



# Such a Pretty Girl

*Laura Wiess*

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## **Such a Pretty Girl** Laura Wiess

They promised Meredith nine years of safety, but only gave her three. Her father was supposed to be locked up until Meredith turned eighteen. She thought she had time to grow up, get out, and start a new life. But Meredith is only fifteen, and today her father is coming home from prison. Today her time has run out.

## **Such a Pretty Girl Details**

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Author : Laura Wiess

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# From Reader Review Such a Pretty Girl for online ebook

## Addi • Pages Within Me says

Truly heartbreaking, but still lined with hope.

Meredith, while suffering from major PTSD, was so strong and willful and I admired her. Her relationship with Andy, while unconventional, made me happy and I enjoyed the character development on both sides. The ending also made me smile and I liked that. The anger I felt at a few characters and situations throughout this book was also somewhat mollified by seeing those characters face the consequences they deserved.

Overall, taking into account the subject matter of the book, I enjoyed and appreciated it. I'm glad I read it, even if it was hard to read at times. This author knows how to pull at heartstrings.

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## Kelsie says

Although this book deals with a dark and demented issue, its style, readability, and theme of justice made it impossible for me to put down. Meredith, a 15-year-old girl, was promised nine years of protection from the government when her father was charged with molesting and raping her when she was 12 years old. Her father was sent to prison and was supposed to be locked up until Meredith was 18 and legally free from her father's guardianship. But to Meredith's horror, he is released after only three years for "good behavior." Meredith comments, "Of course he was on good behavior, there aren't any children in prison." Now that he has been released back into the public, Meredith (as well as her friends) know it is only a matter of time before her father will strike again. He is not the type of offender who wants to change - he is a pedophile who truly believes he loves children (boys and girls) and can't keep his hands off, regardless of what the law says. Meredith finds herself in an almost impossible situation: does she wait around for her father to attack a pure and innocent child, or does she offer herself as a sacrifice, hoping he can be put away for good?

This gripping story will have you not only disgusted by the degrading acts of incest, pedophilia, and child molestation, it will also have your heart enraptured in rooting for Meredith as she heroically attempts to fight for herself and all other child molestation and rape victims. This book, though a difficult subject, realistically portrays the evil that too many children encounter in our society: molestation and rape by a family member. Though this entire book could not be taught in the classroom, it is a good resource for teachers and students to read in order to have at least some sort of understanding of the horror that molestation and rape victims face and have to deal with. I think that excerpts could definitely be used in the classroom. This book could also be used to discuss the justice system's procedure in handling child sex offenders. Also, Meredith's mother turns a blind eye to Meredith's father and refuses to see that his actions were done by choice, not by mistake. This book could be used to explore the real-life cases and consequences of those who choose to turn a blind eye to the evils in society and accept the wrong done by others and the destruction it causes in a family, community, and society.

ALA 2008 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers

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## **Talon says**

A lot of things really irked me about this book. Not the subject matter, though. No, it was more than that for me. My first problem started with one of the main characters. Meredith's mother.

What in the ever loving hell is wrong with this mother? How could she be so inconsiderate, selfish, and dense? Is this a typical thing? I really hope not. As a mother, this is something I cannot stand for. Neglect. That's how I see this whole thing. The ending of the book have the mother just what she had coming. I wish it would have been more.

Also, In what kind of world does a pedophile get THREE years of prison? After their daughter admits to the things he does? IN court? What kind of world is this book taking place in? Not to mention the amount of time we spend reading about this girl running away. Constantly. Every chapter she is running away. Where is this child's help? Why would you want someone to run away so much? Once or twice will suffice, I promise.

The plus side of Such a Pretty girl was how strong the dialogue was. It was intense and realistic but other than that, this book had nothing to offer to me. Nothing but an urge to help this child who's mother clearly wouldn't. Also, it's a very short book that packs a huge punch that most readers might struggle with.

I really just felt like the author provided poor plots and situations. In turn, the characters make poor decisions and choices. And then everything was just lost to me. Pointless. I can think of at least four other ways this book could have went.

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## **Penelope Douglas says**

Wonderfully written story. A little pricey for being so short--I wish it was longer--but I loved the way things were described and the twist at the very end.

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## **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Jocelyn Pearce for [TeensReadToo.com](http://TeensReadToo.com)

In SUCH A PRETTY GIRL, Laura Wiess grabbed and held my attention from the first page to the last. New Jersey teenager Meredith was supposed to have nine years of safety from her father, so she'd be eighteen and out of the house when he was released from prison. But three years later, when Meredith is fifteen, her father gets out for good behavior. No matter what he did to Meredith and to other children before her, Meredith's mother is more than ready to take him back.

