



HANK WHITSON

WRITER & DESIGNER

ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

This sample offers a quick look at my creative and copy writing abilities. If you want a deeper dive on either fiction (for longer passages and more formats) or non-fiction (including academic, journalistic, and technical writing samples), head to: www.HankWhitson.com/portfolios!

Novel Passage

This is a short sample from my current project, a novel called Akrasia.

Keepers dwell not in the past. Keepers fret not with the future. Keepers hold the present.

Sevardin swirled the mantra around his head like scotch in his glass until Hodd cleared his throat. Reverie broken, he looked up at the ruddy bartender.

"I'm shooting a hole in my boat here, but I'll tell you a secret. At a certain volume of consumption, it's more economic to buy booze by the bottle and drink it at home."

Sevardin smirked at the scarred reflection in his scotch, the pale ghosts of a dozen nicks and gashes shining against his dark skin. He finished the glass and slid it back to Hodd.

"I'd be lost without your warm companionship and sage advice."

Hodd snickered, filled the glass for the seventh time, and slid it back.

"Forgive the observation, but you don't seem particularly 'found' at the moment."

Sevardin just smiled. *Oh, I know exactly where I am. I am shipwrecked on the shores of despair. I am pouring gas on the fires of perdition. I'm sitting in your shitty little dive bar, Hodd, trying to drink a hole in my head so I can fall asleep tonight without dreaming, wishing I didn't have to wake up to another soulless tomorrow.*

Even as he thought it, he knew it wasn't fair.

The Drowned Book was a far cry from Arroyo's nicest bar, but definitely wasn't shitty. There were plenty of watering holes that welcomed thirsty Keepers, but the Book was Sev's favorite. He even treated fellow regulars with a little extra respect on account of them having good taste. *The name's a Dowland reference. What surer sign of class could there be?*

When he lost Yuel and Jecia he had stayed away—couldn't bear the memories—but he came back when he returned to active duty. After the subsequent suspension, he slid from 'regular' to semi-permanent fixture. *Behold the Arroyo's champion, now reduced to human furniture. And to think he showed such promise.*

The bar was built like an iceberg. Its back-alley entrance opened to a cramped ground floor with a short bar, and a smaller second floor that had just enough room for two stools and a counter. But the basement was like an old-world beer hall, big enough for eight tables and two dozen booths with room leftover for darts and billiards. The scent of old smoke always hung in the air, along with the strains of classic songs unspooled from a vinyl record player. Today it was Picasso's original rendition of "Hey Jude."

Sevardin hummed along with the chorus, tapping his finger on the bar, staring intently without actually seeing anything. Hobb watched with concern. He was by no means timid, and not a man to mince words, but it took him a full minute to find the words to address Sev.

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

"Listen, Harker. You know me. I like telling people their business even less than I like them telling me mine, but I think you should go somewhere. Do something. Talk to somebody who can talk back worth half a damn."

Sevardin looked up as the song died. Meeting his eyes was like standing on a precipice, and Hodd quickly looked away. But Sevardin relaxed and did the same.

"I don't know where to go," he admitted.

"There are counselors, aren't there?" Hodd asked.

"Whatever you say in those 'confidential sessions' has a funny way of coming out."

"No, not your people. I meant private practices. The same ones vets go to see."

"I don't feel like paying a stranger to ask me questions I already ask myself."

Sevardin stood from the stool and placed a fifty-dollar bill on the counter. Hodd slid it back. The Keeper eyed him dangerously again, but this time the barman held his ground.

"That's not charity," Hodd insisted. "It's an investment. I'm buying the rest of your week. Go to the beach. Take a hike. Spend it on a shrink you wouldn't want to pay for yourself. Do anything other than.... this. If it's all horseshit, come back next Lunday and I'll start taking your money again."

Sevardin nodded, now unable to meet Hodd's gaze. The kindness undid him.

