

Setting

Act I, Scene 3 (BCF) — Two years later

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Barbara's marriage to William is well and truly on the rocks. The question isn't simply whether the marriage will survive long-term. The big question is: will their marriage even survive tonight's party?

Over the past two years, William has thrown himself more and more into his work. The relationship between him and Barbara - never a terribly passionate one - has grown more and more distant and strained. William loves her in his own way, but the only way he knows to show it is by working hard for her, bringing home a good paycheck, and making sure that she has a stable life.

Meanwhile, Barbara was bored stiff. She craved attention and passion. She missed the passion that she had with Charles, and wondered whether she made the wrong decision in marrying William. Charles has gone off to start a new job teaching theater at the University, and his life finally seems to be coming together.

When Charles showed up again, she couldn't resist him. The affair only went on for a few months before she decided that she couldn't continue betraying her husband that way. Since then, however, Barbara has been even more lost and lonely in her marriage. Even worse, Barbara has recently found out that she is pregnant, and she is terrified that having a child with William will trap her in this boring life forever. To complicate matters further, she's not completely sure it's even William's child.

Virginia is very worried about the state of her daughter's marriage. She is hoping desperately that Barbara and William can resolve their issues, but she also worries about Barbara feeling trapped. She hopes that a child might help the marriage, but is afraid that they will have a child first, and divorce after. Will Barbara and William's marriage survive?

Barbara Gardener

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How did it come to this? You had been cheating on your husband - with his brother. You are now two and a half months pregnant, and you can't be sure who is the father. Where do you even go from here? You wish you knew.

You have a horrible feeling about tonight. You know that you need to tell William about your pregnancy, but somehow that will make everything all too real. You will find yourself trapped for the rest of your life this way. A big house, nice things, a child, but a passionless and rarely-home husband. You can't go on living this lie. You broke things off with Charles, but you almost regret it. You need to come clean, and tell William that he has two choices: take you back anyway and make this marriage meaningful again, or let you go. You don't want to be divorced with a child, but you can't go on like this.

It isn't that William doesn't provide for you. No, he's out working hard at the law firm because he wants to give you all the material comforts you could ever need. Somehow that makes it all that much worse. After the past few years, any hope of real passion in this marriage has dried up.

You know that you're keeping the child. Despite everything, you couldn't imagine not having it. This little child will need and care for you in a way that no one else has. The question is whether or not the stability and financial support that William provides is enough. Can you stick it out purely for these things, or do you need to get out now, however hard it will be for you and your child alone? You know one thing: you can't go on living a lie, pretending things are ok, and sleeping with your husband's brother on the side. William needs to understand what this empty marriage has made you do.

If he doesn't care enough to understand that some things are more important than stability, you're better off without him. If this doesn't break through his shell, nothing will.