FROM HEM TO ETERNITY: JAMES JONES, HEMINGWAY, PARIS— MEDITATION & MEMOIR

H. R. STONEBACK

I

"For Norman, my dearest enemy, my most feared friend."
Inscription by James Jones in Norman Mailer's
copy of *From Here to Eternity*

I do not remember when or where I first read the work of James Jones. With some authors—Faulkner and Hemingway, for example—I never forget when and where I first really read them, the exactitude of their words and the feeling of their incantatory sentence rhythms, their style carrying with it the numinous presence of the *place* where I read them. *Place* transformed, magically illuminated by words, by style. But the gift of James Jones was not for *style*—it was for the slow steady building of narrative, character, and theme, the narrative drivenness that creates a world for the reader to inhabit. This is a gift that I have not fully appreciated until my recent rereading of much of his work in preparation for the writing of this essay, which is, then, in part a reassessment of his work after my long absence from the worlds of his fiction. My late reinvestment in the work of Jones is here expressed largely through memoir and anecdote—not to be confused with *anecdotage*—or, more exactly through a reconsideration, a *meditation*, on scraps of memoir I have written (and sometimes published) concerning Jones since the 1970s.

I do remember when I first heard of Jones, in pre-teenaged years, when

THE MAILER REVIEW, VOL. 6, NO. 1, FALL 2012. Copyright © 2012. The Norman Mailer Society. Published by The Norman Mailer Society.

From Here to Eternity exploded on the literary scene in 1951. If you thought of yourself as destined to be a writer, as called to the high vocation of literature—and I did at least since the third grade—you were aware early on that Jones was a major literary figure of his generation. You were aware of what Jones, Mailer, and Styron felt when the three young writers met in Greenwich Village in 1952 and they all agreed when Styron put his arms around the shoulders of his new friends and colleagues, saying: "Here we are, the three best writers of our generation!" (Hendrick 183) Of course, you did not know that anecdote then, but you knew the *ranking*. And yet, for me, my first knowledge (such as it was) of Jones, was through the film made of *From Here to Eternity* in 1953. I remember seeing it in a drive-in theater, probably in 1954 as a second-run drive-in feature. It is the only instance where I encountered a classic American novel first through the movie. I remember liking the movie very much and praising it to friends and being pleased when it received so many Academy Awards. I did not go to the movies much as a kid and it was the first non-western, non-Cowboys-and-Indians movie I had seen. I was moved by the story, convinced by all the actors and their characters—with some reservations about Montgomery Clift playing the role of a talented but reluctant boxer (since at age thirteen I was doing some boxing and had firm ideas of what a boxer should look like and how he should move). I also remember the girl (Judy) I saw the movie with at the drive-in and how the movie poster looked at the popcorn stand—Deborah Kerr and Burt Lancaster making love (making *out* we said then) in the waves, with Kerr on top, and that gave me some ideas about what Judy and I might do the next week-end at a beach-party on the South Jersey Shore, there in the magical surf. I was thirteen then. Sometime in the next year I read the novel.

And I do remember James Jones, the man and the writer, whom I came to know rather well when we were friends and neighbors in Paris, where we both lived in 1973–74. I remember the time, not long after we first met, when he said: "Who matters most in the generation before me? Faulkner and Hemingway." I agreed. Then he said: "Who matters in my generation? Baldwin, Mailer, Styron. And Jones." I think I agreed with him again. For a long time, my feelings about his work had been ambivalent. At first, I felt the same way about the man. The main business of this essay, then, is my memories of and meditations on that friendship.

II

> "So what are you kid? Another young American novelist looking for Hemingway's ghost?" [Jones said].
>
> "No," I said. "I'm more interested in Baudelaire and St.-John Perse." . . .
>
> "You come here to write or to drink at all of Hemingway's old hangouts?"
>
> "Are you buying?" I laughed.
>
> H. R. Stoneback *Hemingway's Paris: Our Paris?*

James Jones was my boss in Paris in 1974. To put it more precisely, Jones held a special advisory position on the Board of Directors of the American Center for Students and Artists and he was instrumental in hiring me for the position of Acting Director of that then-venerable now-defunct institution. I first met Jones sometime before the formal interview for that position. It was either December 1973 or January 1974—my memory functions more in seasonal rhythms than in calendrical sequence, so I am certain only that it was during the Christmas season of 1973–74. There were Christmas decorations everywhere on the streets of Paris on the day I met Jones. It might have been at the Crazy Horse Saloon where I later sometimes saw Jones, but it was more likely at the club at Pershing Hall where I later saw him often, sometimes in company with board members of the American Center.

My first published recollection of Jones appeared in a special "Literary Paris" issue of the glossy magazine *Arete* in 1989. I wrote the essay very quickly under deadline pressure, happy to receive the substantial check they sent and spend it in Paris. Although I intended to include more about Jones, I never did, neither in the expanded limited edition republication of the essay as a chapbook in the 1990s, nor in its 2010 republication in commercial book format under its current title *Hemingway's Paris: Our Paris?* Here, then, in its entirety, is my earliest published recollection of Jones:

> When I first went to Paris to *live*, I was resolved to avoid what I thought of then as Hemingway's superficial Paris, since I was firm in my will to live quietly and deeply into the real Paris, to enter truly into the life of France, and this resolve would have no truck with shallow American expatriate notions. Early in that

first year of residence in Paris I had my first conversation with James Jones, a central figure in yet another generation of American expatriate writers in France:

"So what are you kid? Another young American novelist looking for Hemingway's ghost?" His eyebrows furrowed down and deeply inward.