He stuffed the bill into his pocket and walked up the steps to the ground floor. Dusk had fallen, and the energy of the early evening stoked Old Town—the lively sprawl that grew out of Calle Puente, Arroyo's major artery. It meant Bridge Street in Spanish, which Sevardin always found funny, seeing as it ran over only one bridge in a city filled with bridges. But that particular bridge reified the city's soul. The Ancient's Bridge, or the Suicide Bridge, if you had kinked humor, was famous. A piece of the old world, built by the Amagium when they first established their presence in the southland.

Bluebies seemed to be everywhere, and then he remembered graduation was just a few nights a way. Another reason Sev appreciated the Book was that Hodd and his bartenders would serve aspirants nothing but water until they wore the black.

He watched a pair of young pups recounting their Keeper exam in anguish, blindly praying to God that their freedom would end. So fresh-faced and bright-eyed. So eager to get out there and save the world. *You poor fools. Go into any other branch, or better yet, become asfalís. Make do with two stones of humble magic, like every other sane person on the planet.*

After about twenty minutes of walking to clear his head, Sevardin returned to his bike and stoked it to life with his key.

It was completely mechanical. Not a trace of animate energy or spelled artifice. It wasn't unheard of, but still decidedly eccentric, requiring a special state license, since it relied on completely manual control. Even though components occasionally needed to be replaced or tuned, a motorcycle would never develop the quirks that a piece of artifice gradually accumulated. Gas cost as much as ambient batteries, but you could go further on one tank. Well worth it in the long run. It demanded capability in exchange for reliability. Sevardin respected that arrangement deeply.

Besides, tinkering was his opus. The little task that restored his wyrd's stamina. Gearwork gave him a small charge. Motors were better. But engines.... After a long day of magic, working on engines was the only thing that truly scratched his itch.

As he darted through traffic, he imagined Jecia pressed against his back, her arms wrapped around him, one hand on his chest and another on the top of his thigh, teasing what waited at home. But she had disappeared and taken home with her.

She's not gone though. They couldn't find a body, and the stories taught him there was always hope

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

until you found the body. *She's too strong to die. Just lost in the Faed, waiting for me to find her.* He chuckled at himself. *No. She would never wait. She's fighting her way back to me, struggling to give me a sign so I can do the same.* He could still feel her touch in his wyrd. He knew it in his bones. But he also knew 'story' was another word for 'lie,' bones could be mistaken, and magic was a door to madness.

"The Penalizer" Viral Scripts

The following scripts were written on spec as potential content to promote a streaming series starring a violent, ex-military vigilante. The assignment specified quick, low-budget scenes with a mix of action and psychology.

Intervention

We see Grant Bastion holed up in a motel room, preparing his arsenal, when we hear shouting one room over. After trying to ignore it, the sounds change to obvious violence, with screams and sobbing. Sighing, Grant goes to knock on the door. A brute of man answers, bloodied handle of liquor in one hand, and a woman sprawled on the floor behind him. Grant and the abuser look at each other for a beat, then the fight begins. Grant's internal monologue plays calmly over the audio of the fight.

GRANT VO:

"I'd like to think the Demon has the right idea."

The man swings a left hook, and Grant steps back, then headbutts the man in the nose. He shakes himself, apoplectic, and then swings the forty in his right hand.

GRANT VO:

"I'd like to believe a couple broken bones are enough to put somebody back on the right track."

Grant catches the man's wrist before the bottle can make contact, and almost casually snaps his radius and ulna. Again, his pulse hasn't raised by a beat. The man collapses to the ground howling, clutching his ruined arm. The beaten woman gets up and gets out, murmuring half-heard thanks. Grant begins to leave.

GRANT VO:

"If only the world were that soft and fluffy."

The brute rises and lunges for a handgun on table. Frank pauses in the door, looking over his shoulder. We cut to the exterior as a gun reports. The night is silent a beat. Back in the apartment, the Penalizer stands over the dead man, stone-faced.

