

PROLOGUE

“I WANT TO GO TO JAIL”

On Thursday morning, May 2, 1963, nine-year-old Audrey Faye Hendricks woke up with freedom on her mind. But, before she could be free, there was something important she had to do.

“I want to go to jail,” Audrey had told her mother.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Hendricks thought that was a good idea, they helped her get ready. Her father had even bought her a new game she’d been eyeing. Audrey imagined that it would entertain her if she got bored during her week on a cell block.

That morning, her mother took her to Center Street Elementary so she could tell her third-grade teacher why she’d be absent. Mrs. Wills cried. Audrey knew she was proud of her.

She also hugged all four grandparents goodbye.

One of her grandmothers assured her, “You’ll be fine.”

Then Audrey’s parents drove her to the church to get arrested.

Wait a minute! What kind of nine-year-old volunteers to go to jail? And what kind of parent would make sure she gets there? And why would she get arrested at church?

Is this real?

Yes. Audrey Hendricks, her mother, Lola, and her father, Joe, are real. So is this story.