Meredith isn't alone, though. She has her grandmother, the mayor of the town, who wants Meredith to move in with her to escape her father. She has Andy, her best friend, the guy she is in love with, who was also scarred by Meredith's father as a child. She has Andy's mother, who moved across the street from Meredith's family just to keep other children from the horror from which she couldn't protect Andy. She has Nigel, a retired policemen who has a plan to get Meredith's father back in jail and away from children. Even though Meredith is far from alone, she still feels that way when she can't even count on the people every kid is supposed to be able to count on: her parents.

Meredith wants to get her father back in prison. She wants her mother to go back to visiting him instead of having him in their house. She wants to be able to go into her own home without fear. She wants other kids to be safe, too. She doesn't know what that's going to take, and she's certainly not unafraid, but she isn't going to let him hurt her, or any other kids, again.

This moving, powerful novel is one that should not be missed. Once you start reading it, you won't be able to put this book down. I wasn't! It's an emotional book that is beautifully, powerfully written and unique, and it'll stay with you long past the last word.

Laura Wiess's characters are as well-written as the rest of the book, very realistic (in some cases, scarily so). They're three-dimensional characters in an equally (and, again, scarily) believable story that will certainly be a favorite of anyone who reads it. I know it's one of mine now! Don't miss this book.

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### **Michelle Llewellyn says**

What a stupid story! Yes, the author is trying to deal with a heavy issue like child incest and pedophiles but the world she's created here is just too unbelievable. The main character, Meredith, age 15, just can't seem to focus on anything except getting away from her sadistic parents and their bad sex to be with her crippled boyfriend, Andy, so they can have the good sex and drink the good booze. Hanging out of a car window while drunk was what led to Andy's paralysis yet he's constantly swigging from a bottle of whiskey and engaging in underage sexual activity. Sex with daddy is bad while sex with Andy is perfectly acceptable. No moral scruples here.

Meredith has no close girlfriends her own age and the only responsible female adult in her life is her grandma because her Mom is just plain crazy. Once again, the harmful message that a woman is nothing without a man in her life trumps the more serious issues the author fails to get across.

The big, bad, boogie-man who wants to get in everyone's pants is Meredith's father who just got out of prison. Apparently everyone in town, except Meredith's crazy mother, hates his guts and are ready to run him out on a rail. (view spoiler) Take my advice and skip this one.

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### **Jamie L says**

This book was stupid, boring, and too short to warrant \$9.

SPOILER: girl is abused by her dad; dad goes to jail; dad gets out of jail; mom is more interested in dad than daughter; dad starts harassing daughter again; daughter hits him with a statue of the holy mother and breaks his head. the end.

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### **Angie says**

SUCH A PRETTY GIRL has only been out for three and a half years now, but I kind of get the impression that--similar to Julia Hoban's Willow--it hasn't reached the wider audience it deserves as a result of its somewhat disturbing subject matter. I know I held off picking it up for awhile. Well, make that several days. I would have gone longer, I'm sure, but I read two absolutely stellar reviews of it and wanted to try it so bad. However, I have a very hard time reading stories about child abuse. I haven't the stomach for it and I tend to emerge so much the worse for wear that I can't make a habit of them. However. Something about the tone of

these reviews (I wish I could remember whose they were) encouraged me. So I made a silent agreement with myself that if my library had it, I would go ahead and read it. And wouldn't you know it, it did have it. And this ended up being another case of me running out to buy the book before I'd even finished my library copy. It was that good. And this all happened within the space of one 24-hour period, as this slender volume clocks in at a scant 224 pages. But I'm telling you, Laura Wiess knows how to make every word count. It instantly snagged a spot on my Beloved Bookshelf and I think about it and Meredith often.

Meredith Shale thought she'd have longer to prepare. She thought her father would be locked away for nine years. That's what his sentence read. But after serving three years in prison for child abuse, he's released on good behavior. And he's coming home. Her mother, who never got over her father being gone, is ready to welcome him home with open arms. Meredith's reaction is just a little bit different. At fifteen, she thought she'd be able to reach her eighteenth birthday and leave home, thus avoiding ever having to see him again. But now he's back living in the same apartment complex. And Meredith has no one but her best friend Andy and retired cop Nigel to turn to when her anger and fear threaten to overwhelm her. But Nigel can't always be *right there* when she needs him. And Andy, who is confined to his wheelchair and not so incidentally had his own brush with Mer's father, really does have his own set of messy issues to deal with as much as he loves and wants to protect Meredith. When the unthinkable first happened, no one believed her. And the horror spread to other kids as a result. In the years since her father was incarcerated, Meredith has acquired several coping mechanisms for dealing with what happened to her. From her strict vitamin-taking regimen to her obsession with prime numbers, everything in her life has its place. Now that he's out, even on parole, she abhors the idea of seeing him, doesn't believe for a second his claims of reformation, and is determined no one else will ever suffer at his hands the way she did again.