GRANT VO:

"But I know better."

Over the Counter

Open on a 24-hour pharmacy. Grant Bastion walks in and goes to the snack aisle.

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

GRANT VO:

“Lots of vets have problems with pills. Get hurt over there. Get hooked back here. Others start when they get home. Looking for a way to plug the holes. Dull the pain.”

We see a pharmacist handing a white bag to an elderly woman who thanks him, all smiles. Then we hear the snarl of motorcycles outside. The bikes screech to a halt and seconds later, four bikers burst into the store, all armed. The leader rushes the pharmacy, grabs the pharmacist and demands everything on a list. The other thugs corral the terrified shoppers in a corner of the store. Except Grant. Who is still inspecting the snack aisle.

GRANT VO:

“Me? I’ve never had that particular issue.”

A biker sees Grant and levels his sawed-off shotgun at him.

BIKER:

“Hey! Are you retarded? I said--”

The biker takes a step forward and Grant grabs the gun, uses it as a lever to twist the man’s hand unnaturally. Tendons pop, bones snap, and the gun shoots wild. The other bikers look at the sound of the disturbance. Grant yanks the biker in front of himself as a human shield. The biker’s chest erupts as his friends unload at Grant.

GRANT VO:

“Way I see it, if a guy gets to know pain, they can become buddies. Swap war stories. Speak each other’s language.”

Grant waits for the salvo to clear, and then fires his remaining shot, catching one of the other bad guys in the head. Two down. He advances on the guy robbing the pharmacy, ditches his human shield, and swings the empty gun at the third biker’s throat. He falls to the ground, choking and dropping his handgun.

GRANT VO:

“And after a while...”

As Grant turns to face the remaining biker, a bullet catches him in the shoulder and he drops. The remaining biker jeers as he steps forward, manic and menacing.

GRANT VO:

“...Nothing can hurt you.”

Grant grabs the dropped handgun, whips around and shoots the guy in the ankle, the knee, the thigh, groin, upward until he is striped with holes. He falls to the floor, writhing, and then Grant shoots him one more time.

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

Panicked shoppers run screaming out of the market, while the checker and pharmacist look on, dumbstruck with fear. Grant inspects the bullet hole in his shoulder. He grabs an ace bandage off the shelf, pauses by the snack aisle and grabs a bag of gummy bears, then places a \$20 on the counter before walking out.

Narrative Design Test Responses

These are some responses to writing prompts I have received in interviews.

Premise Prompts

Write up a brief pitch, no more than 3 sentences, for a romance story.

A bored taxman falls in love with the incompetent con-woman who is attempting to scam the IRS. He decides to help cover her tracks to continue wooing her, while she struggles to go straight to protect him from her organized crime bosses and the government.

Write up a brief pitch, no more than 3 sentences, for a horror/thriller story.

Two aspiring filmmakers arrange a series of accidents to befall their thesis project, hoping to create buzz that their production is cursed. But after unintentionally killing one of their actors, mishaps beyond their control plague their set and personal lives. Is it all in their heads, or have they conjured evil in earnest?

Character Driven Dialog Prompt

Write a brief scene, no more than 20 lines of dialogue, between two characters. Try and give the reader hints about who the characters are without using any narration, only the dialogue.

“Stick another piece of gum under that desk, Marcus, and I will force it down your throat in Jesus’ name,” Adrian said.

“That doesn’t sound very Christ-like,” Marcus said.

“Oh, it doesn’t? When people ask, ‘what would Jesus do?’ they forget that flipping tables and chasing people with a whip is within the realm of possibilities.”

Marcus snickered. “Yeah but I’m not a money trader, and this ain’t no temple.”

“Isn’t it? St. Bellarmine’s is a monument to sharpening young minds. A refuge of learning by the glory of God’s example. And you’re a testament to it! Excellent grades. Sister Catherine informs me you were at the top of your class on your last religious studies test.”