"No," I said. "I'm more interested in Baudelaire and St.-John Perse."

"Sure," Jones frowned. "So you're not hot on Papa's trail?"

"Not at all." He couldn't believe that I really wasn't.

"You come here to write or to drink at all of Hemingway's old hangouts?"

"Are you buying?" I laughed.

Jones's scowl turned darker as he went on to talk about Hemingway's Paris, a Paris which didn't exist, he insisted; but there was something he wasn't saying, some deep sense of unredeemed debt, some tangled sense of resentment toward Hemingway that I sensed between the lines, as if Hemingway had somehow led Jones to an illusory Paris all those years ago, as if Hemingway was guilty of some kind of personal betrayal of Jones. (Later, when I read *The Merry Month of May*, I concluded that although Jones, in a way, knew and loved one Paris, it was his Paris that didn't exist, and Hemingway's that always would.)

When, talking with James Jones and others that year, I confessed my indifference to Hemingway, and professed my far greater interest in French writers, I was probably telling a truth that I deeply felt at the time. [My Eureka-rereading of Hemingway that led to four decades of writing about Hemingway was only just beginning then.] After all, I had not read Hemingway for many years and by the sheer force of cultural complicity, at least, I shared in the ill-informed condescension toward Hemingway that had become fashionable in the 1960s. I had liked Hemingway's stuff when I was a kid, but, as I was saying in those days, I had graduated to Faulkner a long time ago. In fact, if I was interested in the trail of any American writer in Paris, it was Faulkner's spoor I would follow down the rue Servandoni to St. Sulpice, and back again to the Luxembourg Gardens, wondering

> why he had stayed in Paris only a few months though he had so obviously loved it. (But I knew about Mississippi and the South, how it was all different from Hemingway's Midwest, so I understood why Faulkner went home and Hemingway never did.) That year, I was teaching a seminar in Faulkner at the University of Paris. It would not have occurred to me to offer a seminar in Hemingway, and nobody suggested it. Even there, everyone seemed to think Hemingway was *passé*. (*Hemingway's Paris: Our Paris?* III: 1–3)

Reading this prose now, twenty-three years after I wrote it, I indulge an ironic smile, the irony mostly directed at my younger self, and another, warmer smile thinking about Jones, seeing him, hearing his voice talking during our first real conversation. And Hemingway almost always came up one way or another in our conversations the rest of that year.

Of course, the Jones-Hemingway question is familiar terrain to Jones scholars and runs like a litany through the recollections of Jones written by his friends. William Styron, for example, writes:

> [Jones] had stubborn prejudices, though—a blind spot, I thought, about Hemingway. He grudgingly allowed that Hemingway had possessed lyric power in his early stories, but most of his later work he deemed phony to the core. It filled him with . . . rage . . . and I would watch in wonder as his face darkened with a scowl as grim as Caliban's, and he'd denounce Papa for a despicable fraud and poseur. (Hendrick xi)

I, too, saw that grim scowl, watched Jones rage against Hemingway, and heard precious little of the grudging praise. Styron thought it all "sounded like overkill" and wondered if Jones was in the grip of "some irrational competitive obsession . . . the insecure epigone putting down the master" (Hendrick xi). And I confess that after I read Jones's essay in an old issue of *Esquire* I found in the American Center library, his essay about Pamplona entitled "Letter Home: Sons of Hemingway" (December 1963), I felt that Jones's relation to Hemingway was that of an obsessed epigone. Of course, I never said anything like that to him and I mostly just listened to his anti-Hemingway tirades. Given my own attitudes toward Hemingway in 1974, I was hardly

in a position to argue the matter. Now, reading Styron's 1989 Foreword to *To Reach Eternity: The Letters of James Jones*, I am inclined to reassessment, to at least partial agreement with Styron's more subtle point:

> But I soon realized that in analyzing his judgments about Hemingway I had to set purely literary considerations aside and understand that a fierce and by no means aimless, or envy-inspired, indignation energized Jim's view. Basically, it had to do with men at war. For Jim had been to war, he had been wounded on Guadalcanal, had seen men die, had been sickened and traumatized by the experience. Hemingway had been to war too, and had been wounded, but despite the gloss of misery and disenchantment that overlaid his work, Jim maintained, [Hemingway] was at heart a war lover, a macho contriver of romantic effects, and to all but the gullible and wishful the lie showed glaringly through the fabric of his books and in his life. He therefore had committed the artist's chief sin by betraying the truth. (Hendrick xi)

My reassessment, that is, given Styron's analysis, embraces a more sympathetic understanding of Jones's rage against Hemingway—even if I think, now more than ever, that Jones was wrong about what Hemingway did in his work. But I see now that Jones's attitudes towards Hemingway invaded the subtext of my own meditations on Papa long ago in Paris.