I was shocked at how much I loved *SUCH A PRETTY GIRL*. It's an incredibly fast-paced story, with a very *present* narrative style so that it feels like you're standing at the sink with Meredith in the morning, sitting on the curb with her under the glaring sun of the afternoon and staring up at Andy's door, walking home with her at night--a ball of dread tearing a hole in the pit of her stomach. And here and there the story is shot through with brief flashbacks to the time in her life when she was most powerless. But it never overwhelms completely. It never made me want to shut the book and leave. Rather, I could not put it down. I loved this girl from page one and I was going to see her through to the end. Which is perfect, by the way. Wiess strikes a touching and precarious balance between moments when Meredith is supported by a desperately needed group of truly good, if slightly unusual people--a cop, a cripple, a zealot--and moments when she is left utterly alone to stand up to her demons. Because she's the definition of a survivor. Meredith lives through nightmares unimaginable, more than any 15-year-old should ever have to live through. And when the law lets the nightmare right back into her house, she doesn't crumble and succumb. She fights. That's why she won a spot on the Top Ten Kick-A\*\* Heroines of YA list I put together awhile back. I took a risk on this book, but it was just extremely well done. The relationship between Meredith and Andy provides an important current of sweetness and light to counter the darkness of their combined pasts as well as the imminent danger of their entwined presents. And to top it off it has one of my favorite last lines ever. An amazing debut novel for Ms. Wiess. Recommended for fans of Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak*, Julia Hoban's *Willow*, and Donna Freitas' *This Gorgeous Game*.

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## **Sarah says**

3.5 stars

This book was an average read. I kind of wish it was longer and meatier but I can understand why it was on

the short side. Honestly though, How It Ends by Wiess is so much better than this one so I would recommend that one over this one.

The best thing about this book was Meredith. I thought she was a great character. I liked how she was brave and quite rebellious even though she was scared of her father. The other characters all seemed pretty real so in my opinion, they were well done. I liked Andy at the start but then he kind of got annoying. The romance kind of rubbed me the wrong way too and I thought it would have been better if they were just friends. Something else I really liked was the dynamic between Meredith and her mother. Her mother was awful, just a horrible person but there are people like her out there. Those people are almost as awful as the abusers in my opinion.

At the end of the book, Wiess writes about a documentary that partly inspired her to write the book. I watched the documentary on YouTube - its called Just Melvin; Just Evil and I would definitely recommend this. I was planning on only watching a little bit but it was so interesting, I watched the whole thing. Its just incredible and absolutely heartbreaking.

I would recommend this and I would read more by Laura Wiess.

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### **Katyh says**

Wanted to like this, but found it way too unbelievable. So a girl has been molested/raped by her father. Turns out he had molested a bunch of other kids (boys and girls). She testifies against him, and he's sent to jail for 9 years but gets out in 3.

Her mom bases her entire self-worth upon the approval of her dad and is super duper psyched that Darling Diddler Daddy is coming home from prison. Yay! Wonders why the girl can't just forgive and forget. Wants daddy to move back in with them, but according to court order, he's not allowed to be alone with daughter. Instead, he moves to another unit in their condo complex. Girl realizes she's not safe and will have to protect herself, along with the help of her neighbors, the cop who busted her dad 3 years ago and her boyfriend and his mom, who just happen to be one of her dad's victims. (Unlike her own mom, this mom has made it her life's mission to seek vengeance on the man who molested her child.) The cop sets up a plan in which the girl will use herself as bait and record it so that her dad gets sent away once and for all.

