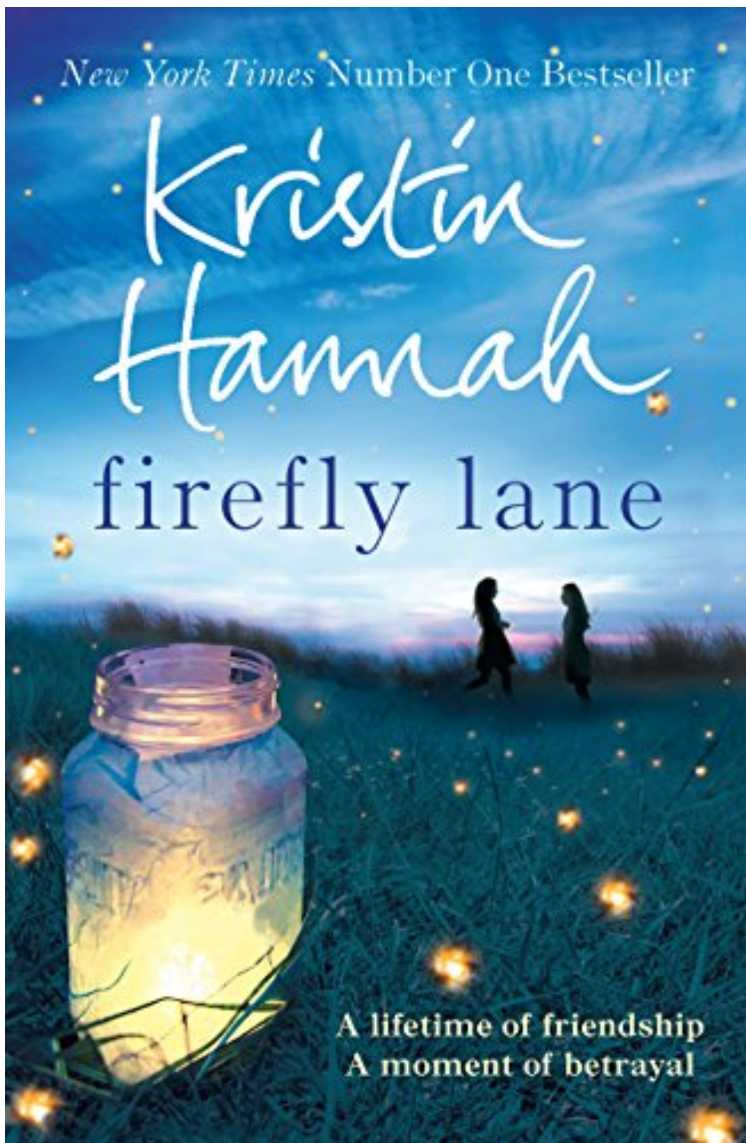


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Firefly Lane (English Edition)



Par Kristin Hannah

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur Kristin Hannah's Firefly Lane is a coming of age novel about a generation of women who were both blessed and cursed by their choices. It is 1974 and the summer of love is finally drawing to a close. The flower children are starting to realize that you cannot survive on peace and love alone. Kate Mularkey has accepted her place at the bottom of the secondary school social food chain. Then, to her amazement, the coolest girl in the world, Tully Hart the girl all the boys want to know - moves in across the street and wants to be her best friend. Tully and Kate became inseparable and by summers end they made a pact to be best friends forever. For thirty years Tully and Kate buoy each other through life, weathering the storms of friendship, jealousy, anger, hurt and resentment. Tully will follow her ambition to find fame and success. Kate knows that all she wants is to fall in love and have a family. What she doesnt know is how

being a wife and a mother will change her. They think they've survived it all until a single act of betrayal tears them apart. But when tragedy strikes, can the bonds of friendship survive? Or is it the one hurdle that even a lifelong friendship cannot overcome. Firefly Lane is a book for every woman who knows that her best friend is the only person who really, truly, knows her. And it is a book she will never forget.

.com A Conversation with Kristin Hannah **.com**: Why did you choose Seattle as the backdrop for Firefly Lane? Is there something unique about growing up in the Northwest that helped you to define the kind of women Kate and Tully become? Kristin Hannah: Quite simply, I chose Seattle as the backdrop for Firefly Lane because it's so much a part of who I am. I've lived in the Northwest for most of my life, and obviously, in all those years, I've seen this part of the country evolve from an undiscovered gem into the Emerald City. So many of the places from my youth are gone, or changed, or moved, and I guess I wanted to remember the physical reminders of those bygone days. And while Kate and Tully are absolutely Northwest girls, I like to think their story will speak to women who grew up in vastly different, more populated areas. After all, it's ultimately about friendship, and those seeds can be planted anywhere.

.com: While you were writing, at any point did you find yourself feeling more sympathetic to Kate or to Tully? How did you keep the weight of the plot balanced between them as their stories evolved? KH: There's no way to avoid the truth that Kate is more than a little like me. Thus, I identified with her from the very beginning--she was the small town girl who had to get up in the pre-dawn hours to feed her horses, and read *The Lord of the Rings* during every family vacation, and felt lost in the first few months at the sprawling University of Washington. All of that was me, so naturally, the problem was not in feeling sympathetic toward Katie; it was much more about holding her at arm's length, seeing her not as an extension of myself, but as a completely fictional woman. Tully was a different story entirely. While many readers might be surprised by this, I really fell in love with Tully. In the final analysis, she's one of my favorite characters of all time. I know she's bold and selfish and myopic and ambitious to a fault, but she's also terribly broken, wounded by her parents, unable to believe in love, and ultimately very real. I think all of us know a "Tully" in our lives, and they bring a lot of drama...and a lot of fire and sparkle.

