

“Have you seen this woman? She stormed out of the apartment and didn’t take her phone.” Daren held his phone up to an older woman walking her dog. A picture of his girlfriend displayed on the screen.

“Call the police.” The woman picked up her poodle to leave quickly.

Daren groaned and ran down the street, pushing against the crowd. Then, there she was. Sitting at an outside table of a café. Her soft hair flowed in the wind and her vibrant blue eyes were pensive. “Rowan,” he sat across from her, “Please don’t run away. Let’s talk about this.”

Rowan rolled her eyes. “How many times have I heard that before? I’m done, Daren. We’re not going anywhere. This relationship has peaked.”

“That’s not true.” He grabbed her hands, but she pulled away. “I looked all over the neighbourhood for you at your favourite spots. I love you and I will do anything to prove that.”

“Give the man a round of applause.” Her chair scraped against the cement as she stood.

He touched her shoulder, and she glared at him. “Don’t go.”

“If you don’t let go of me, I will make this situation far worse for you. Do you see all these people around? They’ll make great witnesses.”

“Don’t take us down that road. You’re better than that.”

She sighed and stared at her feet.

“Rowan,” he lifted her chin to gaze into her eyes, “Would you come somewhere with me, please?”

“I don’t owe you anything.”

“I know, but could you do me this one last favour?”

Her eyes were kind, yet searched for any reason to shut down her feelings. Squeezing his hand, she nodded.

Daren guided her a few blocks over to an empty street.

“What happened here? Where’s everyone?”

“Wait for it.” He squared her shoulders to face down the road.

**Commented [KM1]:** This is a very intense moment. Opening with a scene like this may cause the reader to think his girlfriend is in danger. Try rephrasing to something more calm, or introduce Daren’s character more first.

**Commented [KM2]:** This is a good opportunity to use more descriptions to show his love for her. Good job!

**Commented [KM3]:** We should know more about their relationship so we can understand the stakes and be invested.

**Commented [KM4]:** This seems a bit dark. Is this the tone you’re going for?

**Commented [KM5]:** She seems to give in too quickly. Establishing more of their relationship and problems may help readers understand her more.

A marching band came towards them playing harmoniously. Her eyes lit up as the music approached, along with sections of gymnasts and two floats decorated with red and blue flowers. She clapped her hands over her mouth and stared in awe as the parade passed her. Near the end was a banner with her name on it in cursive.

**Commented [KM6]:** That's cute!

**Commented [KM7]:** I'd suggest using more unique actions to describe her emotions. Ex. frozen in an odd position (stunned), wiping tears from the corner of her eye, etc.

"Do you like it?" he asked, "My father helped me organize it."

"This is wonderful. Like the parade you threw when you first tried to win me over." Her expression soured. "If you think I love you for your money, then you don't know me at all." She turned to him, ready to curse him out and storm off.

He kneeled, holding an open velvet box. "You said you wanted us to move forward. And I'm ready for that commitment now. I want you to be with me for the rest of my life. I want you there for every parade and argument that leads to amazing memories. Rowan, will you marry me?"

**Commented [KM8]:** Consider more build up to this with scenes where they are a loving couple. Really dig into their relationship and show the reader why we should root for them.

"Yes!" She threw her arms around him.

He slipped the princess cut diamond ring on her finger, and she admired its sparkle in the sunlight.

**Commented [KM9]:** Is this a bit cliché?

As he pulled her in for a kiss, fireworks exploded in the cloudy sky. Rowan looked up and laughed. "You know they look better in the dark, right?"

"Last minute planning." He blushed.

"Typical." She smiled, then kissed him once more.

**Commented [KM10]:** Even if it's last minute planning, would he go for fireworks in the daylight? Consider what would he is capable of doing last minute, and what can be spontaneous.

\*\*This piece does not reflect any existing book or persons. It is a sample created specifically for the purposes of my portfolio.