

Straight Up

The Official Newsletter of Author JA Konrath

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Fourth Issue

Happy New Year! You're on this mailing list because you love books. I love them, too. This email is my way of reaching out to readers, librarians, bookstore employees, and fellow authors. If you want to be taken off this list, just reply with REMOVE in the header.

My thriller novel WHISKEY SOUR is the first in a new series featuring Lt. Jacqueline "Jack" Daniels of the Chicago Police Department. BookPage says it's "Easily one of the best debut suspense novels in recent years."

For more about Jack and the book, visit www.jakonrath.com.

Writing Contest Winner

I received over a hundred entries, which was great, but it took me much longer than expected to read them all. I was overwhelmed by the high quality of the submissions, which made it tough to choose the winner. After weeks of excruciating deliberation, I finally went with the quirkiest entry I received. The fifty dollar prize goes to Mike Mayer for

his story "Boundary Line," a gripping tale of a kidnapping gone horribly wrong.

Congrats Mike! Along with fifty bucks, he gets a signed book, and I'll name a character after him in an upcoming novel. Second place goes to Jim Roberts, and third to Bob Farley--they also get signed books.

I struggled to judge this, because so many stories were great. Though there were too many entries to comment on individually, but if you submitted a story and have any questions about it, feel free to contact me.

Bookstore Contests

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

I intimately understand the importance of booksellers, so I held three contests to show my appreciation for the work they're doing.

CONTEST #1

Every bookstore owner or employee who sells more than twenty (20) copies of Whiskey Sour will get their name in the acknowledgments for the second book in the Lt. Jack Daniels series, Bloody Mary, scheduled for release in July.

Email me at haknort@comcast.net and let me know how many you've sold. So far eight booksellers have made the list. There's room for more.

CONTEST #2

Has ended! Whoever sold the most copies of WHISKEY SOUR was going to have a character named after them in RUSTY NAIL, the third book in the Lt. Jack Daniels series. The winner is Steve Jensen, who has sold a whopping 256 copies. I may also be naming my next child after Steve...

CONTEST #3

Has ended! This contest was for the bookstore that drew the biggest crowd during my 2004 tour. The winner was Schuler's Books in Michigan, and the person who set the wheels in motion to get me there was Holly Frakes. Holly will have a major character named after her in RUSTY NAIL, Thanks, Holly!

Library Contest

I spent most of my youth in the library, and it was time well spent (am I the only one who misses the old card catalog?) So this contest is for *Librarians Only*. Here's how you play:

Step 1: Order a copy of Whiskey Sour for your library (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, citing the librarian and the library.

Step 4: In June 2004, my wife will pick the quote she likes best, and the library will receive \$200 worth of free books, including copies of BLOODY MARY.

Love is Murder

If you're a writer, book lover, mystery fan, or celebrity watcher, you need to check out the Sixth Annual Love is Murder Mystery Conference, happening February 4-6 in Chicago at the Rosemont O'Hare Wyndham

The three day con includes all meals, and you'll get to rub elbows with bestselling authors such as Anne Perry, Robert Walker, Barb D'Amato, Martin Greenberg, Raymond Benson, Jay Bonansinga, David Ellis, Barry Eisler, James Rollins, and many others, including me.

If you're a published author, there's still room on some panels. If you're a new writer, this is the place to get expert advice from pros, agents, and editors. If you're a mystery lover, this is Nirvana.

Check out www.loveismurder.com. Or call 847.891.6588 for more info. Tell them Joe sent you.

Left Coast Crime & Sleuthfest

If the Midwest is too far for you to travel to have a beer with me, I'll also be attending two other conventions this winter. On February 24-27, I'll be at Left Coast Crime in El Paso, Texas. For more info go to www.leftcoastcrime2005.com. Then from March 3-6 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, I'll be at Sleuthfest, www.sleuthfest.com. Hope to see some of you somewhere!

Bloody Mary

The sequel to WHISKEY SOUR, called BLOODY MARY, is finished, and I'm ridiculously happy with it. Everyone who has read the book thinks it blows away Whiskey Sour, and the ending is sure to surprise even the most jaded suspense fan.

Jack's back, and she's chasing a maniac who would eat the Gingerbread Man for lunch... literally. Look for it from Hyperion Books and Brilliance Audio this July. It's funnier, scarier, sexier, and has zero carbohydrates.

Famous author Dave Barry had this to say about BLOODY MARY: "I haven't actually read this book, but I can say that J.A. Konrath is an entertaining writer,

based on the 53 emails he sent hounding me to write this blurb."

You can't buy an endorsement like that! (I know, because I tried.)

Recent News

If you'd like to read the first few chapters of BLOODY MARY for free, here's how:

Go visit www.HyperionSelect.com and check out the **Hyperion Select Online Book Club**, launching in January 2005, where you'll have the opportunity to sample excerpts from newly published books--like mine--and get sneak previews of what's coming up, as well as receive access to special offers such as Advance Reading Copies, author phone chats and promotional giveaways.

For all of you on fixed incomes, or who dislike hardcovers because they take up too much shelf space, the paperback version of WHISKEY SOUR will be released at the end of June.

Rights to Whiskey Sour have been sold to Russia. Perhaps I should change Jack's name to Smirnoff...

My private eye ghost story REDUX can be found in the recent anthology SPOOKS, from Twilight Tales books, edited by Tina Jens and John Everson (www.twilighttales.com).

Three humorous JA Konrath horror shorts can be found in SMALL BITES, an anthology edited by Garrett Peck and

Keith Gouveia. All proceeds benefit ailing horror legend Charles Grant. You can pick up a copy by visiting their website at: <http://www.apfuchs.com/cgrantsmallbitesordering.html>.

FUTURES MYSTERIOUS ANTHOLOGY MAGAZINE (www.FMAM.biz) has published a humorous Harry McGlade mystery (Harry is the private eye from WHISKEY SOUR that used to be Jack's partner). The story is called WHELP WANTED, and it's the funniest thing I've ever written.

HORROR EXPRESS, a dark fiction magazine based in the UK, features a very nasty story of mine called BASKETCASE. It's a bloody one. <http://www.horrexpress.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/>.

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.

Look for a hardboiled suspense tale from me in the March issue of **ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE**, called THE AGREEMENT, for sale very soon. I'll also have an upcoming article in **WRITER'S DIGEST**, a follow-up to AFTER THE BIG SALE.

The third Jack Daniels thriller, RUSTY NAIL, is almost finished, and I'm pretty excited about it. Once again, Jack is up to her Armani in violent murder, and along for the ride are old friends like Phineas Troutt, Harry McGlade, Herb

Benedict, and two very stupid FBI agents. Look for it in 2006.

My homepage, www.jakonrath.com, has just reached 25,000 hits, and I'd like to personally thank the three people who have visited my site 8333 times each. 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 other week. Stop by and let me know what you think.

Freebies

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

The lucky winners this time are: Carol Mintz and Linda Primmer. Congrats!

Email me at haknort@comcast.net so I can mail out your prizes: advanced reading copies of BLOODY MARY! Everyone else has to wait until July, but you lucky folks get the read it early (be sure to rub it in everyone else's face.)

Reviewers

Do you review books for a newspaper or a website? I have a few copies of BLOODY MARY available for reviewers. Email me and let me know who you review for.

See you in issue #5 this May!