An interesting sidelight to this matter of Styron on Jones on Hemingway is provided by the fascinating literary conversation at New York's legendary Lotos Club about which I gave a brief account in my essay in the Fall 2010 issue of *The Mailer Review*. That evening, in a conversation about Hemingway that involved Styron, Mailer, William Kennedy and me, Styron was rather hard on Hemingway and how his work "was inimical . . . to good writing by all the writers who followed after him" (Stoneback, "Oohh Normie—You're Sooo Hemingway" 389). Indeed, in terms that sounded, in the early 1990s, rather like what I heard again and again from Jones in 1974, Styron attacked Hemingway. But, as previously reported, Mailer and I would have no part of it and silenced Styron. What should be added here, now that I am in the midst of re-imagining James Jones, is that we all agreed before the evening was over that Jones was the best war novelist of his generation. It was, in fact, moving to hear Mailer say why *From Here to Eternity* was a bet-

ter war novel than *The Naked and the Dead*. He did so more or less along the same lines he followed, years later, in his address to the 1999 James Jones Literary Society Symposium: "I think [*Eternity*] *was* better than *The Naked and the Dead* . . . [it] went deeper into the nature of what it was like to be a soldier" (Mailer 1). At that same Jones Symposium Mailer said: "I sort of half-loved the guy as a buddy." But at the Lotos Club in the early 1990s what Mailer said was this: "I loved Jones more than any other writer of our generation." I did not know what that meant then because I did not know about their long-lasting feud. And I did not yet fully realize or remember—because I had not reread or even seen my Paris journal from 1974 in decades—that I, too, loved Jonesy.

III

> Pershing Hall was where the bigwigs and James Jones and some French Count interviewed me for the job . . . Pershing Hall was the Great War and Modern Memory, and I relived that war there some days.
>
> H. R. Stoneback, "Singing Dolly [Parton] in Paris with the Queen of Sheba." Poem in *Voices of Women Singing.*

I never heard any of Jones's writer friends address him as *Jonesy*—it was always *Jim*—but the night I was introduced to Jones at the club the man doing the introducing said: "Let me introduce you to *Jonesy*." And I heard a few other people refer to him as *Jonesy*, mainly at the club at Pershing Hall among his non-writing more-or-less-military and expatriate friends. So after we had *mistered* each other a few times and he asked "What do I call you kid?" I told him *Stoney*. I asked him if it was OK to call him *Jonesy*. He said that worked for him because *Stoney* sort of rhymed with *Jonesy,* which always felt like an affectionate form of address. Like the way he often called me *kid*.

I liked him from the start and the feeling seemed mutual. It's always nice when you meet a famous writer and you like him better than you expected to, based on whatever notion you had of the man from reading his work. And liking the man better than his work might lead you to reconsider his work. As I said before it was either at the Crazy Horse or at Pershing Hall that I first met Jones—more likely the latter since though I saw him at both places early in our friendship, I saw him more often there.

Pershing Hall, celebrated as the birthplace and "Mother Post" of the American Legion, is located on rue Pierre Charron, off the Champs-Élysées. Now transformed into a luxury boutique hotel, in 1974 the old mansion housed a club where I performed with my wife—"Stoney & Sparrow" did their folk/country act at least once a week, sometimes twice, for many months. It was one of the most fascinating places I ever worked; and in memory's eye *Jonesy* is indelibly associated with it. Here, from my poem entitled "Singing Dolly [Parton] in Paris with the Queen of Sheba" (included in my 2011 collection *Voices of Women Singing*), is an evocation of the place:

> Pershing Hall, they said, was the residence
> of General Pershing at the end of the war:
> the club was all Great War and faded elegance
> and there were always some veterans, French
> and American, in our audience.
> We landed the gig by accident
> when the University of Paris,
> where I was a child-prodigy Visiting Professor,
> delayed paying me for months, and we had
> to come out of our singing semi-retirement
> since we left Nashville, to buy the food and drink
> to which we had become accustomed in Paris.
> Pershing Hall was where the bigwigs and James Jones
> and some French Count interviewed me for the job
> of Director of the American Center for Artists.
> Pershing Hall was the Great War and Modern
> Memory, and I relived that war there some days.
> Other days, it was all foreign intrigue and intelligence.
> Some nights, it was all song and *élégance*.

Some of my fondest memories of Jones and Paris in 1974 are situated, *placed*, at Pershing Hall: all the good talk about the wars with Jones and many veterans of both wars, from enlisted men through generals; how Jonesy talked about his frequent visits to the D-Day beaches and how he was moved when I told him that my first visit on the 30th anniversary deeply affected me. So the club was about war and it was good and right to discuss such things there with the novelist who was one of our foremost anatomists of war. And to

realize suddenly, after thinking the opposite for two decades based on my superficial reading of his work, that, in some deep way, Jones *loved* the military. But it wasn't all war at Pershing Hall—in fact, it was mostly song and *joie de vivre* and one of my fondest memories of Jones there was the night he pulled his harmonica out of his pocket and came up on stage with us and played along on "Trouble in Mind" and another old bluesy folksong.

