

The background features a network diagram with white circular nodes connected by thin purple lines. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with a higher density in the lower half. The background color transitions from a dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The title 'A Year on Ladybug Farm' is centered in the upper half in a white, sans-serif font.

# A Year on Ladybug Farm

Written by Donna Ball

---

Published by sanmarco-sf

# Table of Contents

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| A Year On Venus .....   | 1  |
| A Year On Mars .....    | 2  |
| A Year On Mercury ..... | 3  |
| A Year On Jupiter ..... | 4  |
| A Year On Saturn .....  | 5  |
| A Year On Neptune ..... | 6  |
| A Year On Uranus .....  | 7  |
| A Year On Pluto .....   | 8  |
| A Year On Earth .....   | 9  |
| A Year On Ice .....     | 10 |

A Year on Ladybug Farm

# A Year on Ladybug Farm

By Donna Ball

## A Year On Venus

Their husbands were gone, their families were grown, and the future stretched out before them like an unfulfilled promise...

## A Year On Mars

Tired of always dreaming and never doing, Cici, Lindsay, and Bridget make a life-altering decision. Uprooting themselves from their comfortable lives in the suburbs, the three friends buy a run-down mansion, nestled in the picturesque Shenandoah Valley. They christen their new home "Ladybug Farm," hoping that the name will bring them luck.

## A Year On Mercury

As the friends take on a home improvement challenge of epic proportions, they encounter disaster after disaster, from renegade sheep and garden thieves to a seemingly ghostly inhabitant. Over the course of a year, overwhelming obstacles make the three women question their decision, but they ultimately learn that sometimes the best things can happen when everything goes wrong...

First thing: I liked that this book was about 3 fifty-something women, not the typical young, slender, beautiful, redhaired / curly brunette / blonde that seems so prevalent. Aside from one physical description at the very beginning, the looks of these women aren't really mentioned.

The story is a familiar one, nothing remarkable, and pretty much formulaic.

That said, I really liked this book. The short author bio at the back of the book says she's written something like 80 books under several ps First thing: I liked that this book was about 3 fifty-something women, not the typical young, slender, beautiful, redhaired / curly brunette / blonde that seems so prevalent. Aside from one physical description at the very beginning, the looks of these women aren't really mentioned.

The story is a familiar one, nothing remarkable, and pretty much formulaic.

That said, I really liked this book. The short author bio at the back of the book says she's written something like 80 books under several pseudonyms so I'm surprised I haven't noticed or stumbled across her before. I just liked the characters, the setting, the evolving of their year on the farm, and the ultimate conclusion.

Things that bothered me: I wasn't getting a really good sense of the time frame of things - the climate changes mentioned seemed a bit out of synch - but then I'm not familiar with that area of the country, so it could be my ignorance.

Last night I wasn't sleeping so I got up in the middle of the night to finish this book and found that it was still easy for me to become completely engrossed in the story. I even enjoyed the reading process.

I always hesitate to say that I really really loved a book, because the next person might dislike it or be bored by it. I would, though, recommend this book if someone wants a light piece of escapism. I enjoyed it. ...more

## A Year On Jupiter

Join three friends who buy a dilapidated home and attempt to bring it back to its former glory, a task they thought they were prepared for. Along the way, they find themselves, even as they deal with a possible ghost, a thief, and numerous unexpected pitfalls. They name the place Ladybug Farm in the hopes it will bring them luck. They will need it. It's a delightful book!

Picked this up on a whim at the library. If "Hallmark" is a genre then this fits the bill nicely. I have to be in the mood to read this sort of book without a smirk on my face. I was in the mood.

Three 'older' (gd it...fifty is not old!) women risk everything to purchase an old farm house. Some silly mishaps, lots of bills and a Norman Rockwell-type setting add up to an okay, quick and syrupy-sweet read.

Recommend for those times when you need something cheerful and inane.

