

Exclusive e-deal with Amazon is cut back

August 24 2010, By HILLEL ITALIE , AP National Writer

(AP) -- An exclusive e-book deal between Amazon.com and the agent for such Random House classics as "Invisible Man" and "Lolita" is no longer exclusive, and no longer a deal.

Random House Inc. and the Wylie Agency announced Tuesday that "Invisible Man," "Rabbit Is Rich" and several other works were being "removed" from a program brokered between Wylie and Amazon that offered them as e-books available only through the [online retailer](#).

Instead, Random House, which had claimed electronic rights, will publish the books on a "non-exclusive basis," meaning that consumers can buy them through Amazon, Barnes & Noble.com and other sellers of digital books.

"It sounds like good news," said Oren Teicher, CEO of the American Booksellers Association, the trade organization for independent stores. "We've always felt that exclusivity is never good and if this means that Wylie authors e-books will now be available to all retailers, the reading public will benefit."

The original deal had enraged publishers, who have fought for control of older works, and rival sellers and led to Random House's suspending new business with Wylie. Tuesday's joint statement said that Random House was resuming "normal" relations with Wylie "for English-language manuscript submissions and potential acquisitions, and we both are glad to be able to put this matter behind us."

E-editions of works represented by Wylie, but first released by publishers other than Random House, including Norman Mailer's "The Naked and the Dead" and William Burroughs' "Junky," are still being sold exclusively through Amazon and released by Odyssey Editions, an e-publisher launched last month by Wylie.

An Amazon spokesman, Drew Herdener, declined comment. Telephone and e-mail requests for additional comment from Wylie were not immediately returned.

With the electronic market growing quickly, publishers and agents have differed over author royalties for e-books - agents want 50 percent, publishers prefer 25 percent - and over rights for works when the contracts were negotiated before the digital era and did not specifically address electronic formats.

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