

BY THE END OF THE MONTH, THE DUST HAS SETTLED AND ALL RELEVANT parties have made up their minds. I am hated by the internet, an embarrassment to the industry, and hanging on to my relationship with my publisher by a thread.

At least I'm not broke. Indeed, by most external measures, I am still quite a success. I occupy that curious space where the fraction of the reading population that's constantly online hates me, but the rest of America's book buyers don't. People are still picking my books off the sale racks at Target and Books-A-Million. Despite a petition circled by Adele Sparks-Sato and Diana Qiu to have Eden pull all my titles from shelves until they've conducted a third-party investigation (delusional), my sales haven't dropped.

In fact, they're doing better. Brett was right about scandals generating free marketing. Unofficial until your royalty statement, reads his latest email, but your sales are nearly double this month what they were this time a year ago.

It only takes a little exploring around the seedier corners of the internet to learn what's going on. Alt-right free-speech proponents have made me their cause célèbre. I and my pretty, Anglo-Saxon face have become the perfect victim of the left-wing fascist cancel-culture mob. (It appears the alt-right cares a lot about due process, but only when the accused has done something like sexual assault or racially motivated plagiarism.) A popular Fox News cohost encourages all of his millions of viewers to support me so that Eden doesn't drop me from their list, which has created a strange situation in which thousands of Trump voters are buying a book about mistreated Chinese laborers. My publicist passes on an interview request from a popular young YouTuber, but I decline when I discover that most of her viral videos are titled things like "WATCH ME SNEAK A GUN INTO MY ECON LECTURE LOL" and "LIB SNOWFLAKE GETS OWNED BY THE FACTS ON ABORTION."

Okay, yes, I know how bad this looks. Like Taylor Swift, I had no intention of becoming a white supremacist Barbie. Obviously I'm not a Trumper—I voted for Biden! But if these people are hurling money at me, is it so wrong of me to accept? Should we not celebrate scamming cash from racist rednecks whenever we get the chance?