Dead?

ED: Is she breathing – is she dead?

JANE: No! (*SHE pushes the hood up again.*) She's not dead.

ED: Then obviously she can breathe with the hood on.

(*HE pulls the hood back down and crosses to a bed where he sits with his back to JANE and FAITH.*)

JANE: It's cruel.

ED: Cruel?

JANE: Yes, it's cruel to keep someone – anyone in the dark like that for so long...

(*JANE slowly takes the hood off during the next few lines and kicks it under a bed.*)

ED: So, I'm being cruel. Is that what you're saying?

JANE: I just...

ED: I'm being cruel to her.

JANE: I just meant...

ED: What? What do you mean?

JANE: It won't hurt anything to leave the hood off.

ED: (*As he turns to look at JANE.*) I don't want her looking at me.

JANE: She knows what you look like...

ED: She wasn't supposed to know it's me and you!

JANE: She doesn't need to see to know it's you and me. She knows our voices...

ED: Well, I don't like the way she looks at me.

JANE: Then don't look at her!

ED: She accuses me with her eyes. *She* accuses *me*.

JANE: She's very angry. Wouldn't you be very angry if you were her?

ED: I would be very sorry if I were her. I would be the sorriest person on the planet! (*beat*) I want her to keep her eyes off me. (*HE leans in putting his mouth beside FAITH's ear.*) You keep your eyes to yourself, you understand? I'd better not catch you looking at me.

JANE: Just ignore her.

ED: How am I supposed to do that? How am I going to do that with her sitting right there?

(*JANE crosses behind FAITH.*)

JANE: Just stay behind her. Don't walk in front of her or stand where she can see you.

*(ED stands in front of FAITH, across from JANE.)*

ED: I will not have where I can stand dictated by her.

JANE: You're being ridiculous.

ED: I'm in control here, not her.

JANE: I know that. She knows that, too.

ED: She'd better. *(Beat.)* Why are you taking her side?

JANE: I'm not...

ED: Why are you being nice to her?

JANE: What kind of a question is that?

ED: You were so angry I had to stop you from hitting her.

JANE: I did not hit her! I just gave her a little swat...

ED: You remember why we're here, don't you? You remember?

JANE: I remember. Maybe I feel sorry for her now.

ED: For her?

JANE: A little...

ED: What about us? How about feeling sorry for us? We've been on the road for more hours than I care to count because of her. We're here in this nasty hotel room because of her. That's what you called it, isn't it? "Nasty?" You're going to have to sleep in one of those

beds because of her. You're going to have to use that filthy bathroom because of her.

JANE: You said the bathroom wasn't that bad.

ED: I've seen worse. You said it was *disgusting*.

JANE: And you said I was exaggerating. I haven't forgotten anything, Ed.

ED: I also said we needed to work together. Do you remember that?

JANE: Of course I do.

ED: I've got enough on my plate without having to fight with you...

JANE: I know...

ED: I'm doing this for you – for us. And if you can't see that I don't see any point in going on with any of this...

*(JANE crosses to him.)*

JANE: I'm not fighting with you, Ed. *(SHE hugs him and HE hugs her back.)* I don't want to fight with you. I'm on your side. I am. We are in this together. Now, isn't that what you wanted to hear?

ED: Only if you mean it. I don't want you saying these things unless you mean it.

JANE: I've come this far with you, haven't I? In for a penny...

ED: You haven't changed your mind?

JANE: I haven't changed my mind.

ED: I know we've had to do some things...

JANE: We had no choice.

ED: She forced our hand.

JANE: We didn't want this.

ED: That's right. If I could have made things come out differently...

JANE: You would have. I know.

ED: We didn't want this.

JANE: Not this.

ED: But here we are.

JANE: All because of her.

ED: All because of her. (*Beat. HE notices FAITH is staring at him.*) (*To FAITH*) Don't you look at me like that. You have a lot to answer for, young lady. A lot.

(*Beat.*)

FAITH: (*Muffled and garbled by the gag in her mouth.*) I have to go to the bathroom.

JANE: What did she say?

ED: I don't know. It doesn't matter.

FAITH: *(Slower, muffled and garbled by the gag in her mouth.)* I have to go to the bathroom.

JANE: She needs to use the bathroom, Ed...

ED: I heard what she said.

JANE: You have to let her go...

ED: I'm thinking...

JANE: What's there to think about? She has to go...

