

“DIGGORY POKERY”

■ WOULD-BE author Jack Havana (his pen-name) decided to self-publish his book after reading a website recommendation in the *Sunday Times* "In Gear" section last summer. "A self-publishing service I recommend is Diggory Press, which charges £30 for setup and reasonable fees for printing on demand," wrote columnist Nigel Powell.

Six months later, Jack is more than £600 out of pocket and doesn't have a single copy of his book to show for it. He says Diggory Press director Rosalind Franklin was initially enthusiastic and took his £160 for setup, printing and listing on Amazon but she then stopped replying promptly to messages and, despite attempts to contact her by recorded mail, stopped replying altogether. Jack is now trying to claim his money back through the courts.

The *Eye* knows of at least 17 writers pursuing Diggory Press in the small claims court, for sums between £200 and £5,000.

One author, Sandra Lean, has received plenty of feedback from readers, but she says Franklin has refused to pay royalties or to provide accounts or sales figures. The authors are asking the court to order printers Lightning Source to open up their books and thus reveal what royalties they are owed.

The *Eye* contacted Diggory Press and asked: why will you not give authors detailed sales figures or accounts? Why will you not remove authors' books from your website when they ask? Have you withheld any royalties owed? Why have you been so difficult to contact/failed to reply to correspondence? Diggory Press failed to reply to this correspondence either and answer came there none...