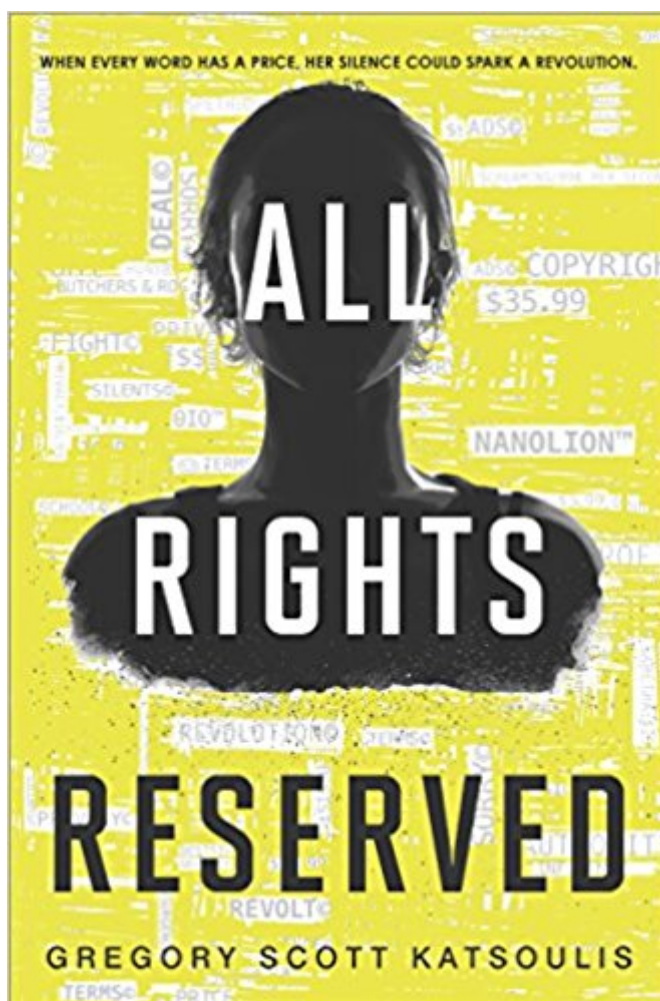


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All Rights Reserved: A New YA Science Fiction Book (Word\$)



Synopsis

“A chilling, unnerving, and timely debut novel about what it means to speak out, even in silence.” —Katharine McGee, New York Times bestselling author of *The Thousandth Floor*

In a world where every word and gesture is copyrighted, patented or trademarked, one girl elects to remain silent rather than pay to speak, and her defiant and unexpected silence threatens to unravel the very fabric of society. Speth Jime is anxious to deliver her Last Day speech and celebrate her transition into adulthood. The moment she turns fifteen, Speth must pay for every word she speaks ("Sorry" is a flat ten dollars and a legal admission of guilt), for every nod (\$0.99/sec), for every scream (\$0.99/sec) and even every gesture of affection. She's been raised to know the consequences of falling into debt, and can't begin to imagine the pain of having her eyes shocked for speaking words that she's unable to afford. But when Speth's friend Beecher commits suicide rather than work off his family's crippling debt, she can't express her shock and dismay without breaking her Last Day contract and sending her family into Collection. Backed into a corner, Speth finds a loophole: rather than read her speech—rather than say anything at all—she closes her mouth and vows never to speak again. Speth's unexpected defiance of tradition sparks a media frenzy, inspiring others to follow in her footsteps, and threatens to destroy her, her family and the entire city around them.

Book Information

Series: Word\$ (Book 1)

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Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Values & Virtues #167 in *Books > Teens >*

Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Dystopian #1986 in *Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction*

Customer Reviews

Gregory Scott Katsoulis is a writer, teacher, artist, and goofball. He is in love with ideas and possibility. When he is not writing, Katsoulis composes incidental music and enjoys taking photographs of faces, debunking bunk, and confounding children by teaching them about black holes, time travel paradoxes, and the hilarious fallibility of human memory. He lives in the lovely and stimulating Cambridge, Massachusetts.