ED: The question is, how do we let her go. I'm not just going to untie her and turn her loose in here.

JANE: If you don't, she'll piddle right in that chair.

ED: She's not going to...

JANE: Probably all over the rug, too.

ED: She's not...

JANE: And I'll have to change her clothes.

ED: She's...

JANE: We'll have to untie her for sure then. Can't change her clothes when she's tied up.

ED: All right, all right.

JANE: Can't let her sit in her own piddle.

ED: That's not going to happen.

JANE: It will happen if we don't untie her. And then things will start to smell...

ED: Maybe I should just put her back in the trunk.

JANE: You won't do that. You care too much about that car to let her piddle in the trunk. (*Beat as HE considers this.*) You can untie her now or untie her later to change her clothes. (*Beat.*) She will piddle in that nice, clean trunk of your car.

ED: Will you please stop saying that?

JANE: What?

ED: That word.

JANE: "Piddle?"

ED: Sounds like you're talking about a baby or a dog or something.

JANE: I could use a more graphic word, but I didn't think you'd like that.

ED: No, I wouldn't.

JANE: I could use a more clinically precise word if you'd like...

ED: I wouldn't like.

JANE: How about "urinate?" Is that a better word? "U-R-I-N-A-T... E" She's going to urinate all over herself

and that chair and probably onto the rug if we don't untie her and let her go to the bathroom.

ED: Oh, for God's sake...

JANE: If you don't like "urinate" I'm afraid you're stuck with "piddle" – unless you have some other suggestion. *(Beat.)* I don't think you thought this all the way through. Not as completely as you say you have. If you did you would have thought about her needing to...

ED: Untie her feet and take her into the bathroom.

JANE: Thank you.

*(SHE bends down to untie FAITH's feet.)*

ED: Better leave her hands tied. She doesn't need those, does she? It's not like she has to aim...

JANE: Who's being crude now?

ED: And leave the gag in her mouth. She doesn't need to talk to...

JANE: We will need to communicate.

ED: Why?

JANE: Women always need to communicate in the bathroom. I don't expect you to understand that.

ED: Men don't talk in the bathroom.

JANE: We're not men. *(SHE rises.) (To FAITH)* You're not going to scream or anything are you?

ED: Damn it, Jane!

JANE: Don't curse at me. *(To FAITH)* If you start raising a ruckus, we'll have to put this back on. Do you understand?

ED: She can't be trusted...

JANE: Nod your head if you understand?

*(FAITH nods her head "Yes.")*

ED: Don't...

JANE: Good. Now, nod your head if you promise to behave. *(Small PAUSE as FAITH looks at one and then the other. SHE then nods her head "Yes" and JANE removes the gag from her mouth.)* Good.

*(FAITH gasps for air for a moment.)*

FAITH: Mom! Dad! Are you out of your minds?!

*(Small PAUSE.)*

ED: Put the gag back on.

FAITH: Take me to the bathroom before my bladder explodes! Because that's exactly what's going to happen!

ED: Take her. And hurry up.

JANE: C'mon, dear.

*(JANE helps FAITH to her feet; FAITH is a little unsteady standing up from being tied up so long. JANE walks FAITH into the bathroom and closes the door behind them.)*

*(ED picks up a remote from the top of the TV and stands before it as HE switches it on. HE adjusts the volume and the sound of a porno movie fill the room.)*

*(HE approaches the TV fascinated by what HE is seeing.)*

*(After a moment, JANE comes out of the bathroom, closing the door behind her. SHE sees what's on the TV and grabs the remote from ED and switches the station.)*

ED: What are you doing?

JANE: Giving her a little privacy. She doesn't need me standing there...

ED: I need you standing there!

JANE: I am not going to stand there while she goes to the bathroom.

ED: I thought that's what women did!

JANE: When there are different stalls – yes, we do. There's only one toilet in there.

ED: I'm aware of that.

JANE: I'm not going to stand there while she does her business.

ED: You used to change her diapers, for Christ's sake! What's the difference?

JANE: About twenty years difference. She can't do anything else in there – she can't crawl out a window or make a phone call. There is no window and you have her phone. (*ED looks away and JANE looks at the TV.*) I don't understand why you have to turn that thing on. You know how I hate that thing.

ED: We have to know what's going on out there.

JANE: You always watch the news on Channel 7. Why don't you just turn it to Channel 7?

ED: Because we're not in Indiana anymore. They don't get Indiana TV stations out here. They have their own.

