

The Final Times of Jim Morrison

—Edward Sanders

In a way he was an American Rock and Roll Bacchus

In another he was a canny performer
 who used his musical/literary abilities
 to please and rouse up a Rebellious Generation

He was apparently inspired by repeated watchings of
 the Living Theater's *Paradise Now*
 in Los Angeles & San Francisco
 in Feb of '69

where the Theater appeared in a near nude mode
 on stage

making Morrison consider trying it himself

March 1, 1969, at a Mad-with-Bacchus concert
 in Miami

the pud-flash
 which caused him much Bacchic trouble
 worthy of Euripides

(there's a question as to whether
 he actually did it
 several books indicate a Doors crewman
 prevented the actual flash)

Flash or not, in a few days a warrant for Jim's arrest
 for pud-dangle
 in front of an audience

Forward to 1970
 according to Tony Sanchez's *Up and Down with the Rolling Stones*
 (try around page 213)

Marianne Faithfull and Mick Jagger
 parted ways in May of '70

He told her he was moving to France
because of tax reasons

2

From early 1964, when she was 17
till the spring six years later
she and Mick Jagger
had had an, uh, turbulent relationship

But now she said she was not going to accompany him
and left 48 Cheyne Walk in London's
Chelsea District
which she had shared with Jagger since 1968

(Dante Gabriel Rossetti, & Algernon Swinburne
had lived in 16 Cheyne Walk in 1862)

In July of '70 Pamela Courson, a long time
confidante, friend and lover of Morrison

was living with Jean de Breteuil
at his family's villa in Marrakesh
at least for a few days

but moved with Jean back to Los Angeles
by the end of the month
where the Count
pushed his heavy-duty possibly uncut horse
upon his "celebrity" pals

(The Doors back in early '66
had been the house band at a place in L.A.
called the London Fog

a 19 year old redhead from California named Pamela Courson
came to a show

and then another show

& in the coming weeks
struck a friendship with Jim

and a loveship
which lasted over five years)

Jimi

September 18, 1970

the great Jimi Hendrix
 choked on his stomach flow
 & passed away in London
 after too much Too Much

de Breteuil's Heroin

Jim's long time girl friend Pamela Courson
 in early fall of '70
 was now hooked on heroin

and living in L.A. with young count Jean de Breteuil
 in the country illegally
 and selling junk to young celebrities

De Breteuil's family allegedly owned all the French-language
 newspapers in North Africa, & after his father had passed away
 a few years earlier, Jean inherited the title Comte de Breteuil
 a line of counts oozing back 700 years

September 20, 1970

In Miami

Jim was found guilty on misdemeanor counts of
 indecent exposure & "open profanity"



Morrison's Mug Shot the Day he was Found Guilty

The same day, after a Stones concert in Paris
 Jagger met a woman from Nicaragua
 named Bianca Perez Moreno de Macias

They in fairly short order
 became a couple

Janis
 October 5

In a session in Los Angeles that day
 Janis Joplin had finished the beautiful vocals for
 “Me and Bobby McGee”

and in the evening she and her band
 recorded a Happy Birthday salute to John Lennon

The session ended around midnight
 & she returned to her room
 at the Landmark Motel in Los Angeles

where she took a shot of dangerous, un-cut heroin
 provided to her by the young Count Jean de Breteuil
 who brought in h
 apparently
 in diplomatic pouches

Janis went out to the lobby
 & purchased some cigarettes

chatted with the lobby man
 how happy she was with her new record

returned to her room
 & fell to the floor
 not to rise

uncut dope
tied the rope

Jean de Breteuil
 was mightily worried
 after his dope killed Janis

He faced a huge prison term if he, an “illegal alien”
 were found to have killed through horse

De Breteuil asked Pamela Courson
to flee with him to Paris
She did

5

leaving Morrison a note
which upon reading he burned

Some time in the several months thereafter
de Breteuil hooked up with
Marianne Faithfull

meeting her in London
while he stayed at Keith Richards' house

As for Jim Morrison, he was amoil and aboil
with trysts & partying
moving from hotel to motel
in the fall of 1970

The Doors were busy recording *L.A. Woman*
after long-time producer Paul Rothchild quit

They recorded it in a home-grown studio
set up in their business office

It was a fine, final album

December 8, 1970

Jim's 27th birthday

he recorded three hours of poetry
at a studio in West L.A. called Village Recorders

reciting from notebooks and typed poems

twenty two pieces in all
(maybe more)

One book lists the following:

"Book of Days"

“Ghost Song”
“White Blind Light”
“The Holy Shay”

6

He performed “The American Night”
striking chords as he read on the piano

He sang-intoned some poems *a cappella*
such as “Bird of Prey”
“Winter Photography”
“Under Waterfall”
and “Woman in the Window”

(It’s difficult to list exactly
because the reel-to-reels apparently
reside with Pamela’s parents, and have
never been commercially released)

