

Setting

Act I, Scene 3 (BDF) — Two years later

~

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

Over the past two years, William has thrown himself more and more into his work. The relationship between him and Barbara - never a terribly passionate one - has grown more and more distant and strained. William loves her in his own way, but the only way he knows to show it is by working hard for her, bringing home a good paycheck, and making sure that she has a stable life.

Meanwhile, Barbara is bored stiff. She craves attention and passion. She misses the passion that she had with Charles, and wonders whether she made the wrong decision in marrying William. Charles has gone off to start a new job teaching theater at the University, and his life finally seems to be coming together. Barbara has recently found out that she is pregnant, and she is terrified that having a child with William will trap her in this boring life forever.

Charles has phased in and out of Barbara's life. He will try to be there for her and comfort her, then find himself getting too close and leave. She made her choice and he doesn't want to betray his brother again. They have gotten a little too close once or twice, but each time, Barbara has stood her ground, and Charles has felt guilty and left them alone, sometimes for months. It's hard for him to be around them. He can't stand to see Barbara so lost and lonely.

Virginia is very worried about the state of her daughter's marriage. She is hoping desperately that Barbara and William can resolve their issues, but she also worries about Barbara feeling trapped. She hopes that a child might help the marriage, but is afraid that they will have a child first, and divorce after. Will Barbara and William's marriage survive?

William Gardener

Act I, Scene 3 (BDF) — Two years later

~

The past year has been a rough one for your marriage. You're making a name for yourself in the law firm, but you see very little of Barbara. Every time you do see her, she seems colder and more distant. You've responded by working that much harder, and by buying things for her. It is what you can do to show her that this has all been for her, however hard these few years have been.

More and more, you're convinced that the two of you should have a child. The next few years are going to be particularly busy for you, and Barbara clearly needs someone there for her in the nice new home you bought a few months ago. A child would give her someone that can be there for her all the time while you move up the next few steps in your workplace.

Tonight at least you've managed to get the evening off. It was a close thing and you owe more than a few favors at work for it. Still, it is Barbara's birthday, and having the family together for it will be good for her.