



# The Tragedy Paper

*Elizabeth LaBan*

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## **The Tragedy Paper** Elizabeth LaBan

Tim Macbeth, a seventeen-year-old albino and a recent transfer to the prestigious Irving School, where the motto is “Enter here to be and find a friend.” A friend is the last thing Tim expects or wants—he just hopes to get through his senior year unnoticed. Yet, despite his efforts to blend into the background, he finds himself falling for the quintessential “It” girl, Vanessa Sheller, girlfriend of Irving’s most popular boy. To Tim’s surprise, Vanessa is into him, too, but she can kiss her social status goodbye if anyone ever finds out. Tim and Vanessa begin a clandestine romance, but looming over them is the Tragedy Paper, Irving’s version of a senior year thesis, assigned by the school’s least forgiving teacher.

Jumping between viewpoints of the love-struck Tim and Duncan, a current senior about to uncover the truth of Tim and Vanessa, *The Tragedy Paper* is a compelling tale of forbidden love and the lengths people will go to keep their love.

## **The Tragedy Paper Details**

Date : Published January 8th 2013 by Knopf Books for Young Readers

ISBN :

Author : Elizabeth LaBan

Format : Kindle Edition 320 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Realistic Fiction, Romance, Fiction, School Stories, Boarding School, Mystery

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## From Reader Review The Tragedy Paper for online ebook

### Kristin says

It's possible that John Green has ruined me for all other YA books.

The Tragedy Paper isn't plot driven nor is it a character driven book. If anything, it's concept driven and unfortunately, both the plot and characters suffer because of it.

Duncan is a high school senior at a prestigious boarding school and has traumatizing memories of the events of the previous year. The previous inhabitant of his bedroom, one of last years seniors, Tim, has left him a stack of CDs in which he narrates the events of last school year so that Duncan can know the entire story. Tim explains, in detail, his insecurities about his albinism and his obsession ("love") for Vanessa, a beautiful girl dating the most popular boy in school.

The story that Tim tells has all of the literary characteristics of a tragedy and that's the main concept that LaBan plays with in this book. Tim's tragedy directly reflects in Duncan's (the listener's) life and Duncan feels trapped because of it.

LaBan takes an admirable stab at trying to build a work around this concept of tragedy but without a catching plot or well-built characters, the entire thing falls flat. The entire time I kept wondering why I even cared about Tim or Duncan since I barely knew anything about them. I didn't know why Tim was so obsessed with Vanessa and I found it hard to pity their love triangle when Vanessa was written so shallowly.

I mentioned that John Green may have ruined me for all YA novels because though The Tragedy Paper had similar themes as many of John Green's books, Green writes such powerful and emotionally stimulating characters that the characters in this book felt even more flat in comparison.

A good idea but unfortunately, poorly executed.

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### Rheo3000 says

I'd like to sum up this book:

- told through flashback for some reason
- features an albino telling a story to another kid who is even less developed - also he took part in the 'tragic' part of the story so I'm unsure as to how he became so riveted by its retelling
- there is a tragedy that is continually referred to but not revealed until the end ... at which point I realized it wasn't a tragedy, it was more of a fairly standard sledding accident
- there is a completely undeveloped love interest who likes to dress like a rainbow and smells like a pig when she gets sick
- the albino kid has head aches and eye aches at the same frequency at which he references the past he shares

with the other even less developed character

- the featured school locally sources their cafeteria food - this is mentioned a lot so I guess it's a plot point
  - I think the teacher from dead poets society snuck into this book and took a nap, but then he got trapped!
  - the real tragedy is that Barnes & Noble tricked me into buying this book with their recommendations based on books I bought. I would like to get my hands on that software and take it sledding ... if you know what I mean
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### **Lea says**

Ich hab kurz über 3 Sterne nachgedacht, denn das Buch ist stellenweise nett, aber gerade gegen Ende hin fasert es einfach nur aus. Die ganze Zeit über wird auf einen tragischen Moment hingearbeitet, der dann einfach kein so großer Höhepunkt ist. Im Gegenteil. Mir hat eher der Anfang des Buches und die Annäherungen der Figuren gefallen. Die Motivation einiger Charaktere im Buch wurde mir einfach nicht ganz klar.

