

The Arrangement – Free Novelette by S. S. Sahoo

Chapter 2

Brad

I called my PA to my office, sighing loudly in frustration. Not even a minute later there was a knock at my door.

“Come in,” I called without looking up. In walked Ron, my twenty-six year old PA.

“Did you find him, Ron?,” I questioned with one eyebrow raised. Today was not the day to mess with me. He gulped audibly before hesitantly shaking his head. I could see the nerves on him as he began to stutter.

“Sir, we tried to trace him down but we weren’t able to because his phone was switched off.”

I took a deep breath, trying to calm my anger before ordering Ron to leave. He nodded before leaving. He knew that right now was not an appropriate time to call upon a conversation.

Sighing, I walked over to my window looking down the forty-eighth floor from which my office stood. As usual, the street was bustling with activity. Unlike them, I wasn’t blessed with the normality that they went through on a day to day basis. I was the Brad Knights, a billionaire and oil tycoon with my own chain of hotels. At the age of sixty, I was well established and proud of the empire I had built from scratch. There was a misconception that I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth, but this was not the case. I did not come from money; my father was an ordinary mechanic who went above and beyond his working hours in order to put me through school. My gratitude towards my father is unfathomable. Today, people know and respect me for a good reason. And it’s all because of my father’s hard work.

Seeing my company grow and flourish was like watching your child. Having built it from scratch, there was no greater pride. I was now ready to step down though I was hesitant to hand over my position to my son, Xavier Knights. He was one in a million with his intellect and talent. He was also gifted with good looks. Good looks that had all the ladies swooning and falling at his feet. This worked to his detriment for he grew to be arrogant and rude. Much to my dismay, he turned out to be the biggest playboy who refused to settle down. As much I would have liked to, I couldn't blame him. Ever since that girl came into his life, leaving him broken and disheartened, he was never the same again..

We began to argue about him settling down, and the next thing I knew he had left to some foreign place, while blocking me out completely. He hadn't even told me he was leaving. One day I woke up to find a message stating he'd be back soon as he needed some space and time to think.

I didn't know what to do. I wasn't getting any younger and I needed someone to hand the company over to. I was completely stuck. As much as I would like to trust my son, he wasn't showing any responsibility. He was an adult for heaven's sakes. I wish my wife, Amelia, was here; she'd know exactly what to do and how to talk to him.

I miss my Amelia, the love of my life, the mother of my child, and the reason for my success. She was my support. Unfortunately, she passed away four years ago, taking my heart with her. Every time I feel in doubt, I think of her and I'm immediately filled with hope. The day I lost her was the most devastating day of my life that was also the day I lost a part of myself.

I was overcome with nostalgia and sorrow before deciding to visit her grave, which was something I hadn't done in a long time. I ordered my driver to bring out the car before ordering Ron to reschedule all my meetings for tomorrow. I made a note to stop at a flower shop to buy white lilies since they were her favorite flowers.

The car soon came to a halt outside a homely looking flower shop named The Blossom. As I entered I headed over to the counter and asked the girl to point me in the direction of the lilies. She pointed towards a shelf in the corner where a

young girl was already standing holding a bunch. Seeing those were the last ones and thinking she must be a customer, I panicked. Before she could turn and leave, I headed over and reached towards them. She turned towards me in shock before slowly regaining her composure. I was in awe, completely taken aback by her beauty. She had an aura of kindness and love that resonated from her. I immediately felt a connection. I was overcome by a fatherly love and affection towards her.

Finding my voice, I cleared my throat.

“Excuse me. I’m sorry but those appear to be the last white lilies. I’d really like them as I need them for someone special. ”

She smiled a warm, heart-stopping smile before clearing the confusion. She was not a customer but rather an employee there at The Blossom. She gave a light-hearted laugh before calling me over and wrapping them up beautifully before handing them to me. I smiled down at the beautiful flowers before paying.

I felt happiness as I thought about the girl. Her pure and delicate presence reminded me of Amelia. That thought brought peace to me and for the first time in the four years I felt complete and utter happiness.

I reached Amelia’s grave, bending down to dust away from the fallen leaves before slowly placing the flowers before her headstone.

. . . . Amelia Knights

Beloved wife of Brad Knights and loving mother to Xavier Knights.

Born 16 October 1962 - Died 4 March 2011

As I sat near her grave and reminisced on our youth days, I began speaking to her about Xavier in hopes she’d show me some sort of sign. With heavy eyelids, I momentarily closed my eyes, my mind immediately going to the beautiful girl in the flower shop. I smiled, looking towards Amelia’s grave. My love has given me the answer. I pictured Amelia accepting the girl with open arms. I jumped with joy as I promised Amelia the next time I visited her it would be because I bore good news. I would save our son. I would give him the perfect girl—a girl that was just like his mother.

. When I returned to the office, I passed Ron and told him to get any information he could on the girl from the flower shop. Entering my office, I smiled. .Everything would work out soon. My son would have his princess.