“If you’re trying to inspire me, you’d better go get that whip.”

Adrian sighed.

“Why the tough guy act? Why mouth off at your teachers and vandalize desks?”

“Because I’m bored? Because y’all could use some mouthing off at?”

“No. Those aren’t reasons for someone as smart as you. Why do you insist on landing us here in detention every evening, when you could be at home on the Xbox, or out chasing girls?”

“Maybe I can’t afford ‘the Xbox.’ Maybe I don’t like girls. That ever occur to you?”

Adrian laughed.

“I don’t think there’s anything wrong with either, but I’ve seen you look at Gloria Esposito.” Marcus flushed slightly but said nothing. Adrian pressed him. “What’s the real reason, son?” After another moment,

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

he asked, tenderly. “Care to tell me where you get those bruises?”

Marcus glared at him.

“Let’s just say you’re not my only father, Father. And I sure as hell ain’t your son.”

Branded Loot Crate Copy & Social Posts

Here are some social posts, instructions, and copy written for Loot Crate’s reward program and the brands featured in their crates.

Secret Order of Keys Facebook Group Mission Statement

Unite Looters through a shared love of pop culture and explore new frontiers of fandom with puzzles and challenges.

Secret Order of Keys Landing Page

Adventure is our calling, our creed is having fun, and our society is Looters everywhere. We’re calling all you sci-fi savants and fantasy fanatics, gaming gurus and anime aficionados, to explore the multiverse of pop culture and unlock your loot’s full potential.

Facebook Intro Posts

- **General:** Calling all Looters! The Secret Order of Keys, a fraternity of fandom for exclusively for Core Crate subscribers, is now live. What does The Order do? Each month, your crate will be packed with mysteries and puzzles that will challenge you to use your loot in inventive ways. Completing a challenge will earn you achievements and completing every challenge will unlock a piece of bonus loot in your next Core Crate.
- **Crate Specific:** February’s Build crate is the first to feature the Secret Order of Keys challenges, but a new batch of puzzles will appear in every crate in the months to come! Join now and don’t miss out on the action!

Customer Support PSA

Having trouble with a puzzle? Run into an issue? We’re here for you. After [date], contact support with your question for hints and help. But keep in mind, assistance *will* contain spoilers for your crate! If you want to be surprised, wait until you receive your loot before seeking assistance. And remember: your fellow looters are your greatest resource!

Optimus Prime Puzzle Blurbs – Alter-Ego Crate

- **You Can Learn a Lot from an Autobot:** Optimus Prime has appeared in many forms throughout the years, but his leadership remains constant. No matter what identity you adopt, it is crucial to stick to a personal code. That is the key to becoming something more than meets the eye.
- **Switching Gears:** Alter Egos are about more than disguises or secret weapons. Their key advantage is adaptability. Prime’s strength is not defined by battle mode or vehicle mode alone, but the ability to switch between the two.

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

Jekyll and Hyde Puzzle Blurb – Alter-Ego Crate

- **Control:** In the end, Mr. Hyde's dark passions consumed the brilliant Dr. Jekyll. His sad tale demonstrates the dangers of alter egos. Staying safe is ultimately a matter of moderation. Let your secret self run free, but never surrender complete control over who you are.

Rick and Morty Portal Puzzle Blurbs – Animate Crate

- **Sci-Fi Sight Seeing:** The shortest distance between two points is a line—if you're a sucker. Folding space-time so that point A and point B merge is far more efficient, and it looks a lot cooler. It's not only the fastest way to travel; it's the only way to explore the entire multiverse. Get over linear thinking, and you'll be surprised by how much your world grows.
- **Side Effects Include:** There are some risks to traveling with portals. Each dimension has its own perils, and side effects include headaches, nausea, male pattern baldness, halitosis, palpitations, loss of appetite, sudden weight gain, and the occasional, hard-to-explain run-in with interdimensional and/or trans-galactic law enforcement. But what else are you gonna do? Stick around on *Earth* your whole life? Please.