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### **♥Rachel♥ says**

3.5 Stars

The Tragedy Paper is not my usual type of read but something about the synopsis drew me in. I was affected by this story, but in a mixed way. I guess this is to be expected when this tale revolves around the re-telling of a tragic event involving two students, Tim an albino and social outsider and Vanessa, the popular and pretty girl.

Duncan is entering into his senior year at The Irving, a boarding school in New York. He's trying to forget an event from the last year, which he had a part in. But he's put smack into the middle of it when he discovers his "treasure" left in his dorm room are audio CD's made by Tim, recounting the tragedy and the months leading up to it. At first Duncan doesn't want to listen, he just wants to get back to normal school life, and the pursuit of a girl he hopes didn't get away. But soon the lure of finding out exactly what happened proves too hard to resist and he's listening, riveted by the story.

This was an unusual tale, really two stories wrapped up in one. First we have Duncan the senior who feels guilty about what happened to Tim and Vanessa, although, we have no idea why. Then we have the story of Tim and Vanessa recounted by Tim through his CD's. The story slowly unfolds as flashbacks through Tim and Duncan's recall, and through that, we get the bittersweet tale of how Tim and Vanessa formed an unlikely bond. We also get a secondary romance of Duncan and Daisy.

I have to say I felt more of a connection to Tim than anyone else. I think this was partly due to the fact that his tale was in the first person, as he was telling his story to Duncan. I felt his loneliness and self-

consciousness profoundly throughout the story and was happy that Vanessa latched onto him. I can't imagine always feeling like everyone sees you as a freak. Just the way he described reactions from people and dealing with being in public hurt my heart. I yearned for him to make friends so that Vanessa wasn't his only focus, though. I didn't have the same connection to Vanessa, and I while I was thrilled that she treated him as a human being and more, I wanted to shake her at times. I'm sure she knew how much she affected Tim. The situation was bittersweet, and open ended.

Apart from Tim's bit, the rest of the story is told in the third person and I'm not sure that worked entirely well. I felt a distance with Duncan and couldn't really get a read on him. Maybe if his part in the tragedy was revealed earlier, I could've understood him and his motivations a little better. This might have been purposeful because the main focus of the story was Tim and Vanessa, but I think I would've enjoyed this more if Duncan was more fleshed out. I wasn't really moved by Duncan and Daisy's romance either. There was no lead up and I really knew nothing about Daisy.

Overall I enjoyed this story and I was anxious to find out what transpired, but I also felt there was something missing. I wouldn't hesitate to pick up another read by Ms. La Ban, because even with some of my issues, I was engrossed.

*A copy of this was provided by Knopf Books for Young Readers through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!*

You can find this review and more [The Readers Den](#).

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## **Ken says**

THE TRAGEDY PAPER's focus is a love triangle between 17-year-olds at a boarding school. What makes it a rarity in the YA field is how "clean" it is. Anyone reading YA these days knows that, as a genre, young adult literature has grown up and skewed strongly toward more adult themes, language, and issues. Not so with Elizabeth Laban's debut novel. The book is wall to wall free of profanity or R-rated acts of any sort. It's just a straight-out, old-fashioned love story -- with a few quirks.

Quirk #1: It starts and circles back like S.E. Hinton's THE OUTSIDERS for no other reason than (according to the afterword) Hinton's book -- another "clean" read, thanks to the era it was written -- is one of Laban's favorites.

Quirk #2: The protagonist is an albino. This reminded me of Palascio's WONDER, in a way. Obviously the characters here are much older, but still, Tim Macbeth (I kid you not) stands out like a white light that draws stares from all around. He is another case of a "marked man" in the lead, against all odds.

Quirk #3: THE TRAGEDY PAPER is a book within a book. It's mostly about Tim's love for a girl named Vanessa, who happens to be attached to that predictable YA staple, the most handsome and athletic popular jock in the school (here named Patrick). But Tim's entire narrative is told, THIRTEEN REASONS WHY-like, via tape (CDs in this case). The listener? A new senior named Duncan (again, I kid you not), a year on the heels of the triangular leads, who listens to the recordings because he happens to get Tim's room from the fateful year before. Neatly enough, he, like Tim, has a romantic interest he is pursuing.

