

# 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

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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

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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”

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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

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### 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

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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

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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



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.

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“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

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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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