

Indiana Romance Writers of America, Inc.

“INDIANA’S GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY” CONTEST

CONTEMPORARY SERIES SCORE SHEET

ENTRY CODE:		JUDGE:	
TITLE OF ENTRY:			

CATEGORY:	TARGET PUBLISHERS:
<i>Contemporary</i>	
WORD COUNT:	

YOUR SCORE

/250

Point System for Scoring

- 5 = Outstanding - ready for an editor**
- 4 = Very few flaws, needs only minor tune-up**
- 3 = Average**
- 2 = Many problems/errors**
- 1 = Major problems**

PROFESSIONAL IMPACT: (Possible Score: 15 points) []

- [] 1. Is the entry presented professionally?
- [] 2. Does the entry follow required format of this contest?
- [] 3. Are the grammar, spelling, and punctuation correct?

WRITING MECHANICS: (Possible Score: 40 points) []

- [] 4. Is the first chapter compelling? Is there an intriguing hook? Does it make you want to continue reading?
- [] 5. Does the author use the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste) appropriately to create a vivid experience?
- [] 6. Does the author show rather than tell? Is the writing active and not passive? If passivity is used, is it appropriate for the scene and unobtrusive?
- [] 7. Is the writing style clear and distinct with appropriate use of adjectives/adverbs?
- [] 8. Is exposition presented in a believable and well-balanced manner?
- [] 9. Do the scenes flow smoothly? Is the manuscript well paced?
- [] 10. Is the story told in a fresh, clear, and focused manner, without irrelevant digressions?
- [] 11. Does the author present the work in a distinct style/voice?

TOTAL POINTS ON THIS PAGE: []

READER'S INITIAL REACTION: (Possible Score: 15 points) []

- [] 12. Does the book open at the right place, and does the opening reveal something important and/or hint at the story conflict?
- [] 13. Are the central character(s) introduced at an appropriate moment? Is this first appearance believable and intriguing?
- [] 14. Are the opening situation and introduction of characters presented in a clear manner, without unnecessary confusion? If some information is withheld for suspense, is it done effectively?

HEROINE: (Possible Score: 20 points) []

- [] 15. Does the heroine have plausible personality traits and values, and exhibit a range of believable emotions?
- [] 16. Is the heroine an active character? Do her actions affect the course of the plot?
- [] 17. Can you identify with the heroine, even if she isn't initially sympathetic?
- [] 18. Does she interact realistically with other characters?

HERO: (Possible Score: 20 points) []

- [] 19. Does the hero have plausible personality traits and values, and exhibit a range of believable emotions?
- [] 20. Is the hero an active character? Do his actions affect the course of the plot?
- [] 21. Can you identify with the hero, even if he isn't initially sympathetic?
- [] 22. Does he interact realistically with other characters?

CONFLICT AND MOTIVATION: (Possible Score: 20 points) []

- [] 23. Do the motivations of the character(s) create genuine conflict, not contrived or forced?
- [] 24. Is the conflict (or conflicts - internal/external) strong enough to carry a story of this type and length?
- [] 25. Does the romantic conflict challenge the hero and heroine to grow into love?
- [] 26. Do you see conflict rising in an effective way as the story goes on?

PLOT: (Possible Score: 15 points) []

- [] 27. Are the major story questions or plot problems established in the early chapters? Can you tell what the major plotlines are going to be?
- [] 28. Are the story events believable even if they are extreme in some way? Is the plot free of logic lapses?
- [] 29. Does the plot promise to develop as a comprehensive whole, not just a series of episodes without much linkage?

SETTING: (Possible Score: 10 points) []

- [] 30. Is there a believable world of the story, a setting created with richness and texture?
- [] 31. Does the presentation of the setting add depth and/or conflict to the story?

TOTAL POINTS ON THIS PAGE: []

POINT OF VIEW: (Possible Score: 15 points) []

- [] 32. Is the Point of View approach effective and appropriate for this plot and this type of book?
- [] 33. Does POV create empathy and understanding of the character(s) and a good vicarious experience for the reader?
- [] 34. Do the choices of particular POV characters (rather than another character's POV) for each passage or scene enhance the story, such as by creating suspense, giving a unique perspective on an event, or increasing the level of emotion?

DIALOGUE: (Possible Score: 30 points) []

- [] 35. Do the characters sound like real people? Are character voices consistent with their age, education, gender, ethnicity, etc.? Is the dialogue appropriate for the time and place of the story?
- [] 36. Does each character have a distinct voice without too frequently resorting to misspelled words and other annoyances?
- [] 37. Is the exposition (information transfer) in dialogue natural to the speaker and situation?
- [] 38. Do the dialogue passages effectively use paragraph length, word choice, placement and type of quote tags, punctuation, vocal idiosyncrasies (like sentence fragments, etc), action, and introspection to create a conversational experience both inside and outside the quotation marks?
- [] 39. Does the dialogue move the story forward and cause plot change?
- [] 40. Do the conversations between characters reveal and change their relationship?

SYNOPSIS: (Possible Score: 50 points) []

- [] 41. Is the synopsis presented in an acceptable format and does it clearly define the period, situation, and locale of the story?
- [] 42. Does the synopsis present a plot of a complexity and length suitable for this type of novel?
- [] 43. Does the synopsis tell the story in a clear chronological fashion, with the cause-and-effect dynamic of events identified?
- [] 44. Does the synopsis clearly show the actions of the major characters and how they affect the plot?
- [] 45. Does the synopsis answer all the questions the reader might have about the plot?
- [] 46. Does the synopsis describe the conflicts and show how they rise in tension and resolve in the end? Does the ending answer the story questions?
- [] 47. Is there a presentation of the emotional cause and effect of story events?
- [] 48. Are the characters, their motivations, and their conflicts clearly defined in the synopsis?
- [] 49. Do transitions between events effectively link one event to another and promote the smoothness of the reading experience and the coherence of the plot?
- [] 50. Does the synopsis make you want to read the rest of the book?

TOTAL POINTS ON THIS PAGE []

In the event of a tie score, the entry with the highest score in "Synopsis" will be declared the winner. If both entries have a tie score in this category, the entry with the highest score in "Mechanics" will be declared the winner.

Judge's Comments

(A separate page may be used for additional comments)

What I liked about this entry:

Areas that, in my opinion, need more work:

If I were judging this entry in the Golden Heart, I would give it a
(based on a scale of 1 – 9, with 9 being highest)

[]

Judge's Name (optional): _____

Not Published: _____

Published: _____

Romance: _____ Other: _____