Quirk #4: The book seems to be contemporary, yet reflects little of its time in history and how modern teens,

lifestyles are today. At one point, up early in the morning, one character uses the line "Time to make the doughnuts" as a joke. What 17-year-old would understand THAT allusion, I wondered. The Dunkin Donuts commercial came out in the 80s. More strangely still, I think cell phones are mentioned once, and one big event in the novel -- a secret "outing" planned by Patrick -- is advertised via handwritten posters over a series of days. This jars in an almost anachronistic way. What kids that age would bother with such an old-school, labor-intensive, and clearly dangerous (if you don't want to be discovered) method of announcing a party? Does the word "texting" mean nothing to this book?

Quirk #5: The Tragedy Paper, an assignment from the English teacher Mr. Simon, plays a minor role throughout. You keep expecting it to somehow play a larger role, but no. The only connection is that, by definition, both book and assignment are tragedies. Nothing earth-shaking there.

Overall, the book scored high marks for its earnestness and flowing style. Is it in the upper tier of boarding school books? Hardly. And it loses steam toward the end, where it meets an almost anti-climactic end. Still, the narrative pulls you along, and you wonder as much as Duncan does how all of Tim's troubles will pull together. In the end, and ironically enough, I felt as if the book needed a more tragic end than it got. Weird, huh? Nevertheless, I admired Laban for what she accomplished here and think many students, from middle school and up, will agree.

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### **Christina (A Reader of Fictions) says**

LaBan's *The Tragedy Paper* is contemplative and academic, sure to appeal to readers looking for a meatier, slower-paced read. It's a strange sort of book, though one that certainly has some good company. Though I didn't exactly fly through *The Tragedy Paper* or become caught up in the characters, I really enjoyed reading it, curious to find out what had happened during the previous year at the Irving School.

There's a whole subset of young adult fiction about boarding schools. Something about them calls to the imagination, I guess: the freedom or how elite they seem, perhaps. The Irving School has an illustrious history, complex traditions, and the requisite quirky professor needed to help guide the main character to enlightenment in the style of *Dead Poets' Society*. The Irving School holds more appeal for me than many of the boarding school settings I've read (that don't have magic), from the archway to the custom of departing seniors leaving treasure behind for the student next to receive their dorm room.

Duncan, ostensibly the main character of the piece, really only serves as a frame story, which is rather daring. The treasure left for Duncan is a stack of CDs, upon which Tim Macbeth has recorded the story of his tragic semester at Irving School. We really actually learn very little about Duncan throughout *The Tragedy Paper*, since he spends most of his time either listening to Tim's story or thinking about Tim's story. While ordinarily, I might find this framing device frustrating and unnecessary, I like it here because the way that Duncan becomes caught up in Tim's tale the same way I become entangled in a wonderful novel. I thought it was a wonderful sort of metaphor for the process of reading, becoming caught up in the journey of someone else and growing as a result of it, though you have actually been a passive observer.

Tim Macbeth, like all tragic heroes, suffers from a fatal flaw: being too uncomfortable with himself as a result of his albinism. All his life, Tim has been stared at, feared, or pitied because he was born without the pigmentation most people have. He has never been particularly close to anyone outside of his family and resists connection with anyone new, sure that they will only ever see him as an albino, not as a deeper person. Of course, the person most obsessed with his albinism is Tim himself.

From the beginning, it's clear that something awful happened during Tim's one semester (the second semester of his senior year) at Irving School. There's a girl, of course, beautiful and perfect and maybe even interested in him, but, unfortunately, she also has a boyfriend, the most popular guy in school. There were some echoes of *Looking for Alaska* in this, I think. The mystery of the harrowing event at the end of the year kept me rapt, but was a bit of a letdown when I finally got there, mostly because of the allusion to a literary work I didn't much care for in the first place.