## A Year On Saturn

Originally published at my blog Chasing Empty Pavements

I can't even begin to tell you how much I loved and enjoyed this book. This book goes right up there with *The Help* and Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society. I started reading it at work and could not put it down. I finished it in a 7 hr span. *A Year on Ladybug Farm* is about 3 close women who decide it's time to put their dreams to the test. They pool their money and resources together and buy a decrepit old house that they fell in love with. Originally published at my blog Chasing Empty Pavements

I can't even begin to tell you how much I loved and enjoyed this book. This book goes right up there with *The Help* and Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society. I started reading it at work and could not put it down. I finished it in a 7 hr span. *A Year on Ladybug Farm* is about 3 close women who decide it's time to put their dreams to the test. They pool their money and resources together and buy a decrepit old house that they fell in love with. With the house comes not only a deep love for the house and land but a whole batch of problems as well. As each woman faces their own desire to fix up the house and their reasons for loving it, they also face the reasons why the change was so important. Together, the women continue to find surprising and often costly reasons to stay on the farm.

What I loved: It's so strange that I read this book the same time I was having a future breakdown. (You know, where you have a meltdown based on the fact that you have no clue what you're going to do with your future?!) I have been spending a lot of time thinking about how much I would just like to go to a small southern town, buy a little house with a front porch, make fresh lemonade and sit on the swing until the cicadas talk. This book appeals to every one of those notions. It was so realistically written that it makes me feel like I can make my dreams come true if I really wanted it. The women all reminded me of either myself or of people I know. Their friendship is realistic and so crazy awesome it makes me want the type of friendships they have.

What I didn't love: I don't have much to complain about but I guess at some points the book can get a bit too "feel good" and it all works out for the best predictably. The women are flawed..but I can see where some people might think they aren't flawed quite enough. They do seem oddly gifted, smart and almost perfect. But I forgive them since they really do seem so amazing.

Grade: I give *A Year on Ladybug Farm* by Donna Ball an A because the book was really awesome and I recommend it to anyone who has felt like they want a fresh start in their life.

...more

An Amazon reviewer said this is not "War and Peace" but it sure was totally enjoyable to read. I had never heard of this book or author until a friend who knows how I like to read about home renovation

and cooking told me about it. I was hooked on the first page.

I loved the characters, their development, and the descriptions of all that these women did on the farm. I love how they met the challenges, many of which they had not expected to encounter. It is a story of resilience and most important An Amazon reviewer said this is not "War and Peace" but it sure was totally enjoyable to read. I had never heard of this book or author until a friend who knows how I like to read about home renovation and cooking told me about it. I was hooked on the first page.

I loved the characters, their development, and the descriptions of all that these women did on the farm. I love how they met the challenges, many of which they had not expected to encounter. It is a story of resilience and most importantly, the value of friendship, especially the friendships that these women had nurtured for so many years.

Some naysayers at Amazon lamented the fact that these women had no idea of how much it would cost to fix up this house and had no fund for this. I disagree.....these women DID have a fund to pay for repairs. They had just under-estimated. Anyone who has ever built a home or done extensive renovation would know that under-estimation is often an issue.

The author has a gift for describing "place" and putting the reader there. I think it was obvious from the details that Ball was intimately acquainted with the trials and tribulations of renovating an old place.

I am now going to read the sequel, "At Home on Ladybug Farm" and look forward to the third book in this series, to be published in October.

...more

## A Year On Neptune

I don't use the word 'chick-lit' because I find it condescending and dismissive of books that women may like to read. (After all, there is no universal, slightly derogatory slang term for books that men might be drawn towards.) I may, occasionally, call a book "fluffy" if I feel it doesn't have much literary, educational, or mental weight to it, but I could call a story about women "fluffy" or a spy novel. Gender appeal doesn't play into it. And may I say for the record that I am a giant fan of I don't use the word 'chick-lit' because I find it condescending and dismissive of books that women may like to read. (After all, there is no universal, slightly derogatory slang term for books that men might be drawn towards.) I may, occasionally, call a book "fluffy" if I feel it doesn't have much literary, educational, or mental weight to it, but I could call a story about women "fluffy" or a spy novel. Gender appeal doesn't play into it. And may I say for the record that I am a giant fan of good fluff.

