

Kilpatricks face a long road back to trust
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Marney Rich Keenan

On an August morning in 1998, Bill Clinton woke Hillary **to** tell her that the Monica Lewinsky situation was much more serious than he'd previously admitted.

In "Living History," Hillary wrote: "I could hardly breathe. Gulping for air, I started crying and yelling at him, 'What do you mean? What are you saying? Why did you lie **to** me?' I was furious and getting more so by the second. He just stood there saying over and over again, 'I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I was trying **to** protect you and Chelsea.' "

Until then, Hillary had believed only that her husband had acted ridiculously for "paying attention" **to** Lewinsky. She was now "dumbfounded, heartbroken and outraged that I'd believed him at all."

"She should have killed him on the spot," said Sara Erhman, one of Hillary oldest friends, dating **back to** her Ivy League days.

Surely that sentiment has occurred **to** Carlita Kilpatrick in the days leading up **to** her incredible display of stoicism as she gave an impassioned speech Wednesday night supporting her husband, the mayor of Detroit.

In the wake of such public humiliation over the salacious text messages the mayor exchanged with then-Chief of Staff Christine Beatty (Beatty: "And, did you miss me, sexually?" Kilpatrick: "Hell yeah! You couldn't tell. I want some more."), her words, following her husband's dramatic TV apology, came as **a bit of a shock**. Viewers drew **a** collective gasp when the camera panned **back to** show the mayor's wife, both hands tightly clasped in her husband's grip, her expression firm and resolved.

"Like all marriage, ours is not perfect," the mother of their three children -- twin 12-year-old boys Jelani and Jalil and 5-year-old son Jonas -- declared. And it was for them that she likely tried **to save face**.

The **Kilpatricks'** joint TV appearance has been seen by many as an opportunity for healing, not only for the city, but for their marriage.

"In **a** way, this speech could be the start of the healing process for their relationship," says Jerome **A.** Price, **a** marriage and family therapist and director of the Michigan Family Institute in Southfield. "They were unified in asking for their privacy, and in **a** way, the media violating their personal space, gave them **a** common enemy."

Albeit, an enemy of his own making. "In **a** sense he created his own nightmare," Price says. His lack of boundaries in his life probably contributed greatly **to** his affair and terrible judgment in mixing his personal problems with city time and funds, Price says.

Carlita Kilpatrick's voice quivered when describing how wronged she felt. "I am angry,

and I am hurt, and I am disappointed," she said.

"But there is no question I love my husband." While that may have implied forgiveness, she never uttered the word.

"If she just learned the truth of his infidelity recently, it would be totally unbelievable that anyone could progress **to** forgiveness in such a short time," Price says. "Even if she knew, the stark details that have been publicized would certainly reopen the wound. Couples rarely discuss affairs in such detail."

In the experience of Tracey Stulberg, the director of Birmingham Family Therapy Clinic, infidelity is not the result of a situation merely presenting itself **to** the offending parties.

"These things don't just happen," she stresses. "Most of us, at one time or another, have been flirted with. If you are in love in with your spouse, and you're approached, it's a compliment. If you're not in love with your spouse, it becomes an opportunity.

"Cheating is not the problem that make marriages fail," she says. "Cheating is the result of some problem that never got fixed."

Most people who stray from their spouses have self-identity conflicts, Stulberg says. "Anybody with a healthy sense of self would have the integrity **to** say: 'I am unhappy, let's do something **to** fix it.' "

When it comes **to** leaders or politicians, there is a tendency for the powerful **to** have exaggerated views of themselves. "The narcissism will chip away at the integrity of the person," Stulberg says.

"It's so sad because here's a man who appears **to** be a decent human being, a decent leader, making choices that almost destroy his family, his career and then he repeatedly lies about it. "They both have **to** work really hard **to** gain **back** the **trust**. **Trust** is the hardest thing **to** get **back**."