

**RWA® Mystery/Suspense Chapter presents**  
***The Daphne du Maurier Award***  
**FOR EXCELLENCE IN MYSTERY/SUSPENSE**  
**UNPUBLISHED DIVISION 2017**  
**CONTEST RULES**

The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense is named for Daphne du Maurier, the author of REBECCA, a suspense novel with romantic and gothic overtones and a precursor to today's romantic suspense. The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense (The Daphne) is a writing contest with two divisions, one for published and one for unpublished authors.

The contest provides helpful feedback by trained judges, and winning or placing in the competition adds a boost to the entrant's writing career.

These rules apply to the Unpublished Division of the contest.

**Eligibility:**

- The Daphne is open to all writers who have never been published in book-length fiction (40,000 words or more). All work must be the entrant's original work, and not be contracted for publication prior to entering the contest.
- Any manuscript that has previously finished in The Daphne (including Honorable Mention) is not eligible for entry.
- Membership in Romance Writers of America® and/or KOD is NOT a requirement for entry.
- There is no limit to the number of entries per author or per category, but each entry may be entered in ONLY ONE category.

**Entry Caps:**

- Category (Series) romantic mystery/suspense: 50 entries
- Historical romantic mystery/suspense: 50 entries
- Inspirational romantic mystery/suspense: 50 entries
- Paranormal/Time Travel/Futuristic (PTTF) romantic mystery/suspense: 50 entries
- Mainstream mystery/suspense: 100 entries
- Single Title romantic mystery/suspense: 100 entries

**Entry Deadline:**

- Entries must be received **ELECTRONICALLY NO LATER** than 11:59 PM MT, March 15, 2017. You will receive an entry confirmation email.
- Early entries will be held until all entries are received.

## Entry Payment:

- Entry Fee: \$15 for KOD members; \$30 non-KOD members.
- Payments will be made through myRWA invoicing and may be submitted using PayPal, credit card, personal check on US bank, or money order in US funds.
- When paying by personal check or money order you must first create a myRWA invoice and include the invoice and entry number on your payment.
- Personal checks and money orders must be postmarked no later than March 16, 2017, made payable to Kiss of Death RWA® Mystery/Suspense and sent to the chapter treasurer per the instructions on myRWA and the confirmation email.
- Entries without completed profile, entry form and payment will not be judged.

## Unpublished Contest Categories

**Category (Series) romantic mystery/suspense:** any manuscript that fits into series romance defined as: romance written within a set of parameters that establish a style for tone, page length, sensuality level, and the requisite happy ending. Examples are stories similar to those found in the Harlequin Intrigue or Harlequin Romantic Suspense lines.

**Historical romantic mystery/suspense:** any manuscript set in a time that predates the end of World War II.

**Inspirational romantic mystery/suspense:** any manuscript in which religious or spiritual beliefs form a significant part of the story.

**Mainstream mystery/suspense:** any manuscript where the mystery/suspense is the main plot.

**Paranormal/time travel/futuristic (PTTF) romantic mystery/suspense:** any manuscript in which paranormal elements play a significant role.

**Single Title romantic mystery/suspense:** any manuscript where the romance is the main plot but which contains elements of mystery/suspense.

## Helpful Hints for Determining Category

- The entries in the Category (Series), Historical and Paranormal categories may contain varying degrees of mystery or suspense with the romance as the primary or secondary focus.
- If the romance is the primary focus, the story should follow the guidelines of a romance; the hero and heroine must end up together in a happy, committed relationship.
- If the romance is the secondary focus, the story should follow the guidelines of a romance, but the committed relationship may be only alluded to.
- Entries in the mainstream mystery/suspense category may contain only minor elements of romance or none at all.
- Attention Young Adult Mystery Writers:
  - Does your YA mystery contain a romance? If not, please enter this manuscript in the Mainstream category and label it in the header: Mainstream Mystery (Young Adult). Romance is optional in this category.
  - If your YA mystery or romantic suspense contains romance, does it also have paranormal, inspirational or historical elements? If so, please enter your

manuscript in the subgenre category that best fits your work and label your entry as a Young Adult in the header, e.g. Paranormal (Young Adult) etc.

- It is the author's responsibility to enter the work in the correct category. All clarifications as to category should be made prior to submission. If you have any questions, please direct them to the Daphne Contest Chair at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com).

### **Submissions:**

- For each entry, entrants will electronically submit the **FIRST 5,000 words** of the manuscript with a synopsis of no more than **675 words**. The synopsis is not judged but included for the judges' reference. (See formatting specifics below.)

