

Setting

Act II, Scene 3 (BGM) — Six years later

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This party marks Stephanie's 23rd birthday and she has brought her boyfriend, Zack Bloom. Zack and Stephanie know each other from high school, and Zack has had a troubled past. He went to juvie several times for drug-related offenses and assault. While he hasn't been arrested since he turned 18, Barbara is not certain she trusts his claims of being clean. There were rumors that he was dealing serious drugs to his classmates, and even that he was part of a gang. His tattoos and shaved head don't make him easy to trust.

After William was able to get Stephanie off the hook on the drunk driving charges, she started pulling her act together and graduated high school. After William died of a sudden heart attack a few years ago, Stephanie used a chunk of her inheritance to go to community college, and is now working on an accounting degree at a state university. She will be graduating this winter and has been doing well in her classes.

She ran into Zack at the supermarket and they began reminiscing about high school. Soon enough they were dating, and now, almost six months later, they have come to this party to announce their engagement. Barbara is happy Stephanie has found someone, but she is worried about Zack. She's afraid that Zack could pull Stephanie off the successful path she seems to have found. Barbara is particularly concerned that Zack might still be dealing, and that this could set Stephanie up for a relapse.

Zachary Bloom

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You were alternately ecstatic and terrified driving over to the family gathering with Stephanie. You love her madly and when she accepted your proposal of marriage, it was better than any high. You know she loves you too and that the two of you are going to make a life together, but you're very worried about how the announcement is going to go with her mother, Barbara, and her uncle, Charles.

Yes, you had a troubled adolescence. Stephanie had some troubles too, if nothing like you did. But you got your shit together. You got clean and you're staying clean. Hell, you don't even drink. In the past few years you have held down a steady job at a garage and managed to get by on your own. With Stephanie, you're convinced that all the worst of your troubles are far behind you and it is smooth sailing ahead.

Now you just need to be able to convince Stephanie's mother and uncle of this.