Secret Order of Keys Insert Foreword and Afterword – Guardian Crate

- **Foreword:** Whether they are bringing balance to the elements, defending Earth's Last City, or patrolling the galaxy for threats, Guardians are the keepers of keys. They hold the line against evil, open ways to new worlds, and serve as guides who reveal hidden knowledge. Each member of the Secret Order of Keys shares those abilities and duties. So what are you waiting for? Adventure calls!
- **Afterword:** As this guide illustrates, keys can take many forms. To conquer these puzzles, you will need to master every tool at your disposal, from blasters to alien alphabets. At its core, progressing through the order is not about unlocking doors, but seeing the secret side of things. Good luck, looter. More puzzles are on the horizon.

Patient Pop Social Posts & Tweets

These are Facebook posts and tweets I have written for medical practices and healthcare professionals through the Patient Pop growth platform. Each sample follows one of three branded formulas: A) branded posts highlighting services, B) interest posts pertaining to the practice's subject matter, and C) tweets with useful or interesting medical facts.

Branded Post 1 – Pacifica Care of Suncoast

Are Your Kids on the Naughty List? Anxiety May be to Blame

(https://www.pacificacaresuncoast.com/blog/how-childhood-anxiety-leads-to-disruptive-behavior?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO)

Anxiety doesn't always present itself in an obvious way; especially when it comes to children. Kids who have been getting in fights, or withdrawing from social situations may be exhibiting an exaggerated fight or flight reaction. Similarly, symptoms of obsessive or attention-seeking behavior may be the result of a need for greater reassurance.

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If your children need help with chronic anxiety, call our offices now to make an appointment. (https://www.pacificacaresuncoast.com/blog/how-childhood-anxiety-leads-to-disruptive-behavior?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO)

#PuntaGorda #Psychiatry #MentalHealth #Anxiety #ChildCare #Misbehavior

A cum laude graduate of University of Missouri, trained at the Howard University College of Medicine with a specialty in psychiatry from University of Florida Jacksonville, Dr. Tait is exceptionally trained and has served Punta Gorda, Florida, for over 5 years. She views her patients as valued collaborators in their own treatment and offers personalized, compassionate care. Call today at 941.347.8447 to make an appointment. https://www.pacificacaresuncoast.com/provider/laura-f-tait-md?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO

Branded Post 2– Georgia Hand, Shoulder, and Elbow

Meet Our Expert Staff: Dr. John Seiler III

(https://www.gahand.org/provider/john-g-seiler-iii-md?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO)

Dr. John Gray Seiler III specializes in tendon repair of the hand, wrist, and brachial plexus. He also serves as our master of metrics, managing quality measurements and assessments in orthopedic surgery to ensure we provide the best patient care possible. With an education and medical training spanning University of Louisville, Vanderbilt, and Harvard, Dr. Seiler has further honed his skills by obtaining several board certifications.

Learn more about Dr. Seiler here, and call our offices today to make an appointment. (https://www.gahand.org/provider/john-g-seiler-iii-md?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO)

#Atlanta #Marietta #HandCare #ShoulderCare #ElbowCare #OrthopedicSurgeon

Georgia Hand, Shoulder, and Elbow is proud to serve the greater Atlanta area with our team of talented doctors and surgeons. We leverage the latest in orthopedic treatment techniques and technology, ensuring the highest possible level of care. Call our Atlanta (404.352.3522) or Marietta (770.795.7979) locations to make an appointment with us, or book online now. (https://www.gahand.org/?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO)

Branded Post 3 – Perio Health Professionals

Combat Gum Recession With Pinhole Surgery

(<https://www.periohealth.com/contents/our-services/periodontal-and-related-surgery/pinhole-surgical-technique>)

Receding gums expose the roots of your teeth, turning a moderate problem into a situation that can threaten your entire mouth. Gum grafts present one potential solution to recession, but Perio Health Pros can perform a Pinhole surgery as a preventive measure against more invasive treatment. This technique leverages tiny inci-

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sions, collagen strips, and your gum's natural ability to regenerate to restore coverage to exposed teeth.