JANE: What about CNN? MSNBC? FOX?

ED: They have different numbers on the TV here. God, I hope we haven't made it on CNN. We're as good as dead if we're on CNN...

JANE: Why would they care about this? They only do stories about wars and famine and the filthy sex lives of politicians...

ED: (*HE finds CNN.*) Here we go.

(*THEY stand and watch the TV as an anchor goes over the day's stories.*)

VOICE FROM THE TV: ... the White House had no comment on today's developments and referred all questions to the Pentagon. Moving to the home front, the fiancé of the missing Indiana bride made a statement to the press today appealing for the safe return of his future bride and in-laws.

ED: God damn it! Why are they doing this?! It's a local story! It's just a local story!

VOICE OF HART: I just want to say that if you're watching this please contact the Clark County Sheriff's office or contact me directly. If anyone knows anything, please call me. You can call me at home or at my store, Hartsell's Patio Furniture – like the name says, “We sell from the Heart.” They tell me the numbers are on your screen now. I just want her back safely – just tell me what you want. I'll do anything you want.

JANE: Hear that, Ed? He said he'd do anything we want.

REPORTER'S VOICE: Authorities here remain puzzled by the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Faith Givens and her parents. According to Police, her fiancé last spoke to her on the phone in the late afternoon on the day before they were to be married in this small Indiana town. I'm told that although the house did not show any signs of a break in, there were signs that a struggle had occurred, although there were no signs of blood. I've also learned that one of the family's cars is missing. The current theory is that the family knew and let into the house whoever has done this. Police say her fiancé, Hartsell Edward Thomas Williams the Fourth is not a suspect in the case.

ED: Nobody has any sympathy for the parents. Parents don't matter. Not like we used to.

REPORTER'S VOICE: Police have asked the public to be on the lookout for a late model, gold Cadillac with the Indiana tag “B-I-G-E-D.”

ED: Damn it!

*(HE switches the TV off.)*

JANE: I told you not to get those personalized tags.

ED: Damn it!

JANE: What are we going to do now?

ED: We have to get another car...

JANE: How are you going to do that? Steal one?

ED: You're not helping.

*(The bathroom opens enough for FAITH to thrust her bound-together wrists into the room.)*

*(Beat as ED and JANE stare at the arms, wrists and hands.)*

JANE: *(to FAITH)* Is something wrong, dear?

FAITH: I need my purse...

ED: Oh, no...

FAITH: And my hands untied.

ED: No.

JANE: What do you need from your purse, dear?

FAITH: A tampon. *(Beat. No one says anything.)* I need a tampon, Mother.

JANE: We heard you the first time, dear.

FAITH: And you can either untie my hands or you can help me put it in.

ED: Oh, for God's sake...

JANE: *(To ED)* At least we know she's not pregnant.

FAITH: You didn't plan for this -- did you, Daddy?

JANE: *(To ED)* Where did you put her purse?

ED: It's in the glove compartment.

JANE: Give me the keys and I'll go get it.

ED: Just get her one of those... those...

FAITH: It's called a "tampon," Daddy.

*(ED digs the car keys from his pocket and hands them to JANE.)*

JANE: Why don't you untie her hands? *(HE looks at her.)* I'm not going to do it for her? Are you?

ED: All right. Fine. Fine.

*(JANE exits out the front door, closing it behind her. ED crosses to FAITH's outstretched hands and tries to untie them without success.)*

FAITH: Having a little trouble there?

ED: Keep still.

*(Frustrated, HE tugs hard at the knot.)*

FAITH: Owwww!! You're hurting me!!

ED: It's your own fault.

FAITH: We'll see what a Judge has to say about that.

ED: This is nobody's business but ours.

FAITH: And Hart's and a whole church full of people.  
(*HE tugs hard again.*) And the police. (*HE steps away from her.*) I heard what was on the TV. They're going to catch you. So, if I were you, I would start being real nice to me.

(*ED pulls a large pocket knife from one of his pockets and flicks the blade open. HE approaches her and grabs her wrists with his free hand.*)

ED: Don't move.

FAITH: What are you doing?!

ED: I said, don't move unless you want to get cut. (*HE cuts her wrists loose and SHE withdraws them from sight into the bathroom.*) (*Laughs*) Did you think I was going to hurt you?

FAITH: You've already hurt me.

ED: You broke the fourth commandment, Faith!