The Tragedy Paper will appear to a certain niche of reader, those who prefer high concept to action. At no point did I feel bored and LaBan sustained my curiosity about the mystery all the way through. LaBan's debut is impressive, and I will likely be reading more of her work in the future.

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## Jessica says

In the last few years, John Green has kind of become the king of contemporary “realistic” teen fiction. I mean, just look at the furor caused by *The Fault In Our Stars*. It's so popular that anyone who dares post a negative review on this site is descended upon by hordes of angry fans who don't get that someone else not liking something doesn't have to invalidate your own enjoyment of it.

I love John Green as much as anyone else, but his books often contain many of the same young-adulthood elements: a situation that takes parents out of the equation, a predictable social structure in which the nerdy main character falls for a beautiful, borderline manic-pixie It Girl whose It Guy boyfriend is a jerk who doesn't appreciate her, an adherence to traditions and rituals within the teenage community, and an underlying appreciation of academics (usually literature, but once it was math). He didn't invent these tropes, but I definitely associate them with his books.

*The Tragedy Paper* contains all of these elements, which is why I described the book to several of my friends as an introduction to John Green. And yet, it still feels like its own little beast.

The main character of this book is Tim Macbeth. He's an albino and, because of that, he's always been a little bit of an outcast. His parents are moving from Chicago to Italy, so he's going to get a fresh start by spending the last semester of his senior year at The Irving School, a boarding school in New York whose motto is “Enter here and find a friend.” En route to the school, Tim is stranded at the airport hotel and meets Vanessa, also traveling to Irving. The two connect, but she's got a boyfriend and Tim assumes that his albinism means he doesn't have a chance.

Once he's at Irving, Tim learns about two important school traditions: the Tragedy Paper – a senior English thesis that's pretty self-explanatory in theme – and the senior Game, which is basically a big blow out planned and executed by a group of “randomly chosen” students who just so happen to be the most popular kids: in this case, it's Vanessa's boyfriend, Patrick who is in charge, but because he's the new kid, Tim is invited to help out.

The book is structured in a sort of roundabout way. It's actually two stories, Tim's being relayed to Duncan – an Irving student a year behind Tim – via a collection of CDs Tim burned and left behind in his dorm room as part of another school tradition – leaving a “treasure” for the junior who will inherit your room as a senior. Duncan becomes absorbed in Tim's story as he struggles to complete his Tragedy Paper assignment and to navigate the scary world of liking a girl. This structure didn't always work for me, because Duncan was a less interesting character and the asides about how he had to change the CD were awkward transitions.

However, Duncan knows how the story is going to end before it even begins – he was present at the climactic event of the book, so Tim's narration becomes more tensiony as we the reader aren't sure what it's building to.

Eh, Duncan's a bit of a device but it wasn't all together awful or cloying. It's my only real complaint about the book, which is ultimately as smart and engaging as anything Green's put out. And honestly, I was so nervous about where the story was headed that I don't think my ass unclenched for the entire three days I was reading it.

Ass clenching is always a sign of a great book.

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## Wer. says

Páni, momentáln? nemám slov. Tahle kniha m? hodn? zasáhla.

+ Recenze: <http://wer-books.blogspot.cz/2015/07/...>

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## Best says

(This review is also posted on B's Book Blog!)

## 2.5 stars

*Sometimes it's hard, impossible even, to know how much magnitude a choice holds until it is all over.*

Duncan Meade enters the Irving School a senior this year. As a school tradition, each senior gets their own dorm room without having to share it with anyone. On the first day of school, each senior will go to the senior hall and find their room; and in the room, there will be "treasures" left behind for them from the previous senior who lived there. Duncan has one fear: he is afraid to find out if the smallest room in the hall belongs to him. And of course, it does. The treasures the previous owner, Tim Macbeth, leaves behind for Duncan is a note and a stack of CDs. Those CDs play the recordings of Tim's story for Duncan as the "meat of your Tragedy Paper," which is the Irving School's senior English paper to be handed in at the end of the school year.

