



## A Sprig of White Heather and a Scottish Lass: Part One

**Anne Angelo**

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*A Sprig of White Heather and a Scottish Lass is a resilient woman's memoir about her perseverance amid immense hardships and her courage to seize enormous opportunities.*

Anne Angelo's *A Sprig of White Heather and a Scottish Lass* is book one of her mesmerizing memoir series set in the 1900s.

The narration starts in medias res and soon shifts to Angelo's childhood under the oppressive hand of her father, a bitter Italian man whose wealth rose while his family remained impoverished. He was spiteful to Angelo, her siblings, and their mother due to his failed attempt to get into the French upper echelons through his wife. The foundation for Angelo's breakthrough was laid when he forced her to develop an entrepreneurial mind and fend for herself. When she was at her lowest point and wanted nothing more than for it all to end, she got the opportunity of a lifetime: a governess position for a French family. As she broke free from her father, her life turned toward one thrilling adventure after the other.

Now, with the world on the verge of another world war, Angelo's lover, Gerald, urges her to return home to Invergordon, Scotland, even though she thought she had left it and all of its painful memories in the past. Shortly after her arrival, she finds herself being propositioned by a supposed British officer while wondering how he's connected to Gerald.

Angelo's story is engaging, adventurous, emotional, and humorous. It also passes across lessons that are relevant to different facets of life: what to avoid when picking a man; how to mix with diverse social classes and be discerning when in new environments; ways to survive in perilous and changing times. Cultural diversity is explored through Angelo's mixed heritage and interactions with different cultures. The cultural differences between Scotland and France are explored in detail too. Upon her arrival in France, Angelo notes the stark contrast between the cold Scottish weather, which requires a heavy amount of clothing, and the warm French climate, which allows for lighter and more fashionable outfits. She also muses about how wearing the French outfits in Scotland would cause mockery due to differences in climate and mindset.

The distinctness and linguistic command used to describe people, events, and thoughts enriches the brilliant storytelling. With clarity, Angelo describes her experiences with leaving Scotland for the first time, including a hurried and confusing goodbye with her family and the surreal feeling she got from boarding a train alone. She shared an overcrowded cabin with people and animals and tried to cope with the rapid flow of French; she attracted stares after stepping out of the train from Scotland onto French soil, looking like Bonnie Prince Charlie. This volume concludes with a cliffhanger ending that secures anticipation for book two.

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GABRIELLA HARRISON (December 2, 2022)

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