Another place where I see Jonesy in memory is the legendary Crazy Horse Saloon. I should explain here that after the death of my wife in 2008 I began, in fits of midnight attic lonesomeness, to root around in old trunks and boxes of papers, looking for nothing in particular, just signs of places where we had been so happy for so long and so long ago. Maybe it was my secularized version of that spiritual exercise known as *Composition of Place.* One of the things I found that I had not seen since we came home from France in 1974 was my old Paris *Cahier*, the journal or really just a notebook in which I recorded certain things that happened in Paris during the years 1973–1974. Eventually, I decided to include parts of that *Cahier* in my 2011 volume of poetry entitled *Voices of Women Singing.* That book is, I reckon, a radical experiment in form, combining poetry with memoir. Some of the passages that follow are from the published *Cahier* excerpts. (Other passages, omitted from the *Voices* volume, are cited below as *Cahier 1974 manuscript unpublished.*) Here is one passage about the Crazy Horse from 1974:

> The Crazy Horse is the most famous strip joint in the world, and the most elegant and expensive. It isn't really a strip club because the girls are already naked when they dance into the light. We were all insiders and we knew all the doormen and bartenders and waiters and the owner Alain Bernardin so we did not have to pay if we did not want to. But sometimes we paid in other ways. . . . I watched Salvador Dali leaving the club with a stylish young lady on his arm. . . . Dali was a regular at *Le Crazy* but I'd only talked to him or to his mustache a couple of times and we only talked about the dancers. But Mack told me last week that Dali was a devout Catholic so I'd made a mental note to talk to him again and have another look at his melting clocks. Then I remembered that the most famous melting clock was in the painting called *The Persistence of Memory* that I'd seen last year at the MOMA. And how Dali said it was more about Camembert than Einstein. . . .

> We stood around the bar talking to a circle of regulars. On some nights, everybody who was anybody in Parisian life might be there, but I reckon tonight we would have to pass for the rich and famous crowd. I thought the words *rich and famous* in ironic italics and Harry from Hemingway's *Snows* whispered in the back of my mind something about being a spy in the country of the rich. *Ain't this one hell of a place to burn the fat off your soul.* I saw a few well-known political faces but I did not care about talking to them because I'd lost interest in French politics since *Soixante-Huit.* I didn't see any of the writers I knew except a French poet who sometimes hung out with James Jones. I couldn't remember his name and I'd never read his work so I didn't care about talking to him. I hadn't seen Jonesy at the club for over a month. They said he was hard at work on his next novel. Sparrow was reading his last one, the *Soixante-Huit* book with the folksong title. She said it was slow going and more about rich American expatriates than the French, but it had Hemingway all over it so I should read it when she was through with it.
>
> Art Buchwald waved at us from the end of the bar. I'd liked Art ever since he came to our show at the club and praised our act and his friend wrote us up in the *What's Happening in Paris* column in the *Trib.* All that made me read Buchwald's columns with more precise attention. (*Voices* 48–49)

This passage should make clear the flavor of my 1974 *Cahier* and the fact that it was anything but a Jones-centered memoir. Jonesy was just there naturally, along with the Dalis and Buchwalds and Foucaults, the famous and infamous characters that I often encountered in my daily and weekly rounds in that remarkable year. The Jones novel referred to in the passage was *The Merry Month of May*, and the reading of it becomes a sort of minor motif in the *Cahier*, as in this brief passing entry, recording an after-lunch moment in the Luxembourg Gardens:

> "Guess I'll walk over to the Center and work for an hour or two." "I'll wait for you here or over there in the sun. I have plenty to read." She had the *Trib* and Jonesy's *Merry Month of May* that

she'd promised to finish and turn over to me. (*Cahier 1974 manuscript unpublished, no pagination)*

Or in this passage, ostensibly about a fine meal with one of the board members of the American Center, yet still haunted by Jones and his novel, by the Paris expatriate and Hemingway question:

> *Le Grand Véfour* is one of the best and oldest and most elegant restaurants in the world. I don't suppose much has changed there since the mid-1700s when it opened, although the brass *plaquettes* indicating where Colette and Cocteau, Hugo and Napoleon had dined could be called a recent addition. The food was, as always, unbelievably good. I probably should not write *as always* since it was only the second time we'd been there. With our newfound affluence, Sparrow and I had eaten lunch there a month ago. It is also one of the most expensive restaurants in the world. It was a long meal, complicated yet wonderful and simple in the way that traditional French cooking can be, whether in a great restaurant or a peasant country kitchen. I don't remember the names for everything we had and I wish I had written the details down in this notebook that night. As I write this in my notebook two weeks later, the blurring of details caused by the passing of time and the whirlwind week that followed the meal does not mean that we have forgotten the taste, just the names of things. . . . But if you don't remember exactly the names of things the *mystère* disappears, and the world deteriorates into an unintelligible blur of the general.
>
> I don't need to write down anything about the wine our host selected, the two bottles of *Château Margaux 1959* that we drank. It is not necessary to speak of the opulence and elegance of that legendary vintage or to write notes about its black-currant and violet and oaky vanilla bouquet or all the rest because either you have tasted 1959 Margaux or you have not, and once you have you will never forget the taste.
>
> The conversation over dinner was witty and civilized and mostly about art and literature, history, and current politics taken lightly. Our host and my top boss never brought up anything

> about work or how things were going at the Center but his wife referred to all the changes for the better I was making there, and how she hoped she could attend some of the wonderful programs I had planned this coming week. She also asked us about James Jones and his Paris novel, talking *légèrement* as if she were talking about fashion but actually conducting a kid-gloved interrogation hoping to learn what we really thought of Jonesy. Since she and Sparrow were the only ones at the table who had read *Merry Month of May* it was really their conversation and Sparrow talked very lucidly about certain details and scenes, without revealing what she really thought about Jonesy, about the book. Our hostess agreed with her about certain details, about the Hemingway sub-text, about how it was not really a novel about Paris or about France. It was about Americans in Paris. *For us* I said *wasn't it always that way?* (*1974 Cahier* n.p.)

