

# *Setting*

**Act II, Scene 2 (AHL) — Eight years later**

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This year, the garden party is celebrating Stephanie's 17th birthday, but all is not well in the Gardener family. Stephanie has been caught driving drunk and her court date is next week. While this is the first time she has been caught, everyone knows it's not the first time she has been off drinking. Barbara and Charles are concerned about her behavior.

William has strong connections, and with a little pushing, he could get the case put in front of a lenient judge, and either get her off entirely, or get her off with a slap on the wrist. He has certainly done it for Charles in the past. At the same time, after he refused to help when they were in financial trouble, can they get his help now? Even if they can, is it a good idea to get Stephanie off the hook for this?

If she does get convicted, she will lose her license until she's 18. She has an after school job working at a restaurant that she needs the car to get to. Barbara has been very busy with her new teaching job, and could not drive her. If Stephanie gets convicted, she would probably have to quit her job. Barbara encouraged her to get a job in the first place to learn some responsibility, and the money has really helped the family. If she has to quit over this it might be a good lesson, but it would also leave the family on even more tenuous financial footing.

# *Charles Gardener*

**Act II, Scene 2 (AHL) — Eight years later**

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It's your fault. Since you've been struggling so hard for money, you've been working long hours doing extra tutoring at the college to make ends meet. You haven't been around to take care of Stephanie and help her through the hard times.

And blood matters too. Stephanie got this from you and you know it. You were 17 the first time you got caught driving drunk, too. Of course the penalties weren't as bad then. Kids make mistakes. She shouldn't have to suffer too badly for making a stupid teenage mistake.

Of course, maybe if someone had really hit you hard, taught you a lesson when you were a teenager, you would have learned something. Your brother always protected you since your father died. People make a lot of allowances for struggling teens. Does that help them or hurt them? You didn't really start taking account of your own behaviors until you had to figure out how to pay rent and feed your child in hard times. That made you grow up.

Your brother may still have issues with you, but you know he cares about his niece. He might help her out of trouble if you asked. But do you want him to?