

SAMPLE SCORE SHEET

RWA® Mystery/Suspense Chapter presents
The Daphne du Maurier Award FOR EXCELLENCE IN MYSTERY/SUSPENSE
UNPUBLISHED DIVISION 2022
MAINSTREAM MYSTERY/SUSPENSE
SAMPLE SCORE SHEET

SCORING (100 points max.)

5 = excellent

4 = good

3 = average

2 = fair

1 = poor

Important: Please comment extensively. This is a contest for unpublished authors and entrants need your comments to improve their writing process. Contests are an excellent place to get feedback from other authors. All comments must be professional and encouraging. For any question scored 3 or less, judges are particularly encouraged to include an explanation.

Any concerns to share with the contest committee? Please let us know if this book is entered in the wrong category, contains language or situations that are culturally or racially offensive, or is otherwise problematic.

Space for comments (not required to have a response)

OPENING

___ Opening hook: is it a real attention grabber?

___ Opening pages: does the author reveal the right amount of information to compel you to read on?

Space for comments

STORY

___ Is the story original and well-executed?

___ Is the pacing appropriate to the category?

___ Does the conflict arise naturally from the situation (is not forced)?

___ Does the author effectively create a suspenseful atmosphere throughout?

Space for comments

CHARACTERIZATION

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- ___ Are the characters skillfully developed?
- ___ Are the characters' back stories shared in an effective and meaningful way?
- ___ Do the internal and external conflicts the characters face drive the story forward to a satisfying conclusion?

Space for comments

SETTING

- ___ Does the setting give a sense of time and place and set the mood of the story?
- ___ Is the setting interwoven into the plot and does it enhance the story rather than pull the reader from it?
- ___ Are the details significant to the story? Do they move the plot along?

Space for comments

STYLE/VOICE

- ___ Is the writing vivid and evocative? Does it have a certain spark that keeps you reading?
- ___ Are sentence structure and length varied?
- ___ Is the entry free of typos and errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?

Space for comments

DIALOGUE/NARRATIVE

- ___ Is there a good balance between dialogue and narrative?
- ___ Does the dialogue ring true (normal and conversational, not too stiff and unnatural)?

Space for comments

CATEGORY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS – MAINSTREAM MYSTERY/SUSPENSE

- ___ Is there an atmosphere of suspense and/or curiosity about the central puzzle/conflict that creates a desire to read further?
- ___ Is there sufficient concern for the protagonist(s) as they investigate and attempt to find a resolution?
- ___ Are there sufficient twists and turns, red herrings and real clues to keep the reader guessing?

Space for comments

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Please mark ONE statement that best describes this particular entry. This question will only be used as a tie-breaker.

- 5. An excellent book: one of the best I've read lately
- 4. A wonderful read
- 3. Well done
- 2. Some good moments
- 1. A struggle to complete the reading

Additional comments for the author:

Optional: Judge's Name