July 2026

There is always a sense that doing something for the first time doesn't settle in right away.

Not for me, at least.

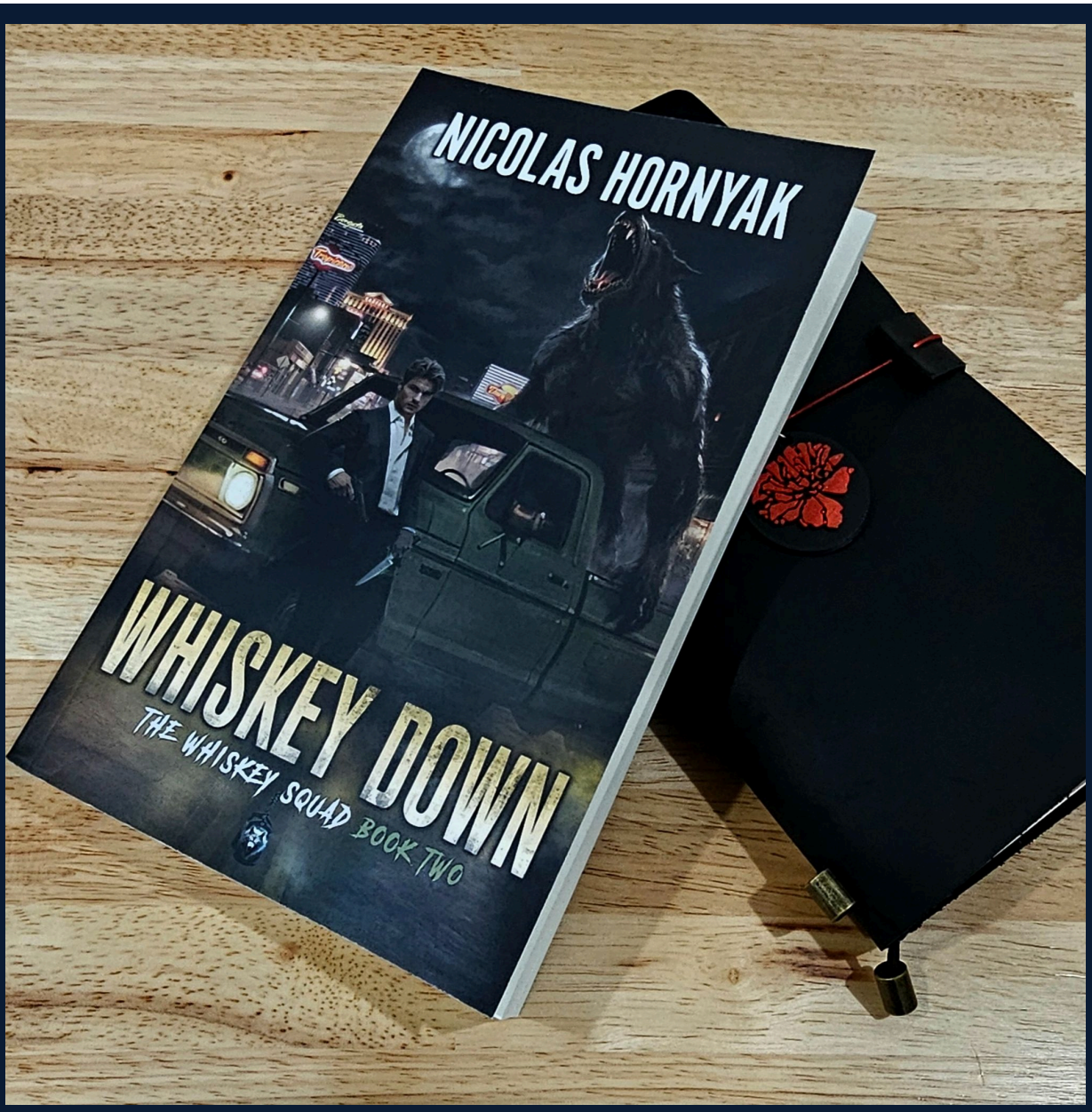
Before I get into it, the big news, which you already know if you spotted my quick email blast earlier this week. But my next book, *Whiskey Down*, is coming out TOMORROW, AUGUST 1st.