And again, in this passage about a "Stoney & Sparrow" fundraising concert we gave at the American Center, Jonesy shows up:

> Jones and the French Count from the Board were sitting in the front row . . . the *Circle* finale was what it always was except now we had great horns behind us underlining the sustained *amen* harmonies at the end of the song. It might have been the best *Circle* we ever did but then we'd ended a thousand shows that way and it almost always felt like it was the best ever. That's how that song is supposed to make you feel when you really sing it. And the audience felt that way since their applause roared on and on even after I said: "Thank y'all—*Bonne Nuit*." We could not do an encore because the show had already gone two-and-a-half hours but we came back out on stage and took another bow and the applause continued while we watched Dominique walk down the center aisle with a very large bouquet of roses. She handed them to Sparrow and hugged her, then me, and the audience roared a little louder. Sparrow hugged the bouquet of roses to her breast and we both blew kisses to the audience and then it was over.
>
> Jones and the French Count came up and told us *great show*. Jonesy said it was all he could do to keep from running on stage

> and wailing-along on his harmonica with us. I was hoping they'd . . . go out with us for a drink. But they both had to go somewhere else. I really liked them both. When the crowd was through congratulating us, Ham came up and said:
>
> "Will you go to Lipp's with us?" (*1974 Cahier)*

Even in a passage that is concerned with our moving to a new neighborhood, I am surprised to read, 38 years later, how Jonesy was omnipresent in my notebook:

> We read a lot that week, books about our new *quartier*, about the pilgrimage. I learned more about the pilgrimage from a clochard I met at our corner café. We met pilgrims on the *rue Saint-Jacques*, taking the long good walk south past our new place. We said we'd do it someday, maybe all the way to Compostela, but first to Roncevaux. (*And we did a few years later, Roncevaux then out to Compostelle.*) Sparrow finished Jonesy's novel and thought, in the end, it didn't work. *Too much confused Hemingway* she said. I started it but didn't get very far. For the first time since we gave up the place in Brittany and got on the night-world roller coaster, I wrote some again and worked on my long poem for Red Warren. And I tried to finish the poems I'd just written in my notebook out at Ushant. (*Voices* 153)

Given the lack of enthusiasm expressed in my 1974 notebook about Jonesy's Paris novel, I should say that even then Sparrow, the better reader in our house, did not agree with much of what reviewers had said about it: a "mélange of erratic personal journalism"; the work of a "primitive American writer trying to be chic and literary. And never quite making it"; the work of "a thoroughly commonplace mind seemingly arrested forever at the level of his first adolescent ideas . . . [Jones] ladles up his rubbish, thinking it literate"(MacShane 248). And when I finally read the book I did not agree either, especially with the reviewer who said that if he had a choice of any writer as a candidate for strangulation Jones would be his choice; or the *Newsweek* reviewer who wrote: "Jones writes so badly that his offenses constitute as great a crime against nature as against literature. A book written this badly shouldn't be called a book" (Garrett 149). But the reviewers, their names long since forgotten if ever

known, had been out to bury Jones at least since *Go to the Widow-Maker* in 1967—and in my house that book was judged unreadable when it came out—or as far back as *Some Came Running* in 1958. And when, decades after 1974, my wife and I reread *The Merry Month of May* we liked the book much better, we agreed with Mary McCarthy's appreciation of the novel's Jamesian themes and its evocation of Paris, and with George Garrett's praise of the novel's sense of *place*, and how Paris is "an exciting, *living* force in the novel . . . extraordinary" (Garrett 149). If this were an essay in literary criticism, I would celebrate the novel's spirit of place, and affirm that it is probably still the best account in English of the revolution of *Soixante-Huit*.

