



Behind the Headlines- Sample Chapter 1

The newsroom conference room at KBNR was a burst of color and excitement. Streamers in shades of gold and silver hung from the ceiling, and balloons floated above, adding a festive touch. Fresh flowers in vibrant hues filled every available vase, infusing the air with a hint of spring. I darted around, checking and rechecking details. John Gould my co-anchor for three years was now retiring and his retirement party had to be perfect.

“Breanna, where should we put the centerpieces?” Jenna, a staffer, asked, holding a stack of floral arrangements.

“Place them on the tables,” I replied. “Make sure they’re spaced. We need everything balanced.”

I moved to the catering table next, scanning the food trays. My heart sank when I spotted pasta instead of the hors d’oeuvres I had selected. I dialed the company’s number, my fingers trembling.

“Hello, this is Breanna from Channel 4. We received the wrong order for John’s retirement celebration.”

The voice on the other end was apologetic. “Let me check the order.” After a while, he came back. “You are right. We’ll send the correct items right away.”

I focused on the retirement party with the caters working on the mix-up. Peers were gathering, chatting, and laughing as they set up chairs. I double-checked the projector to confirm that the surprise video was queued and ready.

“Breanna, everything is wonderful,” said Mike, one of our senior reporters. “You’ve outdone yourself.”

“Thanks. I want John Gloush, my co-anchor for 3 years, to have a memorable send-off,” I replied, glancing around to check if everything was in place.

John walked in and looked around, smiling from ear to ear. His words hung in the air, a subtle hint of what would come.

I smiled, trying to push away the unease. “I hope you enjoy the party.”

I returned to my tasks, the party’s success riding on every detail. Despite the vibrant setting and upbeat atmosphere, I couldn’t help but feel sad over John’s retirement.

All the years, we worked together.... I thought my emotions would be in my control. But they weren’t.

The conference room buzzed with staff mingling and chatting. I glanced at the faces of coworkers who had come together to celebrate his retirement. John looked both surprised and delighted, waving to everyone with a grin.

It was time to start this party. I looked around the room, checking that everything was in place. The staff had filled the room, and the buzz of banter grew louder. Laughter and clinking glasses filled the air as friends caught up and enjoyed the food at the tables.

I took a moment to gather my thoughts. With the catering mistake resolved, there were finally hors d’oeuvres, instead of pasta, on the table. And the decorations were in place, too.

Everything was ready, at last.