

Han, Jenny. **The Summer I Turned Pretty** 276p.

Recommended for Grades 8-12

Realistic Fiction

For most people, summer is the time to relax and stay out of school. For Belly, whose real name is Isabel, it's life. It's a magical life, away from everything and everyone; a life where everyday is spent at the beach house in Cousins, her true home. A life that's spent with her brother Steven, her mom Laurel, her mom's "blood sister" Susannah, and most importantly Susannah's sons, Jeremiah and Conrad. Jeremiah is her best friend, the one that will always make her laugh, and even the one who will steal her first kiss. Conrad is her first love, the one that, without a doubt, will make her heart race, even after all those summers. Jeremiah and Conrad are the boys that Belly has known since forever, the boys who have been through everything with her, from awkward times, to happy times, and even sad times. They'll go through Belly's first real boyfriend, Susannah's breast cancer, and everything in between together. Belly always knew she would end up with one of the boys, but whom? *The Summer I Turned Pretty* is about the one summer that changes Belly's life. It is the most beautiful summer, the most tragic and wonderful summer. The one summer that makes everything end up the way it's really supposed to be.

There are many chapters where Belly tells of her past summer experiences, to show how close everyone really is and was. They're the summers that any girl would want, with the summer romances, the beach, the friendship that ties them together. Jenny Han writes in a way that makes you feel like you're there, soaking up the sun and bathing in the ocean breeze. She could make you feel like you're walking on the warm sand, getting ready for a swim. The way she portrays Belly makes her seem like a real teenage girl you would see every day. Belly's way of seeing things is so interesting and very real. Every detail and event is placed and written just right, so it feels like an actual girl telling stories of her summers. I loved this book so much that I couldn't even put it down once I started reading it! I would recommend this book to any teen girl. It's an amazingly sweet book and incredible to read.

-Lavina