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The Subprimes: A Novel

By Karl Taro Greenfeld



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The Subprimes: A Novel By Karl Taro Greenfeld

A wickedly funny dystopian parody set in a financially apocalyptic future America, from the critically acclaimed author of *Triburbia*.

In a future America that feels increasingly familiar, you are your credit score. Extreme wealth inequality has created a class of have-nothings: Subprimes. Their bad credit ratings make them unemployable. Jobless and without assets, they've walked out on mortgages, been foreclosed upon, or can no longer afford a fixed address. Fugitives who must keep moving to avoid arrest, they wander the globally warmed American wasteland searching for day labor and a place to park their battered SUVs for the night.

Karl Taro Greenfeld's trenchant satire follows the fortunes of two families whose lives reflect this new dog-eat-dog, survival-of-the-financially-fittest America. Desperate for work and food, a Subprime family has been forced to migrate east, hoping for a better life. They are soon joined in their odyssey by a writer and his family—slightly better off, yet falling fast. Eventually, they discover a small settlement of Subprimes who have begun an agrarian utopia built on a foreclosed exurb. Soon, though, the little stability they have is threatened when their land is targeted by job creators for shale oil extraction.

But all is not lost. A hero emerges, a woman on a motorcycle—suspiciously lacking a credit score—who just may save the world.

In *The Subprimes*, Karl Taro Greenfeld turns his keen and unflinching eye to our country today—and where we may be headed. The result is a novel for the 99 percent: a darkly funny comedy about paradise lost and found, the value of credit, economic policy, and the meaning of family.



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Editorial Review

Review

“It’s hard for a fiction writer to know how to engage the present American moment. This powder-keg culture might seem like rich material, but dramatizing it is harder than it appears. Greenfeld is one of the writers we can watch trying to figure it out.” (**Jonathan Dee, *Harper’s***)

“Greenfeld has produced a fascinating novel about life in the age of economic uncertainty. It’s a colorful tale of characters living on the edge combined with sharp social insights.” (**Walter Isaacson**)

“*The Subprimes* holds up a funhouse-mirror version of ourselves and our era. Karl Taro Greenfeld has written a masterful, viciously funny satire of our times, one that we ignore at our peril.” (**Ben Fountain**)

“A little Occupy, a little Ed Abbey, and a good deal of hope for solidarity in a screwed-up world -- *The Subprimes* is a superhero story for the rest of us.” (**Bill McKibben**)

“Sharply observed and engrossing, *The Subprimes* depicts a future that is simultaneously absurd...and plausible. It would be too scary to read if it weren’t so entertaining.” (**Edan Lepucki**)

“With sharp and indicting fury and humor, profound compassion, deep respect, and literary prowess, Greenfeld has written a scorching, twenty-first-century *Grapes of Wrath* that perfectly captures our time’s suffering and potentially apocalyptic greed and folly.” (**Booklist (starred review)**)

“Set in a meticulously, terrifyingly imagined all-too-near future, *The Subprimes* is a potent cocktail of North American myth, equal parts John Steinbeck and Margaret Atwood, with a dash of benzene.” (**William Gibson**)

“*The Subprimes* admirably -- amazingly -- superimposes all the populist instincts of *The Grapes of Wrath* onto a dystopian future that is all too visible from our current moment. Greenfeld’s compassion and understanding -- this novel’s beating heart -- are what grabbed me most.” (**Charles Bock**)

“Greenfeld has a tendency to lean toward parody in his satiric style, but here he employs enough authenticity to terrify, enough black humor to disarm the story’s inherent pessimism, and a surprising admiration for faith in its myriad forms.” (**Kirkus**)

From the Back Cover

In a future America that feels increasingly familiar, you are your credit score. Extreme wealth inequality has created a class of have-nothings: Subprimes. Their bad credit ratings have lost them jobs and make them unemployable. Jobless and without assets, they have walked out on mortgages, been foreclosed upon, or can no longer afford a fixed address. Fugitives who must keep moving to avoid arrest, they wander the globally warmed American wasteland searching for day labor and a place to park their battered SUVs for the night.

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Subprimes who have begun an agrarian utopia built on a foreclosed exurb. Soon, though, the little stability they have is threatened when their land is targeted by job creators for shale oil extraction.

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About the Author

Karl Taro Greenfeld is the author of seven previous books, including the novel *Triburbia* and the acclaimed memoir *Boy Alone*. His award-winning writing has appeared in *Harper's Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, *The Paris Review*, *Best American Short Stories 2009* and *2013*, and *The PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories 2012*. Born in Kobe, Japan, he has lived in Paris, Hong Kong, and Tokyo, and currently lives in Pacific Palisades, California, with his wife, Silka, and their daughters, Esmee and Lola.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Janice Nolan:

The reserve with title The Subprimes: A Novel has lot of information that you can discover it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This book exist new know-how the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world currently. That is important to you to be aware of how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you throughout new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book on the smart phone, so you can read the idea anywhere you want.

Jeffrey Dominguez:

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