



The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 2: 1920-1923

Anaïs Nin , Joaquín Nin-Culmell (Designed by)

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A continuation of the journey of self-education and self-discovery begun by Anaïs Nin in the previous volume of her early diary. Central here is the growing conflict between her role as woman and her determination to be a writer. Editor's Note by Rupert Pole; Preface by Joaquin Nin-Culmell; Index; photographs.

The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 2: 1920-1923 Details

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From Reader Review The Early Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 2: 1920-1923 for online ebook

Bruce says

The first three volumes of Nin's early diary cover the years 1914-1927, beginning with her voyage to America with her mother and brothers. The diaries are exceptionally-written given her age at the time: main themes include her delusional attempts to reunite her family, her struggles at school and with the genteel poverty of her home life, and, inevitably, boys. Through all this there is her ongoing compulsion to write, the mark of all professional writers.

Lindsey says

Beautifully and innocently written.

Kay says

If you ever can bear to revisit the pains of late adolescence, Anaïs Nin's second diary can guide you through it in a delightful way.

This volume is written in English. She switches from her native French because she has so fallen in love with the English language. She remains strongly devoted to reading, consuming volumes by Emerson, Bossuet, Poe, Descartes, Darwin, Rostand, Tennyson, Henri Merger, Sinclair Lewis and Stevenson. (She was not a fan of Lewis'. She found his writing too plain.) It is during this time that she begins classes at Columbia University, where she endearingly said she studied four subjects: "Composition, Grammar, French and Boys."

It is this last subject that is one of the main themes of this book, that, and coming to terms with her own beauty. She goes from often criticizing her own appearance to eventually serving as an artists' model. She once even appeared on the cover of the Saturday Evening Post. There are moments when she expresses surprise at discovering people think she is pretty. It is through this eventual comfort with her own looks that she also matures in her feelings about the opposite sex.

In this volume, there are two boys between whom she splits her devotion. First, she forms a great intellectual bond with her cousin, Eduardo. Eventually she confesses to her mother that she thinks she might be attracted to him. Her mother dismisses this as the silliness of youth, and promises she will get over it. And A.N. does eventually get over her devotion to her cousin, but always views him as someone with whom she has a deep bond.

Eventually, her admiration turns to Hugo (officially named Hugh, but goes by Hugo to avoid confusion because his father holds the same name), a young man who she finds to be steady and intellectual but she often struggles to know how he really feels about her. Eventually, of course, she marries Hugo, and that marks the end of this volume, but it is the journey of young love, making choices about these feelings that suddenly arise, that really make this book.

Again, A.N. speaks often of her passion for writing. She goes through the phases many young writers do; she notes that everything has already been written. She wonders how she could possibly contribute to a literary world which is already filled with great writing.

She also makes resolutions often in the book: she promises to be virtuous in housework; she promises to write daily in her journal; eventually, as she becomes betrothed to Hugo, she promises to put his wishes above her own. It's almost heartbreaking, these youthful designs that will all eventually be broken. But that feeling of youth, of resolving to, from that day forward, commit strongly to one thing or another, is one that is all too common in youth.

In this book, we see A.N. gradually move from a child to a young woman. It is a journey that is filled with joy and heartbreak, and one that might seem all too familiar.

Monica says

Her reliance on men at this age scares me...other than that it is a good depiction of her blossoming into a brilliant writer.

Kim says

Nin's diaries are like one-sided conversations with an interesting narcissistic free-spirit. Enjoyable summer or bathtub reading.

Brooke says

This was the book that made me love Anais Nin. Her early thoughts, precocious imaginations, her simple crushes. All of these things made me feel as if I had found a long lost friend.

Greta says

This volume contains Anaïs's first diaries written in English. Although her writing style is heavily influenced by the vast quantities of English Literature she has read, she is able to express her thoughts and ideas so clearly and so beautifully as to make her relatively mundane life interesting. She is a wise soul in a young body, at this point in her journey through life. While she tends to be heavily melodramatic with regard to the subject of love, her feelings toward her future husband, Hugo, are a bit of foreshadowing perhaps. This, again, keeps the reader interested in the development of her personality and her ability and desire to write. And interested in finding out how her relationships eventually unfold.

SallyRose Robinson says

I enjoyed this inside look at how Anais 's Mind worked. It was interesting to see where she made the connections to the people in her life and how her writing can to her.

tee says

ARGH, I didn't check the 'quantities' at checkout when I ordered this one online and bought two. If anyone wants to trade for one of the ones that I don't have, or perhaps another book - let me know!
