

Setting

Act II, Scene 3 (BGM) — Six years later

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This party marks Stephanie's 23rd birthday and she has brought her boyfriend, Zack Bloom. Zack and Stephanie know each other from high school, and Zack has had a troubled past. He went to juvie several times for drug-related offenses and assault. While he hasn't been arrested since he turned 18, Barbara is not certain she trusts his claims of being clean. There were rumors that he was dealing serious drugs to his classmates, and even that he was part of a gang. His tattoos and shaved head don't make him easy to trust.

After William was able to get Stephanie off the hook on the drunk driving charges, she started pulling her act together and graduated high school. After William died of a sudden heart attack a few years ago, Stephanie used a chunk of her inheritance to go to community college, and is now working on an accounting degree at a state university. She will be graduating this winter and has been doing well in her classes.

She ran into Zack at the supermarket and they began reminiscing about high school. Soon enough they were dating, and now, almost six months later, they have come to this party to announce their engagement. Barbara is happy Stephanie has found someone, but she is worried about Zack. She's afraid that Zack could pull Stephanie off the successful path she seems to have found. Barbara is particularly concerned that Zack might still be dealing, and that this could set Stephanie up for a relapse.

Stephanie Gardener

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This party is very important to you. Zack just proposed, and this is your opportunity to tell your mother. You know she's worried about him, and you understand why, but Zack is clean these days, and his determination has helped you stay clean as well. If your mom can't look beyond his past, how can she look beyond yours?

Sure, you met him in high school when you were both struggling, but seeing his progress has made you aware of what is possible. If he was able to pull himself out of serious addictions and very lucrative dealing, surely you could get through college. When you met him at the supermarket, you were amazed at how different he had become.

You are going to marry Zack regardless of what your mother says. You love him and you are happy together. Being with Zack is the first time your life has actually felt stable or made sense. He has a job, and you're almost finished with college. You've even started talking about having kids together.

Your mother has a very simple choice: either she accepts Zack and you, or she rejects you both and you go on with your life without her.