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In an alternate world, in a nameless totalitarian city, the autocratic Mayor rules the school system with an iron fist, with the help of his Educators. Fighting against the Mayor and his repressive Educators is a group of former students called the Truancy, whose goal is to take down the system by any means possibleâ€”at any cost.

Against this backdrop, fifteen-year-old Tack is just trying to survive. His days are filled with sadistic teachers, unrelenting schoolwork, and indifferent parents. Things start to look up when he meets Umasi, a mysterious boy who runs a lemonade stand in an uninhabited district.

Then someone close to Tack gets killed in the crossfire between the Educators and the Truants, and Tack swears vengeance. To achieve his purpose, he abandons his old life and joins the Truancy. There, he confronts Zyid, an enigmatic leader with his own plans for Tack. But Tack soon finds himself torn between his desire for vengeance and his growing sympathy for the Truantsâ€¡.

Isamu Fukui wrote *Truancy* during the summer of his fifteenth year. The authorâ€™s purpose is not just to entertain, but to make a statement about the futility of the endless cycle of violence in the world as well as the state of the educational system. And, as he put it, â€œI need to be in school myself if I want to write about it.â€

Truancy Details

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From Reader Review Truancy for online ebook

Julia says

This book is amazing!!!! It is one of my favorites! Written by seventeen year old Isamu Fukui, Truancy has some of the best characters, plots, and basically everything I've ever read! rebellion, romance, action, suspense, mystery, this book has everything! Like Voices I give it a six, though the stars can only go up to five... It's still six!

karen says

truancy, boooo-ancy. and not scary halloween ghost boooo-ancy, i mean it *blew*-ancy.

fifteen-year-olds have a place in this world. i have no problem with them serving me food at an eatery, or bagging my groceries, but i don't want them performing my brain surgeries, and i don't want them in charge of my entertainment.

it's great that he wrote this so young, really. but it exhibits every weak writing mistake you would expect from someone so inexperienced: clumsy dialogue, continuity errors, oddly specific details that are stressed but serve no purpose. none of the characters were well-developed, the idea of cause and effect seemed... unfamiliar, there were many scenes i just straight up did not understand. and the same exact word-palette as *twilight* - do people really grit their teeth so much?? and clench their jaws?? don't let the orthodontists win!!

and i think some of the scenes were supposed to be funny, but they were like listening to that guy you work with, the one you think might be a little touched, make a joke and you feel all small and trapped and you force that laugh, but inside you feel violated.

so i was in a bar last night, and i was just alone, drinking beer and killing time until i was going to meet up, and this lady comes in with a baby. and she's drinking her beer, laughing with her friends, and the baby is SCREAMING. it hates the bar. and this makes *me* hate the bar. and that's what this book is like - the baby has no business being in a bar, and some teenager has no business ruining my love of reading dystopian fiction.

on the one hand i feel bad talking shit about some kid's writing. but, in my defense, had i found his diary or his school notebook and read it, i probably* wouldn't be making as much fun of it. but seriously, TOR, are there no full-grown writers?? what's george r r martin doing right now?? i have heard some fans that might be interested in another book from that direction...

ugh, can i bitch some more, or do you have plans? that final fight sequence?? what the fuck kind of baz luhrmann/julie taymor fighting scene was that? they have their swords in the fields and the petals are falling colorfully all around them, then suddenly they are in a fountain and the spray is going everywhere?? now they are on a subway?? this is an ambitious music video, but a shitty way to end a book.

and maybe that's the problem - maybe this would be a good video *game*, but nothing is developed well enough to make it work as a novel. in the golden age of video games, some of the old skool atari games came

with little comics. this one was the best: . and no one has ever learned how to advance in the game, or determine its purpose, but i did play it a lot, blindly going through doors, unsure what was expected of me...

i mean, how much clearer could it be?? :

but the comic that came with it - that i loved. and i would actually curl up with it and be transported to the Land of the Zodiac where the gemini twins battled taurus or whatever... i don't know where i am going with this, only, that if i had read that swordquest video game comic as a novel, it would probably have been disappointing.

also - i just remembered - there is a fight scene in the library, too, where they throw books at each other and destroy many of them. NO FIGHTING IN THE LIBRARY!!!!

however, incendiary "water balloons" filled with lighter fluid and stuff. that's pretty cool, i guess.

* i don't know who i am kidding with this. i would probably be even worse. i am a dick.

Angie says

I love the idea behind *Truancy*: complete control through education! This is set some time in the future, and schools have near complete control over the student population. Classes are harder, tests are even more important, and the rules make sure all teens stay in line. And classes are six days a week now. Students aren't even allowed to talk in the hallways, snack, or use the restroom without express permission. It's no wonder there's a rebellion group known as the Truancy, made up of dropouts and expelled students, fighting to take back their city.

