May 2026

I'm a big proponent of taking what you think should be your daily word count, and cutting it in half.

So 1000 words a day becomes 500, 2000 becomes 1000, etc. Consistency should be easy.

Looking back on the last few newsletters I've sent y'all from Substack, I think I could've used some more thinking like that. Not just word count, but volume of content. Trying to incorporate pictures at every corner, enable comments, etc. was adding friction. Holding me back.

In line with some recent advice, I'm building a new system for newsletters, and Offering previews to new subscribers. Soon I'll be adding links inside my books, pointing you to the next one.

I've also been rewriting book listings into *products that the right readers want to read.*

Once the systems are fully in place, the newsletter will get easier. This edition alone is a sign that things are working. More people are reading. In terms of validating reviews, I got some nice surprises on Amazon and Reddit.

So I'd like to ask: if you've read my work, and liked what you saw, consider leaving a review on Amazon or Goodreads. It truly keeps the faith.

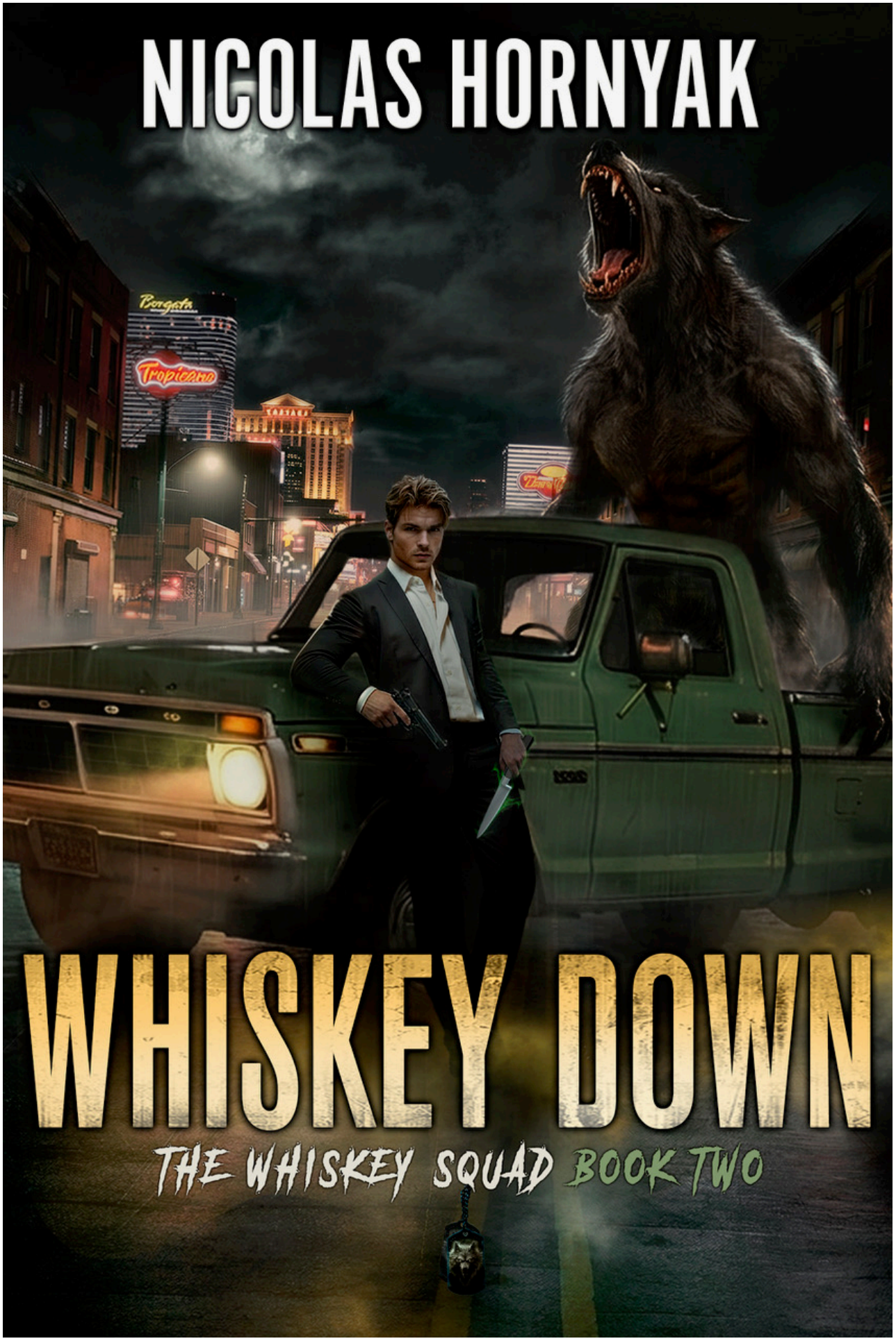
Updates

The publishing cycle for *Whiskey Down* slowed down over spring. Part of it was that I wanted a couple more beta readers on it. But mostly, it was one of many things I couldn't stay on top of, all at once. Life gets crazy.

May was a turning point. I took a few weeks to level up, revise product listings, assemble reader magnets, and build marketing cadences for new subscribers.

Now that the bulk of this work is done, I'm going to start the layout for *Whiskey Down* in the next few days. Unlike Book 1, this will have a paperback upon release.

If you haven't seen it, here's the cover for Book 2:


NICOLAS HORNYAK
Bergata
Tropicana
WHISKEY DOWN
THE WHISKEY SQUAD BOOK TWO

This is lower resolution to save your poor AOL email account.

Recommendations

If you haven't listened to "Suffer" by Boy Golden by now, let me turn you on to a cathartic listen about the state of America.

A much more recent drop: "Gaslight" by Sara Beth has been on repeat. It's this excellent mix of "Mother Mother" by Tracy Bonham and "Possum Kingdom" by the Toadies, with a splash of "Loser" by Beck. It's brilliant. Just go listen.

Pride is upon us. The City We Became by N.K. Jemisin is the inaugural read of NYPL's Big Summer Book Club, and I cannot wait to reread it. I'm currently waylaid with *Soul Music* by Terry Pratchett is all. (Also a great book!)

Thank you for reading. Thank you for caring.

Keep on kicking and screaming,

Nico

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