Clickthrough to read more about this revolutionary technique here and make an appointment for a consultation today! (<https://www.periohealth.com/contents/our-services/periodontal-and-related-surgery/pin-hole-surgical-technique>)

#Houston #PinholeSurgicalTechnique #OralSurgery #Periodontics #Dentistry #GumRecession

Perio Health Professionals has served the Houston area for nearly four decades under the leadership of board-certified periodontists Michael McGuire, E. Todd Scheyer, and David Lipton. Leveraging the latest techniques and technology, it is our mission to provide you with best in oral care. Call at 713-231-9606 to schedule an appointment. https://www.periohealth.com/?utm_source=googleplus&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=Social_SEO

Interest Post 1 – Pacifica Care of Suncoast

Identifying the Invisible – Diagnosing Negative Symptoms

(<https://www.health.harvard.edu/mental-health/the-negative-symptoms-of-schizophrenia>)

One of the reasons schizophrenia diagnosis is so difficult is that many of its symptoms are invisible. Instead of presenting as abnormal behavior, they are things that go missing from our lives, loss of attention, expressiveness, or a sense of time. In addition to being hard to detect, these “negative” symptoms are often the most damaging aspect of the condition, making it difficult or impossible for schizophrenics to live independent lives.

#PuntaGorda #Schizophrenia #Psychiatry #MentalHealth #NegativeSymptoms

Interest Post 2 – Georgia Hand, Shoulder, and Elbow

8 Bone & Joint Friendly Tips About Virtual Reality

(<https://www.bonejoint.net/news-events/blog/eight-things-you-should-know-about-virtual-reality/>)

Dabbling in Virtual Reality for the first time this December? Be careful! Headsets that block your seeing and hearing abilities paired with games that demand full-body movement are a simple recipe for serious injuries. In addition to hitting objects that you can't see, not being able to see your arms also makes it easier to tax your joints!

#Atlanta #Marietta #VirtualReality #InjuryPrevention #HandCare #ShoulderCare #ElbowCare

Interest Post 3 – Perio Health Professionals

What Is a Crossbite (and What Should I do About It)?

(https://www.patientconnect365.com/dentalhealthtopics/article/what_you_need_to_know_about_crossbites)

Crossbites are a common type of dental malocclusion—which is a technical way of saying your teeth are not

HANK WHITSON - ABBREVIATED PORTFOLIO

properly aligned relative to each other. Specifically, crossbites refer to bite patterns where the arcs of your teeth intersect rather than run parallel to each other. This can cause several problems, like tooth-on-tooth grinding or other collisions that can damage enamel.

#Houston #Dentistry #OralHealth #Crossbite #Malocclusion

Tweet 1 – Pacifica Care of Suncoast

There are two halves to drug abuse! Opioid dependency refers to your body's physical need a substance, whereas addiction refers to the mental drive to continue abusing it despite your better judgment. #PuntaGorda #OpioidAbuse #DrugDependency #DrugAddiction

Tweet 2 – Georgia Hand, Shoulder, and Elbow

If you break a finger, you should head to the doctor ASAP. But it's also a good idea to secure the finger to a splint before you head to the hospital. Don't have a splint? Use tape and a popsicle stick! #Atlanta #Marietta #BrokenFinger #FirstAid #HandCare #OrthopedicMedicine

Tweet 3 - Perio Health Professionals

Bone regeneration is a grafting procedure to treat extensive damage from periodontal disease. A bone graft provides support and structure to achieve greater regrowth than would normally be possible. #Houston #Periodontics #DentalGraft #BoneRegeneration #OralSurgery

Thank you for reading!