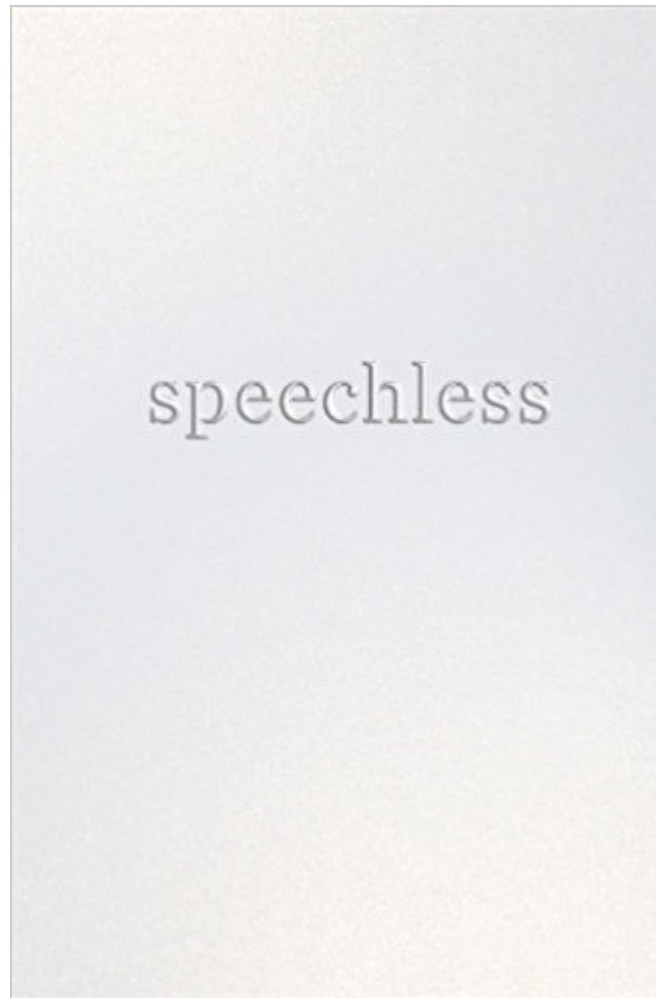




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# Speechless



## Synopsis

Everyone knows that Chelsea Knot can't keep a secret. Until now. Because the last secret she shared turned her into a social outcast; and nearly got someone killed. Now Chelsea has taken a vow of silence; to learn to keep her mouth shut, and to stop hurting anyone else. And if she thinks keeping secrets is hard, not speaking up when she's ignored, ridiculed and even attacked is worse. But there's strength in silence, and in the new friends who are, shockingly, coming her way; people she never noticed before; a boy she might even fall for. If only her new friends can forgive what she's done. If only she can forgive herself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up-Chelsea Knot can't keep a secret. She tells all and makes many enemies along the way. Nothing seems to stop her from blabbing until Noah, a gay teen, is beaten to the point of hospitalization after she reveals that she saw him hooking up with another guy at a party. Upon learning about the trouble that she has caused, the teen decides to take a vow of silence like a monk she reads about in a National Geographic article. "What comes out of my mouth is the root of my problems, so the solution is for nothing to come out." During this time, Chelsea is abandoned by her former best friend and bullied with name-calling, locker trashing, and other forms of harassment. She sticks to her guns, however, and remains mute. Readers will wonder what will finally break her silence as the drama surrounding Noah's beating unfolds. The book could stand on this premise alone, but Harrington has chosen to throw in a bit of romance between Chelsea and Noah's best

friend, Sam. Chelsea grows as a person, making new friends, learning to bite her tongue and developing a stronger sense of self. However, some readers might feel that her vow of silence draws too much attention away from Noah, especially those who sympathize with him. This book is part of the Love Is Louder movement whose mission is to help those who are mistreated and misunderstood. Readers might see Noah as misunderstood, but maybe not Chelsea. -Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School, Linden, MI  
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Chelsea Knot falls from the top of her high school's social ladder to hated loser in one night when she informs the police of an attack on a gay student by a couple of popular basketball players. It's partially her fault - she instigated the attack by gossiping about the teen and spreading his secret to the student body. Trapped between guilt and broken pride, Chelsea takes a vow of silence to keep herself from causing any more harm. She receives unexpected sympathy from a group of students who help her forgive herself and find out who she really wants to be. Harrington addresses a serious issue in a heartrendingly tragic story that's all too realistic. The strength of Harrington's writing is that it leaves no point of view unturned. She portrays the far-reaching pain caused by all types of bullying, and more important, stresses the strength a teenager gains when they are bold enough to go against the crowd. A pertinent story about a girl who loses everything and gains herself. Grades 9-11. --Bethany Fort