Truancy started off pretty good. I was intrigued by this idea of an entire city being used as an experiment. It's not revealed who is conducting this experiment, or where this is even taking place (it's just The City), but the goal is pretty clear. Someone wants total obedience and order from the citizens, and perhaps conditioning them as kids through the education system is the way to go. I also found it interesting how this has been going on for generations, so even though the kids hate school, they enter the system to do it to the following classes. It's just how life is. They take it, and then it's their turn to dish it out.

As much as I liked this whole set up, I found that I didn't actually care about what was happening. *Truancy* has a ton of action, since the Educators and Enforcers are finally going full force to stop the Truancy, and the Truancy is stepping up their game to end the Educators and Enforcers. It's never boring, but I felt this disconnect from everything. Our main narrator is Tack, who is the latest student to leave the system and join the Truancy, although for very different and personal reasons, but I never grew to care about him. I felt bad for what happened to him and caused him to run away, but nothing beyond that.

The one character I was really interested in was Umasi. He's this combination of "the wise janitor" and Mr. Miyagi. He lives in an abandoned district which Tack wanders into one day, and then he starts answering all of Tack's questions about what happens to students who leave school. Then Umasi starts his training, including menial tasks that seem like they have no purpose at first. Of course, Umasi has to have a secret, since it's odd that those in charge would just leave him alone like that. I wasn't very satisfied with the explanation, but it was interesting.

In the end, I kind of liked *Truancy*. It held my interest, but it was more like I was just reading to be doing something rather than becoming invested in the characters and events.

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Aaron Vincent says

Originally Posted On Guy Gone Geek.

In an alternate society, the Educators RULES. They create the law, implement them, and yes, they also do power play. Of course, this set-up is a kind of nightmare to all the students. Because of the Educators tight grip on them and the natural desire to defy the norm that comes with being an adolescent, these students formed a rebellion group: The Truancy. The Truants had no other intention but to make the lives of the Educators a living hell.

Tack, a highschool student, is just going with the flow. He hates the Educators but he is not doing anything drastic about it other than sulking. He has no connection with the Truants, and in fact, he never heard of them. But one day, his dearest sister got killed in a battle between the Truants and the Educators. After mourning, he joins the Truancy with only one objective in mind: vengeance. Tack later found out that his plans wouldn't be that easy to accomplish as he learned to sympathize with the Truants and become a valuable asset to them.

Isamu Fukui wrote this when he was sixteen, which is quite admirable. It is inevitable to compare him to Christopher Paolini, another author who wrote a book at that age. I had high hopes for both of them. I expected that being young and full of fresh ideas, they can offer something new and innovative in their writing. Sad to say, I'm disappointed on both accounts.

What I didn't like the most in *Truancy* is the characters. I think the author controlled them too much. They are flawed and have their individual struggles, but I can see the strings that attached them to the author all throughout the novel. The characters' actions and intentions were too big and 'death-defying' for their own good, resulting to slapstick characterization. I found it rather hard to connect to them and imagine them as real people — real students role-playing as rebellious thugs and gang leaders, maybe, but that's besides the point. Often times they think or say something that is really unprecedented. For example, one character, Umasi, said, "I wonder if Zyid will find him[Tack] easier to control than I did." There was never a point in the story before this dialogue did Umasi appeared as struggling to control Tack. Everything, including the 'social commentary', just felt too forced and too contrived.

Being someone who is always on the lookout for epic action scenes, I would have at least liked these kind of scenes Fukui wrote — I didn't. These scenes were set at the most fantastic places. The fights happened at a library with books being thrown and cut into pieces by a sword, flowerbeds where their swords cuts the

flowers causing the place to be heavily scented, and of course, the most used setting in action movies, the moving train. These settings of the fight scenes only sucked the believability out of these scenes. I wasn't able to shake off the feeling that I was watching someone playing a video game.

Had I put the author's age into consideration, maybe I ended up liking this. But I think that's not fair. Once a book is published, it should take the reader into the author's imagined world regardless of who wrote it. I was not convinced; therefore I am not a Truant.

Scott says

Ugg. I kind of feel bad. This guy is just a kid, and if any of my library kids did this, I would be super-supportive. But . . . it isn't going to benefit him to just hold his hand and praise his book, which is impressive, but not that good.

While I *am* impressed with the patience, skill, and even the creativity of the young writer, I fear publishing him could be detrimental to his growth. Seriously, if this is something he wants to do with his life, and I suspect it is, he doesn't need undue praise or publishing contracts for a highly-flawed novel that gets by more on the fact that it was written by a fifteen-year-old than it does for being anything of any quality. What he needs is the truth, maybe some workshopping, and most certainly some editing. Because this book will be mostly forgotten in a few years because it reads like something written by a teenager. Clunky, doofy, repetitive, even a little pretentious.

The beginning drags and the end is predictable.