FAITH: That's not what it means! It doesn't give you the right to...

ED: Honor thy father and thy mother!

FAITH: You can't stop me from marrying Hart!

ED: You broke God's law! You broke the fourth commandment!

FAITH: Yeah? And soon you'll be in a courtroom pleading the fifth!

ED: You are a wicked girl! Wicked! And that man is evil!

*(JANE enters through the front door, closing it behind her. SHE is carrying a purse.)*

JANE: What is going on in here?

*(Beat.)*

ED: Nothing.

JANE: *(Crossing to the bathroom door.)* I could hear the two of you yelling while I was outside.

ED: I was untying her hands.

JANE: You're going to get us caught. Do I have to put a gag in both your mouths? *(SHE holds the purse out towards the bathroom door.)* Here's your purse, sweetie.

ED: Don't give her the whole purse...

*(FAITH grabs the purse and disappears into the bathroom, closing the door.)*

FAITH: Thanks, Mother.

ED: *(To JANE)* You were just supposed to get her one of those things. Why'd you give her the whole purse?

JANE: What harm can it do?

ED: Did you at least look to see what was in it before you gave it to her?

JANE: It had the usual... stuff.

ED: “Stuff?”

JANE: Girl stuff. You want me to get more specific for you? You can’t even say the word “tampon.”

ED: How much girl stuff can she possibly need?

JANE: I don’t know. That’s why I gave her the purse.  
(*Beat. ED sits on the edge of a bed.*) It’s not like she had a gun in it or anything.

ED: Or her cell phone? I couldn’t find her cell phone, remember?

(*Beat.*)

JANE: I didn’t see her cell phone in it either.

ED: Do you even know what her cell phone looks like?

JANE: It looks like a cell phone I would imagine.

ED: You would imagine?

JANE: I have my own cell phone, Ed. I know what one looks like.

ED: They all look different!

JANE: Do you remember what her cell phone looks like?  
(*No response.*) Well, do you? Is it blue, or red or silver?  
(*No response.*) Mine's silver. I think all cell phones are silver.

ED: Not all cell phones are the same color!

(*Beat.*)

JANE: I don't think her cell phone is in her purse.

ED: You "don't think?" You don't know? She could be calling the police in there!

JANE: Why don't you go in and see?

ED: You go in and see!

JANE: All right. If that's what you want.

(*SHE crosses to the bathroom door and knocks on it.*)

ED: Don't knock on the door! Just go in – now she knows you're coming in...

(*JANE opens the bathroom door and steps inside.*)

JANE: Hellooooo! Everything all right in here?

FAITH: (*Inside the bathroom.*) Everything is fine now, Mother.

JANE: (*Inside the bathroom.*) Good. Now, come out and sit with your Father and me.

FAITH: (*Inside the bathroom.*) Let me wash my hands first.

JANE: (*Inside the bathroom.*) All righty. (*JANE comes out of the bathroom while FAITH washes her hands. ED stares at JANE silently.*) (*To ED*) What? (*No response.*) If you have something to say I wish you'd just say it.

(*ED stares at her silently.*)

(*FAITH enters the room carrying her purse. ED leaps to his feet and taking her by her shoulders, sits her in the chair. HE then grabs her purse from her and crosses to one of the beds.*)

FAITH: Hey! (*ED dumps the contents of the purse onto the bed and rifles through the pile.*) What are you looking for?!

ED: Nothing.

JANE: (*To ED*) Happy now? (*FAITH crosses to the bed and taking her purse from ED, SHE starts picking up her things from the bed and putting them back in the purse.*) He was afraid you had a cell phone in there.

(*beat*)

FAITH: There's no cell phone in my purse.

(*SHE finishes putting her things back in the purse.*)

JANE: (*To ED*) See? I told you.

ED: You didn't tell me anything. You didn't look and you didn't know 'till I just looked.

JANE: It wasn't in her purse so it doesn't matter anyway, does it?

ED: It would've mattered if she'd had it!

FAITH: Could we please stop this – you're giving me a headache.

JANE: I'm getting a headache, too.

ED: You are both giving me a headache.

*(Beat. No one says a word)*

FAITH: *(Spits out the word "Daddy" like it makes her want to vomit.)* So, what's the plan, *Daddy*?

*(Beat as ED looks hard at her.)*

ED: We stay here for a while. That's the plan.

FAITH: I'm hungry.

JANE: Me, too.

ED: Well, congratulations!

