

# Angelique

## Chapter One:

### *The Crossing*

I left England wrapped in fog, the kind that clings to your coat and memory alike. At twenty-three years of age, I didn't know I'd stepped into the middle of my own story. I only knew the ache in my chest wasn't fear. It was calling.

This moment could reveal the tension between old identity and future purpose. The Sylvia who boards the ship is still tethered to the known, but something in her, a flicker, a whisper, is already becoming *Angelique*. Maybe it's a conversation with a stranger, or a moment staring at the vast sky from the tarmac, where the name begins to form without explanation.

They said England was grey. I hadn't noticed, not really, until the morning I left it behind. The sky pressed low and heavy, as if the heavens themselves resisted my departure. But there was no storm. Only mist. Mist that

clung to rooftops, to boots, to breath. Mist that blurred the edges of the life I was walking away from.

My suitcase was half-empty. I told myself it was practicality. But maybe, even then, I knew I was making space for something else. For Hoping and dreaming of a new home amongst kangaroos and wallabies as we had seen in the promotion videos for immigrants to Australia. Imagining sunny days at the beautiful beaches. So very inviting.

As we boarded the train at Stoke Station, I was too caught up in my own excitement about starting a new life in a distant country to notice how our departure was affecting my mother. I watched as tears welled up in her eyes. I couldn't recall ever seeing her cry before. Her life had been tough, raising six children as a single mother. The years had taken their toll, and she looked old now.

I don't remember much about the train journey except it was fast, they have very fast trains in England.

At Southampton I watched as the enormous ship was being boarded by hundreds of passengers.

The Ellenis isn't just a ship, it's a vessel for transformation. And "Melbourne" gleams like a word spoken in prophecy, not geography.

The gangway trembled beneath our feet, but I barely noticed. I was watching the faces, so many faces, some tear-streaked, some unreadable. A sea of strangers moving toward an unknown shore, each with their own ghosts, their own hopes folded into suitcases.

I carried more silence than luggage.

The ship's horn bellowed, low and mournful, as if marking not just departure, but departure from who I had been. England shrank behind us, slowly, then suddenly. I pressed my hand against the cold railing and watched the dock fade into mist.

I didn't wave goodbye. Not because I wasn't grateful. But because something in me was already looking forward.

I didn't know it then, but I was already walking toward a name I hadn't heard, yet somehow recognized. It would rise slowly, like the dawn—whispered long before it was spoken aloud. This wasn't just a journey across oceans, but across identities. The Sylvia who boarded the Ellinis carried more than a suitcase; she carried a destiny not yet revealed. Somewhere beyond the mist and motion, a name waited, not one given by man, but by God. *Angelique*. And though I couldn't yet speak it, I could feel its echo in my chest, like a promise just beginning to unfold.