*The Tragedy Paper* started out, for me, as intriguing; I was curious to see how the connection between Tim Macbeth and Duncan Meade would play out. Would it be, you know, like Shakespeare's Macbeth, in which Macbeth kills Duncan? Or would Tim Macbeth share the same tragic flaw with Macbeth, and Duncan the receiving end of that flaw like King Duncan? Or what? Of course, I was expecting the use of these two names to have some significance. I have been taught in Literature class that a text alludes to something like this, it is saying something implicitly, and you should find what it infers. But it looks like this book falls flat in that department, because as far as I know, the only function of this allusion is only to tell the reader: *Hey! This book is a tragedy because its two main characters are named after the two in Shakespeare's tragedy Macbeth!* Hmm. Right now, in my head, I can even see my beloved Lit teacher hold up her index finger in a warning manner, and hear her say her favorite disapproval: "Nonono."



Again, I don't seem to share everyone (who's read it)'s enthusiasm about this book. Some say that it's "deep" and "profound," but I honestly don't see how that can be. It's not like I suck that much at reading between the lines and critical thinking; how about it's just *meh*? 90% of the book is about Tim told, narrated by Tim's recordings which Duncan listens to; while Duncan's part takes up only about 10%. And this makes me wonder why it has to be written this way. Not only does it bother me that the book doesn't just simply tell Tim's story--which already is the focus, if not the entire meat, of this story--it has to have Duncan as a medium (why bother?), but it also irritates me that, knowing very well Duncan's function is only to hang around and play the CDs so we can listen to them as well, the book tries so hard to have Tim affect his romantic life--in a way trying to make a connection between them when it's strained and uncalled for. If there'd been some believable and close connection between them for the recordings to have their natural effects, I would've believed it and appreciated it more.

In the end, I'll say that *The Tragedy Paper* is not a bad book, but there are a lot of things that I personally didn't like. The ending, for instance, felt too contrived in the way that it is steered into a tragedy pattern, which I understand since I get it, the point is that this book is a tragedy; but I still didn't like it that much. And the effects Tim's story has on Duncan are to me a little too unbelievable. I'd love for it to have more substance, and if the switching between two points of view is going to be this unbalanced and the connection this strained, how about no switching at all? I'd be happy to read Tim's story alone as the whole book without Duncan having a voice in part of the narration. That's just me. For the most part, I enjoyed Tim's story and wanted to see how it was tragic and how it would end, but once I did, I felt greatly underwhelmed. Still, as I said, it's not a bad book. It has good potentials but it's just not my cup of tea. 2.5 stars.

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I received a digital copy from NetGalley and the publisher for review.

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## **Renee says**

This is hard to tell but the first word I have is PROFOUND. I know there isn't anyone who reads this that will not be completely blown away. The situations and the story is pretty complex and dare I say tragic. There is a part when Tim answers to Mr Simon, the English teacher, that he didn't know if he meant tragic in the literary sense. That was like boom BIG reveal. You will get what happens next. They say you give five 5 yes 5 stars to a book that leaves you thinking, maybe laughing, maybe crying, but this left me hopeful! Sometimes even a senior can "get it" , really make a choice and understand what that choice means.

I feel so blessed to get ARC's and blog, this is such an honor for me and I wish I could meet the author. I will say that the book description in my opinion is not accurate. I did my own edit. It is released in Jan and then I will come back and add my quotes from my clippings. Now if I did it would ruin it. Let me tell you I totally GOT it.

My version:

Tim Macbeth is a 17-year-old albino and a recent transfer to the prestigious Irving School, where the motto is, "Enter here to be and find a friend." Tim has never been comfortable with his appearance and he really understands that people are staring and looking, but in a good way they are curious, not making fun or thinking he is a freak. When his Mom and Step Dad (who loves Tim like he is his own Son) decide that they will move to Italy and Tim will have one GREAT senior year at his Alma mater, Irving. There is a huge

snow storm and at the airport he meet Vanessa. She treats him so totally normal that when he says he has a room, she goes across to the hotel with him and for the first time Tim is not albino, he is just Tim. She tells him she is going to Irving, he can't bring himself to tell her he is going too. He knows she has a boyfriend, Patrick (not a fan of his) Tim and Vanessa enter into a clandestine relationship, but looming over them is the Tragedy Paper, Irving's version of a senior year thesis, assigned by the school's least forgiving teacher.

