

# *Setting*

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

~

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?

Barbara has recently found out that after the blow up over Karen, Charles actually did start cheating on her. She had been planning on going through with her birthday party tonight, but at this point, she's not sure she can handle the situation. It's time to confront Charles about what he has done to her, especially at this important time. She has big news and needs to know whether or not Charles will truly be there for her.

Barbara's affair with William ended a month ago, at William's prodding. Barbara has decided it was a mistake and moved on, blaming her indiscretion on Charles' own bad behavior. William, however, has been carrying guilt for the affair ever since. He feels that this has been going on too long and he can't bear the secret of his betrayal of his brother, no matter what Charles himself has done. Tonight he plans to confess and beg Charles' forgiveness.

Meanwhile, Charles got a new job teaching theater at the local college. After he left the high school, he and Karen broke up over Charles' guilt about cheating (and the slow dimming of their own passion). Charles is ready to beg Barbara's forgiveness and try to start over, if she'll have him.

Virginia is watching this all from the sidelines with tears in her eyes. She doesn't know for sure about all the cheating that has been happening, but she is hoping desperately that Barbara and Charles can resolve their issues. Will Barbara and Charles' marriage survive all the betrayals?

# *William Gardener*

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

~

How did it come to this? What were you possibly thinking? An affair with your brother's wife?

The affair with Barbara went on for the better part of the last year. It was only a month ago that you broke it off, but it had been eating away at you since almost the beginning. Even if Charles has been having an affair, it doesn't justify what you've done to him. That is why you need to confess and apologize tonight. No matter what comes of it, you can't live with the lie anymore.

Barbara... you love her. There is no doubt about it. But she made her choice when she married Charles. It has taken you this long to really and truly come to grips with it, but you have at last. She may regret it at times, but it was the decision that she made and you can't help her, your brother, or yourself by denying it any longer. What she needs... what all of you need is to start acting like adults and living with the choices that have been made.

Their marriage needs help, lots of it. You can't be part of the problem anymore . You just can't and won't do that now or ever again.