But this is memoir and the proper *terroir* of memoir is love. So maybe I can get away here with saying that the book fully embodies Jones's complicated love of Paris. It is that love which may be my main subject here and I am not certain that these excerpts, published and unpublished, succeed in illuminating that love. Or even the *man* behind that love. There is much about Jones and Paris that did not find its way into my *Cahier*: how much he loved his home on the Île Saint-Louis; how he looked when he entered his favorite place, the brasserie at the end of the footbridge behind Notre-Dame (*la Brasserie de l'Isle Saint-Louis,* still there, always there with its red-awning terrace by the Seine) which is still my favorite place in Paris after 40 years of eating and drinking there; and in 1974 Jones was our friend and neighbor that we saw often, cheerful and happy at our brasserie. Nor is there anything in my 1974 notebook about how Jonesy looked when he listened to Sparrow singing *Barbara Allen* at the club, his scowl disappearing and his lantern jaw somehow retreating as his lips moved inaudibly on the words of the old ballad that gave him the title for his Paris novel, his brow unfurrowed and his eyes wet with *tendresse*, loving Barbara Allen, loving Sparrow. (That was the night she told him he would read his novel. He gave her a copy a few days later.) Nor did I write anything about Jones's legendary generosity and his celebrated parties at 10 quai d'Orléans on the Île. We attended several of those parties and I remember his home, his books, his knife collection, the famous pulpit bar, and the way Jonesy was always hospitable although often a quiet observer at his own *soirées*. And I remember his wife Gloria and his children. We did not go as often as we should have maybe. I'm not sure what Sparrow thought the night when Gloria Jones somewhat drunkenly welcomed her as a new member of the Writer-Fuckers Club. My wife was no prude—but she was a Kentucky Lady. And we were only a few years out of

Vanderbilt, a place where Allen Tate, my famous teacher, took decisive action when another student said "bullshit" in class. Tate went to the Chancellor to ask that the student be expelled, not because he had said "bullshit" in disagreement with some critical notion but because he used indecent language in the presence of ladies. Paris was not Vanderbilt, and no, it wasn't the Writer-Fuckers Club initiation that kept us from Jonesy's legendary parties on the Île. It was just that we were too busy working three jobs—the visiting professor gig, the Center directorship, and all the performances in all the clubs—and we went out of town every long weekend we could.

And in the autumn of 2011 when I spent part of my sabbatical in France I lived again for a spell on the Île Saint-Louis—on the quai d'Orléans a few doors down from Jonesy's place. It was both sad and amusing that the literature that came with the expensive apartment rental stressed that *I was now located* just a few doors down from the legendary literary gatherings and parties that took place at the home of James Jones in some Golden Literary Age a half-century ago. Reading that apartment rental publicity, I felt old. From my balcony, I looked down the quai towards Jonesy's place and tried to see him walking along the river. He wasn't there. And then I read the rest of the publicity, about how Arthur Miller had said that the very view I had—across the river to the back of Notre-Dame—was one of the two greatest rear-views in the world, the back of Notre-Dame and his wife's rear-end. I wondered if maybe Marilyn Monroe would show up at the imaginary *soirée* I was throwing with Jonesy that night. And I felt young again (and younger still when the blonde poet who was coming for our lunch date waved to me on the balcony as she walked along the quai.) Maybe Mailer would show up at my daydream-*soirée*, too. I laughed at what Bill Styron had said about the *stately ecclesiastic rump* of Our-Lady-Across-the-River, and thought of Jake Barnes looking wordlessly downriver at Notre-Dame *squatting* against the night sky. I was there—in Hemingway's Paris, Jonesy's Paris, my Paris.

IV

> Dear Jonesy: Yes, let's do that lunch or dinner next Thurs. . . . let's don't forget to wrap the *Montparnasse Review* revival question (would be great to have, along with your piece, something from Styron and Baldwin).
>
> Stoneback to Jones. Letter June 5, 1974

Since we saw each other once or twice a week, sometimes more, there wasn't any reason or need for Jones and I, as friends and neighbors and American Center colleagues, to write letters to each other. When the telephones didn't work, we left messages—verbal or written notes—at the Center or Pershing Hall or even the Brasserie. Once, on an urgent issue, Jonesy sent me a *pneumatique* at the Center. It seems none of this ephemera has survived. One carbon copy of a letter I actually mailed to Jones has survived. I sent it by post because I was going to be out of town for a week. It is on my American Center letterhead—*H. R. Stoneback, Directeur*—and it's addressed to Jones at his home 10 *quai d'Orléans;* the June 5 date helps me to identify the timing of my undated *Cahier* entries. In the letter I confirm a lunch or dinner meeting he had suggested. Looking at this missive for the first time in decades, I am amused to see that I said I'd meet him either "at the Club (Pierre Charron not Big Chief)." I had forgotten completely until I reread this letter that my wife and I sometimes sang at a place called the Big Chief Steakhouse in Montparnasse, and we had seen Jonesy there. We do forget so much, sometimes right after it happens. I asked Jonesy to "remind me to tell [him] about owner of *Paris Match* and his secret mission to Africa he tried to recruit me for, at the Club last night." I told him that since we'd last talked "things at Center looking up. Think I have all the drug dealers out of the catacombs now . . . And I kicked out 3 more phoney artists yesterday, so have 3 more vacant studios if you've got someone. (Don't let me forget to tell you full wineful narrative of Hank-the-Hole-Digger and Zeno-the-musician-who needs no instrument—2 of the 3 phoneys I physically ejected ystrday)."

Jonesy had mentioned that Bill Styron might be coming to town soon and he'd like to introduce me to him, so I wrote: "Yes, about Styron, whenever he gets here, we'd love to see him. Have never met, but have mutual friends." I noted: "Saw Baldwin at the Rotonde the other day. Don't know him, couldn't think of anything to say, so said nothing." In fact, we just waved at each other across the room, as we had done several times in several places that year. I never did talk to Baldwin, a fact to be filed under *regrets*. But the real point of the letter I saved for the last sentence: "Also let's don't forget to wrap the *Montparnasse Review* revival question (would be great to have, along with your piece, something from Styron and Baldwin.)"

