

# Danielle Steel



Bestselling author of  
**FINE THINGS**



# KALEIDOSCOPE



*Kaleidoscope*

Danielle Steel



**SPHERE BOOKS LIMITED**

**SPHERE BOOKS LTD**

**Published by the Penguin Group**

**27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ, England**

**Viking Penguin Inc., 40 West 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, USA**

**Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia**

**Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R 1B4**

**Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd, 182-190 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand**

**Penguin Books Ltd, Registered Offices: Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England**

**First published in Great Britain by Michael Joseph Ltd 1987**

**Published by Sphere Books Ltd 1988**

**Reprinted 1988**

**Copyright © 1987 by Danielle Steel**

**All rights reserved**

**Printed and bound in Great Britain by**

**Richard Clay Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk**

**Filmset in Monophoto 10 on 12pt Bembo**

**Except in the United States of America,  
this book is sold subject to the condition  
that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise,  
be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated  
without the publisher's prior consent in any form of  
binding or cover other than that in which it is  
published and without a similar condition  
including this condition being imposed  
on the subsequent purchaser**

Danielle Steel is a descendant of the Löwenbräu beer barons. Her mother is Portuguese and her father is German. Their common language is French, although they all speak eight languages. Danielle's father's family, the prominent banking and brewing clan, has always lived in Munich and the family seat was a moated castle in Bavaria, Kaltenberg. Her mother's family were diplomats and her maternal grandfather was a Portuguese diplomat assigned to the United States for a number of years.

American-born Danielle lived in Paris for most of her childhood. At the age of 20 she went to New York and started working for 'Supergirls', a before-its-time public relations firm run by women who organized parties for Wall Street brokerage houses and designed PR campaigns for major firms. When the recession hit, the firm went out of business and Danielle 'retired' to write her first book, *Going Home*.

Danielle has established herself as a writer of extraordinary scope. She has set her various novels all over the world, from China to New York to San Francisco, in time-frames spanning 1860 to the present. She has received critical acclaim for her elaborate plots and meticulous research, and has brought vividly to life a broad range of very different characters.

*Also by Danielle Steel in Sphere Books:*

**THE PROMISE**  
(based on a screenplay by Garry Michael White)

**NOW AND FOREVER**

**GOLDEN MOMENTS**

**SUMMER'S END**

**SEASON OF PASSION**

**GOING HOME**

**LOVING**

**TO LOVE AGAIN**

**THE RING**

**LOVE POEMS**

**A PERFECT STRANGER**

**PALOMINO**

**ONCE IN A LIFETIME**

**REMEMBRANCE**

**CROSSINGS**

**FULL CIRCLE**

**THURSTON HOUSE**

**FAMILY ALBUM**

**CHANGES**

**SECRETS**

**WANDERLUST**

**FINE THINGS**

To three very special little sisters:  
Samantha, Victoria, and Vanessa,  
precious little ladies,

and their very big sister, Beatrix,  
who is so lovely,

and their three big brothers,  
Trevor, Todd, and Nicky,  
who are very special too.

May each of you be blessed  
with good lives, and good fortune,  
good hearts, and good people to love you  
and who you love well.

May you always be safe, and strong,  
and happy . . . and together!

And may each turn of the kaleidoscope  
bring you joy!

The first turn, which was our turn  
brought you to us, one by one,  
special gifts, greatly loved, precious people.  
And may your own turns bring you love,  
and flowers . . . never demons . . .

Hold fast to each other, beloved ones,  
bring each other strength, and laughter  
and good times and love . . . just as once  
we brought them to you.

With my love, for you and your Daddy,  
and with ours, for each other,  
and you.

With all my heart.

kaleidoscope

*the first,  
    shimmering moment  
        of life,  
like a diamond  
    in the sea,  
    glittering  
        in the noonday  
        sun,  
brightly lit  
    and glowing  
        flame,  
a brand new name,  
    a shining light,  
then gentle twist  
    and darkest night  
    comes  
        for the first  
        time,  
then happy rhymes  
    and gentle songs,  
        hearts that belong  
until one stands  
    alone,  
    from brightest  
        dawn  
    to deepest dusk,  
from morning sun  
to twilight dreams,  
fantastic schemes,*

*and lives  
that sometimes  
go awry,  
such shining  
hopes,  
such sudden turns,  
from bright  
to dark  
from grim  
to grand  
from joy  
to sorrow,  
always waiting  
for tomorrow  
and a twist  
of fate,  
a ray of hope . . .  
with the faintest  
sleight of hand,  
the alteration  
of all life's  
schemes  
and all its scope . . .  
all with one tiny turn  
of life's kaleidoscope.*



**Part I**

**SOLANGE**



## *Chapter 1*

The rains were torrential north-east of Naples on the twenty-fourth of December 1943, and Sam Walker huddled in his foxhole with his rain-gear pulled tightly around him. He was twenty-one years old and had never been in Europe before the war. It was a hell of a way to see the world, and he had seen more than he'd ever wanted. He had been overseas since November of '42, fighting in North Africa, and taking part in Operation Torch until May of '43. He had thought Africa was bad with the deadly heat and desert winds and the sandstorms that left you half blind with red eyes that burned for days and tears constantly pouring down your cheeks, but this was worse. His hands were so numb he could hardly hold the cigarette butt his buddy had given him as a Christmas gift, let alone light it.

