



Firefly Lane

By Kristin Hannah

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From the *New York Times* bestselling author Kristin Hannah comes a powerful novel of love, loss, and the magic of friendship. . . .

In the turbulent summer of 1974, Kate Mularkey has accepted her place at the bottom of the eighth-grade social food chain. Then, to her amazement, the "coolest girl in the world" moves in across the street and wants to be her friend. Tully Hart seems to have it all---beauty, brains, ambition. On the surface they are as opposite as two people can be: Kate, doomed to be forever uncool, with a loving family who mortifies her at every turn. Tully, steeped in glamour and mystery, but with a secret that is destroying her. They make a pact to be best friends forever; by summer's end they've become *Tully and Kate*. Inseparable.

So begins Kristin Hannah's magnificent new novel. Spanning more than three decades and playing out across the ever-changing face of the Pacific Northwest, *Firefly Lane* is the poignant, powerful story of two women and the friendship that becomes the bulkhead of their lives.

From the beginning, Tully is desperate to prove her worth to the world. Abandoned by her mother at an early age, she longs to be loved unconditionally. In the glittering, big-hair era of the eighties, she looks to men to fill the void in her soul. But in the buttoned-down nineties, it is television news that captivates her. She will follow her own blind ambition to New York and around the globe, finding fame and success . . . and loneliness.

Kate knows early on that her life will be nothing special. Throughout college, she pretends to be driven by a need for success, but all she really wants is to fall in love and have children and live an ordinary life. In her own quiet way, Kate is as driven as Tully. What she doesn't know is how being a wife and mother will change her . . . how she'll lose sight of who she once was, and what she once wanted. And how much she'll envy her famous best friend. . . .

For thirty years, Tully and Kate buoy each other through life, weathering the storms of friendship---jealousy, anger, hurt, resentment. They think they've survived it all until a single act of betrayal tears them apart . . . and puts their courage and friendship to the ultimate test.

Firefly Lane is for anyone who ever drank Boone's Farm apple wine while listening to Abba or Fleetwood Mac. More than a coming-of-age novel, it's the story of a generation of women who were both blessed and cursed by choices. It's about promises and secrets and betrayals. And ultimately, about the one person who really, truly knows you---and knows what has the power to hurt you . . . and heal you. *Firefly Lane* is a story you'll never forget . . . one you'll want to pass on to your best friend.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

A Conversation with Kristin Hannah

Amazon.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.



Amazon.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.

Amazon.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 Kate's 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.

Amazon.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.

Amazon.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.

Amazon.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.

Amazon.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.

Amazon.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.

Amazon.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.

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Review

"Hannah's latest is a moving and realistic portrait of a complex and enduring friendship." ?*Booklist*

"Not since Iris Dart's *Beaches*, twenty years ago, has there been a story of friendship that endures everything, from girlhood dramas to bitter betrayal, to be the touchstone in two women's lives. In *Firefly Lane*, Kristin Hannah creates the most poignant of reunions and an unforgettable story of loyalty and love" ?*Jacquelyn Mitchard, author of The Deep End of the Ocean*

"A tearjerker that is sure to please the author's many fans." ?*Library Journal*

“With perfect pitch, Kristin Hannah describes the tumult and energy of the 70s and 80s, and on a deeper level takes readers into the heart of a friendship between two women. *Firefly Lane* is masterful at the grand sweep and the fine detail.” ?Elin Hilderbrand, author of *Barefoot*

“This terrific buddy saga about two best girlfriends who survive all sorts of escapades and catastrophes will inevitably provoke comparisons with Iris Dart's 'Beaches,' but the story is all Hannah's own.” ?*The Seattle Times*

“No one writes more insightfully about women's friendships with all of their messy wonder, humor, pain and complexity like Kristin Hannah. She's a marvel.” ?*Susan Elizabeth Phillips, author of Natural Born Charmer*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kenneth Roland:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Reserve is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each e-book has different aim or maybe goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They can be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Consider the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, individual feel need book after they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you will want this Firefly Lane.

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