I am sure that there are plenty of victims of molestation who remain vulnerable to their attackers, but I just couldn't buy that:

- a) this particular girl would be that helpless. She has resources. Her grandmother is mayor of the town and hates her father. Why didn't she fight for custody before he was released? Why doesn't she suggest that the daughter live at her house before her dad gets out of jail?
  - b) the cop would suggest that the girl use herself as bait like this.
  - c) the final confrontation would go down the way it did.
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### **Patrick says**

I'll start by saying that I was struck by the similarities between this novel and my spring 2007 book Chasing

Tail Lights). The journey, the choices, the use of flashbacks, and the two main characters making similar cold blooded and calculated decisions on avenging their abuse. Yet, I was most struck by the middle section of this novel where Mer talks about what is supposed to happen to "girls like me" who have been abused. The book is loaded with creepy moments (the father touching Mer's back and asking - "when did you start wearing a bra" ) and awful insights (it's not the abuse that hurts, it is the memory of the good times). The subplot with Andy, the boy finger quotes crippled by her's father's abuse is excellent and touching, and the ending of the book -- that last line -- just breathtaking. Merdeith's mother - well, people who read Chasing Tail Lights would always ask how could the mother in that book know the abuse is going on and not do anything -- is just so sad, so pathetic, and thus in so ways more evil than even her father.

A couple of things troubled me which kept it from five stars: her father's fate is just too perfectly ironic that after enjoying it, it annoyed me. While the author did a great deal of research about pedophile, it is odd the father's actions involve both pre and post pubescent children which not the norm for this compulsion. I found the Madonna / Virgin Mary / Catholic imagery distracting, and the Andy's mother "disguise" implausible.

Still, this is a quick read with long lasting impact.

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### **Sarah says**

This book is raw and painful, and although it hurt to read it, I couldn't put it down. After being sent to prison for raping his 12-year-old daughter Meredith and other children, Meredith's father is released. She was promised a sentence of nine years but he's home in three and back to the same abuse. Meredith, is now fifteen and she's losing it.

The characters were all incredibly well-drawn, especially Meredith, but also the supporting characters. (I hate, hate, hate Meredith's mother.) There were some parts of the story that were unlikely (weird coincidences, etc.) but overall it was very real. And that's why it hurt. It hurt because there are ways in which I was Meredith once. I hate that I was once where she was, but it makes me feel good that someday Meredith may end up where I am. Reading Meredith's story also made me rethink my kids at work. Statistically, so many of them have stories like Meredith's. I don't know which ones. And I can't talk to all of them, I can't make them better. I'm a librarian not a social worker. The most I can do is keep books like this on my shelves and hope that they find them. We're all stronger than we know.

Recommended for fans of Speak: similar theme, narration, but harsher storyline and darker tone and not a high school setting.

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### **Nicole Gerritsen (nicolesbundleofbooks) says**

I am gonna keep this sort and sweet. I am a social worker. I work with childhood sexual abuse everyday with the youth I take care of. This book does a horrible job at telling the truth.

The two positives I can give the book is 1) the mom's personality is pretty spot on and 2) Meridith's OCD with numbers is pretty spot on as well.

I have to many bad things to complain about that I will keep them to myself and not ruin the book for others.



Just know that this doesn't give the full and accurate picture of incest/child sexual abuse.

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## Laura says

12-year-old Meredith's father is sent to prison for nine years for raping her repeatedly. But he's paroled in only three, when Meredith is 15, and, because Meredith's selfish, narcissistic mother wants her husband back, he sets about working his way back into Meredith's life and continuing where he left off.

Let's just get one thing out of the way: this book requires an *enormous* suspension of disbelief, at least if you have even the most tangential contact with the real justice system. First of all: nine years for raping your own daughter? Nowhere but Bizarro World -- I don't care what kind of psychiatric testimony the guy presented. 40 years would be more like it for that crime. And parole after *three years*? For sex with your 12-year-old? Nuh-uh. Not anywhere in America, certainly. And finally, there would be no way in hell that the guy would be allowed anywhere near his minor daughter after his parole. Just no way in hell -- it would probably be a condition of his parole that he not get within 500 yards of her, much less live in the same condo development. But that's just what he does here. Uh, no. (Please don't leave comments saying, "You're wrong! I know someone, and her sister-in-law's cousin had this EXACT SAME THING happen to her." If you want to send me a documented story showing that something like this actually happened in the United States sometime within the last 20 years or so, fine, but please, spare me the fifth-hand accounts that you overheard at a party a couple months ago.) There's more than just a suspension of disbelief problem here -- by presenting such an unbelievable story, Wiess sensationalizes her subject.

