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HarperCollins Is Said to Acquire Rights to Amanda Knox Memoir

By *JULIE BOSMAN*

Four months after being freed from an Italian prison and cleared of charges that she murdered her roommate, Amanda Knox has sold her memoir for close to \$4 million, according to people familiar with the negotiations.

After a heated auction among publishing houses that stretched for days, HarperCollins bought the rights this week to publish Ms. Knox's book, which is expected to be a gripping account of her experiences in Italy.

In 2007, Ms. Knox was arrested, along with her onetime boyfriend, Raffaele Sollecito, after her roommate, Meredith Kercher, was found stabbed to death in her bedroom in the central Italian city of Perugia. Ms. Knox spent four years in prison before an initial conviction, in 2009, was overturned on appeal in October.

Tina Andreadis, a spokeswoman for HarperCollins, declined to comment.

During her time in prison, Ms. Knox kept regular diaries that will help shape the book, she told publishers in meetings earlier this month.

Some people in the publishing industry have questioned the prospects of a book written by Ms. Knox, who to some members of the public is not a wholly sympathetic figure. But others were convinced that it would be a huge best seller, and the opportunity to release the memoir set off an intense competition among large New York publishing houses.

People in publishing with knowledge of the process said that several publishers submitted bids, including Crown, part of Random House; St. Martin's Press, an imprint of Macmillan; Atria, part of Simon & Schuster; and Dutton, an imprint of Penguin Group USA.

Robert B. Barnett, the Washington lawyer who is known for representing blockbuster authors, brokered the deal. In 2009, Harper published the best-selling book, "Going Rogue," by Sarah Palin, who is another high-profile client of Mr. Barnett.

Ms. Knox's legal troubles flared up again this week when Italian prosecutors filed an appeal for a new trial for Ms. Knox and Mr. Sollecito, saying that they are convinced that the pair is guilty of killing Ms. Kercher.

Mr. Sollecito, who was also freed in October and is living in Italy, is planning to shop his own memoir, possibly later this month.