However, after reading "A Year on Ladybug Farm," I was very tempted to call it chick-lit. I found very little to the actual book, it seemed compiled of worn-out cliches and sentimental characters that had nothing to say. While there was no doubt how this book would end, I finished the book anyway. However, unless there is a sudden dearth of reading material, I will not be reading the sequels.

...more

Had I read this book when it came out in 2009, I'm not sure I would have related to it as much as I do today. But during the last 7 years many things have changed in my life which resulted in me completely seeing myself in one of three main characters. This was one of those rare occasions where it felt as though the author was writing about me personally. I absolutely loved the novel as a result.

Having small-town and rural roots myself, followed by a career that placed me from 1984 to 1998 in t Had I read this book when it came out in 2009, I'm not sure I would have related to it as much as I do today. But during the last 7 years many things have changed in my life which resulted in me completely seeing myself in one of three main characters. This was one of those rare occasions where it felt as though the author was writing about me personally. I absolutely loved the novel as a result.

Having small-town and rural roots myself, followed by a career that placed me from 1984 to 1998 in two different mega-cities, I would have related in 2009 to the aspect of career-oriented city women trying to adjust to rural life. Since then, I have also gained the experience of "fixer uppers", and, unfortunately, geographical separation from my son who is at a stage in life where keeping up a relationship with Mom is not so important. I have grown in my awareness of teens in the last few years who have had to grow up way too soon somehow make it on their own at a very tender age. These things all mixed together made this novel thoroughly real to me; I found it interesting how the author wove all of these aspects of MY life (ha!) and more into the book.

I enjoyed "Ladybug" much more than I thought I would and that's saying a lot! I came to it with rather high expectations. The author, Donna Ball, did not disappoint. ...more

## A Year On Uranus

I think I have found another book in the league with the Jan Karon Mitford books! This is the story of three friends who find themselves at a crossroads in their lives. One has just lost her husband in death, one has been divorced and a child off to college and one is a retiring school teacher. Best friends for years and ready for a change, they decide to purchase an old house in Virginia and undertake redoing it as they redo their lives as well. As they discover all the history and problems of the house and grounds, they also discover some quaint folks that come with the territory. They have agreed to stay for one year and then decide if they will stay or go their separate ways. Very enjoyable read! There are two more books in this new series that I am looking forward to reading now. ...more

I love getting wrapped up in a good book that I cannot put down, well this is one of them.

The story of a Year on Ladybug Farm was a quick read with a few surprises that I didn't see coming. The intertwined lives of Cici, Bridget and Lindsay all come together as one on Ladybug Farm. A hatched plan of dreams and ambition keep them together in their 1st year on the farm. Their relationships with each other are tested to the limit when everything that could go wrong, likely does. I felt sorry for them and want to go help them out!

The story of a Year on Ladybug Farm was a quick read with a few surprises that I didn't see coming. The intertwined lives of Cici, Bridget and Lindsay all come together as one on Ladybug Farm. A hatched plan of dreams and ambition keep them together in their 1st year on the farm. Their relationships with each other are tested to the limit when everything that could go wrong, likely does. I felt sorry for them and want to go help them out!

The three women all friends, couldn't be more opposite in terms of their personalities and passions. Life has handed them all their fair share of heartbreak and struggle.

I'd definitely recommend this book for women, dreamers and those seeking something unusual.  
...more

## A Year On Pluto

What to do when your life hits a crossroads? This is a wonderful fiction novel, the first in a series, which asks of three independent women, can we dare to live our dreams?

Cici, Lindsay, and Bridget have all been friends for two decades or more. In fact they have been neighbors and have laughed, cried, and grieved together. One discussion over wine leads the ladies to the question of dare we live our dreams?

Gradually, the idea becomes a reality, and the three women find themselves outside a bro What to do when your life hits a crossroads? This is a wonderful fiction novel, the first in a series, which asks of three independent women, can we dare to live our dreams?

Cici, Lindsay, and Bridget have all been friends for two decades or more. In fact they have been neighbors and have laughed, cried, and grieved together. One discussion over wine leads the ladies to the question of dare we live our dreams?