JANE: We have to eat, Ed.

ED: Don't you think I know that?

FAITH: What did you plan to do about food, *Daddy*?

ED: *(To FAITH)* Stop that.

FAITH: Stop what, *Daddy*?

ED: Calling me "Daddy" like that. It sounds disrespectful.

FAITH: I wonder why.

ED: We can put that gag back in your mouth...

JANE: Ed...

ED: I don't have to put up with that...

JANE: She's just a little stressed, dear...

ED: You think that I'm not stressed? And why are you defending her?

JANE: I'm not defending...

ED: You're supposed to be on my side.

JANE: I am.

ED: What happened in the bathroom?

JANE: What?

ED: Something happened in the bathroom between the two of you. I want to know what it was.

JANE: Nothing happened in the...

ED: Because when we first got here, I had to stop you from smacking her. And now you're best friends...

JANE: I'm her mother!

ED: So? I'm her father!

JANE: It's different.

ED: I'll say it is.

FAITH: Is this why you don't want me to get married?  
So, I don't end up like the two of you?

*(Beat.)*

JANE: I love your father, Faith.

FAITH: You must love him to go along with this craziness.

ED: *(To FAITH)* We did this – together – because we  
love you.

FAITH: You sure got a funny way of showing it.

ED: And you sure got a smart mouth.

FAITH: Well, I am my parents' daughter.

ED: What's that supposed to mean?

JANE: It means she got it from us. Or from one of us...

FAITH: I wonder which one.

JANE: Probably your father's side, dear. I've always been noted for my sweet disposition.

FAITH: I just hope I didn't also inherit the crazy gene.

ED: Who is crazy Gene?

FAITH: Not "who" – it's "what." *(Beat.)* The gene – the strand of DNA that's making you two act crazy!

ED: We are not crazy.

FAITH: You tied me up and threw me into the trunk of your car on the day before my wedding and brought me to a hotel room in Arkansas!

*(Beat.)*

JANE: *(To ED)* She has a point. That does sound crazy, dear.

ED: She does not have a point!

FAITH: Okay, all right – you’re not crazy. You’re behaving perfectly normal.

ED: It’s not normal – this is not a normal situation! This is an extraordinary situation and it requires extraordinary measures!

FAITH: The ends justify the means.

ED: Sometimes they do.

FAITH: Who gets to decide that? You? Do you decide when it’s all right to kidnap people?

ED: We did not kidnap you.

FAITH: Wasn’t I just in the trunk of your car?

ED: You can’t kidnap your own daughter. We’re responsible for you.

FAITH: You lost me there, *Daddy*.

ED: We protect you. You go where we say you can go.  
You do what we want you to do...

FAITH: I'm eighteen years old!

ED: There's no time limit on a parent's responsibility.

FAITH: You can't stop me from marrying who I want to marry!

ED: We just did.

FAITH: Oh – and now what? Do we stay in this hotel room in Arkansas for the rest of our lives? Or are you going to throw me back in the trunk and run for the border?

JANE: Which border is that, sweetie?

FAITH: I don't know – the Mexican border!

JANE: (*To ED*) We're going to Mexico, dear?

ED: I've thought about it.

FAITH: You cannot keep me prisoner forever.

ED: We don't want to keep you prisoner. We just want to stop you from making a very bad mistake.

FAITH: I am going to marry Hart.

ED: Not today -- you're not going to today.

FAITH: Sooner or later, this insanity of yours is going to end. The cops are looking for us. They're looking for

your car. They know your license number. I heard it on the TV. So, you either let me go or the cops are going to make you let me go. And either way, I am going to marry Hart.

ED: We'll see about that, won't we?

FAITH: I guess we will.

JANE: (*To FAITH*) We were hoping we'd be able to persuade you...

FAITH: "Persuade?"

JANE: Convince you...

FAITH: By kidnapping me?

JANE: That was just the first part of the plan, sweetie. The plan has two parts. Doesn't it, Ed?

FAITH: How's it going so far?

JANE: Well... The first part went pretty well. You're not married. And we are here all together.

FAITH: You think you can brainwash me now? Beat me into submission?

JANE: Your father said we could reason with you once we got away from all the pressure. Once we got you away from that man. We are right about this, Faith. And I know you're a smart girl. I know you'll figure it all out and do the right thing if we give you the chance – the opportunity to do so.

FAITH: So, this is an opportunity?

