

# *Charles Gardener*

**Act I, Scene 4 (BG) — Five and a half years later**

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It's been hard watching Barbara as a single mother. You've tried to reach out to her, but she pushes you away. You can't really blame her, it's not like you're a great role model for a kid. You like your little niece, but you don't get to see her often enough. You try to bring her treats and things, but she is fickle as small children are, and often seems hardly to recognize you one time to the next.

Since the divorce, your brother threw himself headlong into his work. He provides reasonably well for Barbara and Stephanie, but rarely sees his daughter. He thinks he can pay his way out of being a father, and Barbara mostly lets him. Meanwhile, you can see how overwhelmed Barbara is with being alone.

Until recently, Virginia was able to help out, but since the stroke, Barbara has been spending almost as much time caring for Virginia as for Stephanie. You wish you could help out, but you don't have the money to help with a nursing home, and Barbara pushes you away when you try to assist her. Maybe this is your opportunity to offer something.