

I, Anna: Book 1 A Novel d'Amour. Story of Free Love

JG ROTHBERG

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The Story begins in 1962 at the onset of the counter-culture explosion. With a fantasy filled childhood and adolescent friendship with Andy Warhol, Anna Sarena's adult life becomes a caretaker for her ailing parents. But the anguish of a pregnancy and birth to a boy, when she was sixteen, with the infant immediately sold for adoption, gnaws. A life event Anna agonizes over throughout the pages of the book. Now with parents deceased, her mom recently passed away after battling dementia, Anna sets out to rekindle her friendship with Pop-artist Andy Warhol. To her despair she is shunned time and again. In these endeavors, Anna befriends two men, Nick and Ethan, both connected to the '60s art world. Anna's narrative is one of romance and intimacy with both men. Nick her one lover is a drug addict, who spreads happiness and semen among various ladies in Andy Warhol's entourage; Ethan, the other lover, an art critic is an anxious lover, who pushes his career to higher levels.

A young man arrives later in this enigmatic novel, Nick's friend from rehab, who claims he's Andy Warhol's son, imploding another element to the story. During the course of the novel, Anna's obsession with Marilyn Monroe leads her to undertake a complete makeover in the hands of Tweetie, a clairvoyant, palm reading, hairdresser. With forays into music clubs in Greenwich Village, Gerde's Folk City, Cafe Wha? and the like, usually with both her lovers, to art galleries and to watering holes, the White Horse Tavern and Cafe Nicholson, Anna elicits stares, and whistles as Monroe. At a Taylor Mead poetry reading, a transvestite grabs her crotch and is surprised she is the real thing: a woman. The story at times is episodic, as a jealous roommate attempts to poison Anna with plant leaves mixed into to her breakfast of waffles and strawberries.

Eventually Anna's fate hangs on love and intimacy, and the good doctors who work to save her life. The story ends with the assassination of President Kennedy, and Anna's awakening from a coma, that nearly cost Anna her life.

The novel explores a diverse range of topics, including an evaluation of the fundamental institutions of marriage, intimacy, sexuality, politics and art, the role of woman, and men in our times. With "I, Anna," J. G. Rothberg writes a heart wrenching literary novel of love, intimacy, life spiraling quixotically; and an attempt at murder. An affaire d'amour for us all and for all times.

About me: J. G. Rothberg founded Circus Magazine, the legendary rock and roll publication and had been its editor and publisher for thirty-five years. Rothberg has also published and edited MGF, Mens Guide to Fashion and Sports Mirror magazines during this time.



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