

Fireflies  
in the  
Summer

&

Other short stories

Jill Kramer 2017©

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This book is dedicated to YOU, THE READER, so fill in your own name!

An unread story is not a story: it is little black marks on wood pulp. The reader, reading, makes it live: a live thing, a story.

Ursula K. Le Guin



## Chapter 1

As the car pulled away and she turned to wave back one more time, she could hardly believe it. Yes, they were on their way and how they had arranged this time away was still amazing. Well, to be perfectly honest, she had never in her wildest dreams imagined that she would have been able to pull it off with such panache. Ten days away. Ten whole days! First of all a long weekend away, with her best friend Daz and then the rest of the week away with her lover! God, her life was full of secrets these days and had been for the last six months. If anyone had asked her: what will you be doing in 6 months from now? She would have just tilted her head and answered: 'the usual'.

She and Daz had known one another for a long time, but their deep friendship had begun after Lot has moved away. Then they suddenly realized all the missed chances over the years, because when they met sporadically these days, but the friendship had taken on new depths. They both were married and had grown up children now but in some of other way, despite their age difference, they had becomes best friends. 'You know what we need?' Daz would often say when they met up every three months of so, 'we need a weekend break together, a couple of days to relax and just chat on, there is just never enough time and then when you have gone back, I realize how much I miss our face-to-face meetings. App's are fine, but it is just not the same'. 'Agree' replied Lot but they just talked about it and then again the next time they met up.

One sunny morning Lot received an app from Daz: She wrote: 'You know I have been droning on about a weekend away, well I HAVE to have a weekend away, do you think you can get away?' Lot rang her back on Facetime, 'what's happened?' she enquired. 'Too much to chat about but how about this for an idea? We could go to a wellness centre and have a couple of days being totally pampered?' Wow that sounded such a good idea and just what Lot felt she needed. 'Where?' she asked. 'Well' Daz said. 'I was thinking about that amazing wellness/spa place in the south of the country and I just happen to know that there is a park nearby where you can hire a house for a long weekend and we could just fill our days and have the full package of treatments!' 'Sounds wonderful' Lot replied.

Later that day she approached the subject with her husband who had just caught the end of the Facetime conversation. 'Daz has asked me if I would like to go on a short holiday with her, troubles at home and she needs a break'. Surprisingly he agreed and said it would probably do her good, a bit of 'girls only' time and a break as she had been working really hard this year with several projects on the go at the same time. Immediately Lot's brain started to think. What if she could combine the idea with a week away with her lover? What if she could find some way to combine the two? Meeting him was tricky (if near impossible) to say the least, but this might just open the door for her to arrange something. Anything just to mean that she could spend some time with him. Up until now their meetings had been brief, dinners out and a couple of times a night away, but apart from that it was all top secret and actually very complicated.

In the meantime Daz booked a lovely little cottage style house, easy walking distance from the wellness centre and they both spent a couple of days on Internet looking up what treatments were available and both made a list. They laughed out aloud when they had virtually chosen the same things and Daz made a simple phone call and booked them into two days of sauna's, haman, scrub sessions, a dead sea mud experience, something called a chocolate rasul, (whatever that might be?) pedicure, manicure, facials and such like. The water at the spa came from a natural source deep in the ground and was renowned for the bubbles it had, like champagne, they joked. Daz had to keep to her rather strict diet, she had several food allergies, but Lot was so easy going on that score she was happy just to go along and not drinking alcohol or either eating anything apart from vegetarian food, was to her all part of this package.

Unbeknown to Daz, she had been busy making her own set of arrangements. After consulting her friend, she found the most amazing house to rent for the week and when she and Daz were on their own having their weekend she would tell her all about their relationship. It would be a relief actually, she thought to have someone to talk to about him, because up until now she had not told a single soul. Their relationship was delicate and because of the circumstances, not to mention the fact that she was married, made it even more complicated. She had met him unexpectedly a few months ago and it had been something really special right from the word go.



The drive down was easy and took about three hours. They found the little park close by and checked into their house for their stay. It was lovely, modern and clean, it would be perfect. They then had some lunch and did a bit of shopping, ready to step into their programme the following morning.

That evening after an easy meal, they weren't very hungry after the large lunch, they talked and talked. Lot had given in and actually bought a couple of bottles of her favourite wine and they agreed that perhaps no alcohol this weekend was taking things a bit too far!

Daz started her story first. Lot knew her husband and also her two children and that Daz loved to travel and did so often with another friend. Lot was quite envious of her stories in the past, all the exotic places she visited and of course it was almost a foregone conclusion that at some time she would meet someone who stole her heart. Her marriage was similar to Lot's, a sort of slur, a habit, a lot of memories, but the spark had been extinguished in some way or another.

It must have been the wine that made it easier to talk and Daz told her that she had met this amazing man one night on the beach. 'I just looked at him' she said 'and knew, this man is something special'. Apparently they walked for hours along the shoreline, talking and talking. It was her second trip back to that country which had really started the ball rolling and together with another girlfriend, they had made very secret arrangements to meet up with these two men and spend a holiday with them.

'God' Lot thought. Daz continued and broke her thoughts. 'He is just amazing' she said 'and my goodness they are so right about Latin lovers!'

