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with your proposal, leaving you with two options – to forfeit the collaboration or to use my proposal. You guys panicked; it was a huge project, after all. Surely you couldn't bring yourself to give it up! Hence, you sought Gareth and showed him the proposal. Though he read it, he still chose mine.”“He also singled me out, giving you guys a hard time. No matter who it was, they both chose me. If I worked with one of them, the other would be offended. Under such difficult circumstances, you guys thought of another idea, didn't you?”Another idea...Rage boiled in him.The audacity of this woman!After hearing what Elisa stated, he was even more certain that Linda had something to do with that incident.And Linda said absolutely nothing in opposition. Funny... He was extremely disappointed; perhaps he had mistakenly trusted Linda in the past.Linda could have been acting through the entire thing.“You guys came up with such a ruthless plan in the end, but I bet it's out of your expectations that I would only break a rib. However, Gareth was so worried about me dying. He loves my proposal. He will lose an important business partner and suffer massive losses if I'm not around. Look at how he stayed with me when I was hospitalized! He even visited me regularly. If I didn't treat him coldly, he would probably visit me every day. Weren't you the one who caused all this to happen? Sometimes I wonder if I misunderstood your intentions; you kept saying that you are trying to bring us together. Now, it really seems the case.” “Unfortunately, I don't like Gareth, or we would have gotten back together. Linda, if you continue to make us see each other regularly, aren't you worried about me falling for him again? After all, he seems to value profit and thinks I'm valuable to him. A marriage of convenience often works to make more money, and I can do that for him.”We will never get back together.Gareth laughed coldly.She's self-aware.How could I get back together with such a conniving woman?Rage finally pushed him over the edge.'Boom'The man slammed his hands onto the table.“B*tch! Argh! I'll kill you!”That was the end of the recording.Gareth stopped the recording as his eyes darkened. Nobody was around to witness the violence.In the end, Elisa was the one who drove him mad. Not Linda, Elisa.It took a lot of strength to suppress his urge to find Elisa and confront her.Gareth finally found his composure.Damn it.Elisa. Is she

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very clearly.'Fear for your reputation if you attempt to attack the two of us again. The entire world will be made aware of your hypocrisy. Your name will be tarnished.'Linda cried in rage.The driver, startled, applied the brakes and looked in the rearview mirror at his passenger. The woman in the backseat sported a furious look.“Miss Linda. What's the matter?”Linda collected herself, inhaled deeply, leaned back against the chair, and shut her eyes.“I'm fine,” she admitted in exhaustion. “You keep driving.”The driver didn't dare to say anything. He nodded and continued his driving.Linda couldn't even tell her parents about this when she got home. I would be handing my ass in humiliation.Her mother had pleaded with her to exercise common sense and avoid mishaps, but she refused to do so and confronted Elisa. Even yet, she wished for reconciliation with Elisa. Looking back, Linda could only think that she was foolish to have done such a thing. I'm such a moron! ...For Elisa, everything appeared to be peaceful for three days in succession.Norman Benett and Rose Meek both intended to halt as a result of Elisa's episode. Linda was forced into a stalemate, so naturally, they were undisturbed for now.Every day, Linda fretted and checked her social media accounts to see whether there were any signs of leaked recordings. When there were none, she could let out a sigh of relief. This occurred daily and soon

became a dreaded daily routine for her. What would my Garry do? Did Elisa send the recording to Garry? She

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were their biggest stakeholder. Having them out of the picture would be a terrible move. Linda still had an intact trust in Gareth. With that in mind, she wasn't as worried as before. For a time, the family conversed, planning how to go about tomorrow. The Bennett family would have to be resilient tomorrow. That night, none of them slept well. They knew even with a game plan, the Wickams were unpredictable. Being notoriously unyielding, it was difficult to influence their choices. It would be pointless to try to convince them. In the worst-case scenario, if they played their cards right, they could have

