

Setting

Act II, Scene 2 (AHL) — Eight years later

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This year, the garden party is celebrating Stephanie's 17th birthday, but all is not well in the Gardener family. Stephanie has been caught driving drunk and her court date is next week. While this is the first time she has been caught, everyone knows it's not the first time she has been off drinking. Barbara and Charles are concerned about her behavior.

William has strong connections, and with a little pushing, he could get the case put in front of a lenient judge, and either get her off entirely, or get her off with a slap on the wrist. He has certainly done it for Charles in the past. At the same time, after he refused to help when they were in financial trouble, can they get his help now? Even if they can, is it a good idea to get Stephanie off the hook for this?

If she does get convicted, she will lose her license until she's 18. She has an after school job working at a restaurant that she needs the car to get to. Barbara has been very busy with her new teaching job, and could not drive her. If Stephanie gets convicted, she would probably have to quit her job. Barbara encouraged her to get a job in the first place to learn some responsibility, and the money has really helped the family. If she has to quit over this it might be a good lesson, but it would also leave the family on even more tenuous financial footing.

William Gardener

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Watching your niece, Stephanie, is like watching your brother Charles back in the day. She's every bit as reckless and wild as he was, only today that means it is a lot more dangerous. You always did your best to watch out for your younger brother and you hope that you can do something at least to help out with Stephanie.

Charles has matured somewhat in the past few years. Having to raise Stephanie and watch her make so many of his own early mistakes has to have had an impact. The question now is whether or not he is ready to really step up and do what is right by his own daughter. Both Barbara and Charles have some hard decisions to make about how to get Stephanie back on the right path.

You know you could call in a few favors and see that Stephanie gets only a slap on the wrist for this. You've had to do this sort of thing for your brother in the past, as much as you disliked doing so. You haven't helped them out financially the past few times they were in tight straits. Because of that, the income from Stephanie's job, which can only be reached by car, means a fair bit to their family. That said, there does have to be a line somewhere. If Charles and Barbara do ask you for help, exactly how much are you willing to do for them?