Simultaneous with my housecleaning labors at the Center, the centerpiece of my cultural renewal program was my planned revival of the long defunct *Montparnasse Review*, which had once been an important Center

publication. I worked very hard on the first issue, and I had good contributions from younger poets and short story writers—American, French, and others in the Paris expatriate community. Because some Center Board members were less than enthusiastic and wanted to know where the money would come from for production expenses of the journal, I organized a series of benefits at the Center—an art exhibition, a poetry reading, a jazz and folk-song concert, with all proceeds to support the *Montparnasse Review*. I announced the journal all over town. I even did a poetry reading at Shakespeare & Company, enlisted George Whitman as a supporter, and recruited a few young poets there as contributors. But I wanted some big names, so when Jonesy said he would try to write something for me about "American Writers in Paris" I was excited, and the excitement turned to pure delight when he said he'd try to get something from others like Baldwin and Styron. Jones supported everything I did at the Center—and, most especially, my *Montparnasse Review* project.

Then the day I had hoped for arrived. I had been in my office at the Center for a while when my secretary came into my office (and this should be recounted in the words of my 1974 *Cahier*):

> "I almost forgot. Mr. Jones dropped this off this morning." She handed me a large envelope. "For the *Review.*"
>
> When she left, I pulled five envelopes out of the large office envelope. I opened the first envelope and recognized Jonesy's handwriting and read the first paragraph and it was good, about leaving the Paris he loved. I opened the second small envelope and unfolded what looked like a long letter in handwriting I did not recognize, looked at the last paragraph and saw the signature: *James Baldwin.* I opened the last three envelopes and saw the pieces by Mailer and Styron and Morris. *Holy shit* I thought *you scored* then silently chastised my *crudité.* I hadn't even hoped for something from Mailer or really from anybody but Jones. I saw my *Montparnasse Review* in lights maybe like Moulin Rouge or the Eiffel Tower at night. I could see my "American Writers in Paris" section of the *Review* and my mind started writing the introduction. I had scored a literary coup and it felt like the time I blocked the probable winning shot in double overtime and got the ball and dribbled fast downcourt and slam-dunked the

> game-winning points right before the clock ran out in the State Semi-finals. I read the first and last sentences of some of the pieces and wanted to read all of them all the way through but I knew I was late and had to get downstairs to the show. I put the five manuscripts back in their envelopes and locked them in my top desk drawer. I ran downstairs and the place was packed, everybody standing around with drinks in their hands and looking at the paintings and sculptures. I told Sparrow about the manuscripts. She was excited too.

It seems important to stress here this evidence of a Jones-Mailer *rapprochement* after their long estrangement. Jones biography and criticism makes much of the feud between Jones and Mailer but nothing I have seen suggests that they ever made up or communicated with each other directly after the early 1960s. There is in the record the fact that Jones and Mailer had a brief, cold encounter in New York in 1972 (Hendrick 282, 338). Yet, clearly, in 1974 Jones contacted Mailer to solicit something for my *Montparnasse Review* revival, and Mailer responded, delivered. This may be the best evidence we have of a *rapprochement* before Jones's death, and it might illuminate the context of Mailer's warm and wistful comments about Jones decades after his death (see above). And maybe, in the Mailer archive, there is more evidence of contact between Jones and Mailer in 1974. In the light of history (more than in the present moment) we long to see dear old close friends who have had a bitter feud make up.

In any case, I was very excited to have Jonesy's and Mailer's contributions and all the others for my review. For a very busy week or two, the manuscripts remained locked in my office desk drawer. And then it happened. I had been expecting some form of retaliation from the drug-dealers and phoney artists I had evicted from the Center, but I was not prepared for what happened. Overnight, the Center was trashed. My office was trashed, thoroughly vandalized, and a small bonfire had been made of the papers locked in my desk drawer. Here is the contemporaneous account from my 1974 *Cahier*:

> I sifted through the ashes and charred papers in my rifled desk drawer. The metal on the edge of the drawer was jagged where they had forced it open with something. The sick feeling in my

> gut came back. All the manuscripts—Jones, Baldwin, Mailer, Styron, and Morris—were burned completely with just a few charred fragments left . . . I wondered if the bastards who torched my desk even knew what they were burning or if they'd ever heard of Baldwin, Jones, Mailer, Morris, Styron. *The Fire Next Time.* That was a good title. *Set This House on Fire.* Another good title. Of course, the papers on one side of the desk drawer that survived the little bonfire were unimportant—my lists of things to do at the Center . . . At the bottom of the pile of papers that survived was the copy of a CIA memorandum I'd been given when I started the job.
>
> It was an official CIA document dated 20 October 1970, reporting on a lecture given at the Center on 12 October 1970. The lecture was given by John Thorne, defense attorney for the Soledad brothers, and it was apparently on the subject of racial injustice in America. Angela Davis' name was mentioned several times in the report. Parts of the report were blacked out. It was mentioned that the audience was very large, mostly American, and it included James Baldwin and Jean Génet among other attendees specified. At the end it said that after the lecture a collection was taken for the defense of the Soledad Brothers. Attached to the report was the handwritten note to me from a Board member: "This is the kind of 'cultural' event we'd rather not see at the Center." I'd forgotten that document at the bottom of that pile of papers. It was no big deal— I wasn't surprised to be handed a copy of a classified CIA document by a Board member. Why wouldn't they be watching the Center? And why wouldn't they be involved in some way?

