

Straight Up

The Official Newsletter of Author Joe Konrath

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Third Issue

Welcome!

You're on this mailing list because you love books. I love them, too. This infrequent email newsletter (three times a year) is my way of reaching out to readers, librarians, bookstore employees, and fellow authors.

My name is Joe, and I'm a mystery writer. After many years of struggling to get into print, I landed a three-book, six-figure deal with a large publisher. My first novel is being released in hardcover this June, by Hyperion. It's called *Whiskey Sour*, and introduces Violent Crimes Lieutenant Jacqueline "Jack" Daniels of Chicago.

For more about me, and Jack, visit my homepage at www.JAKONRATH.com

Writing Contest

I want to help new writers, and the quickest way to connect with them is to hold a contest.

My previous contest ended February 29th. The first place winner was Noel Penaflor, for his story "Confessions of an Amateur Killer." Great story, Noel! Second place went to Dan Rogers, and third to Patrick Lambe. I received a lot of submissions, and many of them were excellent. Thanks to all who entered.

My new writing contest has already begun. The rules are simple:

- 1) Stories must be unpublished and less than 3500 words.
- 2) Stories must be in the mystery/thriller genre.
- 3) Stories must be typed, double-spaced, and sent to me in the body of an email (no attachments.)
- 4) All entries must be received by October 31, 2004, only one submission per person.

I'll personally read all the entries, and try to offer editing advice when I can. The winner will receive:

- A signed hardcover copy of *Whiskey Sour*.
- Their name as a character in my third book, *Rusty Nail*.
- My help in submitting their story to a

paying market. I'll assist the winner in writing a query letter, and lend my name and endorsement to their cause.

– \$50 in cold, impersonal cash.

Second and third place winners will also receive undisclosed prizes (undisclosed because I have to think of something to give.)

Bookstore and Library Contests

I love bookstores and libraries! Booksellers and librarians are some of the brightest and friendliest people on the planet (and I'm not just saying that because I worked in a bookstore for several years).

Because I intimately understand the importance of you folks, I'm holding two contests to show my appreciation for the work you're doing.

CONTEST #1

I want to know what you think of Whiskey Sour. If you are a bookstore owner or employee, or you work in a library, email me your thoughts about my novel. Here's how it will work:

Step 1: Order a copy of Whiskey Sour for your library or bookstore (ISBN 1-4013-0087-1)

Step 2: Email me at haknort@comcast.net, and let me know what you (or your patrons) think of the book, in three sentences or less.

Step 3: I'll post these critiques on a special page of my website.

Step 4: Website visitors will be able to vote on which bookstore and library critique they like the best.

Step 5: On Dec 31st, 2004, the bookstore entry and the library entry with the most votes will each have a supporting character named after them in my next novel, Rusty Nail.

CONTEST #2

I'll be touring the Midwest during the summer and fall of 2004, and would love to visit you! I'll be covering most of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, and will also be making a trip to New York, NY.

If you are a bookstore or a library in one of these states, contact me and I'll do my best to make an appearance.

The venue that draws the biggest crowd will have their store or library mentioned by name in Rusty Nail.

How to Get Published

Since signing my deal, I've had many pre-published authors contact me, asking how I did it. So many, in fact, that I decided to write a booklet detailing everything I know about breaking into print.

The booklet is called "How to Find an Agent and Sell Your Writing." It's 28 pages long, and filled with tips, tricks, and strategies you won't find in any other how-to book.

It's also available absolutely free as a download at www.jakonrath.com. Since putting the booklet on my website five months ago, over two thousand copies have been downloaded. I'd like to break the ten thousand mark by the end of the year, so feel free to spread the word.

Recent News

–I've teamed up with the wonderful folks at Brilliance Audio for a special treat. We've decided to include a cool extra on the unabridged audiobook release of *Whiskey Sour*. Along with the novel (read by the award-winning Dick Hill and Susie Breck), Brilliance will include an extra, stand-alone short story, featuring the serial killer villain from my novel. This story will be read by the author (me). And it's a scary one...

–In the next few months, I'll have stories and articles appearing in several places, including *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, *Writer's Digest*, *Cemetery Dance*, *Futures Mysterious Anthology Magazine*, and the print collections "Spooks" by *Twilight Tales*, "Cold Flesh" by *Hellbound Books*, and "The Many Faces of Van Helsing" edited by *Jeanne Cavelos* and coming from *Ace books* this April. If you're a J.A. Konrath completist (hi, Mom!), check my website hourly to find out when and where all of the above will be released.

–*Bungeishunju* has purchased the Japanese rights to *Whiskey Sour*, and *Librairie des Champs-Élysées* will release the novel in France.

–In conjunction with the print and audio versions of the book, *Whiskey Sour* is also being released in a variety of e-book formats. Warm up your Palms, technophiles.

