

# *Setting*

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

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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.

Meanwhile, Charles got a new job teaching theater at the local college. After he left the high school, he and Karen recently broke up over Charles' guilt about cheating (and the slow dimming of their own passion). He is ready to beg Barbara's forgiveness and try to start over, if she'll have him. She's not sure whether she can take him back, after this betrayal- Can she ever really trust him again? Meanwhile, in her turmoil, she has often wondered whether she made the right choice. Would she have been happier with the stable William? He has been there for her through all this, calm and reassuring. He never tried to take advantage of her in her grief, despite how close they got, and she respects him for it. She knows he still loves her. Even if they don't have the passion of her marriage to Charles, at least she knows William would never cheat on her.

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 their marriage survive the betrayal?

# *Barbara Gardener*

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

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How did it come to this? Your husband has been cheating on you. He's out drinking, gambling, or off with his pretty little actress almost as many nights as not. And here you are at home, now two and a half months pregnant. Where do you even go from here? You wish you knew.

You have a horrible feeling about tonight. You know that you need to confront Charles about his affair and find out if he is still committed to this marriage. He needs to know about the child you are carrying, but you need to know first whether or not there is a marriage worth trying to save. Right now your needs, and the needs of your child-to-be, come first. You and your child are going to need support. You are going to need a stable environment. You need to know where you stand. Anything else is secondary.

If Charles isn't going to, or can't focus on your marriage, you need out now. You love him, but not enough to subject your child to life like this, not knowing if or when their father might or might not be there. You aren't sure what you are going to do if it comes to that, but you won't raise your child in a situation like this. You just can't, no matter what comes of it.