All Rights Reserved is a speculative fiction about a future where litigation and copyrights have been taken to the extreme, so as to effectively abolish 'free' speech. With the exception of a few expressions, every form of communication or word has been copyrighted, or trademarked and the use of every single thing has been patented in such a way that just existing means you have to pay a price. Hugging someone? You need to pay! Talking to someone? You need to pay per word or phrase! In such a world, Speth (whose very name was picked because it costs less) decides to take an impulsive vow of silence when she comes of age at 15. Her silence is so complete that she does not speak or communicate beyond what is considered 'public domain' in her world. The world-building of All Rights Reserved, while confusing at the start, slowly develops throughout the course of the novel, and pulls you in an immersive experience. The handful of times I put the book down for a break, I couldn't shake off the feeling that my every action had a price. It makes you question how much freedom we take for granted, and how if we aren't careful we could head towards a world like it. It is speculative, and a bit exaggerated, sure, but also seems plausible, if you think about it. The author, through Speth, brings up the challenges of living in a world without communication, of having to restrict all your thoughts to yourself and never being able to convey anything. Throughout the book, she is offered alternative means of communication that wouldn't break the laws of her world, but she holds her 'silence' as a form of protest and as a matter of principle. Besides the specific confines of the world, it also builds on the rich-poor divide, and how capitalism is skewed towards the former. This is a world that is built on profiting from the use of things and intellectual property, and it questions how many rights we would sign away in the name of progress. It is however, confined to a city and the scope of the world outside the city is only hinted at, which is why I surmise it is a series. Without going into specifics, I would like to say that I loved her team - they were the cutest thing when they were introduced and I loved how their friendship built up, (also, that profession is simultaneously hilarious and badass) and I also loved the family dynamics of the Jimes. The pacing is a bit slow, and it takes some time for things to really get into gear, though. The villain was a bit one-dimensional, considering I was thinking it was a systemic

issue, but I would like to see what the next book contains in terms of obstacles. This was an interesting speculative dystopia, imaginative and rendered in an engaging manner. Would recommend it for all science fiction fans, specifically. Received an advance reader copy in exchange for a fair review from Harlequin Teen, via Edelweiss.

All Rights Reserved was an addictive read that took me entirely by surprise. It is a smart and timely YA dystopian novel that will leave you thinking long after you've turned the last page. While this novel's world is exaggerated, it isn't too difficult to imagine that our society could develop into something similar in the future. At its core, All Rights Reserved is social commentary about the importance of freedom of speech. This world is one where a majority of words and gestures have been copyrighted, patented, or trademarked. Every word an individual speaks or gesture they make after age fifteen is tracked in order to determine how much they owe the stakeholders for expressing themselves. Most families are separated due to crippling debts accrued throughout generations. All Rights Reserved begins on Speth's fifteenth birthday as she's getting ready to say her first paid words. After seeing her friend commit suicide rather than try to work off his family's crippling debt, Speth can't stomach the idea of giving her speech, which was populated with advertisements for companies and platitudes rather than meaningful statements. To avoid increasing her family's debt, she chooses to go entirely silent, sparking a movement that may ultimately change the world. The concept of this world was so unique, I absolutely loved it. The author did a fantastic job of showing the reader the world and Speth's place in it as the story progressed. The book went by pretty quickly, I was actually surprised by how engrossed it in I was during most of the plot. However, I do wish that the other members of Speth's team had been explored more and been developed more. I thought that the author did a good job of balancing Speth's maturity level with the enormity of her decision. Since Speth didn't quite understand what the impact would be of her split-second decision, it was interesting to see how both she and the society were affected by it over time. The ending definitely gave me some chills, I can't wait to see where the story goes next! Overall, this was both an entertaining and thought-provoking read. It was refreshing to see an author use a futuristic dystopian world to create social commentary regarding a modern day problem. It almost reminded me of what Aldous Huxley did with Brave New World (which you should definitely read if you enjoyed this novel). I am very intrigued to see how the author will further develop this story in the sequel. *Disclaimer: I received this book for free from the publisher in

exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

This is great science fiction. The world building is vivid and intriguing, it has a unique plot, and it makes you think. Speth's world is uncomfortable to read about. Every word and gesture is copyrighted and a payment has to be made to the rights hold. Any slight provokes a lawsuit that eventually sends people into so much debt that they are sold as indentured servants. Speth, in shock and grief over the suicide of her friend, chooses not to speak, which makes her a pariah and even dangerous. This is an engaging read with very clever details—like the secret product placers who sneak into houses in the middle of the night to leave samples from advertisers. I really enjoyed this book. Great for teens and adults!

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