JANE: Yes, that's right.

*(Beat.)*

FAITH: I can't believe I'm related to you two. Are you sure I wasn't adopted?

JANE: That's not a very helpful attitude, Faith. We've gone to a great deal of trouble to help you...

FAITH: You're going to be in a great deal of trouble when the cops catch you.

ED: There's no crime here. There's just a family. A daughter and her loving parents trying to do the right thing.

FAITH: A family vacation...

ED: That's right.

FAITH: I don't remember traveling in the trunk of the car on any of our other family vacations.

ED: That doesn't matter now.

FAITH: Does to me.

ED: You'll get over it.

FAITH: How about if I just start screaming?

ED: How about we put that gag back in your mouth?

FAITH: Can't eat with a gag in my mouth.

ED: No, but you can eat tied up. I bought a bunch of baby food in those little bottles. Since you insist on acting like an infant having a tantrum, I can tie you to that chair and your mother can spoon feed you.

FAITH: I'm not the one having a tantrum...

JANE: (*To ED*) Oh! Did you get carrots and sweet peas? She used to love carrots and sweet peas when she was baby – that and the chicken noodle dinner...

FAITH: (*To JANE*) I'm not eating any baby food, mother. (*To ED*) Kidnapping someone because they won't do what you want them to do sounds more like having a tantrum to me.

ED: We did not kidnap you. We're your parents...

FAITH: I wonder what the FBI will say about tying me up, throwing me in the trunk of your car and crossing state lines...

JANE: The FBI?

FAITH: Crossing a state line makes it a federal offense, mother.

JANE: Is that right, Ed?

ED: I'm going to say it one more time – we did not kidnap you. We are acting to protect you...

FAITH: Is that what you're going to tell the Feds? That we're on a family vacation or something?

ED: I won't have to tell the Feds anything. As soon as you come to your senses we can all go home.

*(Beat.)*

FAITH: Okay. Fine. Mother. *Daddy* – I have come to my senses and I'm not going to marry Hart. So, you can take me home now.

JANE: Oh, that's wonderful, dear...

ED: She's lying, Jane.

FAITH: No, I'm not..

ED: I don't believe you.

FAITH: Well, what is it you want me to say? What do I have to do to get you to take me back to Indiana?

ED: Be sincere.

FAITH: I'm very sincere.

ED: You're a disobedient child and you can't fool me.

FAITH: *(SHE stamps her foot.)* I am not a child!

ED: Then stop acting like one!

FAITH: And do as I'm told.

ED: Do what's right.

FAITH: I am doing what's right!

JANE: Your father knows better about these things than you do, sweetie.

FAITH: What have you got against Hart? What's so wrong with him?

ED: He's not right for you.

FAITH: Why not?

JANE: How could you marry a man named Hart?

FAITH: What?

JANE: What's his real name? Hartsell something-something...

FAITH: Hartsell Edward Thomas Williams the Fourth.

JANE: Think of your children, dear.

FAITH: You've really lost me now, mother...

JANE: If you have a son, you're going to have to name him after his father, aren't you.

FAITH: Maybe – I don't know...

JANE: He's going to want to continue his family tradition – they've already invested four generations in it...

FAITH: What difference does it make?

JANE: You can't name a poor baby boy "Hartsell Edward Thomas Williams the Fifth."

FAITH: Why not?

JANE: You're not going to call him "Hartsell" are you? I can't imagine introducing my grandson by saying, "This is my grandson *Hartsell*..."

FAITH: You don't want me to marry Hart because you don't like his name?!

JANE: ... if you call him "Hart" like his Daddy the kids at school will make fun of him.

FAITH: What are you talking about?

JANE: "Hart" is a stupid name for a child. For a grown man as well, but you know how cruel children can be. You can saddle your son with a name like "Hart" – the other kids will call him "Hart the Fart" – or something even worse. That's reason enough not to marry him.

*(Pause.)*

FAITH: Mother... that has got to be the most insane thing I have ever heard And I have heard and experienced some insane behavior in the last couple of days...

ED: Show your mother some respect!

FAITH: No! You show me some respect! I love Hart. I love him. And unless you've discovered he's a child molester in hiding or a murderer or some other kind of psychopath who's managed to hide his dark side from me, I am going to marry him. And if you don't stop this foolishness and take me home you are both going to be very, very sorry!

ED: Don't you dare threaten us! (to JANE) You see?!  
You see how she is?!