In between though, he matures as a writer. Some parts are downright great. But those parts are few and far between. Mostly it is uneven, causing me to feel like I was pushing a boulder up a hill rather than reading a dystopian actioneer. That's another thing, the action is great, even if it does just feel like he is rewriting something he's seen on television, but they become stale quickly, because they are just the same thing over and over and over and over and over.

I hope this kid keeps writing.

I just hope he gets better. Hopefully when he can't get by on being a kid, he will have to get by on being an author.

Renae says

Okay, first of all, an excellent piece for a 15-year-old author. Damn fine for that.

However, a couple of issues...okay, five.

1. Message = very heavy-handed. The whole "reject the establishment" and "education creates mindless slaves" thing was about as subtle as a brick to the forehead.

2. Author's name = Isamu. Character name = Umasi. Just a little too cute.

3. I tried to read this a little over a year ago and ran out of steam about half-way through. Restarted it a few days ago and ran out of steam in the exact same place. I'm thinking that's about when the violence got a little over-the-top, robotic, and tedious. Battle scenes that are painstakingly choreographed over pages and pages make me weary.

4. This was probably one of the most violent YA books I've ever read. Not so much in terms of GORE, per se, but just flat-out violence. I'm not sure it wasn't for effect. Jury's out on this.

5. Lots of tedious, drawn-out philosophical scenes that left me feeling like I was watching one of those Final Fantasy cut scenes that left me tired.

On the other hand, I did find it to be an impressive piece. Enough so that I will go back and pick up the prequel without complaint.

Thomas says

Fifteen-year-old Tack lives in a city controlled by education. School is a constant struggle to survive: filled with strict to deadly teachers, an insurmountable amount of homework, and a zero tolerance policy for under achieving. Students are pushed and pushed until they become the perfect role model citizens - mind controlled, obedient slaves to their society. Tack is fearful that he will fail and be expelled because of his apathy for schoolwork, but he continues to go to school for his younger sister Suzie. Later on Tack meets the mysterious boy Umasi, and learns of the Truancy - a group of rebel students who fight against the Mayor and his oppressive Educators. Tack is torn against two extremes: whether he should join the violent Truancy, or remain glued into a cut and paste world where teenagers like him are herded into a faceless mass, losing their identity forever.

Isamu Fukui wrote *Truancy* when he was around seventeen. Unfortunately, his young age and inexperience with writing is very noticeable. While he grasped the concept of writing a book, he didn't manage to weave all the techniques together. Still, with some more experience under his belt, Fukui could possibly be a writer to look out for.

His writing was very amateur. It sounded like something I would write if I attempted to write a science-fiction novel, which isn't a good thing. There was a lot of repetitive imagery and word choice, and some phrases were just awkwardly stated. However, there were quite a few promising scenes and Fukui clearly excels at writing action sequences. It sounded like something straight out of an action movie - I could literally visualize the character's fighting one another.

The plot was also average. Some of it was just too far-fetched and unbelievable, but other parts were strangely inspirational. There were definite flaws in the pacing of the novel and the character development, but while reading *Truancy* I noticed some recurring themes continued to appear, such as: the repeating cycle of violence, the oppressive nature of education in today's world, and the sheer undermining of certain individuals based on their appearance or their past.

Overall, I would recommend this book to someone who wants an experimental read or something jam-packed with action. I wouldn't recommend this to someone who highly values literature or has a weak

stomach.

Lady Entropy says

I am yet to find a 15-year old who can write well.

Every single time I go into a book that's touted as "It was written by a 15-year old in a course of a summer", I have only to say... "IT FUCKING SHOWS"

This is a fine book for the type of teenagers who lack in the "nuance" department, where everything is black and white, the teachers are sadists for no reason, all adults are terrible, all students are victims, and so on.

It bored me to tears, and felt too much like my own rants in my diary when I was 15 years old about how horrible the world was and nobody suffered like I did or understand me.

Yeah, Did Not Finish.

Laura says

This book is a violent, hard hitting novel written by a 17-year-old author. The main character Tack hates school for very good reasons. In the functionally autocratic society of The City, school dictates every part of his life. Many of the problems that he comes up against in school exist to some degree in every school in the U.S. His coldly aloof parents are no comfort to him. Tack tries to succeed in school but it seems like the teachers and the system are out to get him at every turn. Being expelled from school means being sentenced to life on the streets or even execution. His only real friend and companion is his younger sister. When she takes the blame for a friends' rebellious act and gets expelled, Tack is thrown into a horrifying situation. I thought this book was amazing especially since it was the product of a high school student. Due to graphic violence, I would probably not recommend it to young teens. However, older teen boys, especially those uncomfortable with the system will love it.

Raccoonit says

Gyerekki kedvencem. Bár a történet több sebből vérzik, de a karakterek miatt a mai napig szívesen elíveszem.