### **FORMATTING & SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRY:**

- One inch margins
- 12 pt. or larger Arial, Courier, New Times Roman or similar legible font. (Smaller fonts will not be accepted.)
- Double-spaced
- Each page should have a one-line header with title and category on the left side; page number on the right side
- **Note to MAINSTREAM ENTRANTS:** In your header, please indicate genre, e.g. Mainstream Thriller, Mainstream Suspense, Mainstream Cozy, Mainstream Young Adult Mystery, etc.
- **CONTESTANT'S NAME MAY NOT APPEAR ON THE ENTRY. ANY ENTRY WITH THE CONTESTANT'S NAME WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.**
- Be sure to remove your name from all properties.
- Entries must be **RTF** (Rich Text Format) files **ONLY**.
- If you have questions on how to remove the properties from your manuscript or save it in rtf, please contact the Daphne Contest Chairman at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com)
- Document name should be the **title** of the manuscript **only**.
- **Combine all manuscript pages and synopsis in one file.** Paste synopsis **after** the manuscript pages. All pages should be in standard manuscript format.
- **The un-judged synopsis should be presented FOLLOWING your judged submission.**

### **Submission Package:**

- Entry Form will be filled in at time of submission.
- Entry (No more than 5,000 double-spaced words. **Best advice: don't try to squeeze in as many words to reach the 5,000 word count; it's far more important to end on a hook.**)
- Synopsis (No more than 675 double-spaced words)
- Your entry will be given an entry number and submitted to the coordinator of the manuscript category you have selected. You will receive a confirmation email with the entry number.

## How to Enter:

- All entries are registered and uploaded through the Daphne Contest website at: <http://writingcontest.website>

**Important: if you have entered the Daphne previously or have been a Daphne Judge, you do not need to create a new profile.**

Log on using the email address you used originally. If you do not remember it, please contact the Daphne Contest Chair at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com) Please do NOT create a new profile.

- After logging in, click on the button that says “Check Your Profile”. Review the information and ensure that all fields are completed. Please be sure to include both a secondary email address and an alternate telephone number.
  - If you need to make changes, click on Edit Profile, make corrections, and then click Submit.
  - If all the information is accurate, click on Entries.
- To register your entry, click on Enter Unpublished Contest
  - Complete all of the fields and upload your file. (Files must be RTF.)
  - Be sure to make your entry fee payment through myRWA.
    - NOTE to KOD members: To receive your discount, you must first be signed into myRWA prior to accessing myRWA through the contest site.
  - After you have made your payment, enter the invoice number on the entry form.
  - Click Submit

If you have any issues during the registration process, please email the Daphne Contest Chair at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com)

## Judging:

- Score sheets are based on 123 points.
- Each unpublished category is judged on a score sheet specific to the requirements of the category.
- Each entry will have four first-round judges; the lowest score will be dropped to eliminate discrepancy judging.
- Judges are strongly urged to make comments throughout the manuscript as well as the score sheet.
- The top qualifying five finalists (or more in case of a tie) must receive a score totaling at least 276 points (75% of 123 points X 3 or 369) to advance to the final round.
- Final Round judging will consist of one editor and one agent for a total of two judges and two scores.
- The order of placement will be determined by the combined scores of the editor and agent.

### **Score sheets:**

- All judging will be done electronically.
- Score sheets will be returned electronically to all non-finaling entrants shortly after Finalists have been announced.
- Score sheets will be returned electronically to Finalists shortly after the conclusion of the Winners announcement at the annual Death by Chocolate party held during the RWA® National Conference.

### **Final Round Judging:**

- FINALISTS must submit in ELECTRONIC form within three (3) days of notification to the designated coordinator:
  - One (1) manuscript portion totaling no more than the first twenty-five (25) double-spaced pages.
  - One (1) copy of a synopsis totaling no more than two (2) double-spaced pages.
- Finalists failing to meet the deadline will be disqualified from the final round and are eligible for Honorable Mention only.
- Final Round Judges have agreed to judge the first fifteen pages (15 pages) of the entry. The additional ten pages are for final round judges who wish to continue reading.

### **Announcement of Finalists and Winners:**

- Under normal circumstances Finalists will be notified on or before May 5.
- Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony at the Death by Chocolate Party held annually during the RWA® National Conference.
- The first place entry in each category will receive an engraved bookmark, an award certificate, a digital medallion, a cash prize of \$25 and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The second place entry will receive an award certificate, a digital medallion, a cash prize of \$15 and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The third place entry will receive an award certificate, a digital medallion, a cash prize of \$10 and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The remaining Honorable Mentions will receive an award certificate, a digital medallion and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The top overall scoring entry will receive The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense, and will receive a commemorative pin, an award certificate, a digital medallion and voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- First through third place winners in each category will be published in the *Romance Writers Report (RWR®)* the monthly magazine of Romance Writers of America®.

**If you have any questions, please contact the Overall Daphne Contest Chairman at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com).**