Gradually, the idea becomes a reality, and the three women find themselves outside a broken-down mansion in the glorious Shenandoah Valley of Tennessee. Their families and friends are overwhelmed by the fact that their sensible friends are going to sell up and move on out.

Thus is born the Ladybug Farm...Welcome Home.

I found this book a compelling read for me. The characters were inviting, the dialog true and strong, the location and mansion welcoming and there were enough adventures that kept me turning the pages to see what on Earth was going to happen next.

Finding myself laughing aloud several times and having to tell my husband various scenes, tells me that this is a novel I would easily recommend to friends that want a good story. I Thank, Jennifer for recommending it to me. ...more

LOVED THIS BOOK. I was a little skeptical when my friend suggested this book but I am soooo glad I bought it. I needed to read something refreshing and positive. This is a very light read and very easy to follow.

I was constantly picturing myself in my 50's hanging out on a farm with my bestest friends in the whole wide world. I absolutely adore my friends and would not be able to live life without them.

I found myself giggling out loud in some parts of the book and that is very rare for me.

This b LOVED THIS BOOK. I was a little skeptical when my friend suggested this book but I am soooo

---

A Year on Ladybug Farm

glad I bought it. I needed to read something refreshing and positive. This is a very light read and very easy to follow.

I was constantly picturing myself in my 50's hanging out on a farm with my bestest friends in the whole wide world. I absolutely adore my friends and would not be able to live life without them.

I found myself giggling out loud in some parts of the book and that is very rare for me.

This book would make a great Mother's Day gift or a just because gift for that special female person in your life.

Can't wait to read the second book. ...more

## A Year On Earth

This is a story of friendship, independence and self-discovery. It's a light, fluffy read and very heartwarming. Three women chuck everything and purchase a farm in Virginia that turns out to be a money pit. The story follows their trials and tribulations in getting the property habitable. The problem I had with this book is that it was very hard for me to believe that three mature professional women would purchase a home without doing their homework. One of the characters, Cici, was supposedly a real estate agent for 30 years! Good summer read. ...more

This is a story of friendship, independence and self-discovery. It's a light, fluffy read and very heartwarming. Three women chuck everything and purchase a farm in Virginia that turns out to be a money pit. The story follows their trials and tribulations in getting the property habitable. The problem I had with this book is that it was very hard for me to believe that three mature professional women would purchase a home without doing their homework. One of the characters, Cici, was supposedly a real estate agent for 30 years! Good summer read. ...more

4.5 It was refreshing to read a book about three 50-something women and not a romance in sight. I loved reading about their friendship and their adventures buying and renovating Ladybug Farm. It was a fun, feel-good read. It made me want to grab a few friends and move there myself :) Thanks Diana for the recommendation!

## A Year On Ice

An Extreeeeeeeamly cozy read :) Fun, light, and really, really delicious-sounding food! Thanks for a great read, Susan!!!

This is an idealized but still fun story about three fifty-something women friends who move from an upscale neighborhood in Maryland to an old farmstead in the mountains of Virginia. They do have a lot of money and convenient skills to make the transition easier, still there's enough to like about this book for those of us who love rural life. I appreciated that there was no romance or sex and very little profanity. There also were no ticks, poisonous plant life and only one snake. :)

I didn't ca This is an idealized but still fun story about three fifty-something women friends who move from an upscale neighborhood in Maryland to an old farmstead in the mountains of Virginia. They do have a lot of money and convenient skills to make the transition easier, still there's enough to like about this book for those of us who love rural life. I appreciated that there was no romance or sex and very little profanity. There also were no ticks, poisonous plant life and only one snake. :)

I didn't care for the fact that all their children are selfish jerks. I'm in my 60s, and I know a lot of great young people who are kind, caring and helpful, including my own two kids. I sometimes get tired of the "selfish adult child" trope in books like this. Still, they didn't spoil the book for me because they played such a small part. There were some nice passages describing nature, and I thought the friendships were pretty realistic, too. All in all it was a pleasant book that I enjoyed, especially because it was clean, took advantage of its rural setting, and had older women as MCs. I'd read something else by this author. A sequel, perhaps?

...more