
SAMPLE QUERY LETTER EDIT

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ISSUE TO IMPACT

Issue

In a market where it's tough to stand out, this 93,000-word dark romantasy aimed to do just that. This book is part of a series of self-published, connected stand-alone stories, which is a tricky needle to thread when querying.

Agents weren't replying.

Solution

I revised the query letter with a stronger hook and clearer stakes. Having edited the manuscript, I deeply understood the story, which shaped the approach. I tend to lead with the story first rather than comp titles, unless the comp titles are compelling enough to be the hook. In this instance, the story was.

Impact

Agents began to respond:

- Five (5) full requests
- One (1) partial request

Note: Results will vary by manuscript and market

ORIGINAL QUERY LETTER (264 WORDS)

Dear _____,

I'm excited to query you about my newest project. I felt you were a great fit because you want _____ and _____. Given the similarities, I thought you'd be a brilliant match for a dark romantasy with a word count of 93,000.

[Comp1] meets [Comp2] in [Book Title]. FMC, who's being haunted by the weight of her responsibilities, as well as by the trauma of her past. When signs of a prophecy twenty years in the making appear, FMC must face the [Redacted] king at the center of them.

MMC, a newly crowned king, just lost his mother, who had long resented FMC's family. He inherits her resentment, and his grief only serves to amplify it. Set on war, he welcomes FMC to [his kingdom] under the guise of being open to peace so he can size her up. The two experience an immediate mutual attraction, which complicates things for them both.

FMC finds she doesn't want to resist him. MMC welcomes the darkness that has lurked beneath the surface for so long. She finds it freeing. As she embraces these truths about herself, she descends into madness, joining him in his war against her own people. The trigger warnings include graphic sex scenes, BDSM, explicit language, violence, death, references to SA, and war.

My name is [Author Background]. I have [number] other works on the market. I'm on [Author Industry Affiliations]

If you're interested in working with me on this project, please reach out to me. I look forward to speaking with you further. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
[Author]

REVISED QUERY LETTER (268 WORDS)

Subject: Query: [Book Title], Dark Romantasy, 93,000 words

Dear [Agent],

You may be a great fit for [Book Title] because you want ____ and ____.

They tried to shape FMC to be the [Redacted], to bury who she really is. But darkness can't be contained.

With war on the horizon, the once-allied island of [Kingdom1] lost their [Leader]. A young [Redacted] prince rises to the throne with vengeance in his heart. Holding a generational grudge against FMC's adoptive family, MMC lures her into a bet. FMC agrees so she can negotiate peace and "fix" the bad boy MMC has become. Both get more than they bargained for as they learn about who they truly are.

Meanwhile, FMC's younger brother, MSC, is finding his way as the crowned prince of [Kingdom2]. Living in the shadow of his [Parents], he tries to build alliances to stand up to MMC and bring FMC home. He navigates betrayal, rumors, and tragedy as he and MMC hurdle toward a final battle that was foretold in a prophecy before he was born. Oh, and MSC is a smoking hot [Redacted] who just wants to find the [Redacted] of his dreams.

With the deliciousness of gritty romance and a twist on the classic good vs. evil struggle, [Book Title] is a dark romantasy of 93,000 that will appeal to readers of [Comp1] and [Comp2]. Trigger warnings include graphic sex scenes, BDSM, explicit language, violence, death, references to SA, and war.

I'm a [Author Background] and have [number] other works on the market. I'm on [Author Industry Affiliations].

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Author]