

Indie Gold Awards Announces Winners of Crime Fiction Contest #2



Palm Springs, California Aug 11, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - The Indie Gold Awards today announced the winners of its second international competition recognizing outstanding independently published mystery, thriller, and suspense fiction. The awards celebrate both emerging and established authors whose work demonstrates exceptional storytelling, originality, and craftsmanship outside traditional publishing.

Grand Prize Winner

Taking the Grand Prize for Contest #2 is **Juliet Dillon Clark** for her suspense novel ***Farmhouse Forgotten***.

Beginning with the brutal murder of a young farm family and the disappearance of two children in California's Central Valley, *Farmhouse Forgotten* follows a decades-old mystery that refuses to stay buried. The judges praised the novel for its compelling characters, masterful pacing, emotional depth, and satisfying conclusion.

Juliet Dillon Clark is the author of five Lindsay and Boyd mystery novels, known for combining page-turning suspense with richly developed characters and memorable settings. She also hosts the **Promote, Profit, Publish** podcast, where she helps fellow authors navigate publishing and book marketing. She lives in Utah, where she enjoys golf, hiking, and dreaming up her next mystery.

"Indie writers are producing some of the most exciting work in crime fiction today," said James Dain, founder of the Indie Gold Awards. "In this year's competition we were seeing both returning authors and first-time entrants produce work of consistently high quality. Indie crime fiction continues to thrive, and we're delighted to recognize these talented writers through the Indie Gold Awards."

Ms. Clark also received a Gold Prize for a second submission, her novel *Dark Granny*.

Gold Prize Winners

The following authors received Gold Prizes in Contest #2:

- Kay Brooks — *Broken Image (Bennett Auction Series)*
- Scott Colley — *The Kisumu Affair*
- Juliet Dillon Clark — *Dark Granny*
- D.L. Grace — *Fighting Season*
- Lynda McDaniel — *Deep South Trouble*
- A.K. McCutcheon — *Cave Man*
- K.D. McLemore — *Lagniappe*
- Shenna Coty Paju — *Stolen By Order*
- Marshall Prescott — *Murder on Knollwood*
- Simon Rowe — *The Fly by Night Shop*

Silver Prize Winners

Silver Prizes were presented to:

- Kay Brooks — *Invincible*
- Sharon Calleja — *The Museum of Lost Things*
- Alex Charns — *Queer Justice*
- Troy Hunter — *Gus and the Burning Stones*
- Caroline Gilpin — *Closing Cases, Opening Hearts*
- D.L. Grace — *The Ghost of Grozny*
- Catherine Kramer — *Over the Wall*
- M.G. McLaughlin — *A Murder with Katrina in Mexico*
- A.K. McCutcheon — *The Blood Stone of Shiva*

- Artemis Taylor — *Strange Inheritance at River's Edge*

Bronze Prize Winners

Bronze Prizes were awarded to:

- J.K. Albers — *Baelor: The Cornelius Duet: Part One*
- Andrea Barton — *The Runaway Girl*
- Chad Boudreaux — *Mob Justice: A Scavenger Hunt Thriller*
- Katherine Burnette — *Examine Me*
- J.L. Calder — *Terminal Spiral*
- C.C. Ford — *Smoke and Mettle*
- Bill Garwin — *Chasing Madison*
- Harriet Joy — *Thrifty, Shifty & (Barely) Surviving*
- Joel Rakow — *Life in Woke America*
- Les Zig — *The Reckoning of Gordon Shumley*

Entries were evaluated by a distinguished panel of judges led by award-winning storytellers **Jason Cannon**, playwright and Amazon bestselling author, and **Joslyn Chase**, finalist for the Readers' Favorite International Book Award and author of the Riley Forte mystery series.

Contest #2 attracted submissions from authors around the world, including novels, novellas, and short stories spanning the full spectrum of mystery, thriller, and suspense fiction.

"Our goal has always been to provide indie authors with meaningful recognition they can proudly use in promoting their work," said Dain. "Every contest reminds us how much exceptional talent exists beyond traditional publishing, and we're honored to help bring these authors to the attention of new readers."

About the Indie Gold Awards

The Indie Gold Awards is an international awards program celebrating excellence in independent publishing.

Its inaugural division, **Indie Gold Crime**, recognizes outstanding independently published mystery, thriller, and suspense fiction while providing authors with meaningful promotional recognition they can use to build their readership and strengthen their author platform.

Founded by Amazon bestselling author **James Dain**, the Indie Gold Awards were created to celebrate exceptional independent authors and to help deserving books receive the recognition they have earned.

For more information, visit <https://www.indiegoldawards.com>

The awards are proudly sponsored by **Book Award Pro**, helping authors connect with thousands of awards, reviews, and story marketing opportunities, and by **Plottr**, story-planning software that helps writers visualize and plot books easily and effortlessly.

Contest #3 opens for submissions December 1, 2026.

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