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and he hardly even gave her a glance. However, she was at a loss for what to do and was powerless. Her heart was filled with a growing sense of unease. Norman inhaled a little, grinned as he glanced at Darren, and continued, "Why did you want to eat with us today, Old Mr. Wickam? Do you wish to discuss the two children's engagement more?" Norman made a direct statement. Linda's heart began to shake quickly, and her terror increased. The threat she feared the most was approaching! Her eyes were filled with terror as she hurriedly grabbed Rose's hand underneath the table. Rose quickly clasp her hand and gave her two firm squeezes while reassuring her not to make a mistake. Darren's smile froze at the corner of his mouth, but the next instant, he grinned and nodded. "Yes, I invited you over for lunch so I could talk to you about that; after all, the date we agreed on is rapidly approaching. The closer it gets and the longer it goes, the less important it will be." Linda drew on as her eyelids quivered slightly, and she turned to face Gareth. What exactly do those terms mean? Rose and Norman were both shrewd individuals; how could they fail to recognize that something was amiss? Nothing was going easily, in addition to everything else that occurred. They were sure that the Wickam family had heard the recording. Rose and Norman remained silent, and Linda simply stayed silent out of a worry that she might lose her cool if she spoke. Norman continued speaking gently after a pause, "What are you going to do then, Old Mr. Wickam? We'll cooperate." What ought to happen would still happen, but he must continue to act as though he was unaware of it. What if it was only a false notion? Be optimistic. Gareth remained silent and appeared composed. Julia had a grin on her face. Although she appeared courteous and

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meal with a confrontation even though the food had not yet been served. Rose had a somewhat nervous appearance. They wouldn't be much smarter than idiots if they did not understand what was going on, so Norman hid his smile. Monica seemed uncomfortable looking at them and avoided eye contact. Jerry believed that it would be simpler if they were made aware of it. Gareth coughed for attention, "This... is just self-preservation. Do you understand?" The Bennetts were dumbfounded. Understand? What did they need to comprehend? The three of them followed a rather predictable pattern while staring at him in confusion. Darren was speechless. Why are they still acting foolish when there is nothing left to do but fight till the end? Not to mention, wouldn't it be good to save some dignity and face? Darren spoke once more to save everyone's face. "Everyone is aware of the engagement's events at this time, so I won't go into detail. This will be our last meal..., a farewell, due to recent events." A fool could understand the

intent behind that statement. Norman's family each expressed a grave expression. Monica gave a remorseful smile but remained silent. Rose was not satisfied, "What do you mean by that, Old Mr. Wickam? We've already sent out the invites for the engagement, but now you're saying the relationship is over? This doesn't reflect a good public image for both families! Furthermore, are you abandoning your responsibility

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worst fears were confirmed. She's now considered a joke. "Auntie, why?" She cried, "Why do you want to do this? Do you believe those traitors? I certainly don't!" At this point, Linda wouldn't dare to rant and rave. She could only twist the truth in her favor. She did not know what she was denying, but she did not care. Darren sighed and then said seriously, "This is the way things are. After all, we proposed the termination. If you have are dissatisfied, you can speak up, and we will compensate you." "Compensation?" Norman seemed annoyed, "Although the Benetts aren't as famous in the circle as the Wickam family, we are still well-known. How will you make up for abandoning my daughter?" Rose couldn't help but question, "I just want to understand why you proposed to dissolve the engagement?" Linda kept her focus on Gareth. Her tears were streaming out of her eyes uncontrollably. She winced from the inevitable question. Gareth remained his uncaring glare. "You are all aware of the recording. I had an evaluation performed, and it was not faked." Gareth finally spoke. Linda was shocked by what he said. Immediately, her face became pale. "So someone really played us! Gareth, don't trust it! We've been sabotaged!" Gareth sneered, "Sabotaged?" Who is the villain exactly? Linda did not know how to reply to him. She widened her eyes and looked at Gareth in disbelief, "Garry, you, how could you accuse me like that?" Rose's face darkened, "What do you mean by that, Gareth? She tried to save your life back then, even though she nearly died. How could you? Is this how you repay your savior?!" Instead of being angry, Gareth grinned. "If I don't continue to investigate this matter and take your word for it, would you swear by that statement?" Rose paused. Linda went quiet. They panicked. How has it come

