

**RWA® Mystery/Suspense Chapter presents  
The Daphne du Maurier Award  
For Excellence in Mystery/Suspense  
PUBLISHED DIVISION 2022  
CONTEST RULES**

The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense is a writing contest with two divisions, one for published and one for unpublished authors. The Romance Writers of America Mystery/Suspense Chapter #144's contest 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. 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 Romance Writers of America Mystery/Suspense Chapter #144, also known as Kiss of Death (KOD), is an affiliated chapter of Romance Writers of America, Inc. (RWA®). As an RWA chapter, this chapter must comply with RWA's bylaws and policies and procedures regarding chapters as well as the Chapter Affiliation Agreement. For that reason, children's books and middle grade books are not eligible for entry into the contest.

- The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense is open to any author over the age of 18 who published book-length fiction with a 2021 copyright (See below under Submissions for details).
- For purposes of The Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence writing contest, an entry is considered published if the novel has been made publicly available either for free or for purchase. This includes all publishing paths: traditional, self/independent publishing, vanity press, online applications, etc.
- 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.
- Each author may enter as many books as they like. However, each book may only be entered in one category and there is a limit of two books per author in each category.

### **Published Contest Categories**

**Short Romantic Mystery/Suspense:** works with a central romance that have a wordcount of 40k-65k.

**Historical Romantic Mystery/Suspense:** works with a central romance set in a time that predates the end of World War II.

**Spiritual Romantic Mystery/Suspense:** works with a central romance in which any religious or spiritual beliefs form a significant part of the story and could not be removed without damaging the storyline.

**Mainstream Mystery/Suspense:** any work where the mystery/suspense is the main plot.

**Paranormal (PTTF) Romantic Mystery/Suspense:** works with a central romance and in which paranormal, fantasy, time travel, and/or futuristic elements play a significant role.

**Long Romantic Mystery/Suspense:** Novels with a central romance that have a wordcount of 65k and above.

## Entry Caps:

Each category is limited to 50 entries. Once entry caps have been met, the website will not allow additional entries. There is no waitlist.

## Changes to categories

If a category does not receive at least 15 entries, it will be combined with another category at the discretion of the Contest Committee. Contestants will be informed before judging begins and will have the option to withdraw their entry and have their entry fees refunded.

## Entry Timeframe and Deadline:

- The contest opens for entries on February 15, 2022 at 12:01 AM MT.
- A single PDF file copy of your book must be received **ELECTRONICALLY NO LATER** than 11:59 PM Mountain Time, March 15, 2022.
- CAREFULLY review all the rules to ensure the PDF is formatted corrected for the contest.

## Entry Payment:

- Entry Fee: \$15 for KOD members; \$30 non-KOD members.
- Payments will be made through the contest registration process and may be submitted using PayPal, credit card, personal check drawn on a US bank, or money order in US funds. Links are provided on the entry form. (See more in the How to Enter section below.)
- When paying by personal check or money order you must still complete the payment process section, and then include the invoice and entry numbers on your payment.
- Personal checks and money orders must be postmarked no later than March 16, 2022, made payable to RWA® Romantic Suspense/Mystery Chapter #144 and sent to the chapter treasurer per instructions on the Daphne du Maurier Contest confirmation email.
- Entries without completed profile, entry form, and payment will not be judged. Entry fee will not be returned, and PDF files will be deleted (See How to Enter section below).
- For questions regarding the entry payment process, please email the Daphne du Maurier Contest Chair at: [kodcontest@gmail.com](mailto:kodcontest@gmail.com).

## Helpful Hints for Determining Category

- Stories that are entered in the Romantic Mystery/Suspense categories are required to contain a love story (either as the primary or secondary focus of the story) that concludes in an emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending.
- For additional guidelines about the definition of the romance genre, visit the RWA website: [https://www.rwa.org/Online/Romance\\_Genre/About\\_Romance\\_Genre.aspx](https://www.rwa.org/Online/Romance_Genre/About_Romance_Genre.aspx)
- Entries in the mainstream mystery/suspense category are not required to contain a romantic storyline, nor any romantic elements.
- 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 questions, please direct them to the Daphne du Maurier Contest Chair at: [kodcontest@gmail.com](mailto:kodcontest@gmail.com).

## Submissions:

- For each entry, entrants will electronically submit a single PDF file copy of the published book.

