

TOUCH OF MAGIC 2010
Erotic Romance Novella Scoresheet

Use these criteria for scoring erotic romance novellas. Each criterion is worth 5 points, except in the 'sensual details' section, where each score doubles (ie a 5 becomes a 10, a 2 becomes a 4).

For the purposes of TOM, erotic romance is defined as a novella (20,000-40,000 words) in which the primary element is the romance, but the plot of which is driven through the exploration of the sexual relationship. As a romance, the story should be headed for an HEA. As an erotic romance, the sexual tension should be omnipresent, and explicit language in describing physical acts and appearance is considered the norm. Specific rules do apply to TOM entries in this category, as follows: all characters must be depicted as 18 or older, regardless of the norms of the depicted culture or time period. No depictions of nonconsensual sex, bestiality (shapeshifters must be in human or just-shifting form), no necrophilia or other 'philiias' or bodily functions that a reader might find distasteful, or other acts outside generally accepted publishing standards. See contest guidelines for the specific prohibited elements.

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 story.	
Total points for Setting	

Comments:	
2. Characters (25 points)	
Hero is likable or intriguing.	
Hero is fully developed and 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 the plot of an erotic romance.	
Heroine is fully developed. Her actions/reactions are realistic, her dialogue gives us a sense of her character, and sets her apart from the other characters.	
There is clear chemistry between hero/heroine.	
Total points for Characters	
Comments:	
4. Dialogue (10 points)	
Dialogue is used effectively to further the plot, enhance the sexual tension and erotic elements, 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 an erotic romance. There is appropriate balance between dialogue and narrative.	
Backstory and other explanatory prose is layered in appropriately.	
Total points for Pacing	
Comments:	

6. Plot/Conflict (25 points)	
Author reveals an intriguing plot that is appropriate for an erotic romance of this length.	
Plot is fresh, or author's voice is distinctive and brings a fresh perspective.	
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—story arc is more than a recitation of sex acts.	
There is clear romantic conflict and tension.	
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. POV switches are smooth and appropriate.	
Observations are appropriate to POV character (ie hero isn't over-focused on the details a man would be unlikely to notice).	
Total points for Point of View	
Comments:	
8. Mechanics (25 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 erotic romance genre and adds to the story/setting.	
'Showing' outweighs 'telling'.	
Total points for Mechanics	
Comments:	

9. Voice and other intangibles (10 points)	
Author's voice shines through and lends itself well to the contemporary genre.	
The opening pages are intriguing, drawing me in and making me want to read more of the story.	
Total points for Voice	
Comments:	
10. Sensual details (20 points-each criterion is worth 10 points)	
Sexual tension is present and realistic. The attraction between the hero/heroine jumps off the page.	
Sensual and sexual details are layered in to create a sexy, HOT, story that steams up the monitor and makes you forget you're reading.	
Total Score (150 possible)	
Other comments:	
Judge's info:	
Published, romance	Published, erotic romance
Published, other	
Un-published	