

**RWA® Mystery/Suspense Chapter presents**  
***The Daphne du Maurier Award***  
***For Excellence in Mystery/Suspense***  
**PUBLISHED DIVISION 2018**  
**CONTEST RULES**

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for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense (The Daphne) is a writing contest with two divisions, one for published and one for unpublished authors.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 Daphne 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 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 Published Division of the contest.**

**Eligibility:**

- The Daphne is open to any author who has been published in book-length fiction with a 2017 copyright (see below under Submissions for details).
- All entries must have a minimum length of 40,000 words.
- Membership in Romance Writers of America® and/or KOD is NOT a requirement for entry.
- There is a limit of two entries per category, though an author may submit different books to any or all categories as appropriate. An author may not enter the same book into multiple categories.

**Entry Caps:**

- Category (Series) Romantic Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries
- Historical Romantic Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries
- Inspirational Romantic Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries
- Paranormal (PTTF) Romantic Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries
- Mainstream Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries
- Single Title Romantic Mystery/Suspense: 50 entries

**Entry Timeframe and Deadline:**

- Entry forms must be received **ELECTRONICALLY NO LATER** than 11:59 PM MDT, March 15, 2018. You will receive an entry confirmation email.
- Physical books must be **POSTMARKED NO LATER** than March 16, 2018, addressed to the appropriate coordinator as shown on the entry confirmation email. You will also receive confirmation email when your books have been received.

- The contest opens for entries on January 15, 2018 at 12:01 AM MT. Entries will not be forwarded to judges until all entries are received.

### **Entry Payment:**

- Entry Fee: \$30
- 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, 2018, made payable to RWA® Romantic Suspense/Mystery 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, and books will not be returned (see How to Enter section below).

### **Published 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 (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 (PTTF) 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 the book in the Mainstream category.
- If your YA mystery or romantic suspense contains romance, does it also have paranormal, inspirational or historical elements? If so, please enter the book in the subgenre category that best fits your work.
- 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 submit four (4) copies of their novel with a copyright date of 2017.
- Works with a 2016 original copyright date, but not available for public release until 2017, will be accepted with proper documentation.
- Novels (in any format) released for sale before 2017 are not eligible.
- For purposes of The Daphne, a contestant is considered published if the contest entry is published in **any** publishing venue, including e-pub or self-published, subsidy (vanity) press, print-on-demand or small imprint publisher.
- The contestant **MUST SUPPLY** the entry in **PRINT FORMAT** regardless of publishing venue.
  - **NO DISK SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
  - **YOUR BOOK MUST BE IN MASS MARKET OR TRADEBACK PAPERBACK SIZE. NO UNBOUND OR SPIRAL-BOUND SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
  - **PLEASE, NO ADVANCE READING COPIES (ARCs)**

### **Submission Package:**

- Submit four (4) Print Format copies of your book.
- Each entry must be accompanied by a printed copy of your entry form. (See below for instructions on completing the entry form.)
  - You can use your confirmation email.
- No entries requiring a signature upon delivery will be accepted. (You may use the USPS delivery confirmation if you wish.)
- Affix correct postage.
- Please mail entries to the **correct** coordinator as listed in your confirmation email. If you have questions, please contact the Daphne Contest Chair at: [daphnecontest@gmail.com](mailto:daphnecontest@gmail.com)

### **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 Published Contest
  - Complete all of the fields.
  - Be sure to make your entry fee payment through myRWA.
  - 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 88 points.
- Each entry will have three judges; the lowest score will be dropped to eliminate discrepancy judging.
- Judges will be asked to make comments on the score sheet.

### **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.

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

- Under normal circumstances, Finalists will be notified on or before May 25<sup>th</sup>.
- 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 and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- All other finalists 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 also receive a commemorative pin, an award certificate, a digital medallion and voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- First 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 questions, please contact the Daphne Contest Chair at:  
daphnecontest@gmail.com.**