.com: You have a beautiful way of showing both the tension and tenderness between mothers and daughters. Was it a challenge to write Tully's painful history with her own mother, and later, the conflict that builds between Kate and her own daughter? KH: Honestly, I believe that the mother-daughter relationship is magical, complex, potentially dangerous, profoundly powerful, and deeply transformative. To put it simply, all of us have this relationship, and in a very real way, "none of us comes out alive." We are all formed first as daughters and then tested as mothers. There's nothing like motherhood to make us reassess how we were as daughters. One of my favorite parts of *Firefly Lane* was the circle of Kates relationship with her mom. First we see her as an angry teen, slamming the door on her mother...and then later her own daughter does the same thing to her. There's a real symmetry in that, a truth that many of us have learned. I have often wished in the past few years that my mom were here to help me as I raised my own teenage son. As a girl, with my own mom, I thought I knew it all; now I know better. Somewhere, I know my mom is smiling.

.com: Throughout the novel, both Kate and Tully question the reliability of love. Is it that question that creates the rift between them and, ultimately, reunites them in friendship? KH: You're right, they each do continually question the reliability of love. For Kate, it's a self-esteem issue. She absolutely believes in love--she's grown up surrounded by it--but she constantly questions Johnny's commitment to her. I always felt that was largely because she felt like a moon to Tully's bright and shining sun. For Tully, she honestly doesn't believe that true romantic love exists, and for all of her overblown ambition and belief in herself, she has been wounded by her mother's repeated abandonment. The result is that she feels she's unlovable.

.com: Kate and Tully are each big personalities in their own way. Was it hard to create male characters who really understand them? KH: The challenge with regard to male characters was not so much creating men who understood Kate and Tully, it was rather to create love stories that equaled the power and emotional intensity of the friendship. After all, the men in the story were important--Johnny particularly--but it was really a story about the women.

.com: When *Wally Lamb's She's Come Undone* first came out, many readers were shocked that a man could write such an intimate portrait of a woman. Do you think women are in fact the best writers of women's fiction? Would you ever consider writing a novel where men take center stage? KH: One of the great things about being a writer is that we get the chance to inhabit the minds and souls of a variety of individuals. I really don't think male/female is the central question in terms of the viability of a voice and/or vision. We writers can "become" murderers, animals, psychopaths, vampires, lawyers, doctors, wizards, children. In short, our storytelling skills and character-building abilities are limited only by our own imaginations. Until recently, most of my novels--

while female-centric in vision--were equally narrated by male characters, and one--Angel Falls--was primarily narrated by men. I didn't see the writing of that any different than anything else. .com: Do you see yourself as a writer of romance or women's fiction? What do you see as the differences in these two genres--is one an evolution of the other, or is the label unimportant? KH: I began as a romance author and moved into women's fiction about ten years ago. While many definitions abound, mine is this: romance is a subsection of the broad, all-inclusive women's commercial fiction market. Women's fiction in general is not an evolution of romance; much of women's fiction is completely unrelated to any romantic elements. However, it is true that many current commercial women's fiction authors began in romance. .com: Many women read fictional romance to escape the stress of everyday life and find inspiration in a happy ending. Is there a primary experience that you hope your readers will have after reading *Firefly Lane*? KH: I am a sucker for a happy ending myself. In fact, my husband and I often go round and round about movies in which I hate the ending and he loves it. He always says I'm only comfortable with happy ever after, but that's not true. What I want is an emotionally satisfying, organic ending. I want to be totally engaged until the last page, and I want to believe every moment up until I close the book. Sometimes I want to laugh, sometimes I want to cry, and sometimes I want to scream that it can't really be over. (Harry Potter comes to mind on this one). The point is, I want to be moved deeply. That's what I look for in other books and what I hope to deliver in my own. Just FYI, here are some of my favorite endings: *Gone With the Wind*, *Middlemarch*, *Prince of Tides*, *An Inconvenient Wife*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *It*, *Shadow of the Wind*. Some are happy, some are sad, some are bittersweet. All are memorable. .com: If you could meet any writer, living or dead, who would it be, and what would you ask them? KH: There are, of course, dozens of choices here, and I could certainly go through the classics and come up with many names and questions, but the truth is that I would love to sit down with Stephen King and listen to some rock and roll, and ask him how in the world he has stayed so good for so long. From Publishers Weekly Hannah (On *Mystic Lake*) goes a little too far into Lifetime movie territory in her latest, an epic exploration of the complicated terrain between best friends one who chooses marriage and motherhood while the other opts for career and celebrity. The adventures of poor, ambitious Tully Hart and middle-class romantic Kate Mularkey begin in the 1970s, but don't really get moving until about halfway into the book, when Tully, who claws her way to the heights of broadcast journalism, discovers it's lonely at the top, and Katie, a stay-at-home Seattle housewife, forgets what it's like to be a rebellious teen. What holds the overlong narrative together is the appealing nature of Tully and Katie's devotion to one another even as they are repeatedly tested by jealousy and ambition. Katie's husband, Johnny, is smitten with Tully, and Tully, who is abandoned by her own booze-and-drug-addled mother, relishes the adoration from Katie's daughter, Marah. Hannah takes the easy way out with an over-the-top tear-jerker ending, though her upbeat message of the power of friendship and family will, for some readers, trump even the most contrived plot twists. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.