After Saving June, Hannah Harrington made her way on my "auto-buy" list of authors. After just one book! So yes, I was super excited to get my hands on Speechless. And Hannah Harrington did not let me down with Speechless! Both Saving June and Speechless dealt with tough issues, but Speechless is one of those books that is so relevant to right now. Speechless is one of those books that's an enjoyable and entertaining book, but at the same time it still makes you really think about the issue at hand. I loved the characters in Speechless. I really understood Chelsea, the protagonist, because I too loved to be up in everybody's business in high school. I didn't spread anything around - and we didn't really have cliques at my high school (it was too small, I think?) but I totally liked to hear all the gossip. So yes, I totally felt for her and I thought she was brave when it really counted. And Sam! I love Sam. He was such a quirky, interesting character and the perfect love interest. Their relationship, although they were perfect for each other, didn't compete with Jake and Harper from Saving June - who was my favourite couple of any book I read in 2011. But I really liked the romantic aspect of Speechless nonetheless - I just loved Sam so much. Speechless was so

well-written. There were so many beautiful one liners and pages that I marked the corners on so I can go back and write down all my favourite quotes. And I'm not usually a big quote saver (although I want to be), but Hannah Harrington really delivered with the writing. If you were a fan of Saving June, don't miss Hannah Harrington's new book, Speechless. And go pick them both up if you haven't read Saving June! Speechless is relevant and beautifully written, with relatable characters and a perfect romance.

I saw Hannah Harrington speak at Traverse Area District Library shortly after the publication of this book, so I was curious to read it. I enjoyed the characterizations of the teenagers. I am now 55 years old but I remember what it was like in high school when your only identity was that which your peers thought you were. Hannah depicts this so well. Only the idioms have changed. What stayed the same was every kid's desire to be accepted by some IN group of people who pressure their friends to be just like them in every thought or they are on the outs. And like every kid, Hannah's character has to learn to not care so much what other people think of her and learn to trust her own self. I'll be watching your career closely Hannah, I know that someday you will be banned!

This book started out slow for me because I didn't like Chelsea very much. But I'm sure that was the author's intent in the beginning of the book. By the end of the book, I liked her a lot better. She became a much better person by just shutting her mouth and paying attention to the people and places around her. She connected with authentic people she would have missed out on by being so fake. Some people could learn quite a lot from this book, I think. People begin to see the inner girl she kept hidden beneath a fake front for so long. But don't ever mistake her for being weak. Weak she is not. She has moxie. I didn't love this book, but I liked it quite a lot.

This book... I don't... I love...UGH! This book has left me speechless! Lol. This truly is an excellent book and if I could come up with the right words I wouldn't be able to say enough. I believe that this is a book that everyone would benefit from reading. I'm a mother of a 16 yr old girl and after finishing this book all I keep thinking about is how this should be a book given to read as an English assignment. While entertaining there is so much for our teenagers to learn. I will be highly encouraging my daughter to read this book (well at least when she finished the Shakespeare unit she is studying).

I got this book 2 years ago, and I'm just now writing a review because I am still in love with this

story. The writing is phenomenal: a teenage girl realistically talks like this, but I'm not cringing at bad grammar. The story itself is even better. It's entertaining while still giving one of the best/most cliché/most important lesson ever: think before you speak. Trust me, you will not regret getting this book.

Chelsea Knot is the second meanest girl in her sophomore class, right behind her best friend Kristen. Chelsea picks on less popular girls and she never met a secret she didn't spread. At a New Year's Eve party, she outs a classmate, not expecting the hate and homophobic responses, setting off a series of incidents with near devastating consequences. Somebody winds up in a coma. Somebody else in jail. Nobody talks to Chelsea any more, except to bully her. After reading a magazine article she takes a vow of silence and while not talking she befriends classmates she would have never previously been seen with, and figures out the kind of person she wants to be. She's not sure she can ever forgive herself, or whether anyone else will. *SPEECHLESS* is a cautionary tale covering themes of homosexuality peer pressure, homophobia, bullying, racism, popularity and friendship. Chelsea's first person narration is both serious and sarcastic, immature and mature, and deeply engaging. Her lack of insight and shallowness in the beginning of the book show us a young woman who isn't very likable. Even after she goes from popular to unpopular overnight because of her own actions, she feels like a victim. Slowly, with the help of new friends who accept her unconditionally, she develops insight and begins to grow. The secondary characters, like Chelsea, are multidimensional, imperfect, life-like individuals. *SPEECHLESS* is a well written, easily readable book. Middle school and younger teens will enjoy this book, though I think older teens might find the story too juvenile. *SPEECHLESS* would be a good launching point for discussions at home or in classrooms on bullying, diversity, and accepting those who are different.

This book was an awesome read!!! My friend just borrowed it and raved about how great it was too. Great read for young adult/late teenager. Definitely a book you can get sucked into!

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Speechless

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