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Kindle lying on a desk

How well is Amazon actually taking care of the indie authors who contribute to its Kindle Unlimited (KU) platform? On the surface, Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) program seems like a game-changer in the world of self-publishing. Countless indie authors found that they could self-publish their books with little hassle via Amazon and have them made accessible to large audiences. Additionally, authors get to choose payment plans that range from 35-70% royalties. KDP has granted opportunities to many indie authors and offers greater visibility to their work.

Amazon punishes indie authors for piracy

Several authors have begun speaking out about the harsh nature of Amazon's exclusivity rules. Authors like Carissa Broadbent have reported having their KU books taken down with no warning or notice due to being victims of piracy. Broadbent reiterated that she had no control over the piracy of her work, but Amazon's "extreme reactions" to any violations of the exclusivity agreement took no notice of this fact. Instead, she received a vague e-mail stating her book had been taken down and realized her monthly income had been snatched away with no notice.

Raven Kennedy, the author of *Gild* and *Glint*, was caught in a similar situation to Broadbent. She also reiterated the lack of control over piracy that writers have. However, despite receiving little aid from Amazon, Kennedy made a valiant effort to protect her work. She even detailed spending her own income to pay companies to issue "takedown notices" and constantly combed the web for pirated versions of her books. Despite her efforts, she continued to receive warnings from Amazon about her book being found elsewhere on the web. The situation became so stressful that she ended up removing her books temporarily because she felt she had no other choice. Upon re-enrolling them in KDP Select in hopes of making them affordable to her readers, she was notified by Amazon that they had removed two of her books and that a third was under threat of being removed. However, it is quite clear that Amazon needs to change its KDP Select policy. The first thing that Amazon needs to do is to double down on piracy. Right now, they are opting to punish their writers rather than deal with an actual issue that is threatening their contributors and their business. As said above, Amazon needs to revitalize its security system, put more research/resources into anti-piracy measures, and work with law enforcement to double down on piracy. Next, instead of just giving warnings and then abruptly banning authors, they need to assist writers experiencing this. Most indie authors do not have the legal knowledge and resources to know how to take steps to fight piracy.