

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UNPUBLISHED DIVISION

CONTEST RULES

**Eligibility:**

The Contest is open to any writer who has never been contracted in book-length fiction (40,000 words or more) from any publisher. There is no limit to the number of entries per author or per category, but each entry may be entered in **ONLY ONE** category. Any manuscript that has previously finished in the Daphne (including honorable mentions) is not eligible for entry. Membership in Romance Writers of America® and/or MRSRWA (KOD) is not a requirement for entry.

**Deadline:**

Entries must be received **ELECTRONICALLY NO LATER** than March 15, 2012. Early entries will be held until all entries are received. **An ELECTRONIC ENTRY** received after March 15, 2012 will not be sent to the first-round judges.

**Important qualifier:** The Daphne has four judges per unpublished entry. In order to give the entrant the most for his/her entry dollar and not overwhelm our judges, the Daphne will adhere to the following entry caps:

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

**Categories:**

- Category (series) romantic mystery/suspense: any manuscript that fits into series romance as published by Harlequin, Silhouette, etc.
- Historical romantic mystery/suspense: any manuscript set in a time that predates 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: **may or may not contain elements of romance.**
- Paranormal/time travel/futuristic romantic mystery/suspense: any paranormal manuscript with elements of romance.
- Single Title romantic mystery/suspense: any manuscript where the romance is the main plot but which contains elements of mystery/suspense.

### **DEFINITIONS THAT MAY HELP CONTESTANT DETERMINE WHERE ENTRY FITS:**

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. 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 Overall Contest Coordinator [DaphneContest@gmail.com](mailto:DaphneContest@gmail.com).

### **Attention Young Adult Mystery Writers:**

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.

### **HOW TO ENTER:**

- Submit one (1) Electronic Entry of no more than the **FIRST 5,000 words** of your manuscript & one (1) Electronic Synopsis in the **same** document with no more than **675 words**. (It is strongly recommended your entry end on a hook.)

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

One inch margins

12 pt. or larger Courier or 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 Chicklit Mystery, Mainstream Young Adult Mystery, etc.

**CONTESTANT'S NAME MAY NOT APPEAR ON THE ENTRY. ANY ENTRY WITH THE CONTESTANT'S NAME WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.**

### **To Remove your name from properties:**

In Word '07: File, go to Prepare, go to Properties, go to Summary

In Word '03: File, go to Properties, go to Summary

Entries will be received in **RTF** (Rich Text Format) files **ONLY**. (To convert your file to RTF, open the document, go into File, click on Save As and choose RTF format. This will create a new document with the same title in RTF format.)

Document title should be the **title** of the manuscript **only**.

**Combine all manuscript pages and synopsis in one file.** Paste synopsis before the beginning of the manuscript pages. All pages should be in standard manuscript format.

- 1) Entry Form will be filled in at time of submission.
- 2) 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)**)
- 3) 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 be sent a confirmation email with the entry number. **If there are multiple authors of an entry, the second author must fill in an entry form and reference the entry number.**

Enter as many times as you wish, but a separate payment and entry form must be

received for each entry. **Entries without completed entry form and payment will not be judged.**

**PAYMENT:**

Entry Fee: \$15 KOD Members; \$30 all others. Payment may be submitted using Paypal, Personal check on US bank, or Money Order in US funds. Payment must reference entry number. **Checks & Money Orders must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2012, made payable to MRSRWA and sent to:**

**KOD/Daphne Overall Coordinator  
c/o The Willbrook Co.  
P. O. Box 1983  
Fallbrook, CA 92088**

**JUDGING:**

- Each entry will have four first-round judges; the lowest score will be dropped to eliminate discrepancy judging.
- All four entries and scoresheets will be returned to the entrants.
- The top qualifying five finalists (or more in case of a tie) must receive a score totaling at least 92 points (75% of 123 points) to advance to the final round.

**Final Round: FINALISTS** must submit in **ELECTRONIC COPY TO THEIR DESIGNATED COORDINATOR** within three (3) days of notification:

One (1) copy of a synopsis totaling no more than two (2) double-spaced pages.

One (1) manuscript portion totaling no more than the first twenty-five (25) pages **MAXIMUM. FOR A TOTAL OF NO MORE THAN 27 PAGES FOR MANUSCRIPT AND SYNOPSIS.**

***Finalists failing to meet this deadline will be disqualified from the final round and are eligible for Honorable Mention only.***

Final Round Judges have agreed to judge on the first fifteen pages (15 pages) of the entry. The additional ten pages are for final round judges who wish to continue reading.

**Final Round Slate Judges for 2012:**  
*Categories & Final Round Judges*

**CATEGORY (SERIES)**

Editor: Dana Hamilton, HQN Intrigue

Agent: Jill Marsal, Marsal Lyon Literary Agency

### **HISTORICAL**

Editor: Megan Records, Kensington Publishing

Agent: Laura Bradford, Bradford Literary Agency

### **INSPIRATIONAL**

Editor: Emily Rodmell, HQN Love Inspired

Agent: Linda Glaz, Hartline Literary

### **MAINSTREAM**

Editor: Alex Logan, Grand Central Publishing

Agent: Josh Getzler, Hannigan Salky Getzler Agency

### **PARANORMAL**

Editor: Michelle Vega, Berkley Books

Agent: Amy Boggs, Donald Maass Literary Agency

### **SINGLE TITLE**

Editor: Kristin Sevick, Tor/Forge Books

Agent: Christina Hoglebe, Jane Rotrosen Agency

### **Announcement of Winners:**

Winners will be announced at the RWA® National Conference in Anaheim in 2012.

- The first place entry in each category will receive an engraved bookmark, a cash prize of \$25 and a certificate for one COFFIN online class.
- The second place entry will be awarded a certificate, a cash prize of \$15 and a certificate for one COFFIN online class.
- The third place entry will be awarded a certificate, a cash prize of \$10 and a certificate for one COFFIN online class
- The remaining Honorable Mentions will receive certificates

The top overall scoring entry will receive the:

***Daphne du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense.***  
**Results will be published in the Romance Writers Report *RWR*®.**

*The name “Daphne du Maurier” is used with permission of the du Maurier estate.*

**Questions: Please contact the [Overall Contest Coordinator](mailto:DaphneContest@gmail.com) at [DaphneContest@gmail.com](mailto:DaphneContest@gmail.com)**