December 11
the Doors final several concerts
first Dallas
then the next night New Orleans

then back to L.A.
after which they suspended all future gigs

Morrison spent the rest of December
finishing *L.A. Woman*

Pamela Courson
just before Christmas
returned to L.A. from Paris

apparently urging Jim to quit the Doors
and come back to France with her

In January 1971 the final two weeks
completing *L.A. Woman*
recorded on 8-track tape

At last they finished the mixes

on what turned out to be the Door's
most successful album

7

The Tracks

- 01 The Changeling
- 02 Love Her Madly
- 03 Been Down So Long
- 04 Cars Hiss By My Window
- 05 L.A. Woman
- 06 L'America
- 07 Hyacinth House
- 08 Crawling King Snake
- 09 The Wasp (Texas Radio And The Big Beat)
- 10 Riders On The Storm
- 11 The Celebration Of The Lizard

February 14, 1971

Pamela left by herself for Paris
She checked into the Hotel George V

and re-hooked up with
her on and off lover
Count Jean de Breteuil

her source of skag

March 8, before Jim departed for France
Courson called from Paris
saying she'd located a good place
for them to live

Morrison went to Paris on March 12

He brought prints of his two films, *Feast of Friends*
and *HWY*

some notebooks
a typed poetry manuscript

two quarter inch reels of his poetry readings

a Super-8 movie camera

a file of photos

8

plus some books and clothing

Landing, Jim took a cab to the George V hotel
but found it empty
no Pamela Courson

who was now a stone junkie

One of her lovers was the young Frenchman named
Jean de Breteuil
who specialized in peddling strong, even uncut heroin
reportedly brought in through diplomatic channels
perhaps even in diplomatic pouches

(his uncut junk had killed Janis)

Pamela had been hanging out with the Count's wealthy junk-batty pals

Through connections of de Breteuil
Pamela located an apartment
for Jim to sublet
which he did in the middle of March

It was a 3rd floor pad on the Right Bank
at 17, rue Beautreillis
not far from the Place de la Bastille
owned by a French "cover girl"
known as ZoZo

While in Paris,
Morrison was carrying around a satchel of texts and poetry
jotting ideas into a spiral bound notebook
plus attempting to get a screening
of his two films

April 10
in a rented Peugeot
Jim and Pam
drove into Spain

on a three week trip
visited the Prado in Madrid

May 3

they flew from Marrakesh
to Casablanca
& then back to Paris

and moved when returning
to the exclusive L'Hôtel
on rue de Beaux-Arts
on the Left Bank

(because ZoZo and pals
were temporarily residing
in her pad)

L'Hotel had 25 finely appointed rooms

Jim and Pam spent around two weeks at L'Hôtel
(Oscar Wilde had passed away there
in late Nov of 1900
when it was a modest place called Maison du Perier,
famously commenting
“Either that wallpaper goes, or I do.”)

De Breteuil in Southern France

Meanwhile, five Stones had moved
to southern France in the spring

where they set up a home-based
recording studio to record what
became *Exile on Main Street*

Mick and Bianca were married on 5-13
in St. Tropez
she was pregnant

Meanwhile the young pusher named Count De Breteuil
showed up at Keith Richards' house in France

with a woman's compact loaded with horse

Richards was grateful
and offered de Breteuil

(also known by the name Johnny Braces)
the use of his house in London
on Cheyne Walk

10

De Breteuil was soon luxuriating in the luxury
& learned that Paul and Talitha Getty lived
just a few doors away

At their house Jean met Marianne Faithfull

Jean just happened to be there
“He was Talitha’s lover,” wrote Faithfull
in her autobio
“and somehow I ended up with him....
He had a lot of dope. It was all about drugs and sex...
He was with me only because I’d been involved
with Mick Jagger.
In that froggy way he was obsessed
with all that
To him I was *très le type* rock ’n’ roll.”

She went with Jean de Breteuil
back to Keith’s house on Cheyne Walk

“I lived there with him
for months
& then we went to Paris for a weekend.”

A fatal weekend for Jim Morrison

May 18

Jim/Pam flew to Corsica
where they spent ten days

Then late May Jim moved back into 17, rue Beautrellis

An acetate of *L.A. Woman* arrived from Elektra
which Jim listened to 'gain and 'gain

(It was around then that Jim wrote
a poem “As I look Back”)

Early in June

Jean de Breteuil & Marianne Faithfull
were living in Keith Richards' house

(Richards and the other Rolling Stones
were in southern France)

Back in Paris
Jim was drinking heavily
Sometimes passed out
late at night in strange places

Two weeks before his fatal snorts of uncut
Morrison picked up a two-man band performing in the street
and took them for an impromptu session
at a second floor studio
not far from the Café Flore
and recorded a spontaneous version of Morrison's tune
"Orange County Suite"

and took the quarter-inch tape with him,
sticking it in a bag he carried
along with his poems and notebooks

End of June '71

Pamela Courson moved back into the flat
where Morrison was living
at 17, rue Beautrellis

She had been off and on residing at Jean de Breteuil's pad
but he had shown up from London
with the hooked Marianne Faithfull in tow

