

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [\\$2m crime novel deal collapses amid questions over AI use](#)

The Pact - August 18, 2026, 6:30 am

The publishing world has once again set itself on fire, this time over a debut crime novel that was supposed to be the next big thing, until someone whispered the forbidden words: "Uh... did a robot write this?"

Jerry Falade's *Call Me, I'll Hide the Body* was cruising toward a \$2m deal, a 14-way auction, and a 2028 release date. Then his agents abruptly yanked the manuscript from circulation, presumably while sprinting away from it like it was ticking.

In an email to publishers, the agents announced that Falade had produced an "incredible manuscript that dazzled us and top publishing professionals around the world."

But now, they say, they "are no longer able to authenticate how the manuscript fully evolved from origin to completion."

They explained that they had "vetted the manuscript with Jerry for AI" and trusted his reassurance that he didn't use it. Unfortunately, they can "no longer substantiate that."

Translation: "We didn't run it through an AI detector because he seemed nice." Although AI translators are a complete scam anyway.

The US agent, Marc Gerald, said he first read the book in June and that it was "stunningly good" and "appeals to absolutely everyone." Which, to be fair, is exactly the kind of suspiciously universal praise people give right before discovering the author may have had help from something with a GPU.

Halfway through submissions, an editor raised concerns about "signs of potential AI use." Europa Content decided not to check with software because Falade's explanation was "clear and credible." ie..... "we believed him until he said something different later, and now we're in crisis mode."

After a meeting on 29 July, when "aspects of Falade's story changed," the agency cut ties, citing the "need to have total faith."

Gerald added: "We feel terrible for putting this into the universe and the firestorm it has caused. The book itself is genius – however it came to be drafted, it's amazing."

Seems like they meant- "We still love the book, we just don't want to be sued, cancelled, or yelled at on X."

Falade, meanwhile, denies using AI and says the whole thing reflects racial bias in publishing, which, given the industry's track record, is not exactly an implausible subplot.

So now the hottest manuscript of the year is in limbo, the agents are hiding under their desks, and the rest of publishing is clutching its pearls while pretending it knows how to handle AI or what is AI and what is not.

And somewhere, possibly, an innocent author is sitting there thinking:
"I wrote a great book and now everyone thinks I'm secretly three ChatGPTs in a trench coat."

Falade denies using AI and says the response reflects deeper issues in publishing, which, given the industry's long history of selective scepticism, is not exactly an outlandish observation.

The author Falade rejected claims that he had used AI and said the response reflected racial bias in publishing.

He said: "Three Black authors received major publishing deals this year, and all three later had deals cancelled or disrupted following suspicions about AI. There seems to be a troubling assumption that when a Black writer produces work that attracts significant attention, the work could not possibly be their own."

So now the most talked-about manuscript of the year is in limbo, the agents are performing crisis management yoga, and the rest of publishing is pretending it has a coherent policy on AI.

And somewhere, an author who genuinely wrote his book is sitting there thinking:
"I finally got my big break, and it got cancelled because everyone is terrified of robots."

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2026/jul/31/crime-novel-deal-collapses-questions-ai-jerry-falade-call-me-ill-hide-the-body>

CanadianEy - August 18, 2026, 10:50 am

I personally don't think it makes much difference if a commercial product, such as a book, has been produced with some degree of AI assistance. People are so uptight about AI now that anyone being caught using the em-dash is immediately accused of being a witch to burn at the stake.

The Pact - August 18, 2026, 5:21 pm

(Aug 18, 2026 10:50 AM)CanadianEy Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I personally don't think it makes much difference if a commercial product, such as a book, has been produced with some degree of AI assistance. People are so uptight about AI now that anyone being caught using the em-dash is immediately accused of being a witch to burn at the stake.

Yeah I would advise people that if they are using AI for anything commercial that they keep their mouth shut about it.

This author denies using AI but they say his story changed. Perhaps he admitted to using it to find a metaphor or simile. There are times back in the day when I Googled for a simile. Is that a crime? This is democracy manifest./s

If the whole damn book is proven AI that's a different thing. And the accusations that FOUR black authors have been offered six figure deals this year and FOUR were rescinded because of accusations of using AI....is crazy and NOT anyone using "the race card."

They say "his story changed," and they can "no longer authenticate," this says to me that he decided to be scrupulously honest and admit to using AI to find a couple of metaphors -and that's the end of you if you do that because people are CRAZY!

mammothsdie - August 21, 2026, 2:57 am

Even only using AI for typos will be watermarked as done with AI, RIP authors.

The Pact - August 21, 2026, 8:08 pm

(Aug 21, 2026 02:57 AM)mammothsdie Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Even only using AI for typos will be watermarked as done with AI, RIP authors.

They claim that won't happen but who knows. They're trying to make the EU happy. But I think everyone should just stop using them. Why would you use Claude anymore. I never liked that Claude wants your phone number compared to the other AI. Youtubers have been saying that Claude is the best for writing but why would anyone use it anymore?