

Name of Writer: *Lynnette Hopkins*

Title of Work: *Duchess of Tooting*

Reviewer *A*

**Checklist**



Fiction  
Feedback

**A. Quality of writing**

Does the narrative have drive? Does the author show rather than tell?

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4. \_\_      5.

1 = a major weakness; needs addressing

2 = some passages have promise

3 = there is evidence here and there of a storyteller at work

4 = good overall

5 = excellent

**B. Writing style**

a) Does the style suit the subject matter?

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

1 = style is at odds or is inconsistent throughout

2 = style is suitable and apparent here and there; needs development

3 = style is congruous and/or consistent; getting there

4 = style is a plus that's only occasionally let down

5 = excellent

b) Does it generate suitable reader emotion or tension?

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

1 = style is not working in harmony with the story

2 = at times the style works; needs development

3 = style is working quite well, on average

4 = style is a plus factor, just the occasional blip

5 = excellent

**C. Standard of English**

a) Spelling, grammar and punctuation

1. \_\_      2.       3. \_\_      4. \_\_      5. \_\_

- 1 = a major weakness; needs addressing
- 2 = needs work
- 3 = needs improvement, at least in one area, but getting there
- 4 = good, just the occasional blip
- 5 = excellent

**b) Sentence structure is conducive to understanding**

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

- 1 = a major weakness; needs addressing
- 2 = needs work
- 3 = needs improvement, but getting there
- 4 = good, just the occasional blip
- 5 = excellent

**D. Plot**

In which we discuss how the novel or story progresses; whether we are carried along by its sense of purpose

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4. \_\_      5.

- 1 = I still had no clear idea where this was leading me by its end
- 2 = plot eventually became more evident but it took too long to bite
- 3 = needs improvement, plot is weak in parts
- 4 = good, just the occasional slow section or apparent inconsistency
- 5 = the writing drove the story along and I felt carried along with it; excellent

Can we tell who this is aimed at, eg older children; romance-addicts, lovers of crime fiction, contemporary fiction readers?

- Yes       No \_\_      Unsure \_\_      Changed my mind several times \_\_

*Leave blank if the following is inappropriate*

Sometimes novels and stories can be confusing at the outset.

i) If this was the case here, did it hold my attention anyway throughout the extract?

- Yes \_\_      No \_\_      To some degree \_\_      Not perfectly, but has promise \_\_

ii) Was I less confused by the end?

- Yes \_\_      No \_\_      No, but I felt more comfortable with it \_\_

No, but it didn't matter, it was sufficiently compelling \_\_

**E. Story**

In which we discuss the scenario in which the characters find themselves, the vehicle for the writing.

NB Story is not a significant element in some fiction \_\_ This might be the case with yours

Was the story interesting and engaging?

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

1 = No, I'm sorry, I found it dull and uninteresting, or utterly confusing

2 = It meandered a lot, yet my interest was sparked here and there

3 = On the fence! Not particularly involving, yet not too dull or confusing either

4 = I found it engaging and interesting, at least for the most part

5 = Compelling reading; fascinating

## F. Characterisation

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

1 = a major weakness; main characters are one-dimensional or inconsistent

2 = needs work

3 = needs improvement, but overall a positive

4 = I came to know the characters and feel involved in their story

5 = strongly drawn characters that evoke interest and empathy

## G. Description

Do the descriptions help the reader visualise a scene, an action or a character? If expressed by a protagonist, do they also give an insight into their thoughts or personality?

1. \_\_      2. \_\_      3. \_\_      4.       5. \_\_

1 = descriptions are mainly hackneyed or bland, or they don't work

2 = descriptions are fair to average

3 = on the whole descriptions are good, or a few brilliant ones among others not so successful

4 = descriptions are mainly evocative

5 = descriptions are evocative and telling throughout

## H. Dialogue

Achieves what feels like the right balance between dialogue and prose.

Improvement needed       Average to good       Excellent

Is convincing, using normal speech patterns – or patterns the reader understands to be appropriate to the character speaking. Contractions such as *won't* and *can't* are used sensibly.

Improvement needed       Average to good       Excellent

Easily ascribed to character. There are no (or very few) ambiguities – you always know who's said what.

Improvement needed                       Average to good                       Excellent

Doesn't get repetitive, needlessly (and tediously) filling in premises or duplicating what's already been said and understood.

Improvement needed                       Average to good                       Excellent

Furtheres the plot and is used in the right places.

Improvement needed                       Average to good                       Excellent

Any accent or dialect is well treated so there is no interference with easy, ready comprehension. (Leave blank if this doesn't apply)

Improvement needed                       Average to good                       Excellent

Dialogue is pithy and sparkling – something to look forward to in this writer's work.

Improvement needed                       Average to good                       Excellent

## I. Beginning

*NB only applies where novelists have submitted their first chapters, or to the first page or two of a short story*

- I never got into it at all and wouldn't want to read on
- I didn't really feel I was into it much by the time the novel extract or short story finished
- It took a chapter or more, or quite a few pages of a short story, but I got there
- It took a few pages, or paragraphs of a short story, but soon I was hooked
- I was pulled straight into this

## J. Ending

*NB only applies to entire short stories, or where a novelist has submitted their final chapters*

- The ending didn't make sense to me
- I was left fairly unsatisfied by the ending
- The ending wasn't brilliant but it had its merits
- I felt the ending really justified the investment I'd made in reading
- The ending was very satisfying and left me thinking: wow, or: yes that's right.

### **K. Do I like it?**

- Sorry, not at all
- In parts
- Quite like it, or like some parts a lot
- Yes it's pretty much my thing, and attention-grabbing
- I think it's terrific and I'm dying to read more

### **L. Do I think it's publishable?**

- I'm afraid not. I think it would need major re-writing
- It's a long way off, but might have promise
- It could be publishable, with work
- With a bit of polishing I think it is
- It's of similar standard to published work I've read
- It's great and a publisher or agent would be mad to ignore it

*Thank you for submitting your work to Fiction Feedback. We hope you have found our review useful, and we wish you every success with your writing.*