

Mid-Michigan RWA

2009

“Happily Ever After”

Last Chapter Contest Guidelines

It takes more than a great beginning...

Please direct questions to the Contest Coordinator at: contest@midmichiganrwa.org

Purpose:

To challenge and inspire authors of romance and to garner feedback on that all-important last chapter and “HEA” before submitting their work to an editor or agent.

Eligibility:

This contest is open to all unpublished authors of novel length romantic fiction (40K and over) and to published authors of novel length romantic fiction in genres (categories) in which they are currently unpublished or have not had a new novel released for at least three (3) years. You may enter more than one manuscript in a category, but may enter only one category with each manuscript.

Entry Fees:

The entry fee for Mid-Michigan RWA members is \$20 per submission. For all other RWA® members the entry fee is \$25 per submission and for non-RWA® members the fee is \$30 per submission.

Categories & Final Round Judges:

Both an editor and an agent will judge each category. The partial list of judges is shown below and will be updated on our website as we fill the remaining judges’ slots.

Short/Long Contemporary Series – Johanna Raisanen, Harlequin & Melissa Jeglinski, Knight Literary Agency.

Single Title/Mainstream with Romantic Elements (young adult, women’s fiction, etc.) – Holly Root, Waxman Literary Agency

Romantic Suspense – Miriam Kriss, Irene Goodman Literary Agency

Historical – Victoria Horn, Liza Dawson Associates Literary Agency

Paranormal (shape shifters, fantasy, sci-fi, time travel, etc.) – Chris Keeslar, Dorchester Publishing

Inspirational – Emily Rodmell, Steeple Hill Love Inspired

Erotica/Sensual Romance – Hilary Sares, Kensington Publishing & Laura Bradford, Bradford Literary Agency

Contest Rules & Guidelines:

The Happily Ever After Contest is a last chapter contest. Enter the last chapter (and epilogue, if applicable) up to twenty-seven pages of your manuscript, and a 1 to 3 page judged synopsis of the entire novel, for a maximum of thirty pages. The entry must include the final scene in its entirety. The same manuscript may not be entered in more than one category. Choose the category that best fits your manuscript. **All entries must be uncontracted at the time of the contest entry Postmark/E-Deadline of Saturday, November 1, 2008.**

The entry must be presented in proper standard manuscript format (double-spaced, approximately 1" margins, size 12 font Courier New or Times New Roman). Hard-to-read fonts will be disqualified. The synopsis should have the same margins and font as the chapter but may be single spaced.

The header on the manuscript and synopsis should contain the title and category in the upper left corner and the page number in the right corner. For a combined category, such as Paranormal/Fantasy/Sci-Fi/Time Travel, please specify in which of the sub-genres your entry fits (Time Travel, for example), rather than listing all sub-genres in the category. You may also include your targeted house or line, if desired. The name of the author shall not appear in the header or anywhere else on the manuscript or synopsis or the entry will be disqualified.

You may download the HEA contest entry form from our website, <http://www.midmichiganrwa.org/contest.html>.

Submissions:

For entrants within the Continental United States (paper submissions by mail):

A completely filled in and signed entry form must be submitted per manuscript entered. Submit four (4) copies of each manuscript entered and a check or money order made out to MMRWA. (You may write one check or money order for multiple entries in the same category.) Include one flat rate, pre-stamped—**not metered**—Tyvek envelope (your SASE, available at no charge from the U.S. Postal Service) for the return of each of your entries after judging. Contact the appropriate category coordinator (noted below and on the contest entry form) to learn where to send your entry package and mail it by November 1, 2008. Entrants from the U.S. may choose either paper or electronic submission format.

For entrants outside the Continental United States (electronic submissions):

Entries from outside the Continental U.S. may not be submitted in hard copy format. A completely filled in entry form, along with your entry, must be submitted in electronic format via email to the electronic entry coordinator (noted below and on the contest entry form). Payment for your entry should be made using PayPal. Entries and score sheets will be returned in electronic format. Via email, submit one (1) completed electronic entry form per manuscript entered and one (1) electronic copy of each manuscript entered to contest-electronic@midmichiganrwa.org. In the subject line of your email, note the category you are entering. Upon receipt of your entry, you will be instructed to send your payment via PayPal to MMRWA's treasurer.

Category Coordinators:**Short/Long Contemporary Series:**

Email: contest-series@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Lisa Childs

Romantic Suspense:

Email: contest-suspense@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Wil Emerson

Single Title/Mainstream with RE:

Email: contest-singletitle@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Maris Soule

Historical:

Email: contest-historical@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Catherine McClain

Inspirational:

Email: contest-inspirational@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Lila Chandler

Paranormal:

Email: contest-paranormal@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Ami Weaver

Erotica/Sensual Romance:

Email: contest-romantica@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Dawn Bartley

Electronic Entries:

Email: contest-electronic@midmichiganrwa.org
Attn: Catherine McClain

Entry Deadline:

All entries and payments must be postmarked or submitted electronically by November 1, 2008. Any entries sent after that date will be returned. Finalists will be contacted on or around January 24, 2008. Finalist placements as determined by the judging agents and editors will be announced at the MMRWA 2009 Retreat From Harsh Reality.

Note: If the rules and guidelines listed above are not followed, the entry may be disqualified and the entry fee may not be refunded. Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America reserves the right to return all entries and fees if the minimum entry number of five (5) for each category is not received. Entrants will have the option to place their entries in another category or to have them returned.

Judging:

First Round: The first round will be judged by experienced and trained judges, each entry receiving three (3) judges with at least one (1) being a published author. A fourth judge will be used in the event a discrepancy score is determined to be necessary. The top three (3) entries in each category will advance to the final round.

Final Round: The finalists in each category will be ranked by an agent and editor. The agents and editors will be encouraged to answer four questions to help the authors improve their manuscripts.

You may download a sample Happily Ever After Contest score sheet from our website: <http://www.midmichiganrwa.org/contest.html>.

Awards:

All finalists will receive a certificate representing their placement. In addition, the first place winner in each category will receive a lovely heart pendant made from the Petoskey stone, which is unique to Michigan.

For more information, or to receive the contest forms in hard copy, please contact Contest Coordinator Catherine McClain at: contest@midmichiganrwa.org.