The wind from the mountains went right through your bones, it was the worst winter Italy had ever seen, or so they said, and he suddenly longed for the torrid heat of the desert. He had reached Sicily in July, with the 45th Infantry, attached to Clark's Fifth Army, and after Sicily they had been in the battle of Naples in October. And the battle of Termoli after that, but for two months now they had crawled over rocks and through ditches towards Rome, hiding in barns when they found them, stealing what food they could, fighting the Germans

every inch of the way, and bleeding over every step they covered.

‘Shit . . .’ His last match was drenched, and by then so was the butt that had been his only Christmas present. He was twenty-one years old, and when the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor he had been at Harvard. Harvard – the thought of it would have made him laugh if he hadn’t been so bone-tired.

Harvard . . . With its perfect life and its pristine Quad and its bright young faces so sure they would one day run the world. If they only knew . . . It was difficult to believe now that he had ever been a part of all that. He had worked so damn hard to get there. He was a ‘townie’ from Somerville, and all his life he had dreamed of going to Harvard. His sister had laughed at him; all she had wanted was to marry one of the boys in her high school senior class – any of them would do – and she had certainly slept with enough of them to audition for the part. She was three years older than Sam and she had already been married and divorced by the time Sam finally got into Harvard, after working at every odd job he could for a year after finishing high school. Their parents had died when he was fifteen, in a car accident on a trip to Cape Cod, and he had wound up living with Eileen and her eighteen-year-old ‘husband’. Sam had walked out four months before Eileen’s erstwhile spouse, and they had hardly seen each other after that. He had gone to see her once, to say goodbye, three days after he’d been drafted. She’d been working in a bar, had dyed her hair blond, and he had hardly recognized her in the dim light when he’d first seen her. She’d looked embarrassed at first, and there was the same cunning light in her eyes he had remembered and always hated. Eileen looked out for number one, and her little brother had never meant much to her.

‘Well, good luck . . .’ She’d stood awkwardly staring at him in a dark corner of the bar, as he wondered if he should kiss her goodbye, but she’d seemed anxious to get back to work, and didn’t seem to have anything more to say to him. ‘Let me know where you are . . .’

‘Yeah . . . sure . . . take care of yourself . . .’ He had felt twelve years old again, saying goodbye to her, and he remembered all of the things he had never liked about his sister. It was hard to remember anything he had liked. They had always seemed like two people from different worlds, different lives, almost different planets. She had tortured him as a child, by telling him he was adopted, and he had believed her until their mother had whipped her one day and told Sam in her pathetic boozy way that Eileen was lying. Eileen always lied, she lied about everything, and whenever possible she had blamed Sam for whatever she’d done, and most of the time their father believed her. Sam had felt foreign to all of them, the big, burly father who had worked on a fishing boat all his life, the mother who drank too much, and the sister who partied all night. He had lain in his bed at times, imagining what it would be like to be part of a ‘real’ family, the kind with hot meals on the table, and clean sheets on the bed . . . a family from Beacon Hill perhaps . . . who summered on Cape Cod . . . a family with little children and dogs, and parents who laughed a lot. He couldn’t remember ever seeing his parents laugh or smile or hold hands, and sometimes he wondered if they ever had. Secretly, he hated them for the tawdry lives they led, and the life they had condemned him to. He wanted so much more than that. And they hated him in return for his good grades, his bright mind, his starring roles in his high school plays, and the things he said to them, about other lives, other worlds, other people. He had once confided in his father that he



wanted to go to Harvard one day, and his father had stared at him as though he were a stranger. And he was, to all of them. When he finally went to Harvard, it was a dream come true, and the scholarship he had won had been the gift of a lifetime . . . the gift of a lifetime . . . and then that magical first day, after working so hard for so long, and then suddenly three months later it was over.

The rain beat on his frozen hands and he heard a voice next to him for the first time, as he glanced over his shoulder.

‘Need a light?’

He nodded, startled out of his memories, and looked up to see a tall blond man with blue eyes and rivers of rain pouring down his thin cheeks. They all looked like they were crying.

‘Yeah . . . thanks . . .’ Sam smiled, and for a moment his eyes danced as they had years before. He had been full of mischief once, aeons before. He had dreamt of being the life and soul of the drama club at Harvard. ‘Nice Christmas, huh?’

The other man smiled. He looked older than Sam, but even Sam looked older than his years now. After North Africa and the Italian Campaign, they all felt like old men, and some of them looked it. ‘Arthur Patterson.’ He introduced himself formally and Sam laughed out loud as a gust of wind swept them both against the side of the foxhole.

