

# *Setting*

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

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This year, as for the past four years, the garden party has been shifted from Barbara's birthday to that of her five-year old daughter Stephanie. Barbara and William are doing well. William has a good job at a law firm, and, while their marriage has never been passionate, it is stable and seems to be working these days. William works long hours, but since Stephanie was born, Barbara has been relatively content to focus on her young daughter.

Charles has remained connected, at least as connected as Charles ever was. He has drifted in and out of Barbara and William's lives. Since the problems before Stephanie's birth, Barbara has kept Charles at arm's length. He still tries hard to connect with his brother, but William was never terribly good at reaching out. Charles is still teaching at the local college, but no one, not even him, seems quite sure how he keeps that job.

Recently, however, a new issue has come up. Barbara's mother, Virginia, has had a stroke, and can no longer manage on her own. Barbara and William need to decide whether to care for her themselves, or send her to a nursing home. They recently bought a new house, and the cost of a nursing home would be hard on them. However, Barbara is very busy chasing after Stephanie, and the extra work of caring for an ailing parent would be difficult. She has been considering going back to college to become a teacher once Stephanie is in school, and caring for Virginia would make that very challenging. At the same time, tuition might make the costs of a nursing home even more prohibitive.

# *Virginia Vela*

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

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You know something important is happening tonight. It's one of those parties. You like the parties. Everything has gotten a lot harder since the stroke. You just need things to get back to normal.

You should get a cup of tea. You'll feel better with a cup of tea. It's ok, mom will take care of things.

No, wait. That's not right. You're here with your daughter Barbara. She's trying to take you out of your house because she thinks you can't take care of yourself. That's not true. You can handle things ok. You just wish you could talk a little more clearly so you could explain that to her.

She wants to put you in a nursing home. You don't want to go to a nursing home. You want to stay home where you belong. You like it here. Plus the roses would die if you left.