



The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 2: 1934-1939

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Beginning with Nin's arrival in New York, this volume is filled with the stories of her analytical patients. There is a shift in emphasis also as Nin becomes aware of the inevitable choice facing the artist in the modern world. "Sensitive and frank...[Nin's] diary is a dialogue between flesh and spirit" (Newsweek). Edited and with a Preface by Gunther Stuhlmann; Index.

The Diary of Anaïs Nin, Vol. 2: 1934-1939 Details

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Emily Gallagher says

This ought to be read in the fall, sitting on a bench in Thompkins Square Park (in the East Village), while sipping on an Americano from 9th Street Espresso. Ideally you'll be resting your feet on a skateboard. Or maybe that's just me.

Gwen says

Marvelous.

Ciara says

the thing about anais nin's diaries is that they are all drawn from a much larger work--that of nin's life-long diaries. so each volume is just an excerpt, & as such, it's not like one volume really stands out thematically from the pack that much. history/politics-wise, i think this is the one where the going is getting rough in europe, & world war two is about to get started. nin is participating a lot in cafe/salon culture, making friends with various artists, reading manuscripts, still financially supporting henry miller, etc. she is starting to get very interested in psychology & analysis & i think this is the one where she starts analysis with dr. otto rank. when i told jared i was reading these books, he was kind of critical. he said he didn't like them because they are just all about the famous people that anais nin knows & it's like she is name-dropping & luxuriating in how utterly fabulous her star-studded life is. i can see that perspective now that we are seventy years removed & many of the events & people that nin mentions in her diaries have been given an official historical context, but the thing is, we are living in our own historical context right now. we just don't know how it's all going to play out in seventy years because none of us has a time machine. & it's entirely possible that i am friends with someone who could go on to be a culturally relevant writer, theorist, filmmaker, whatever. even if it's just in a small way. i write about the people i know in my diaries, & the things they do, & the projects i admire, etc etc. why not? that's what's on my mind. nin had no way of predicting which of her friends would become famous. & sometimes she spilled a lot more ink on the people who toiled in obscurity than the people who are really well-known now. i guess a lot of people find her diaries interesting to read because they are full of famous people, artists, events, historical moments, & that's fine. but you have to consider that she probably didn't really realize what she was recording while she was living it. it was just luck & circumstance, right?

Jennie Rogers says

Staying deeply rooted to intuition, sensations, feelings rather than the intellect, premeditation, ideas.

Rowena says

"Writing more and more to the sound of music, writing more and more like music. Sitting in my studio tonight, playing record after record, writing, music, a stimulant of the highest order, far more potent than wine. In the interior monologue there is no punctuation. James Joyce was right. It flows like a river." — The Diary of Anais Nin, Vol. Two

I loved Anais Nin's first diary and I enjoyed this one too. Yes, she's extremely self-absorbed and it does get a bit trying reading about how great people say she is but one can't help but admire her for how unapologetic she is, and also for the unique way in which she views life. Her writing is like nothing I have never read before; it's beautiful, thoughtful and poetic. She truly makes diary-writing an art form.

In this diary, Ms. Nin is a little restless: should she stay in Louveciennes or should she go to New York? She ends up going to New York where she becomes a psychoanalyst, a point that I found very surprising as she didn't have any training as such. The part when she was in New York seemed a bit surreal; I can't imagine Anais Nin at Madison Square Garden watching a hockey game!

The diary was written prior to World War Two so this diary therefore has several political mentions in it:

"A war is going on which people doubt will become a real war. It may be a mock war to satisfy those who clamoured for it. We are being deceived, and what is happening is a mystery. Scant news."

The diary was full of Nin's interesting observations. Like Proust, Nin also wrote about memory:

"Some portions of my life were lived as if under ether, and many others under a complete eclipse. Some of them cleared up later, that is, the fog lifted, the events became clear, nearer, more intense, and remained as unearthed for good. Why did some of them come to life, and others not? Why did some remain flavourless, and others recover a new flavour and meaning?"

Overall, I felt more sadness surrounding Nin in this volume. She seemed to have given so much of herself to people around her, and you could tell that the news of the war took a lot out of her.

Looking forward to Volume Three.

Karen Aleta says

Read all about her affair with Henry Miller.

Linda says

Knowing about the life of Anais Nin, I can only regard this work as utter fiction. Her adolescent and arrogant delusions are at times amusing, other times embarrassing. Yet there is something interesting.....

Legion says

Rather than talk about what I learned, I just wanted to warn people that before buying these books they should check to see whether it is the "censored" or "unexpurgated" version. I didn't know and bought 3 "censored" volumes (this was because people she mentioned were still living at the time of publication. Republishing was the full version. These are still worth reading if you can find the uncensored ones...

Vicky says

Nearly breathless, I will write something in here soon.

Janet says

New York and Paris. Gonzalo the hunky Spaniard--guitarist, revolutionary, gigolo--and his awful crippled wife, who move in with Anais on the houseboat in the Seine (not a spoiler!) The Spanish Civil war. The end of Anais and Henry. The advent of the outrageously young, the dizzily intelligent Laurence Durrell. The visit to Fez and the publication of House of Incest. Oh, the older I get, the better these Diaries are--now that I've heard of Brassai and Artaud and James Laughlin the publisher, I've read Proust. It just gets richer with time.

