

CONTEST RULES

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.

1. **Eligibility and Entry Period.** Contest is open only to legal residents of the State of Iowa who are eighteen (18) years of age or older at the time of entry. Submissions for *This Time Next Year*, a short story contest, may be submitted through the Des Moines Public Library website beginning at 5am CDT on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, and ending at 12pm CDT on Friday, October 31, 2025. The submission portal may be accessed at dmpl.org/lv-contest. Submission of an entry constitutes permission to use the entrant's name, entry, and/or photograph, if chosen as a winner, for purposes of marketing and promotion by the Des Moines Public Library and *Little Village*, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees, officers, and immediate family members of the Des Moines Public Library or *Little Village* are not eligible to participate.
2. **Submission Requirements.** Each entrant must submit a new, original, self-contained work of short fiction based on the theme "Predictions for the Year Ahead." Submissions must be in .docx format and may not exceed 2,000 words in length. Use of generative artificial intelligence tools is strictly prohibited. Entries must be the sole work of the entrant.
3. **Judging Criteria.** All eligible entries will be judged according to the following criteria, each worth a maximum of ten (10) points:
 - **Writing Skill:** grammar, punctuation, syntax, voice, cadence, pacing
 - **Story:** emotional impact, originality, effectiveness of hook(s)
 - **Characters:** appeal, dimension, uniqueness
 - **World-Building:** consistency, interest, overall appeal
4. **Prizes.** Prizes will be awarded as follows:
 - **First Prize:** Publication in the January 2026 edition of *Little Village*; \$200 cash prize; and publication on the Des Moines Public Library Blog after the exclusivity period ends.
 - **Second Prize:** \$75 cash prize and publication on the Des Moines Public Library Blog after the exclusivity period ends.
 - **Third Prize:** Publication on the Des Moines Public Library Blog after the exclusivity period ends.

Winners will be notified by e-mail or phone. Prize delivery will be arranged by the Des Moines Public Library and/or *Little Village*. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitution or cash redemption of prizes is permitted, except that Sponsors reserve the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value at their sole discretion. Odds of winning depend upon the number of eligible entries received.

5. **General Conditions.** By participating, entrants agree to be bound by these Official Rules. By accepting a prize, winners release the Sponsors, and their respective directors, officers, employees, and agents, from any and all liability related to the prize. Contest is subject to all U.S. federal, Iowa state, and local laws and regulations. Taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners.
6. **Sponsors.** This contest is sponsored by the Des Moines Public Library, 1000 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, and *Little Village* Magazine, 623 S. Dubuque Street, Iowa City, Iowa.
7. **Winners List.** For a list of winners, available on or after December 15, 2025, send an e-mail request to the Sponsor at asgernes@dmpl.org.