FAITH: *You're going to get caught, Daddy.* And then  
you're both going to jail...

ED: No one will believe you were kidnapped by your  
own parents.

FAITH: Oh, yes they will...

ED: Only if you testify against us. And you won't do that.

FAITH: I will if you make me. I'm going to marry Hart.  
It's my life and if you don't want to be a part of it then  
I will be very sad, but I can live with it. Can you live  
with it? Missing birthdays and anniversaries? – the  
birth of your grandchildren? And who's going to take  
care of you when you can't anymore?

ED: You can't marry a 42 year old man!

FAITH: He's 45 years old, *Daddy*.

ED: In 30 years you'll still be a young woman and he'll  
be 75! You won't be wife, you'll be a nurse!

FAITH: We'll have enough money to pay for a nurse.  
Hart's a very successful man...

ED: He sells patio furniture!

FAITH: From his own store!

JANE: He may not even live another 30 years...

FAITH: Then what's the problem?

ED: 18 year old girls should not marry 45 year old men!  
We're doing the right thing.

FAITH: No, you're not. But I am by marrying Hart.  
*(beat)* I am going to have his baby and I am going to marry him.

*(Pause.)*

ED: You're lying again.

FAITH: No, I'm not. I am going to marry the father of my baby. I thought that's what you'd want me to do.

JANE: Why didn't you tell us?

FAITH: Because I know how you are! Look what you did to me when you didn't know I was pregnant!

ED: If you were pregnant, you wouldn't be having your period.

FAITH: Who said I was having my period?

ED: You asked your mother to get you a... *(Beat.)* Oh, Jesus...

*(HE rushes into the bathroom.)*

JANE: Are you really pregnant, dear?

FAITH: Yes, mother. I am really pregnant.

*(ED comes out of the bathroom with a small, thin cell phone in his hand.)*

ED: (*To JANE*) I thought you searched her purse.

(*HE hands the phone to JANE.*)

JANE: I did...

FAITH: It's not her fault, *Daddy*. It was in a little zippered compartment. I was pretty sure you wouldn't find it.

JANE: It's so *thin* – it doesn't seem like it's a phone...

ED: (*To FAITH*) Who did you call? The police?

FAITH: Believe it or not, I don't want you two to go to jail. Although you deserve it.

ED: (*Grabbing the phone from JANE.*) Who did you call?

FAITH: Hart. I called Hart. He's on his way to get me.

ED: You don't know where we are...

FAITH: I know I'm in Arkansas. And I know how long we've been on the road. And I left my phone on so Hart could get a GPS fix on it.

JANE: G???...

FAITH: Global Positioning...

ED: The location of the cell phone can be tracked by satellite. I bought an on-line GPS phone tracking service for our cell phones. I can find out where you are by finding your cell phone.

JANE: My goodness – the things they can do these days...

ED: Jane... Please be quiet!

JANE: I was just saying...

ED: You're always "just saying"... I need to think.

FAITH: Didn't you know *Daddy* could track your every movement whenever he wanted?

JANE: Do you track my movements, Ed? Have you been checking up on me?

ED: No, of course not! I bought the service like an insurance policy. In case something happened. I've never used it.

FAITH: Never?

ED: Maybe I should have. If I'd known what you were up to...

FAITH: You'd what? Catch me having *sex* with Hart?

ED: We wouldn't be in this mess.

FAITH: You made this mess. This mess is entirely because of you. And now you're going to have to face up to what you've done.

ED: (*paces*) We'll leave as soon as it's dark. We'll stick to the back roads.

FAITH: There's no point in running now, *Daddy*. If Hart can't find me then he will call the police. And he has enough information for them to find us.

ED: He's probably already called the cops.

FAITH: Then they'd be here by now.

ED: (*Crosses to the window and peeks out.*) Maybe they're out there watching...

FAITH: Hart didn't call the police. He's embarrassed enough by all of this.

JANE: Too embarrassed to marry you?

FAITH: He loves me, mother. We're going to have a baby. He's coming to get me.

JANE: Oh, dear. I don't like confrontations.

FAITH: Then you shouldn't kidnap people.

ED: You know what? I'm glad you called Hart, Faith. I'm glad he's coming. Once he gets here we'll end this thing once and for all.

FAITH: What does that mean?

ED: Exactly what I said, Faith. Exactly what I said.

(*EVERYONE freezes as the LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.*)

**END OF ACT ONE**