Let's put that aside, though, and make believe, for the sake of argument, that the wildly unbelievable plot is actually chock full of verisimilitude. Wouldn't matter: although this book is a page turner, it still isn't all that impressive. Wiess is on a mission, and she will never let us forget it for one second. And as with all writers whose mission overcomes their craft, her writing has an unfortunate tendency to become melodramatic and, even worse, overly expository. Long passages describing the effects of sexual abuse don't really do much to advance your story, even when they're disguised as inner monologues. And Meredith's mother, a figure of pure evil and nothing more, actually has dialog like, ""We're supposed to stick together, family is supposed to stick together. He made a mistake! Lots of people make mistakes and no one tells on them! How could you?" and "Why did you have to ruin our family?" This sort of thing is not, to put it kindly, the apex of psychological realism. She might as well have been named Snidely Whiplash for how well she was portrayed -- if she had had a mustache, she surely would have twirled it while cackling and tying Meredith to the railroad tracks.

And frankly, even if you could point to a case that tracks this one, it would take a certain finesse, along with an exceedingly deft touch, to fictionalize so awful a story. Unfortunately, this book has neither, and too readily descends into pathos and self-importance. The author interview included at the end doesn't help matters, I'm sorry to say. Wiess's earnest remarks about the "white-hot blast of terror, fury, and despair" that she felt while writing the first draft just strengthened my impression that she wasn't interested so much in writing fiction as she was in writing a political tract.

Although the strong narrative does carry the reader along, *Such a Pretty Girl* ultimately isn't able to stand up under the weight of its own outrage.

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## Azka says

I know this book deserves more than 3 stars and i would definitely have given it more had i not read "How It Ends" before this one. The latter one had me sobbing so bad. So when i picked this book I had hoped that i would blow me away. But that didn't happen. In fact the ending happened quite abruptly.

Laura Weiss has expertly described the emotions of teenagers who have have been sexually abused and didn't exactly find justice for it. Meredith was abused by her father who is a pedophile. Three years later he is released on the basis of good behavior(his original sentence was 9 years). This wrecks havoc in Meredith's life especially since her mother has never considered her father to be a child molester(she believes that it was a mistake and that they should forget about it and move on). So Meredith decides to put her father in to jail for good and a plan is devised.

What i liked about Meredith was that she was not brave only on the outside but also inside. She doesn't take the easy way out rather she fights it. She has a conscience. She fights not only for herself but also for the safety of other children. This really amazes me because any other kid her age normally would not have the courage to face such a situation a second time.

This book is a great story of standing up and fighting against the unfairness of the world and finding love and friendship amidst such traumatic events.

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## Paulina says

This book was tragically beautiful. I can't think of a better book to bring on holiday...

Meredith thought she had time, time to grow up, time to get away from him. Meredith is only 15 when her father gets out early from prison and is coming for her. Her time run out and she needs to stop him.

I am going through this phase in my life where I'm not interested in books that don't include; suicide, or mental illnesses or rape. Weird I know but I love seeing how an author follows a story, I love seeing how they develop the character and the story line.

Meredith's story is heart breaking and it makes me so mad that this is real life. This happens. A person who is meant to be looking after you, brought you into this world could do that to you. Meredith's father was put away in jail for sexually assaulting four children and his own daughter...

Laura Wiess captured Meredith so well. Meredith tried so hard to keep her father away; she turned to her mother (WHO WAS MEANT TO PRETECT HER FROM HIM), the story unfolds to show how broken the family was before the trial and Meredith's testimony sentencing her father. Her mother is obsessed, she wants to do anything to please him and make him happy; so much so that she lets her daughter be violated and doesn't reach a helping hand when she needs her most. I mean if there was an award for worlds worst mother Meredith's would in the top list for it. Who brings a known paedophile into their house????? Who would take the side of a man over their own child!!!! There is no forgiveness for people like this. I was filled with rage, I still am over Meredith's mother. Over what Meredith went through and those other children. The fact that Meredith was trying her best to look repulsing to her father, she was making sure she was dirty and not showering in order to make him not rape her again. ~~This is not something a 15-year-old~~ that is not something anybody should do!!!

Okay rant over the fact that Meredith has a horrible family, she does however have a great boyfriend, even though a romantic bit in this book was not needed it was very well received. Laura was able to take the

relationship and work it into how those who have been abused deal with their later life relationships. I do know that this was not the main part of the book but I would have loved to read that. I cannot stress enough about how much of a great journey this book was, it's advertised as this dark, sad and depressing book when it's so much more. It's real life, it has everything in there.

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## **Paige Bookdragon says**

**“Rape is not a mistake! He did it on purpose, over and over again because he wanted to, because he get off on it-”**

There are just some books that despite not liking the characterization, you love the book because the story it is telling is important.

