

44 Charles Street: A Novel

By Danielle Steel

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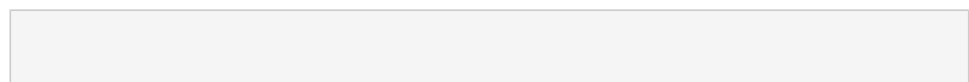
A magical transformation takes place in Danielle Steel's luminous new novel: strangers become roommates, roommates become friends, and friends become a family in a turn-of-the-century house in Manhattan's West Village.

The plumbing was prone to leaks, the furniture rescued from garage sales. And every square inch was being devotedly restored to its original splendor—even as a relationship fell to pieces. Now Francesca Thayer, newly separated from her lawyer boyfriend Todd, is desperate. The owner of a struggling art gallery, and suddenly the sole mortgage payer on her Greenwich Village townhouse, Francesca does the math and then the unimaginable. She puts out an advertisement for boarders. Soon her house becomes a whole new world.

First comes Eileen, a fresh, pretty L.A. transplant, now a New York City schoolteacher. Then there's Chris, a young father struggling with a troubled ex-wife and the challenge of parenting a seven-year-old son who visits every other weekend. The final tenant is Marya, a celebrated cookbook author hoping to start a new chapter in her life after the death of her husband. As Francesca's art gallery begins to find its footing and Todd moves on to another woman, she discovers that her accidental tenants have become the most important people in her life.

As the roommates bond, and the house fills with the aroma of Marya's exquisite cuisine, there are shadows as well as light. Naïve Eileen explores the precarious boundaries of online dating with a series of strangers. Chris's custody fight for his son escalates to devastating levels. Marya faces an unexpected choice that will take her into untested waters. And Francesca herself will contemplate what had seemed impossible: opening her heart once more.

Over the course of one amazing, unforgettable, ultimately life-changing year, the house at *44 Charles Street* fills with laughter, heartbreak, and, always, hope. In the hands of master storyteller Danielle Steel, it's a place those who visit will never want to leave.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

After her boyfriend and business partner leaves her, Manhattan art dealer Francesca Thayer is forced to take in boarders in order to save her beloved home. In short order, she rents out rooms to Eileen, a young teacher; Marya, a famous chef; and Chris, an attractive single father. They all become close friends, but their lives remain chaotic. Eileen falls in love with tattooed men, Marya has a persistent, married suitor, and Chris gains full custody of his son as his ex-wife becomes increasingly erratic. Along the way, Francesca stops worrying about what might have been, and becomes more involved in the world around her—romances, plumbing problems, and all. While addressing the recession, the lethal danger of Internet dating, and the evils of drug abuse, Steel keeps the tone gentle and soothing in this warm, cozy tale about the triumph of love, friendship, and second chances. (Apr.)

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From [Booklist](#)

When Francesca Thayer and her husband, Todd, divorce, he wants to sell their art gallery as well as their charming house at 44 Charles St., and split the proceeds. Francesca can't bear to part with either. She talks her artist father into becoming a partner in the gallery, but that still leaves the problem of how to keep her home. Against the advice of her mother, Francesca decides to share her house with three other people. She chooses carefully: Eileen Flanders, a young, fresh-faced teacher; Chris Harley, a divorced father with shared custody of his little boy, Ian; and Marya Davis, a newly widowed, famous chef who doesn't want to live alone. It looks as though Francesca's problems are solved. However, Eileen isn't as innocent as she seems, and the men she meets on the Internet and brings home range from incredibly rude to physically abusive, shattering the peace of the new family. This book is classic Steel—lots of emotion, friendship, romance, heartbreak, tragedy, and danger. Her countless fans are guaranteed to find it impossible to put down. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** With 590 million books in print and best-seller-list placements lasting nearly 400 consecutive weeks, Steel, somehow both predictable and surprising, is unfailingly popular. --Shelley Mosley

Review

"Charismatic and talented, The Big Five have been firm friends since their first day at school and the challenges, pitfalls and heartache of adult life make them ever more reliant on their trusty friendships. A satisfying novel from the Queen of Romance which explores each of the five's complicated family dynamics." Sunday Express

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ida Shrout:

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Linda Amato:

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Betty Giuliani:

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