

EROTIC NOVELS

Definition: This category includes novels that contain a high level of sexual content, especially stories about erotic sexual interaction. The sex must be such an inherent part of the plot, setting, narrative, characterization, etc., that it could not be removed without damaging the storyline. Entries must have a minimum of 40,000 words to qualify for judging.

Judging Guideline: In this category, sexual interactions are central to the work, though stories may contain elements of other genres (romance, paranormal, historical, etc.). Sexual relationships must be a driving force, with intensely erotic scenes that flow naturally from the overall story or premise. For GCLS purposes, all physical and/or sexual encounters in erotic novels must reflect mutual consent. These novels must include significant themes, characters, situations, or other content about women or sapphically aligned nonbinary people who are romantically and/or sexually attracted to women or sapphically aligned nonbinary people.

Evaluation Items:

1. Thinking back on the GOLDIE entry you are about to judge, what were your overall impressions, positive and/or negative?

Using a 10-point scale where “1” means you “Totally Disagree” and “10” means you “Totally Agree,” please indicate how much you disagree or agree that each of the following statements describes this GOLDIE entry.

2. The opening of this novel draws readers into the story and makes them want to read further.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3. The premise of this novel does not depend too heavily on implausible coincidence or far-fetched circumstances that are inappropriate for this type of book.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

4. This novel has enough conflict—that is, obstacles standing in the way of characters achieving their goals—to keep readers interested.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

5. The plot of this novel is free of holes and logical inconsistencies—dropped story lines, puzzling disappearance of characters, underdeveloped or contrived story elements, actions leading to illogical consequences, etc.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. This novel is appropriately paced. The story moves along smoothly without being too spare, rushed, saggy, bloated, or cluttered with unnecessary detail.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7. By the end of the novel, the author(s) has reasonably resolved all important plots, subplots, and character conflicts other than those clearly intended to remain unresolved.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. This novel features compelling, three-dimensional main characters with credible strengths and flaws.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Secondary and/or minor characters are appropriately developed and do not detract from the main characters or plot.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

10. The characters in this novel are portrayed in a believable way—dialogue is reflective of age and social class, actions are consistent with personalities, career levels are age-appropriate, backstories help deepen reader understanding, etc.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

11. This novel has engaging, natural-sounding dialogue that brings the characters to life.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

12. This novel is written in an engaging style. The story flows smoothly, with a sufficient variety of sentence structure and length; the language is fresh, vivid, and original; word choices are effective and fit the style, tone, and mood of the novel; etc.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

13. This novel is virtually free of factual errors, incorrect spelling, poor punctuation and grammar, unnecessary repetition, paragraph structures that don't make sense, and confusing or missing dialogue tags that make it difficult to know who is speaking.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. The novel does not jump unnecessarily from the "head" of one character to another within a given scene or describe things a given character can't possibly know, see, hear, or feel. Point-of-view transitions within a scene, if any, are clearly signaled to the reader.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

15. This novel has an effective balance between "showing" what happens (via actions, dialogue, and/or vivid details from a given character's point of view) and "telling" what happens (via explanations and summary).

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

16. This novel has a distinct sense of time and place that skillfully captures the mood, tone, and setting of the story.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. This novel has elements (stories, characters, themes, settings, evocative writing, a distinct voice, enjoyable confusion, etc.) that will linger in the reader's mind long after the book is finished.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

18. This novel includes significant themes, characters, situations, and/or other content about women who are attracted to women or sapphic individuals.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

19. Characters of various races, classes, cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, etc. portrayed in this novel are presented in ways that avoid offensive stereotypes.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

20. The erotic scenes in this novel flow naturally from the overall story.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The plot of this erotic novel is appropriately developed within the context of its sex-centered story.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 21.** This novel employs imaginative, innovative, and/or unique ideas within the sex-centered boundaries of erotica.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 22.** This erotic novel is sufficiently provocative, alluring, and/or sexy to kick up the reader's heartbeat a few notches.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 23.** The dialogue in this erotic novel—particularly in sexual situations—naturally reflects the character who is speaking.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 24.** Clarity of spatial relationships is particularly important in sex scenes. Readers of this erotic novel are almost never confused about which characters are doing what to whom, where these sexual interactions are taking place, how they could have gotten themselves into the various positions described, etc.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- 25.** The author(s) skillfully negotiates the complex nuances of consent. This erotic novel is free of disturbing scenes, episodes, physical encounters, and other coercive scenarios of non-consensual sex.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

27. Readers will remember this book as a hot, sexy, and exciting erotic novel.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

28. This GOLDIE nominee is a splendid example of high-quality books in the **Erotic Novels** category.

Totally Disagree									Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

29. Please summarize your overall thoughts about this book. Constructive criticisms, if any, would be especially helpful. An edited version of your insights and those of other judges—absent any identification—may be shared with the author(s).