

# *Setting*

## **Act I, Scene 3 (ADF) — Two years later**

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Barbara's marriage to Charles is well and truly on the rocks this time. The question isn't simply whether the marriage will survive long term. The big question is: will their marriage even survive tonight's party?

Since the fight over Karen, nothing has gone well for them. Barbara hasn't really trusted him since, but she's never dug up any evidence that he did cheat on her. Charles has only grown more distant. They barely talk except when they're fighting. Sometimes Barbara almost wishes she had found evidence of an affair. Then at least there would be someone to blame it on. As it is, everything is falling apart and neither seems to know why.

Meanwhile, Barbara has been wondering more and more whether she should just leave Charles and try to start over. Recently, however, that option has gotten more complicated: Barbara is pregnant. She hasn't yet told anyone she's pregnant. If she tells Charles that she's pregnant with his child, he'll almost certainly do everything he can to make up with her. At this point, she's not sure she wants that. Maybe she could still leave Charles and patch things up with William. William has his own problems, but at least he's stable.

Meanwhile, Charles got a new job teaching theater at the local college. However, with Barbara so upset, Charles has become ever more volatile. He doesn't understand what's going on with her, and he can't fix it, which just makes him angry and frustrated. All he wants is to resolve things, but sometimes he thinks it's not even worth it anymore. He feels like he doesn't even know his own wife, and doesn't know what to do.

Virginia is watching this all from the sidelines with tears in her eyes. She is hoping desperately that Barbara and Charles can resolve their issues. Will their marriage survive all the betrayals?

# *Barbara Gardener*

**Act I, Scene 3 (ADF) — Two years later**

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How did it come to this? You feel like you barely know Charles anymore. He's hardly ever home. He's always out drinking or, worse, gambling away money you need to pay the rent. He's always been irresponsible, but this crosses all boundaries. At first you thought he was having an affair, maybe with Karen, but you have searched and searched, and never found any evidence. In some ways, you almost wish he was having an affair. That would be easier to deal with than knowing that he just doesn't care enough to come home.

You have a horrible feeling about tonight. You know that you need to confront Charles about his instability - the drinking, the disappearances, the fights - and find out if he is still committed to this marriage. He deserves to know about the child you are carrying, but you need to know first whether or not there is a marriage worth trying to save.

If Charles isn't going to, or can't focus on your marriage, you need out now. You aren't sure what you are going to do if it comes to that, but you won't raise your child in a situation like this. You just can't, no matter what comes of it.