

## **In Love with the Enemy by Camille Bernard**

In Rohan's world it was an eye for an eye, and so he felt no remorse for what he was about to do; his brother had been murdered and the man responsible was going to pay and pay dearly.

He knew that Omar Sanka had no children of his own, his only sibling was dead. It was also a well-known fact that he and his wife did not get along and lived a life only of appearances so going after her would be pointless.

But his niece Nadia, now there was Omar's pride and joy, he had raised the girl as his own daughter since she was six and had afforded her every possible luxury there was; she was now twenty and preparing to attend college abroad.

Yes, Nadia would be Rohan's eye for an eye, she was innocent, but so had Daniel been before Omar's men had mercilessly put an end to his life five days ago; his heart ached as the memory of his young brother's casket being lowered into the ground this morning flashed across his mind, and he felt his throat tighten as he remembered how he'd had to cradle his distraught mother to prevent her from falling apart; she had never said it but he knew that Daniel had been her favorite son.

No, he felt no remorse at all for what he was about to do. He was not a man of war by nature, but the war had been brought to his doorstep, and he had to avenge his brother's death.

A brief knock on the door stirred him out of his reverie and he set Nadia Sanka's file down as Leo his chief security officer entered, flanked by two bodyguards.

He walked over and placed a single sheet of paper on the desk in front of Rohan. "This is a copy of her weekly schedule," he said.

He turned the paper around with his index finger and scanned it, then gave it back to Leo who folded it and put it in his pocket.

"Do you want us to take care of it today?" the guard asked, his voice somber, his face an expressionless mask.

Rohan didn't answer straight away, he stood up and walked over to the huge panoramic windows that overlooked the busy city below and gazed down at the bustling streets, then he turned again briskly as if he'd forgotten they were there.

"No," he said shaking his head, his eyes cold, his face a death mask. "Bring her here to me. I want to kill her myself."

### **Editor's Critique:**

I love a good revenge story! Thank you for sending in your first page. I'm excited for Rohan to meet Nadia, and your last line definitely made me want to turn the page. 😊

I really want to know what kind of business Rohan is in—what is his world, in which an eye for an eye is common? I think knowing a bit more about what kind of world he's about to pull Nadia into would add intrigue and up the sense of danger.

There's quite a bit of background information in this first page; while much of it is important to the story, I'd suggest saving some of the background info until later, and letting the reader really sink into Rohan and his emotions/motivations on this first page.

Keep an eye on which details you include; does each one advance the plot/add to the emotional intensity of this scene? We see Rohan go from thinking about killing Nadia to taking the first step by ordering Leo to bring her to him. What happens to bring him to that point? Since a lot of his motivation comes from things that happened in the past, I'd suggest adding a bit more detail to Rohan's present in this scene, to add some balance.

Is he looking at a picture when he thinks of Nadia, for example, while he reads the file? Moving the file detail to earlier in the scene would frame the Nadia information differently, so we see what is prompting his thoughts.

Thank you again for letting me take a look at this! And best of luck in the contest. 😊