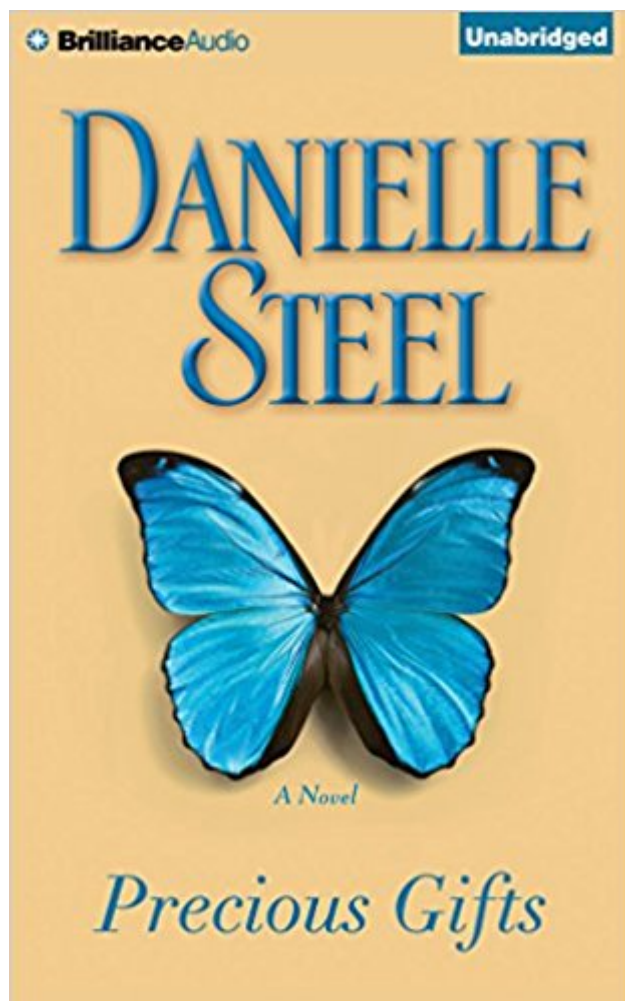


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Precious Gifts: A Novel



Synopsis

Sweeping from New York to Los Angeles to Paris, Rome, Venice, and the South of France, *Precious Gifts* is Danielle Steel at her most acute and affecting, with the story of Veronique Parker and her three very different daughters, who each find their destiny with a late assist from a charming rogue. Paul Parker was the ultimate bon vivant, charismatic but feckless, who left his wealthy wife and three beautiful daughters wounded and wary of men. But after his death, Paul shows surprising insight in the bequests he leaves to each. Knowing that Veronique's wealth is reserved for emergencies and special cases, so as to build the sense of responsibility he failed to provide, Paul aims to address their daughters' immediate needs in his will. To Timmie, he bequeaths the necessary funds to open her own facility to serve her homeless and underprivileged clients. To Juliette, enough to hire a staff to manage her bakery, so she can have time to get away, travel and live more fully. And to Joy, the money to hire a talent manager and funds for two years to get her acting career off the ground. But while Paul may have shown his daughters more support and affection in his final will than he ever did in his actual life, he leaves Veronique with a shocking revelation that shatters her remaining illusions about the understanding they had shared: the existence of a now-adult daughter who'd been born three years before their divorce. Yet this too, is a gift, as it propels Veronique to at last forge a life of her own and to open her heart to the magnetic photographer she meets in the course of her journey.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

All Danielle Steele's books are predictable, but this one is dull. The cast of characters include Paul,

a raconteur, who married Veronique, an uber wealthy woman, and the daughters they had prior to divorcing. In Steele style, the story begins with a tragedy. Usually her tragedies are more dramatic, a plane crash, for example, but Steele begins her saga with Paul's death and the reading of his will. The contents of the will surprise the beneficiaries, but they do not surprise me because the will launches the story. Veronique inherits a painting, and his daughters inherit varying sums of money with instructions about its use. A hands-off father for years, Paul takes a paternal interest from the grave. Veronique immediately flies to Rome. Another calamity ensues when she is nearly hit by a Ferrari, only to be saved by a young Englishman. In the standard Steele storyline, she meets the Ferrari driver, a Russian richer than Croesus, and Adrian, her savior, who is proud to be poorer than a church mouse. She lets the Russian wine and dine her, but her heart belongs to Adrian, who not only eschews money, but is jealous and controlling. Veronique and Adrian gallivant around Europe, and she almost loses him when she takes him to her Paris home, which Steele describes as one of the grandest homes in Paris. Poor Adrian (literally and figuratively). He is sickened by the opulence, especially because he realizes that Veronique, not her husband, brought wealth into the marriage. Almost in tears, he cannot reconcile her bundles of cash with his determination to remain a starving photographer, who specializes in taking pictures only of the most downtrodden.

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