It is, of course, not my first book. But it *is* my first sequel ever compiled into a final novel.

I'm very proud of it. But also, it's not quite landing yet, that this is happening, and that I've committed to the continuation of these characters' stories.

That's a true first. My first two books featured casts who finished their stories:

- There's no part 2 for Elmira, because we know how everything ended and began all the same.
- There's no part 2 for Sky, because the next story would've been with his crew's descendants. (And then I didn't publish it. Darn.)



Behold, the first copy of *Whiskey Down.* (Look, ma! No "proof copy" ribbon!)

Whiskey Down is different. It's the culmination of a single fact: that Winston's story *isn't over.* That Manolo might be sticking by his side, for better or for worse.

And then there are also the smaller beats. Maggie's busy looking for a job. Skylar's teaching Winston about magic theory. Isa and Lil take bigger roles in the story. We meet some new folks. And new threats have turned their sights on Philly...

I'm very nervous about how this one ends. It's going to feel like watching *The Empire Strikes Back*, or reading the final lines of *The Fifth Season.*

But I guess we're locked in this death spiral together now, my fellow eagles. ;)

If you haven't placed a pre-order yet, please do. And if you've read *Whiskey Dogs,* consider leaving a nice review for it if you haven't already. They make all the difference for indie authors in an overly saturated, AI-plagued market.

Haven't read *Whiskey Dogs* yet? Good news: the e-book price has gone down to $2.99 for the foreseeable future. Don't sleep on it!

Updates

A lot has happened this month, most of it a personal whirlwind. What I've been sharing, and slowly getting more excited about, is that I *paid off my student loans.*

This was the result of a career change into SaaS sales I made five years ago, and honestly? I am just extremely fortunate. I have everything I could really want, material wise. I have a beautiful fiance who matched my desire to be more frugal. (He also cooks. 🥹) I got to attend an acclaimed creative writing program in a public school and save on those tuition costs.

And now? Here we are. What's next, Mrs. Landingham?

I'm beginning to work on myself more than I permitted myself to. (Debt guilt is real, y'all.) I'm swimming laps every day. I'm losing weight. I'm treating myself to nice things, like new clothes and fun outings.

In particular, I got to see the musical *Hadestown* for a third time with a friend. And then I took a Friday afternoon off to go see the proshot in theaters. It is fantastic every time.

I'm hyperfocused on it enough that my new, end-all be-all Traveler's Notebook has a *Hadestown* charm/theme to it now.

(Okay but really, I like black and red.)



Isn't she purdy? 3D-printed Hadestown charm, and an old Renn Faire pendant of Pan on the spine. Yes, I keep Whiskey Squad lore in here.

On the indie publishing front, the proof came in, and after proofreading, I revisited a lot of elements to make it as professional as I could. I'm confident that if any typos remain, the total is a single-digit number.

My secret win is when I uploaded the e-book to KDP, it flagged only *two* misspellings. One of which was "methocarbamol."

Not too shabby for a guy who does all his own editing.

Recommendations

I cannot believe I'm putting up a recommendation about clothes, but fuck it, this is *my* newsletter.

I watch a lot of travel videos featuring one-bagging or minimalist load-outs. Maurice Moves is a favorite of mine. But there's a lot of recommendations for Uniqlo's DRY-EX pieces in those circles. And at the same time, a lot of marketing for their Airism pieces.

I'm here to say: get the DRY-EX pants, and get the Airism shirts.

I tried DRY-EX shirts, and they do kind of get the job done. But they're not quite as comfortable, and I don't think I'd trust them in any other color than black.

The Airism shirts? I read up on their technology, and that's kind of what convinced me. Bottom line, they feel nice and cool, and both sweat and spills evaporate efficiently. Highly recommend.

Otherwise, I've just started listening to "Wolf Like Me" by The Listros, which feels like the next "The Wolf" by SIAMES in my inner mind-scape of Whiskey Squad lore.

Upsetting news: French artist Kavinsky passed away unexpectedly, at age 50. "First Blood" has been a staple on my playlists for years. Give it a listen in honor of a great musician.

"Sinking Feeling" by Supergold caught my ear. Similar vein to "Suffer" by Boy Golden. Go listen.

May these be the days where the better decades happen,
~ Nico

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