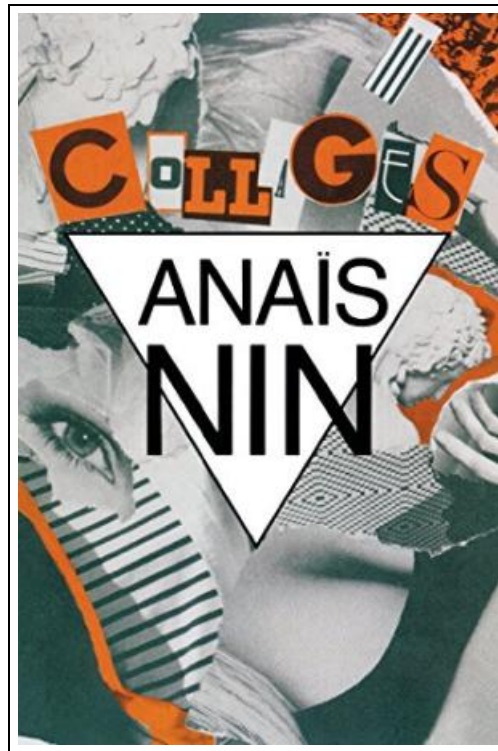


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Ohio University Press, United States, 1964. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Collages began with an image which had haunted me. A friend, Renate, had told me about her trip to Vienna where she was born, and of her childhood relationships to statues. She told me stories of her childhood, her relationship to her father, her first love. I begin the novel with: Vienna was the city of statues. They were as numerous as the people who walked the streets. They stood on the top of the highest towers, lay down on stone tombs, sat on horseback, kneeled, prayed, fought animals and wars, danced, drank wine and read books made of stone. They adorned cornices like the figureheads of old ships. They stood in the heart of fountains glistening with water as if they had just been born. They sat under the trees in the parks summer and winter. Some wore costumes of other periods, and some no clothes at all. Men, women, children, kings, dwarfs, gargoyles, unicorns, lions, clowns, heroes, wise men, prophets, angels, saints, and soldiers preserved for Vienna a vision of eternity. As a child Renate could see them from her bedroom window. At night, when the white muslin curtains fluttered out like ballooning wedding dresses, she heard them whispering like figures which had been petrified by a spell during the day and came alive only at night. Their silence by day taught her to read their frozen lips as one reads the messages of deaf mutes. On rainy days their granite eye sockets shed tears mixed with soot. Renate would never allow anyone to tell her the history of the statues, or to identify them. This would have situated them in the past. She was convinced that people...

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