The story unfolds from two alternating viewpoints: Tim, the tragic, love-struck figure, and Duncan, a current senior, who uncovers the truth behind Tim's story. Tim gave Duncan the story. As ritual and traditions are tested the story takes a few turns in the last 1/3 that blows my mind. Tim and Vanessa's story is told and the entire truth is revealed. Can Duncan produce the greatest Tragedy Paper in Irving's history?

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## Lauren says

As the contemporary lover I am, I ADORED this book! The boarding school setting was great. The characters were beautifully fleshed out and compelling. The plot was full of twists and turns and suspense. Basically, this book had it all and a whole lot more!

### Official Review:

When I originally heard about *The Tragedy Paper* by Elizabeth LeBan, I instantly added it to my wish list. It sounded like an emotional and compelling story. Better yet, I had been hearing some comparisons of it to books by John Green and Jay Asher, two of my favorite YA authors. Thankfully, *The Tragedy Paper* was a beautifully written and well executed coming of age that has landed Elizabeth LeBan on my "authors to watch" list.

The first aspect of this book that I enjoyed was the way in which it was told. Elizabeth LeBan intertwines the stories of Duncan and Tim by using third person POV for Duncan and voice recording/Thirteen Reasons Why style for Tim. At first, I was worried that it wouldn't work for the book, that I wouldn't be able to get a clear picture of everything occurring. However, as the story progressed, this method become one of my favorite parts. Elizabeth beautifully combined their stories, switching back and forth at the most perfect of moments. She also did a great job of fleshing out their stories on their own as well as bringing them together as one, and while Tim's story was my favorite, Duncan story was enjoyable as well.

Moving on, I really enjoyed the characters in this one. Duncan and Tim were boys who at the surface appear to be very different, but at the heart, are very similar. Both are looking for their place in a world where there doesn't seem one. They're both falling in love for the first time, and dealing with the pros and cons to that. They're learning to let go and live, and with that, learning that bad things happen to good people. Duncan and Tim were two characters I loved getting to know more about. They were both smart, determined, and sweet boys, and I feel that all teens as well as adults will be able to see parts of themselves as well as their high school experience in their characters as well as their friends. Better yet, Elizabeth LaBan also introduced an amazing supporting cast in this one as well. I loved the addition of the high school English teacher. He was an interesting main, and I teacher I know I would have loved to have in real life. I also enjoyed reading more

about Vanessa, Tim's love interest, and Daisy, Duncan's love interest. While the former of the two plays a bigger part in the book, I enjoyed reading about both of them equally and felt both added wonders to the book.

The plot in this was also captivating and well-done. As mentioned above, I loved the method in which it was told, and through that method came a lot of suspense as well as twists and turns. Throughout the book, I was constantly curious to see how everything would play out. I knew from the start something tragic happened to Vanessa and Tim, and while it was hinted to slowly, I never knew exactly what happened to the very end, which led to a lot of wonderment and suspense on my part. I also enjoyed that the main part of this book was about growing up and learning to let go and move on. Tim and Duncan were two boys who had faced a lot in the last year, and through their story a lot of emotional and personal growth was made, making it a huge as well as essential part of the book.

In all, *The Tragedy Paper* by Elizabeth LeBan is a gem of a book! I highly, highly recommend that all of you give this book a try, especially those of you who enjoy contemporary novels, ones specifically in style of Green or Asher. However, word of warning: set apart a good amount of time to read this one, because once you start it, it's hard to let go.

Grade: A+

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### **Tanja (Tanychy) St. Delphi says**

Review also posted at [Ja ?itam, a ti?](#)

Even though this book sat on my shelf for over a year and even though I felt pinch of guilt for not reading it, now when I finally read it I regret nothing! The day I picked up this book and started reading it was better than any before it.