## Chapter 2

They talked on most of the night of course as one thing lead to another. Often they would just stop and look at one another and burst out laughing, their stories had so many parallels. It took Lot quite a while before she plucked up the courage to tell Daz her tale. 'I can't believe you bumped into him there of all places,' Daz exclaimed. 'You must have thought you were seeing things'. 'Yes, I did', replied Lot, but the evening, the people, the place, the ambiance it all played a role.

'Never in my biggest dreams, would I ever have imagined that something would have started between us, but it has and I have to confess something'.

She told Daz of her pre-made plans to stay on after their weekend together. Daz of course who was an expert herself in making plans and also carrying out merely raised her eyebrows and said, 'of course I understand. Lot, you just go for it, I know exactly how you feel and you know if it is something serious you will be totally defenceless to fight it. I know!'

'Stop putting yourself down by the way, of course he must have been equally astonished by the whole thing as you, but why do you say, why me all the time?'

Lot picked up her phone and showed Daz a photo of him.

'Oh I see, holy shit! Now I understand. This is an extremely delicate situation to say the least'. Daz was thinking to herself, wow he is really gorgeous! By my goodness this was a relationship where a number of people would have a lot to say', to make comments and judgement.

Just as it was beginning to get light, they decided that perhaps it might be a good idea to have at least a couple of hours sleep before they went off in the morning to have the first day of their wellness rituals. After a quick shower and an easy breakfast of special granola, yoghurt and fresh fruit they walked off to the centre. Daz kept looking at Lot, what a dark horse she was; in fact she had never said a single word.

But to be honest it was not really the first topic of conversation that came up when they met and that was exactly the reason she had suggested this weekend in the first place. She needed a confident just as much as Lot did and as they walked on both women were thinking exactly the same thing. Just as if a huge weight had been lifted from their shoulders, a problem (well it was not a problem really) or secret shared was immediately sort of solved. Daz had no problem whatsoever with the idea that Lot would stay and of course she would not say a single word to anyone. As far as the rest were concerned, she and Lot were having a summer holiday, a simple summer retreat and what they were doing was only their business.

They checked in at the reception. A well-mannered, well-presented smart young girl welcomed them to the centre and handed them a pile of towels, the robe and the slippers (which never fitted and were not that comfortable) and the keys to their respective lockers. 'Wow, busy schedule ladies' she remarked. 'Once you have changed, you can go through to the second reception area and enjoy our welcome drinks and cakes!' Ha cakes, that sounded a bit strange to start your wellness day stuffing your face full of cake!

'Just to remind you' the receptionist continued 'some parts of the centre are the naked areas, no bikini's or bathing costumes allowed, you can put them in the lockers there, using your cards'. Naked areas! Good job, Lot thought that she had already given her body a total de-fuzz before she came.

Lot and Daz walked through the automatic doors. They had both been given a sort of key chain card for the centre for their stay and this automatically gave them access to the different areas of the centre. They changed into their robes and took the stack of towels on their arms. Walking with these slippers was quite something else, but all part of the leisurely day they were going to have because trying to walk at anything more than a snail's pace would have been impossible. Closing their lockers with the key card, they made their way into the second reception area. Sumptuous was the word to describe it. Copious amounts of tables, chairs and sofa's and places to chill out. They helped themselves to two large cappuccino coffees and someone appeared out of nowhere and welcomed them and hoped they would enjoy their day.

During the next few hours they only met one another in the corridors, going from one treatment to another and agreed to meet for lunch by

the outdoor pool. It was a glorious day, sunny and warm and the views from there were quite spectacular. All the way across the hills and valley which made this region famous. The pool was enormous, Olympic size and the water was literally steaming and bubbling coming from its natural spring deep down in the earth's crust. There was also another indoor pool area, which must have been part of the 'naked area' as Lot caught sight of several people there.

God, this was just heaven, Lot thought. She had chosen the 'Lomi Lomi' massage and even though it was quite hard and sometimes a bit painful she knew from experience that by this time tomorrow she would be feeling re-born. This Hawaiian deep tissue massage was famous there and she had had it there on a couple of occasions. The oil they used was frangipani and hibiscus and it smelt divine. Her thoughts were drifting as she was asked to turn over and experienced hands began to massage her neck and shoulders with huge sweeping movements. Yes, she had been right to choose this, and did she need it, yes she did. She felt the tension leaving her body with every movement. The last six months had after all been quite surreal to say the least.

At the end of the morning and a quick session in the infrared sauna, which she also loved, much more so than the steamy ones, she met up with Daz again and they settled themselves and their pile of towels at a table half in the sun. Daz had a much more paler sensitive skin than Lot and she was careful about the possibility of getting sunburnt. Lot on the other hand never burned and tanned easily. Her entire body was actually one big mass of freckles which all seemed to merge together in the summer giving her the appearance of a really good overall tan.

Lunch was just amazing and so much to choose from and well catered for people and allergies. There was spelt bread, warm straight from the oven and all sorts of salads and things to choose from. Wraps filled with prawns, salmon and avocados and huge bowls of fresh fruit salad. It was fresh and well presented and looked really delicious. They walked along the entire table, adding bits and pieces to their plates and had asked for a jug of iced water to which the waiter had added fresh ginger, lime and lemon.

'This is the life' Daz proclaimed. 'How was your morning?' She stretched her legs out in front of her and brushed her hair away from her face. 'Shame I forgot my clip' she said. 'You should have said: I have a spare one in my bag, we can get it after lunch.' Her own hair