

# Fireflies ★ Before ★ Fireworks

by Linda Asato



Ben and Lily rushed through dinner as fast as they could.

“It’s going to start soon!” Ben said.

Their father laughed.

“The fireworks don’t begin for hours.”



“But what if we miss something?” Ben asked.  
“You won’t,” Mom said, packing the picnic basket.  
Lily looked out the window at the fading sky.  
The evening air already felt warm and soft.



Soon the twins were spreading blankets across the grass at the town field.

Families carried folding chairs and coolers.

Music played somewhere nearby.

Children ran laughing through the crowd.



Ben looked up at the sky and groaned.  
“It’s still light outside!”  
“We have forever to wait.”  
Lily sat quietly beside him in the grass.



The sky slowly turned pink and orange.  
A warm breeze moved through the trees.  
Somewhere nearby, crickets began  
chirping.  
Lily noticed tiny flashes near the ground.



“Ben, look,” she whispered.  
Small lights blinked through the grass.  
Fireflies floated quietly in the darkening  
field.  
Ben barely glanced at them.



“They’re just bugs,” he said.

He stretched out on the blanket and sighed.

“But the fireworks are going to be amazing.”

Lily kept watching the tiny lights.



Soon more fireflies appeared.

Dozens of tiny lights drifted across the grass.

Some blinked near their feet.

Others floated higher near the trees.



Lily carefully cupped one in her hands.  
Its little light glowed between her fingers.  
Ben finally sat up to look.  
“Whoa,” he said softly.



For a while, the twins forgot about waiting.

They wandered through the grass together.

Everywhere they looked, tiny lights blinked in the darkness.

The whole field seemed alive.



Then suddenly—

**BOOM!**

A bright burst of red exploded across the sky.

Everyone cheered as the fireworks began.



Gold sparks shimmered overhead.  
Blue and silver lights filled the night sky.  
Ben grinned as the fireworks cracked and  
roared.  
Lily watched quietly beside him.



At last, the final fireworks faded into smoke.

People folded blankets and packed their chairs.

The crowd slowly drifted toward the parking lot.

The field grew quiet again.



Ben and Lily walked slowly through the dark grass.

Then Ben suddenly stopped.

Tiny lights still blinked all around them.

The fireflies were still there.



For a moment, neither twin said anything.  
The fireworks were gone now.  
But the little lights still glowed softly in  
the summer night.  
Ben smiled.



That night, the fireflies glowed long after the fireworks were gone.



**THE END**

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