This book is about a motherfucking pedophile who was supposed to be rotting in jail for nine years (not enough). He was Merideth's father and because the universe is a bitch sometimes, her father was released after three years in prison. Let me be straight because I know you guessed in the blurbed what really happened.

**Meredith's father molested her because he's a pig and he gets off raping little kids and Merideth was one of the people who testified against him in the court. And now he's back.**

Let me go back to why books like this are important. It's fucking important because some people likes to pretend that this kind of thing doesn't happen in the world. That the world is made of unicorn poop with glitters and those big bad wolfs were just fiction.

They can pretend but it won't change the truth. There are some sick fuck out there who likes to hurt little children and sometimes they succeed. I would like to think that this book was written, not just to tell a story, but to make us more aware.

The truth is sometimes dark and harsh, but fuck it, it's the truth.

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## **Adriana says**

This story revolves around Meredith, a 15 year old whose father sexually abused her and has just been released early after serving only 3 years of his 9 year sentence. Her mother turns the other way and is in major denial over the whole thing, and Meredith feels like she has to deal with it mainly on her own. However, she does have allies in her condo community, like her retired cop neighbor, her wheelchair bound boyfriend and his mother, and her grandmother (who happens to be the mayor). She feels safe with the number 4 and she soon realizes that the only way to get rid of her pedophile father is to play the role of the martyr. The story is told very well, it is dark, poetic, fluid, gripping and hopeful. I see it in the vein of another recent read - Living Dead Girl by Elizabeth Scott, and I think although the subject matter is more for mature teens, it is a theme that is important to discuss and read about.

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**Diane ? [ Lestrangle ] says**

*What's the point of obsessing over cholesterol or bike helmets or even cigarettes when the biggest threats to our children are being released back into society every day? Yes, maybe 'some' of them have reformed, but what about the ones who haven't? Doesn't anyone realize that one 'touch', one 'time' will destroy a child's life ten times faster than a pack-a-day habit?*

**Such a Pretty Girl** was disturbing and a very painful subject. The kind that makes one uncomfortable, as it should be. It is sick and sad but it is true and real problem among us. Child incest destroys the innocence of a child and leaves a ruinous future in its wake. The effects of it are devastating, profound and can last a lifetime.

Straight word: **ordinary**. There are many novels out there that deal with this kind of subject, and *Such a Pretty Girl* is like any of them. This book deals with usual issues, like rape, abandonment and incest. Despite being ordinary it's not an easy novel to read, as reader will feel Merith's nightmare toward her father's abuse and mother's abandonment.

There are some that I liked in this book. First is the Merith's fascination on numbers (*maybe the only thing that I like with the main character*). And last, is how the author shows us various outcome of child behavior with same past experience. Like with Merith and Andy. One character finds strength and confronts her problem, while the other finds avoiding or escaping as a solution. Though other than that is plain and I didn't feel hopeful at the end. I just felt beaten down by how cruel the world can be, and how sick and vile some people can be.

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**faith says**

I wanted to like this book, I really did, but I just had some major problems with it. I thought it was going to be similar to *Perks*, and in was in some ways, but it definitely didn't handle the topic of molestation as gracefully as *Perks* did.

The main thing that put me off about this book straight from the start was the fact that Meredith is dating Andy and Andy is 19 years old while she is 15. In my opinion, there was no reason for Andy to be 19, he could have easily been 17 or something and the author could have created a slightly different background story for him as far as the accident goes. But by choosing to make him 19, I felt like this negated a lot of the important issues that the author was trying to address between Meredith and her father. Yes, I understand that Meredith and Andy had a lot in common and they were connected, but their age difference is still statutory rape, and no one seemed to have a problem with it. Not Andy's religious mother, not the retired cop, no one, and that was very unsettling to me. It's really the main issue that I had with this story, because I think in a way it demeaned what Wiess was trying to address. I know that statutory rape would be much different from Meredith's dad, but the whole situation still made me extremely uncomfortable, especially when Andy and Meredith did anything intimate, even if that wasn't very prevalent.

Because of this one major issue that I had with the story, I felt like I didn't connect with Meredith as well or the story. I thought what happened to her was awful, don't get me wrong, but the flashbacks throughout the

book didn't impact as much as I thought they would. That being said, I just can't bring myself to support the story. I think that the basic idea and meaning of the book is important, but I just don't think it was conveyed in the correct way. It is a quick read though; I read it in two sittings on the same day, and the writing was fairly good, I just can't allow myself to support the story. That may be petty, but it just really rubbed me the wrong way unfortunately.

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