Melissa says

Written by a 15-year old boy, this book is pretty solid for an adolescent lit book. Interesting characters (maybe too male dominated, though) and an action-packed plot with extremely detailed (and violent) fight scenes. Reluctant readers - especially boys that like action and battle sequences - would really enjoy this.

Haralambi Markov says

Thanks to the ever so generous Graeme I received “Truancy” as an unexpected gift that got me addicted. For three blissful days I was totally lost in this hardcover edition, which is so unlike me, since my attention span with books ranges to 60 pages at most a day and finishing 400 in three days was impossible to me. I certainly wish more books could force into oblivion.

At first I was very reluctant to setting expectations as everybody knows Isamu Fukui is 17 years old and having had a huge disappointment in “Eragon”, also written by a teen, I had no idea what to expect. However I was not disappointed at all. The story is quite simple. The setting is an unnamed city, which is ruled by an unnamed Mayor in such a manner that turns people into obedient marionettes. This is all an experiment to create the perfect society. The school is the first step to shaping the City’s citizens into spineless humans, but as the system becomes unbearable, revolt is to be expected in the face of the Truancy, an organization of students that oppose the City’s rule.

Tack is the main protagonist to say so, even though there are other characters, who tell the story. He is an average student, who just wants to stay under the radar, until he meets Umasi, a skilled fighter pacifist, and starts training with him. The death of Tack’s sister by the Truant leader Zyid is the trigger that turns Tack into a fighter himself. In Order to avenge his sister Tack becomes a part of the Truancy and even escalates to the position of right hand assassin of Zyid. The plot of “Truancy” revolves around the newest, harshest stage of the war between Truancy and the Educators, who are run by the Mayor and have control over the City. The ending of the book shows a small scale apocalypse and a city lying in ruins.

I applaud Isamu for his great skill in characterization. The dialogue is superb in my own opinion and the protagonists’ points of view are distinguishable although a great deal of head hopping is established. However it’s good that Isamu keeps the cast of narrating characters tight. Each and every character has his or hers dramatic tale that connects them with the others and explains their motifs perfectly. If you have read Japanese manga or watched enough anime, you will definitely feel that specific vibe of nobility, epic drama and honor woven together. This method of storytelling is addictive and offers a lot more suspense for the reader. Another strength that I find is the visual approach to storytelling. I think that this is the literary equivalent to watching a great action movie and the descriptions of the combat scenes are simply mindboggling. Showing high speed motion in a written story is one of the hardest things to achieve and Isamu makes it look easy, too easy.

As conclusion I can simply point out that if you hate school, have hated school and haven’t lived long enough to realize that those were the best years in your life, than this book is for you. In my opinion Isamu has a very bright future ahead of him in the industry.

Raina says

Kind of a cool concept, but the execution is in sore need of an editor. Written by a teenager, and you can... tell. Sample sentence from pg. 426: "He had feared that Zyid would ask exactly that, though it wasn't unexpected."

Seriously.

The only reasons I finished this were that it was recommended by one of my teens, and I read the first half on a flight (it took me a week to get through the second half).

Interesting to see in the mind of a kid who's a little, let's say, disillusioned by school, which might be why it's getting an audience. Wanted to like it, but really.

Camille says

This surprised me. i liked this book more than I thought I would. At first I didn't think I would, but I did.

My problems with this book:

- There was a lot of fighting. At the end of the book there was a 25 page fight scene. That was really long. There were a lot of other long fight scenes, but this one topped it.
- I was confused about the idea of the book. It was a good one, but i was very confused.
- I was shocked on how quickly the Truancy lets Tack in. It was just like he walked up said I want to join and they said Ok and fully trusted him. That was very unbelievable.
- Also, after only a few training sessions with his mentor, Tack was absolutely amazing at fighting and beat someone who spent a good portion of their life fighting and winning.

The good points?

- Well I did like the character named Umasi, Tack's mentor. He had good morals and was kind, but firm in his teachings. Always having small phrases for each situation. "If something harmful is attached to you, sever it." Didn't really like the situation this one took place, but it was really his fault.
- Tack's sister Suzie was a good strong character. Very kind and loving despite the situation she was in.

Now there are more things I didn't like about this book than I did like, but I still think it was a good book. For an 18 year old writer who came up with his own idea and own names, his own plot and complete characters, not stealing from anyone else. It was very good.

David says

This was a decent story, but I do wish that it hadn't been such a two-dimensional situation for the sides. It was almost cartoonish, no depth and not really believable in the situation when it came down to it. It was so close to make it less of a concept on that, but that wasn't done. I know this is supposed to be a teen novel, but I think even as a teen I would have expected a little more beneath the surface. The fight scenes could go on long enough to lose their force as well. Easy things that could have been changed to make it a much better story, one that would have worked for teens and adults too. Just too bad. Decent story underneath that which would have been much better.