‘Charming place, Italy, isn’t it? I’ve always wanted to come here. A truly marvellous vacation.’ He looked around him as though seeing beautiful girls in bathing suits and beaches with endless lovely bodies, as Patterson grinned and chuckled in spite of himself.

‘Been here long?’

‘Oh, about a thousand years. I was in North Africa last

Christmas. Terrific place. We were invited by Rommel.' He gratefully took the light from the tall blond man, lit the butt and got two good drags before burning his fingers. He'd have offered it to his new friend but there wasn't time before the rain put out the mere half inch that remained, and he looked apologetically at his benefactor. 'I'm Sam Walker, by the way.'

'Where you from?'

He wanted to say Harvard, just for old times' sake, but that would have sounded crazy. 'Boston.'

'New York.' As though it mattered now. Nothing mattered now, they were all names of places that didn't exist. All that existed were Palermo, Sicily, and Salerno, and Naples, and Rome, their ultimate goal, if they ever got there.

The tall blond man looked around him, squinting in the wind and rain. 'I was a lawyer before all this.'

Sam would have been impressed, but like the places they were from, the people they had been no longer mattered. 'I wanted to be an actor.' It was something he had told hardly anyone, certainly not his parents before they died, or his sister after that, and only a few friends, but even they had laughed at him. And his teachers had told him that he needed to study something more worthwhile. But none of them understood just what acting meant to him, what happened when he stepped on stage. It was like magic reaching from his soul, transforming him into the character he was playing. Gone were the parents he had hated, the sister he had loathed and all his own fears and insecurities with them. But no one seemed to understand that. Not even at Harvard. Harvard men weren't actors, they were doctors and lawyers and businessmen, heads of corporations and foundations, and ambassadors . . . He laughed softly to himself again. He

sure as hell was an ambassador now, with a gun in his hand, and his bayonet fixed all the time so that he could run it through the guts of his enemies as he had time and time again in the past year. He wondered how many men Patterson had killed, and how he felt about it now, but it was a question you didn't ask anyone, you just lived with your own thoughts and the memories of the twisted faces and staring eyes as you pulled your bayonet out again and wiped it on the ground. He looked up at Arthur Patterson with the eyes of an old man and wondered briefly if either of them would be alive to see another Christmas.

‘What made you want to be an actor?’

‘Hmm?’ He was startled by the serious look in the other man's eyes, as they both sank to a sitting position on a rock planted in the mud near their feet as the water in the foxhole swirled around them. ‘Oh, that . . . Christ, I don't know . . . it seemed like an interesting thing to do.’ But it was more than that, much more than that, it was the only time he felt whole, that he felt powerful and sure of himself. But he couldn't tell this guy that. It was ridiculous to talk about dreams sitting in a foxhole on Christmas Eve.

‘I was in the glee club at Princeton.’ It was an absurd exchange, and suddenly Sam Walker gave a crack of laughter.

‘Do you realise how crazy we are? Talking about glee clubs and drama clubs and Princeton, sitting in this goddam foxhole? Do you realise we probably won't even be alive by next week, and I'm telling you I wanted to be an actor . . .’ He suddenly wanted to cry through his own laughter. It was all so goddam awful, but it was real, it was so real they could taste it and feel it and smell it. He had smelled nothing but death for a year, and he was sick of it. They all were, while the generals planned their attack on

Rome. Who gave a damn about Rome anyway? Or Naples or Palermo? What were they fighting for? Freedom in Boston and New York and San Francisco? They already were free, and at home people were driving to work, and dancing at the USO and going to the movies. What the hell did they know about all this? Nothing. Absolutely goddam nothing. Sam looked up at the tall blond man and shook his head, his eyes full of wisdom and sadness, the sudden laughter gone. He wanted to go home . . . to anyone . . . even his sister, who had not written to him once since he'd left Boston. He'd written to her twice and then decided it wasn't worth the trouble. The thought of her always made him angry. She had embarrassed him for all of his teenage years, and several before that, just as his mother had . . . and his stolid, taciturn father. He hated all of them, and now he was here, alone, with a stranger who had been in the glee club at Princeton, but he already liked him.

'Where'd you go to school? Patterson seemed desperate to hold on to the past, to remember old times, as though thinking about it would take them back there, but Sam knew better than that. The present was right here, in the filth and frozen rain of the foxhole.

Sam looked at him with a lopsided grin, wishing he had another cigarette, a real one, not just half an inch of someone else's. 'Harvard.' At Harvard he had had real cigarettes, any time he wanted — Lucky Strikes. The thought of them almost made him weep with longing.

Patterson looked impressed. 'And you wanted to be an actor?'

Sam shrugged. 'I guess . . . I was majoring in English lit. I probably would have ended up teaching somewhere, and running the school plays for snotty freshmen.'

'That's not a bad life. I went to St Paul's, we had a hell