

## **Forgiving Summer – Synopsis**

*By Alice Griffin*

Sara is disillusioned and lost in life. Her long-term partner, Peter, is the person her friends and family say she *should* be with, but not the person who ignites her heart. The career she is in is one she has been pushed towards her whole life, but not one that represents her true self. Instead, the steady life she leads – a life that convention tells Sara is right and proper – lacks the adventure she secretly yearns for. But is she brave enough to walk away?

Years before when Sara was a child of 11, she visited a small island in Greece and a love affair with the language, landscapes and people began. But as adult life raced along, any childish dreams Sara had of spending time there were shelved, until that is she musters the courage to follow her heart instead of her head. Quietly, to the background of everyday life and unbeknown to Peter and her family, Sara organises her departure and one dreary New Year she finally leaves behind the grey skies of England for the crisp blue winter skies of Skopelos.

In search of freedom from a life that has restricted her for so long, her intention is to be alone so when Lou, a sixty-something widower who lives on the island embraces Sara into her life, Sara is as surprised as anyone to watch their unlikely friendship flourish. Under Lou's protective gaze Sara feels encouraged to be both impulsive and authentic in her new life. She buys a run-down village house, discovers a love for nature and embarks on Greek

lessons at the local taverna. Away from the pressures and way of life she grew up with Sara finds her true sense of self is free to grow.

Soon a love affair develops with local man, George, who offers Sara an awakening to the pleasures of life without need for constant analysing of what is right, proper or expected and her usual considered approach to relationships is left in the dust. The affair is all-encompassing and when George's betrayal of trust brings the relationship to an abrupt end, Sara fears it will be her final undoing.

Written in unison with the seasons of one year: from the cold winter where we meet Sara, lost and empty in England, to the emergence of new opportunities in Greece that first spring, followed by the nourishment of a carefree summer of passion and then a quiet and contemplative autumn, Sara's life on Skopelos is a tale of finding yourself. It is about slowing down, making time to connect with our true and natural desires and nurturing an inner strength that allows us to be open to life.

What Sara finds after a year on Skopelos is that her love affair with George will not be her undoing, but in fact her liberation and that by *Forgiving Summer* and the experiences it brought, Sara is able to move on with newfound strength. Her story ends during another winter, but we leave Sara no longer bare and empty, but nourished in her capacity to be open to new beginnings in life, without fear of endings.