

# The Sting of Fate



Spanning three Continents, the paths of love, life and restored dignity  
will take you on a spellbinding magical ride...

**NANNETTE HOLLIDAY**

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spellbinding magical ride...*

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**Nannette Holliday**



Strategic Book Group

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*To love, life, and the experiences they bring—along with those  
who cross our path—making us the people we are.  
To all who have made this book possible—merci beaucoup—je t'aime.*

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*“People travel to wonder at the height of the mountains, at the huge waves of the seas, at the long course of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars, and yet they pass by themselves without wondering.”*

*St. Augustine, 354 430*

— 1 —

## *French love*

**B**iting her bottom lip, she walked down the aisle—still stunned at what she was doing—uprooting her entire life for a man! Yes, this captivating French artist she’d met while holidaying in Cannes, on the French Riviera a few years previously.

She wasn’t dreaming. It was real. No friends, no family support, just him—a new life with him—and the magical Côte d’Azur would be their home. *Isn’t this what every girl dreams of?*

\* \* \*

Together they had chosen the apartment and many of the furnishings, albeit over the internet. He had included her in all the decision-making, from furniture placement right down to the tiniest little thing, such as the tablecloth—*for heaven’s sake!*

Truthfully, these minute details had actually driven her mad. For starters she really didn’t care for a tablecloth to cover the table all day—only for dinner parties—but it was a sacrifice she was prepared to make for obvious ‘cultural differences’.

She was still working full-time and there was a great deal of turmoil at work. Also at home she was sorting and packing up her things in advance of renting her own apartment. Not to mention the endless streams of paperwork, verifications and translations necessary to obtain her French residency visa, enabling them to legally live together. While he also had to send many papers and declarations, he was retired and could organize his days much easier than her. His days were totally his.

He'd said he wanted their place to be complete when she arrived. Yes, she could see he was a perfectionist, but figured it had more to do with the fact that he had nothing else to occupy his time. *Their* future life together was now his full-time consideration. She smiled, and answered his emails as quickly as possible, ensuring he did not stress.

Actually she was grateful for these distractions. Work had been particularly stressful. The department was undergoing a complete reorganization. His saucy emails not only brightened her life, it enabled her to spread some fairytale happiness to others—those remaining at work facing an uncertain future. Not once had she really considered her own future—figuring it would naturally fall into place after taking her many months of overdue leave. She would either stay in France with him, or come back to work—as simple as that. However, deep in her soul, staying was the only plan.

On her departure, friends threw a farewell party. She'd previously been asked if lunch at the Yacht Club would be all right? Did she have time on the last Sunday before leaving? *Yes, everything would be organized by then.* It sounded wonderful—a simple light lunch with views out over the lake and a handful of friends. Then those who couldn't join them for lunch would be there later for the Sunday jazz and dancing at the club.

Well, it was no simple lunch, but an extravaganza in the private dining room. Her dear friend and fellow jazz enthusiast, Christina, had miracu-

lously organized it. How she'd managed to fit the planning and execution of every minute detail into her already busy life still amazed her.

The room was decorated with red, white and blue balloons and streamers. French and Australian flags adorned the tables, along with photos of him and *their* new hometown that had been obtained from him—so sneaky of Christina! The scene was magical.

She hadn't been told of the exact details. Every time they spoke she would ask her how many were coming—*about a dozen*. Who?

*“Oh I don't have the list in front of me right now.”*

So she would let it slide. They were both very busy at work, and she knew whatever Christina did, it would be fun. It was one less item for her to do list, which suited her fine.

She was flabbergasted when over fifty friends came to the lunch. Did she really have fifty friends? Wow!

Unbeknown to her, Christina had even pre-arranged a recorded message from him. With his charming French voice oozing his profound love and affection for her and all in attendance, tears filled her eyes and a warmth enveloped her heart. She was glad in a way that only a handful in the room understood any French. Next minute the English version was played for all. Thinking aloud she said: *He doesn't speak English—and certainly not that much!*

Oh, but he did today:

*“I am happy to be able to speak with my Australian princess and all her friends gathered there to say goodbye. Firstly I apologize for taking her away from you, but I can no longer stand this separation.*

*We have waited a long time, we have written, we have telephoned, we have been faithful to one another and we have said many things. And now in a few days we will rediscover*

*each other. With a common project, a big project: to live the remainder of our life together.*

*I now await her, with all my love. I am waiting to take her in my arms—to our apartment on the Côte d'Azur.*

*Yes, I have an appointment with a woman. She comes a long way, from the other side of the world. She will leave the cold and bitter winter to discover the heat and the sun at the edge of the sea. . . And do you know for what? For me! For I am very in love. This is a pretty woman. She always has a smile. A very pretty face. A body that gives me ideas. . . And she is very kind. I fell in love with her as early as the first day I saw her. If you knew how much she pleases me!*

*My love for her is so strong that I am sure that we will succeed as a wonderful couple. Yes. I am very in love. Very, very in love.*

*What's more, I am in love as if I was again at high school. She makes me feel young! I love her, and she me, and I know that love will blossom and grow. We will do like a garden: to water it every day to ensure that there will always be flowers. And then the years will pass and we will be happy together. Yes, before getting old, we will have many pleasant years!*

*I do nothing but think of her. My little Australian pleases me a lot. Every day, I discover her actions and thoughts that give me much pleasure. As for her body, I liked it the first second I saw her. She is not big, as I like. Her face is very pleasant. She smiles often. I like her laugh, her humor. Her small eyes crackle as bubbles of champagne. Yes she pleases me much. I love her so! We prepare our new life together. We look to the*

*future with optimism. I am sure that we will always walk together! We will pray for that—to protect our love.*

*While we will keep in contact by email and telephones. . . one day I look forward to meeting you all—in Australia or here at our home where you will always be welcome.*

*Yes my dear, you feel it, I am very, very in love! I know that I am not mistaken in choosing you. You are the woman who I have always dreamed of. I cover you in kisses. Yes, I love you, I love you, I love you, my darling! Please come soon. I now await you with great impatience.”*

She was as red at her jacket. Now everyone knew how he really felt—not just a handful of her nearest and dearest who she'd occasionally shared snippets of emails.

The day was as enchanting as her new life. CDs of him singing were played. He even called on Christina's mobile—in the middle of the night his time. This was like a fairytale. How many males ever do this for the woman they love? Certainly, no Australian man had ever done anything like this before—for her.

Any doubts she may have once had, were not even on the horizon now. Yes, he—this amazing Frenchman—had captivated her heart, and now those of her friends. Each one commenting afterwards that they now understood why she could do what she was doing.

It was sad for her to be moving away from all her friends, who were also her family. It was no small step—it was gigantic—to the other side of the world. If there were any tears, they were only of happiness... and she was so delighted for the many wonderful people who were now sharing her life and dreams. They were simply astonishing and so supportive. She counted herself extremely lucky indeed.

\* \* \*

Tripping, her meanderings were abruptly halted. A man next to the aisle grabbed her arm, stopping her fall. Oh how foolish, everyone would now be looking at her. Quickly, regaining her composure, she bent her head, thanking him.

My God—what was she doing? Reality setting in—her heart racing at a hundred miles an hour. Yes, this was for real. This was not a dream, nor some children’s fairytale story. This was her life. Taking a deep breath, she steadied herself and focused ahead—on him and their future.

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