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collaboration was important, too. She did not believe they would let go of such a good opportunity. She was sure that they would come begging soon after. She would like to see if they would still be as stubborn then. As for Linda... She was panicking at the moment. She thought Gareth was powerless and did not prioritize the collaboration between their families. As she was lost in those thoughts, Darren suddenly shook his head in regret and asked her husband, "Norman, must you go that far?" Norman felt he could benefit from this interaction. He puffed out his chest and said confidently, "Old Mr. Wickam, do you think we are going too far? It was you who wanted to cancel the engagement and make our daughter a laughingstock to the world. I would rather do this than be slaves to your money." He leaned back casually as though waiting for Gareth to light his cigarette. Rose sat quietly and supportively beside Norman. They knew that even if other people did not have the power to negotiate with the Wickam family, they did because the Benett family was the Wickam family's most essential partner. But... They were too naïve... Darren heaved a seemingly exasperated sigh, "If that is your decision, we will respect it. I will send someone to Benett Corporation tomorrow to sign the papers. I will pay the severance fee according to the contract." Norman and Rose's expressions immediately changed! Is he being serious? Didn't he say that to make them take a step back? Norman scrunched his brows together and asked, "Are you sure, Old Mr. Wickam?" Darren sighed again, "I'm sure. Since you do not want to collaborate

anymore, I won't force you. I will not leave you hanging, though. Treat the severance pay as a means of compensation."The amount in the severance pay might be a large sum to a typical bystander, but to Wickam Group, it was pocket change. Besides, they benefit more from working within themselves than in collaborations. Darren didn't think that he would gain so much today. He had come intending to dissolve the engagement, yet there was more news to celebrate. If the Benett family knew of his true

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and tried to control his emotions. He gritted his teeth as he spat, "Old Mr. Wickam, don't you think you're overdoing it?"Darren fixed his eyes on him and said somewhat impatiently, "Norman, why do you say that? I've listened to your request and even offered to pay the severance fee as compensation. Yet, you say I'm overdoing it?"The veins in Norman's neck bulged as his face became red. He simmered in anger before blurting out, "You came with those intentions!"Jerry snickered, "Mr. Benett, these two children have never been suited for each other. They do not have any feelings for each other. They started their relationship because of guilt, but now the guilt has been resolved. Do you think this marriage can hold on?" "You... You all...!" Norman trembled in anger. He never pictured Jerry as a wolf in sheep's skin. He was so blatant with his words. This could only mean that they were determined to dissolve this engagement!Tears fell from Linda's eyes. She did not care about anything else; she turned to look at Gareth's icy expression."Garry, do you... do you really not want me anymore?"The sides of Gareth's mouth tilted up, and his eyes were filled with mockery. His indifference showed how shameful Linda was to ask this question.'Crack!'It was as though one could hear Linda's heart breaking

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explain. He also didn't care about Linda, so he hung up and walked away. From his experience, Linda could be faking it again.

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new adventures and experiences.Rachel laughed and flicked her short hair. "I knew you knew me!!""Of course, I know you. Do you mind if I invite someone over tonight?" Elisa giggled while placing the notebook in her hand down."Who is it?""Sean Jordan, an uncle I knew from before."Rachel looked at her disbelievingly, "What?? Mr. Jordan! I can't believe you know him!"Elisa nodded and replied, "Our company has a project and would like to collaborate with him. We've been trying hard to get him to agree, but it's been hard. He owes me four more meals, so I was going to ask him tonight."With anticipation shining in her eyes, Rachel laughed and said, "Does it still count if you invite him over? I've only seen him on TV and would like to see him in person. He is well-known and powerful; I really respect him!"Elisa smiled and texted Sean after a glance at the time.Elisa: 'Uncle Sean, can I call you?' Her phone rang not long after the text was delivered."Uncle Sean, it's been a while.""Elisa, it hasn't been that long? Is this about the meal I owe you?" His voice did not sound too happy."That's right, but I wanted to invite you over tonight. I broke a rib bone, so I have to stay at home and recuperate.""You broke your rib bone?? What happened?" Sean asked in astonishment."It was a car accident. Uncle Sean, don't you want to pay me a visit?""Send me the address.""Okay, Uncle. I'll see you tonight at six.""Okay."Their conversation ended, and they hung up the phone. Elise sent him her address immediately.There was amazement in Rachel's eyes as she exclaimed, "Wow! I can't believe you got him to come! I didn't realize you guys were this close! This old man's stubbornness is infamous; he's known for