–I continue to teach writing and marketing at the College of Dupage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois. For info visit my site or go to www.cod.edu.

–The second *Jack Daniels* thriller, *Bloody Mary*, is finished, and I'm pretty excited about it. The bad guy is a raging psychotic, Jack's ex-husband returns, there are some fun twists, and the ending simply smokes.

–My homepage, www.jakonrath.com, is growing larger by the day. Along with

downloads, writing tips, pictures, excerpts, news, blurbs, character profiles, interviews, contests, message boards, and jokes, I also add a free short story every few days. Stop by and let me know what you think.

–Bestselling author Eric Garcia (Matchstick Men) has this to say about my novel, "Upon finishing *Whiskey Sour*, I immediately wanted more; I guess I'm just hooked on Lt. Jack Daniels, the freshest new cop on the beat. Konrath is Hiaasen with teeth, Elmore Leonard by way of a dark alley. By turns horrifying and hilarious, *Whiskey Sour* is one sweet read."

–Bestselling author Barry Eisler (Rain Fall) says, "J.A. Konrath's touch is so deft that it's amazing to think that *Whiskey Sour* is only his first novel. This is a fast, funny, furiously entertaining debut, and I hope J.A. plans on keeping his smart, sardonic, and, at 45, sexy-as-hell heroine around for a long, long time. *Whiskey Sour* rocks!"

Freebies

Free stuff is cool. Several times a year I have a random drawing for free J.A. Konrath merchandise, and everyone on my mailing list is eligible. This morning, two newsletter subscribers were randomly picked (by my wife) to receive some cool gifts.

The lucky winners are:

Bob Jurczyk and Annette Taylor!

Congrats, Bob and Annette! Email me so I can mail out your prizes. The first one to email gets the choice of a *Whiskey Sour* T-Shirt (white, XL), or an advance reading copy of the book. The second one gets whatever the first one doesn't want.

Whiskey Sour

So what's *Whiskey Sour* about, anyway?

Whiskey Sour is the first book in a new thriller series featuring a female cop who chases serial killers. It'll be released in hardcover, June 2nd, by Hyperion books. Here's the inner jacket copy:

"Put Donald Westlake in a blender with a jigger of James Elroy, mix in a dollop of Dorothy Parker and you've got the hilarious, horrific world of Lieutenant Jacqueline 'Jack' Daniels."

–Jay Bonansinga, author of *The Sleep Police*

Lieutenant Jacqueline Daniels is having a bad week. Her live-in boyfriend has left her for his personal trainer, chronic insomnia has caused her to max out her credit cards with late-night home shopping purchases, and a frightening killer who calls himself "The Gingerbread Man" is dumping mutilated bodies in her

district.

Between avoiding the FBI and their moronic profiling computer, joining a dating service, mixing it up with street thugs, and parrying the advances of an uncouth P.I., Jack and her binge-eating partner, Herb, must catch the maniac before he kills again... and Jack is next on his murder list.

Whiskey Sour, the first novel in the Lt. Jack Daniels series, cleverly combines laugh-out-loud humor and edge-of-your-seat suspense. Jack is a fun, fully drawn heroine in the grand tradition of Kinsey Millhone, Stephanie Plum, and Kay Scarpetta--and the cast of oddball characters surrounding her are worthy of an Elmore Leonard novel.

And on the back jacket:

"Finally – a heroine for the rest of us! I couldn't put it down. J.A. Konrath is a writer to watch!" –Libby Fischer Hellmann

"Whiskey Sour is a literary cocktail that will knock you off your chair."–Ridley Pearson

"Laugh-aloud humor. A fast, fun read."–F. Paul Wilson

"The best mystery series debut I've read in years. This book has it all."–Warren B. Murphy

"A fresh, frightening new voice."–David Wiltse

"A compulsive page-turner."–George C.

Chesboro

"Smart characters, smart writing, and a smart pace that keeps you reading."–Michael Prescott

"One potent cocktail."–Andrew Vachss

"Detective fiction at it's finest!"–Rick Hautala

"One hell of a ride!"–Rob Kantner

"I can honestly say that I have seen the future of suspense thrillers, and it is J.A. Konrath." –Robert W. Walker

"Finally—a heroine for the rest of us!"–Libby Hellmann

"I can't wait for the next fix!"–Jay Bonansinga

"Thriller lovers rejoice!"–Steven Spruill

"I love J.A. Konrath so much, I married him!"–Maria Konrath

To read the first chapter of WHISKEY SOUR for free, surf on over to my homepage, www.JAKONRATH.com .

That about wraps it up for this issue. Newsletter Number 4 will be e-mailed at end of May. Feel free to drop me a line before then; I'm chained to my computer, and not going anywhere.

best,
J.A.