Reason for that lay in the fact that after a whole semester of reading and discussing Shakespeare I was ready to understand all the jokes here, together with all the concepts and themes presented in his works that could be found here too. We start from the sole idea of tragedy and how it was presented in his plays. It was something to discuss and think about and when the students of Irving School got their final task. It was so interesting when you get to read both Tim's and Duncan's story, which were intertwined but at the same time different.

I loved the switch in narration and the change of the stories, which made me to read this story even faster as I was never bored with it. It was easy to understand Tim and his voice, his fears and troubles. Just the fact that he was albino made him different and he couldn't run away from it. But also I felt for Duncan. I could see that something really bothered him and that there is more to this story, that mysterious moment that hung in the air. It took some time to understand his uneasiness with Tim's story. But when you discover the connection you see why.

Another great thing about this book was that it was not only a tragic story, it was much more. It was a story about ending one chapter in your life, finishing high school and understanding life. It was also a nice romantic story too. Both romantic stories felt real and what I liked the most slow-building.

At the end it was writing and narration that really grabbed me here and kept me turn the pages. I really hope

to experience it again someday.

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## Vendea says

Přesně tohle jsem očekávala od Greenovek, kde jsem to ale bohužel nenašla. Citlivý a dojemný příběh o tom, jak to dneska vypadá ve společnosti teenagerů. Rychle se to čte, hlavní hrdina je sympatický, je to albín a celé je to takové dojemně tragické. Bavila jsem se od začátku do konce. A nejtíší plus za Don't stop believin.

4/5\*

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## Lisarenea says

The fact that I managed to trudge my way through to the end of this novel is more a testament to my misguided faith in the rave reviews this book received than the book itself. Something like that little train going up the hill, I just continued to assure myself that things would get better because so many readers gave it 5 stars! That means it must get better, right? Sadly, no.

So, here is my review and yes, this review contains spoilers. Here is my spoiler alert: there isn't much to spoil. The terrible tragedy that we are waiting for is... well... not much of a tragedy and the part our main character plays in making this awful thing happen is pretty much nonexistent. The book description compared this to Looking for Alaska and 13 Reasons Why. Seriously? Let's see – it takes place at a boarding school and the main character listens to some recordings of another character's story. Oh yeah, and it is about teens and is a book. I assume the comparisons are drawn, in part, because the story attempts to build suspense toward a dreaded event that we know is coming. But, it is just not anywhere close to being in the same league. Frankly, comparing it to either borders on false advertisement.

The best thing about this book is the concept of the Tragedy Paper assignment. That was actually a great idea for a novel, just not this one. Or, maybe this one after a few more drafts, preferably with more natural dialog, a more fleshed out storyline with some actual things happening and a lot more character development. And when I say character development, I am not suggesting more analysis of motives or personality traits from the unrealistically self-aware characters themselves.

I did laugh out loud a few times – but I don't think the author was trying to be funny, it just happened. My favorite part was how blown away one boy was that the girl he had not seen since school ended for the summer knew that it had been three months since they saw one another and predicted if that happened again – gasp – they would not meet again until December! “He quickly calculated the timing. It had been three months, and yes, it would be December in three more months. He was amazed that she had that information so available.” Wow. Amazing. Almost exactly as amazing as this book.

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## Ava says

*ARC supplied by NetGalley and Knopf Books for Young Readers in exchange for an honest review.*

Stopped at around page sixty.

What I read of *THE TRAGEDY PAPER* wasn't *terrible*. It wasn't bad. It wasn't infuriating. It was just tremendously uninteresting and dull, and that's the worst type of novel - the type where you have nothing to say about it, because there wasn't anything unique, or noticeable, or even angering.

Because you can't look away from horrendous books, as hard as you may try. It's still sucking you in, isn't it? But it's easy to abandon a boring story, because there's nothing.

The characters were plain, the writing average. The plot really was nonexistent from what I read. It was incredibly tedious, and I can't stress that enough. Perhaps I should've read a bit more, but I won't be bothered reading some more snore-inducing pages before I actually fall asleep.

The first fifty pages are some of the most important for a book, because it decides whether you'll stay for the ride or drop it like it's on fire. I choose to drop it like it was burning.

I don't have any violent feelings toward this book. It just wasn't my cup of tea.

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