Catherine Corman says

I spread out on my bed all the gifts I brought from New York. A set of wooden dishes with astrologic symbols against blue-painted edges. We will have a dinner and invite Antonin Artaud.

-Anais Nin, The Diary of Anais Nin

Cameron says

For some reason I enjoy "hanging out" with Anais during the summer. So to keep in form, I read Diary 2. Not as good as the first, I still enjoyed her artistic writing style (even the mundane is viewed as art) and her colorful life. It is hard to imagine doing some of the impulsive things she does (e.g. leaving her home to purchase a riverboat, etc). In addition she continues to play the "savior" role for people around her, often at the expense of her own physical comfort. These types of experiences make for a fun, interesting read. Her books aren't life altering, but they do tend to grab my attention and Anais haunts me. It may be her willingness to just live fully, her unwillingness to conform, her ability to see beauty in everything....I am not sure. I guess I will need to wait until next summer.

Pariskarol says

People criticize Nin for, among other things, her self-absorption, but I think any diary of anyone, literary or not, has at its central character the diarist. Maybe I'm self-centered too, but I'm the main character in my life and journal as well.

What makes Nin's diary meaningful to me is not so much the meanderings of a 1930s woman's self-exploration. Instead it is the incredible time and place she documents — the Paris alive with creativity and forward thinking (avant garde) before WWII.

This volume documents the final days of that period, as writers, artists, and thinkers who were able left Paris one by one before the Nazis marched in.

It is so worth reading this book to be introduced to Brassai, Hilaire Hiler, Jean Carteret, Lawrence Durrell, Waldo Frank, Sir Richard Burton, Carlos Suares, and dozens of other fascinating people Nin mentions or meets.

Rebe says

There are a lot of thoughts in this diary that I loved, and those gems made this book well worthwhile. However, I found I lacked interest in her life, and this being a diary, there were a lot of entries about her problems mothering her friends with their various problems and vices. It was a struggle for me to finish this, but I did enjoy her insights.

Ximena López Arias says

Poca objetividad con esta escritora, al menos 10 estrellas. Su erótica pluma es una de las más bellas de todos los tiempos! La época en la que vivió fue también muy prolífica y estimulante, fue amiga de pintores, dramaturgos, escritores, bailarinas, psicoanalistas, entre ellos Artaud y Miller, dos hermosos monstruos!

Shasta McBride says

I completely fell in love with Anais Nin and gobbled up her first three diaries. And then, just like that, I saw the movie Henry and June a few weeks ago, and, well, her Diaries were off-loaded to the guy at the Goodwill Donation center this past weekend (along with All the Sad, Young Literary Men, Then We Came To The End, and How to Lose Friends and Alienate People).

How could I fall so hard and then feel so duped? I don't know. What does that say about moi? I don't know. I think what got to me in the movie--and she is played by a really amazing actress--was that it just portrayed her as some rich, bored housewife who wanted to explore sex and psychology all day long just because she hadn't until Henry swooped in with all of his neat Bohemian friends and lovers. And this somehow painted

her as a selfish (cheating on her husband), mind-absorbed (not in her sexual-feeling like her writing so well-illustrates or seems to illustrate), out-of-touch aristocrat type...

Ah so des ka.

But the movie is one thing and Nin's writing is another. I do idolize her ability to convey emotion on the page and I have yet to read Delta of Venus and all her other letters, and I'm sure I will at some point. For now, I have to let the memory of how the movie painted her fade. XO

Jocelyn says

had the whole set and read them all at 17 or 18. Enthralled then, would probably be less enthralled and more irritated were I to read them now.

Michelle says

The book falls apart in my hands. Its as if no one has read it for 40 years. The pages have turned yellow brown with age and stiffened with coldness. It's brittle and frozen. It comes undone in my hands as if the sheer touch of it is too much to handle. It is overwhelmed. Has it waited out death for 40 years to die in warmth? But I cannot allow this. I will not aid in the murdering of something once so beautiful and filled with a thousand lives. The pages fall off like the hair of a chemo patient. Death is staring right at it and humiliates by making it shed its beautiful veil. Luxurious with organic flow that never had seized to grow until the day black forced itself upon it and stayed. I am the doctor, not Death's accomplice. I hold together the fallen pieces. I find hope among the torn flesh-bound and discolored skin-pages. If it has lived this long harboring a silent killer it will fight what has now become visible, shown its ugliness. For what you can see is easier to kill than what you cannot. This I find to be an improvement. Now I can begin to help it heal and stop the quiet suffocation it has endured. With the turn of each page a breath is taken. Air is beginning of Life. It will live. And I too, will grow.

finn says

giving this four stars even though i found all her ruminations on the differences between women & men annoying. not sure if i overlooked that in the first volume or if it was heavier in this one. anyway, her writing is magic & reading the diaries always inspires me to write more in mine.

l. says

underwhelming. nice writing at times but she doesnt seem like a particularly insightful, intelligent or interesting individual tbh
