

TOUCH OF MAGIC 2010
Novel with Strong Romantic Elements Scoresheet

Use these criteria for scoring NSRE entries. Each criterion is worth 5 points.

Entries in this category do not easily fit into other categories (which have been reworked to include romance as an element—ie paranormal with strong romantic elements should be entered in the paranormal category, not NSRE). This category contains those stories which are sometimes called “women’s fiction” or similar mainstream novels for which another appropriate category in this contest does not exist.

Assign points as follows:

5 – ready for publishing!

4 – minor tweaking is all that’s needed here

3 – this area isn’t bad, but it does need some improvement before submitting

2 – needs extensive reworking

1 – needs better understanding of basic concepts in this area, then extensive reworking

Our goal is to give the author *useful feedback* that she or he can use enroute to successfully publishing the work. Please comment on all areas to the extent possible. Comments are required for any score of 1 – 3, and highly recommended for any score of 4.

Entry title:

Entry#	Judge#
1. Setting (10 points)	
Criterion	Score 1-5
Author created a plausible world through setting, with a clear sense of time and place.	
Author used all five senses to put me in the world of the book.	
Total points for Setting	
Comments:	
2. Characters (35 points)	
Hero (romantic interest) is likable or intriguing.	

Hero is fully developed. Not just a two-dimensional on-paper character, but author gives us a good sense of his motivation, goals and conflicts from the beginning of the story (or alludes to them sufficiently to be intriguing rather than leaving the reader missing something). Interesting characteristics bring him to life.	
Hero is realistic. His actions/reactions are realistic, his dialogue gives us a sense of his character, and sets him apart from the other characters.	
Heroine is likable, or at least intriguing (if she has less-than-likable characteristics), or otherwise meets expectations of a heroine in a novel with strong romantic elements.	
Heroine is fully developed. Not just a two-dimensional on-paper character, but author gives us a good sense of her motivation, goals and conflicts from the beginning of the story (or alludes to them sufficiently to be intriguing rather than leaving the reader missing something). Interesting characteristics help bring her to life.	
Heroine is realistic. Her actions/reactions are realistic, her dialogue gives us a sense of her character, and sets her apart from the other characters.	
Secondary characters are well-developed and distinctive, without overshadowing hero/heroine. If no secondary characters are present, they are not missed.	
Total points for Characters	
Comments:	
4. Dialogue (10 points)	
Dialogue is used effectively to further the plot and is appropriate to the setting.	
Dialogue tags are used appropriately and dialogue is easily attributable.	
Total points for Dialogue	
Comments:	
5. Pacing (10 points)	
Pacing is appropriate for the genre. There is appropriate balance between dialogue and narrative, and the action is suited to the genre.	
Backstory and other explanatory prose is layered in appropriately.	
Total points for Pacing	

Comments:	
6. Plot/Conflict (30 points)	
Author reveals an intriguing plot that is appropriate for the genre.	
Plot is fresh, or author's voice is distinctive and brings a fresh perspective.	
Plot complexity is appropriate for the genre.	
The type and degree of conflict are appropriate to the genre.	
Both external and internal conflict are present or alluded to.	
Romantic elements are present, or if hero/heroine haven't met, the romantic element is easily anticipated in the opening pages (ie set up so it's clear they'll meet, have conflict, etc).	
Total points for Plot/Conflict	
Comments:	
7. Point of View (10 points)	
Point of view is clear and effective. Author's voice does not intrude.	
Point of view switches are smooth and appropriate.	
Total points for Point of View	
Comments:	
8. Mechanics (30 points)	
Manuscript is professionally formatted. (do not take off points for odd page breaks caused by electronic transmission) Appropriate (readable) font is used in a standard type size, with standard margins. Author ended entry at an appropriate break (that is, not in the middle of a sentence).	
Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are correct.	
Sentence fragments, if any, are used effectively.	
Author's word usage is appropriate to the setting and style of the story.	
'Showing' outweighs 'telling'.	
Active verbs balance passive verbs as appropriate to the story and genre.	
Total points for Mechanics	

Comments:		
9. Voice and other intangibles (10 points)		
Author's voice shines through and lends itself well to the genre.		
The opening pages are intriguing, drawing me in and making me want to read more of the story.		
Total points for Voice		
Comments:		
Total Score (150 possible)		
Other comments:		
Judge's info:		
Published, romance		
Published, other		
Un-published		