Jean and Marianne
moved into L'Hôtel

and de Breteuil
reputedly forked over
"Chinese heroin"
to both Pamela & Marianne

July 2-3

After going to the movies with Pamela
it was a Friday night
they ate some Chinese food
At 1 a.m. they returned to their apartment

That's the time-track Pamela later laid out

Jim was sipping whiskey

Pam was slicing lines of heroin on a mirror

Jim and she began snorting it
through rolled up money

They watched Super-8 footage of their travels
in Spain, Morocco & Corsica

with a projector on a chair
aimed at a blank wall
where a painting had been removed

In between reels
they honked down strips of the powerful horse

(Why was JM honking horse?
Wasn't he an alcohol, pot & coke guy
and not a heroin man?)

Here's the truth: Courson later told
a Morrison biographer [Danny Sugarman]
He thought he was honking in lines of coke)

Pam claimed that Jim listened to Doors records
into the night

He began coughing, difficulty clearing his throat

According to Pam, he asked for more junk
before sleep

Pam said that Jim was still awake
when she nodded out in horse-sleep

She came to maybe an hour later
to find Jim, next to her on the bed,
gurgling. She slapped his face, then hit
him a few times, till he began to rouse

Jim somehow made it into the bathroom
where there was a bidet, a toilet
& a narrow, tiled-wall tub
with a hand-held shower nozzle

and placed himself down in the tub

Someone turned on the water

Pamela nodded out again in the bedroom
and then she awakened to the sounds of Jim in the tub
vomiting clots of blood
& chunks of pineapple

After considerable vomiting
She later claimed Jim said to go back to bed
He felt better

(He remained in the narrow uncomfortable tub?)

Around 5 a.m. she slept

Around an hour later, she again awakened
Dawn was devouring the gloom

She further claimed that the bathroom door
was locked from the inside
(unlikely)

& that Jim didn't respond when she beat on the boards

She called Jean de Breteuil at L'Hôtel

Pamela Courson, Marianne Faithfull, Jean de Breteuil

Faithfull was zonked out (she says) on Tuinol
 (but not heroin—possibly a fib)
 and asleep in the hotel
when Pamela telephoned
 & inform Jean that Jim was gone

(How did she know that
 if the bathroom door was locked
 from the inside?)

De Breteuil dressed and rushed over to the apartment
dreading and worrying that
 he had killed two American stars

Why is it that
 de Breteuil's
 hot horse
killed Morrison
 but not Courson
 (& not Faithfull?)

Faithfull's recollections:

When Pamela called Jean
 at L'Hôtel
he prepared to leave at once

Faithfull woke up & said,
 "Jean, listen to me.
 I've got to meet Jim Morrison."

De Breteuil replied:
"Not possible, baby. Not cool right now, okay?"

Faithfull: "You are an idiot *and* a fucking prig!"

De Breteuil: "Not now. Je t'explique later, okay?
 Be right back."

Faithfull: "He slammed out of the room.
He returned in the early hours of the morning

in an agitated state and woke me up.

15

“I was fucked up on Tuinals.
Then, for no apparent reason, he beat me up.....
(After the beating) I lit a cigarette and asked him:

“So, did you have a good time over there?
Aren't you going to tell me why you're in such a good mood?”

“Get packed.’

“Are we going somewhere?’

“Morocco.’

“Very funny. We just got here.’

“I want you to meet my mother. Hurry up!’

“Uh-oh...What happened over there?’

“Shut up goddammit!’

“Oh, shit!’

“Yeah. It's fucked.’

Not very eloquent colloquy
as recounted by Faithfull
on how she learned
an American Bacchus was gone

They manically packed
and flew to Tangier
where they stayed with his mother
the Comtesse de Breteuil
for a week

Meanwhile at the Finale Tableau
at 17, rue Beautreillis

Phone calls had been made by Pamela
who in the months and years leading
to her own death in '74

told various versions

16

of what went down

She called Jim's friend, filmmaker Agnès Varda
Alain Ronay answered

She said something like "Jim is unconscious, Alain....
he's bleeding. Can you call
an ambulance for me?.... You know,
I can't speak French.... Oh, please....
I think he may be dying...."

She was sobbing

Varda was informed
who right away called the Paris fire department
which had the reputation as having
the best rescue squad

She and Ronay sped to Jim's apartment

(Agnès Varda was one of the screenwriters
for Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris*
and based the final scenes of the movie
on what she had seen and learned
about Jim Morrison's death)

The fire squad lifted Jim out of the bathtub
but the body was already chilly
and they carried it to the bedroom
and laid it upon it

De Breteuil showed up
conferred with Pam
telling her to flush all the drugs

and that she had the use of Keith Richards' house in London
or any of his family's places in Morocco
should she need them

Then the Count fled
before the police arrived

There was no autopsy
The cause of death was listed as a heart attack
& Jim was buried in Père-Lachaise cemetery



Photo by Ed Sanders, 1987, Père-Lachaise, Paris

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