- The file must include the copyright page.
- Maximum size of pdf file cannot exceed 10MB.
- Do not include the book's cover in the file.
- Be sure to enable the accessibility feature to make the document easy for people with disabilities to read.
- Be sure that any DRM, privacy restrictions, and password requirements have been disabled. We need the judge to be able to open the file without a password.
- Novels released before 2021 are not eligible.
- The contestant **MUST SUPPLY** the entry as a single **PDF FILE FORMAT** with copyright page regardless of publishing venue. If applicable, watermarks are to be placed in the header and/or footer of each page. Watermarks across the body of a page **MUST BE REMOVED** prior to entry.
- NO DISK SUBMISSIONS
- YOUR BOOK MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY.
- NO PRINT BOOKS.

## Submission Package:

- For each entry, entrants will electronically submit a single pdf file copy of the book with the copyright page.
- Single pdf file is limited to 10MB
- Do not include the book's front cover or back cover in the submission package.
- If you have questions, please contact the Daphne du Maurier Contest Chairs at: [kodcontest@gmail.com](mailto:kodcontest@gmail.com). Please include the category you are planning to enter.

## How to Enter:

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

**Important: if you have previous entered or judged the Daphne du Maurier Contest, you will already have a profile on the contest website. DO NOT create a new profile.**

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

- After logging in, click the button that says "Check Your Profile." Review the information and ensure all fields are complete and accurate. Please include both a secondary email address and an alternate telephone number.
  - If you need to make changes, click Edit Profile. Make corrections and click Submit.
  - If information is accurate, click Entries.
- To register your entry, click Enter Published Contest.
  - Complete all fields and upload your single pdf file. (File must be PDF with the accessibility feature enabled to make the document easy for people with disabilities to read.)
  - Click Save.
  - Be sure to make your entry fee payment by clicking Pay Now.
  - After you have made your payment, this button will change to "Paid."
  - You will receive a confirmation email for your entry from the Contest Committee. If you do not receive it within a few minutes, please check your "SPAM" or "Junk" folder.
  - If you have not received the confirmation within 60 minutes, please contact the

Daphne du Maurier Contest Chair at: [kodcontest@gmail.com](mailto:kodcontest@gmail.com)

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

## **Complete your Judge Profile:**

All entrants are encouraged to judge the contest. You will not be assigned entries from the category that you have entered. Judge Training will be sent via email in late March. Please complete all training before reading your assigned entries.

## **Judging:**

- Score sheets are based on 100 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 winners have been announced. This usually happens at the annual Death by Chocolate party held during the RWA National Conference in July, but may be rescheduled if needed.

## **Disqualification:**

Entries that are disqualified will not have their fees refunded. Entries can be disqualified for any of the following reasons:

- Entry was published before January 1, 2021
- Entry is not the contestant's own work
- Entry is entered in the wrong category.
- The entry violates the Mission or DEIA statements of the Kiss of Death Chapter.
- The KOD Board determines that the entry does not exemplify excellence in the Mystery/Suspense genre.

KOD's Mission Statement: The Romance Writers of America Mystery/Romantic Suspense Chapter #144, also known as Kiss of Death, is organized to promote excellence in mystery/romantic suspense fiction and advance the professional interests of career-focused romance writers within the genre of mystery/romantic suspense through networking and advocacy, dissemination of information, professional education, publications, and other appropriate activities, and to provide continuing support for writers within the romance publishing industry. Our goal is to offer you, the romantic suspense writer, services and support to energize, enhance and showcase your writing experience.

KOD's DEIA Statement: The Kiss of Death Chapter is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, accessible, and equitable community by supporting and empowering individuals of any culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, gender identity, age, body shape and size, and

by creating a safe community for all. Kiss of Death recognizes that while words have power, actions speak louder. Kiss of Death commits to instilling these values into every aspect of our mission.

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

- Under normal circumstances, Finalists will be notified on or before June 15, 2022.
- Finalists names and book titles will be posted to the chapter website.
- Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony at the Death by Chocolate Party held annually during the RWA National Conference, unless otherwise announced by the Contest Committee.
- All finalists will receive a certificate and a digital medallion stating Finalist or First Place (as appropriate) and a voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The first place entry in each category will also receive an engraved bookmark, and an additional voucher for one COFFIN online class.
- The top overall scoring entry will also receive a plaque and a third voucher for a COFFIN class.

**If you have questions, please contact the Daphne du Maurier Contest Chair at:**  
**[kodcontest@gmail.com](mailto:kodcontest@gmail.com)**