

## Writers Guidelines for Starchild Publishing

Starchild Publishing does accept unsolicited manuscripts. Projects we are not currently looking at are: story collections, anthologies (completed or proposed), poetry of any kind, screen plays and non-fiction books.

### Novels General Guidelines:

Starchild Publishing is focused on what we call highly sophisticated urban fiction. By this we mean stories about the inner city but written with the main protagonist as African American or Hispanics but with more skill as a writer.

1. Prefer lengths of 70,000 words minimum. We look for straight forward narrative fiction with an easy to follow plot and engaging characters that we can love or hate but appear to be real, rather than experimental formats or dreamy avant garde writing styles. Many urban publishing companies seek out controversial material that is too unusual for major trade publishers – we do not. We need much of the same kind of entertaining, readable fiction any trade publisher would want.
2. Best bets: we want mystery, true crime, action and suspense and urban thrillers that we can't put down. Write the story like you can see a movie being made about it and it will help when we seek out sub-rights for movie deals. If you are going to tell us a gangster drug dealing story, then make sure it is believable and rings true to those who really lived the life you are writing about.
3. In keeping with the genre, violence and body counts are expected. However, excessive violence is not necessary and takes away from the story. Use violence and the criminal element as a vehicle to move the story along. Think Donald Goines good writing but in today's language. We refuse to publish garbage.
4. Erotic content is welcomed, provided it is comparable to most mass market fiction. We do not need graphic words and verbal exploits. Give us a sex scene that guides the reader to imagine what is happening. Give genitalia other names than derogatory terms that may offend others. We do not mind cursing in dialogue but do not overdo it. Remember we are looking for sophistication and the entertainment value of a story.
5. We look for subplots in all stories. It can be romance, mystery. We love series novels that end with the reader waiting for part two of the story. This is how you develop a following. Your last chapter sells your next book. We want authors who will also get behind their books in promoting and marketing their books and we will work with you to do so.
6. Absolutely NO futuristic settings, sword and sorcery, dark fantasy or straight romance. There must either be a criminal element or some conflict and suspense to hold the reader's attention; plain and simple good story telling.

Rights, Payment and Contract Highlights:

- I. We purchase English language trade PB rights for primary distribution in North America and Canada. (incidental book sales overseas may occur).  
Work is copyrighted in the author's name
- II. Any other format-audio, HC, rack size pb, internet are not included and would require a separate contract and payment if pursued.
- III. Revenue from subsidiary rights sales (e.g. foreign markets, book club editions, film or teleplay option, etc) is split on a 50% author/50% publisher basis.
- IV. An agreed amount advanced against royalties. Advance is paid in three installments: 1/3 on contract signing, 1/3 on delivery of revised and approved manuscripts, 1/3 on publication or makes an outright buy. Each installment paid within 10 business days.
- V. Royalties: 10% - 15% of the invoiced price of books sold. We sell books exclusively to normal book channels – independent and chain bookstores, on-line bookstores, catalogs, direct mail booksellers. All books are therefore sold at wholesale prices, typically 50% off cover price when sold directly to book sellers: 55% to 60% off cover when sold through wholesale distributors and our distribution networks. No overhead, marketing, shipping or other administrative costs are deducted from the invoice price for calculating royalties. Returns are deducted from royalties owed. 10% royalties may be withheld against returns.
- VI. Author receives 5 complimentary copies of their own book and a discount on all books sold by SP. Authors may purchase additional books at the prevailing trade discount rate typically 50% off retail.
- VII. All rights revert to the author if the book is out of print and no longer actively for sale.
- VIII. Please note: our contract includes an Author's warranty & indemnification clause in which the author warrants that the work is original, free of plagiarism or libelous/injurious content and that the author has an unencumbered right of proprietorship to the work. The author FULLY indemnifies the publisher in the event of claim or suit regarding the work (its CONTENT not packaging, distribution, marketing etc, of course).
- IX. What to submit: We prefer to see the entire manuscript to be able to determine exactly what the story is about and a cover letter. We are not interested in why you think the story is good or what the underlying meaning is. Just tell us a good story.
- X. No handwritten manuscripts. Manuscripts must be typed double space on regular 8 1/2 x 11 paper, clean copy and numbered.
- XI. Sorry, we don't accept email submissions. Send hard copy only. Please do not send disk.

- XII. Upon receipt of your manuscript, it will be cataloged and you will receive a letter of acknowledgement. Keep in mind that it will take us 3 to 6 months for manuscripts to be thoroughly reviewed. After your manuscript has been reviewed, you will hear from us.
- XIII. Please include a self addressed stamped envelope with appropriate postage, especially if your material is to be returned. We cannot be responsible for returning submissions without accompanying return postage.

Send submissions or other inquiries to:  
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