

# *Setting*

**Act II, Scene 4 (BGIMO) — Fifteen years later**

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Stephanie and Zach Bloom are doing well. They have two children, Jessica, age 10 and Michael, age 7. Stephanie has recently gone back to work as an accountant. With her help, Zach bought the garage where he works, and the business has been fairly successful. He has even hired a couple new people to help out.

Things have not been going as well for Barbara. A few years back, Barbara was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. This year she had to quit her job, and has gone on disability. Charles has been coming by to help out a bit, but he's not the most reliable caretaker. Money has been very tight since Barbara stopped working and what the state provides doesn't go very far. A state nurse stops by once a week, but Barbara really needs more help than that.

Stephanie and Zach have been discussing whether or not to help out, and if so, how to do so. After watching her grandmother languish alone in a nursing home, Stephanie feels like she should provide more personal care to her mother, maybe even buying a larger house and inviting Barbara to move in. At the same time, with two children, Stephanie's work, and Zach's business, none of them have much time to help. They could pay for someone to come in and help out Barbara a few days a week, but Stephanie feels like she should do more. Will that even help enough to make a difference? Maybe Barbara really needs to be in assisted living somewhere. Can Stephanie and Zach afford that? Do they want to?

# *Barbara Vela*

**Act II, Scene 4 (BGIMO) — Fifteen years later**

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You didn't ask for any of this. A loveless marriage, divorce, raising your daughter alone, and now being trapped inside your own body. Yet, despite all of this, letting go of what little life you have left terrifies you completely. You're not going to let what little you do have slip away without a fight.

It seems like almost every week there is something more you can't do for yourself as the MS continues on its relentless course. The disability and welfare money you have coming in doesn't go very far and the once-a-week visit from a state nurse increasingly just doesn't cut it. Charles comes over somewhat erratically, but it often feels like a pity-fest for him. That's Charles though; he's never been good at the practical things. Still, you take what you can get.

You know that Stephanie and Zach are trying to decide what to do with you. Well, you aren't going to just give up and be shipped off to a nursing home for their convenience. Yes, you did it to your own mother, Virginia, and that decision haunts you today. You gave birth to Stephanie and raised her; she isn't going to just abandon you when you need her the most.