There isn't any way to say now, in 2012, what I felt about the destroyed manuscripts in 1974. It was far, far beyond disappointment and the deep sense of disaster merged with other disastrous things that were happening around me. Only the 1974 *Cahier* can tell the story:

> So the big project for this week was supposed to be getting the *Montparnasse Review* to press. And what am I going to do without the five most important pieces . . . So what do I do—call

> Jones and say *hey jonesy about those manuscripts you sent over for the Review I left them in my office desk drawer and never finished reading them and we had some vandalism at the Center you might have heard about so could you try to get everybody to rewrite their pieces in the next 48 hours? Yeah right.* But I had to tell him and tell him soon. So maybe by tomorrow he'll know about what has happened here and I'll call him and say *hey jonesy I guess you heard about the vandalism at the Center one thing they destroyed was all the great pieces you and Baldwin and Mailer and Styron and Morris gave me I'd left them in the locked office drawer because I didn't want to take them home with me when I was in the middle of moving and the secretary hadn't gotten around to typing them yet and did you by any chance keep copies—yeah right. . .* Obviously I would have to tell Jones that they were burned up and hope he'd heard about the incident but I couldn't do that until tonight's activity was over. I'd call him first thing tomorrow morning. I felt nauseous and couldn't bear to think about my *Montparnasse Review* revival issue appearing without my all-stars. And I had the whole file for the rest of the issue safe at home in my apartment. I felt more nauseous thinking about that.

The old notebook continues:

> At home, I told Sparrow what she needed to know that Dominique had not already told her at lunch . . .
>
> "Oh no," she said. "The only copies?" It was more a statement than a question.
>
> "Yes. Probably."
>
> "How will you tell Jones?"
>
> "I don't know how but I know when. Tomorrow morning."
>
> I was standing in the open window looking across at *Val-de-Grâce*, the great looming dome in the dark sky, and she came over and stood beside me and held my hand. She knew what the *Review* meant to me and what lost manuscripts meant.

I didn't tell Sparrow much about the rest of the damage they'd done at the Center and the trashing of paintings nor did I tell her about the note they left

threatening me and my family—I just kept thinking *don't threaten me you bastards* and how I would welcome the chance to confront any of them face-to-face. Maybe this was a 1974 version of *Occupy the American Center*—but then the Center had been *occupied* since not long after the so-called revolution of *Soixante-Huit*—and Jonesy and I were the vanguard of the liberation troops. And I had made my phone call to the secret number so the "cleaning crew" would take care of everything. (And they did, very swiftly and efficiently, but that's another story.) That night in 1974 I wrote in my *Cahier*:

> Maybe I should write that letter I owe Red Warren tonight. With all his troubled talk and vision of the death of history maybe he'd like to hear about phoney revolutionaries and their rage to destroy the past—the art and literature first. I wonder if Jonesy shares this vision and knows like Red *the past is never past and it's all we've got to make a future out of . . .*
>
> We went to bed fairly early but I could not sleep so I read in Jonesy's novel about the revolution of *Soixante-Huit* and could not focus on what I read, reading the same page two or three times, and I fell asleep with his book on my chest.

And then the next morning:

> It was ten so I could call Jones. He answered on the first ring. After an exchange of pleasantries, I said:
>
> "I reckon you've heard about what happened at the Center this weekend and last night?"
>
> "Yes. I know about it."
>
> Then I told him that the manuscripts he had delivered were among the things that were burned and the typed copies for the printer had not yet been made. Did he by any chance have copies? He said he didn't have a copy of what he'd written but he'd see about maybe reconstructing something from his notes. He didn't think the others would have copies . . . But he'd ask the others. Then he said:
>
> "Do you think you'll be able to get the *Review* out the way things are?"

> "Yes, I hope so."
>
> After we hung up, I realized that he might have been referring to something other than the lost manuscripts and the possible thinness of the *Review* with the submissions that were intact. But I did not know what. Talking to Jones and other Board members about future events at the Center was always a little like telling somebody how wonderful so-and-so was and how much you looked forward to seeing so-and-so and they knew so-and-so was dead but didn't tell you. I guess that's what being an administrator is always like.

Soon enough after the vandalism I learned what the other things were that Jonesy wasn't saying directly over the phone. The Center Board announced drastic austerity measures, Center programs had to be cut back and part-time employees had to be fired. And, most infuriating, the Center treasury had appropriated the funds I had worked so hard to raise specifically for my revival of the *Montparnasse Review*. It wasn't going to happen. What I felt was a mix of outrage and betrayal and something like what must have been despair, a feeling I had never had before. And I knew that Jonesy, who had always been the strongest supporter of everything I did and tried to do at the Center, was going back to the States for good very soon. It never occurred to me until this very moment, writing this sentence in 2012, 38 years after the events occurred, that Jones's departure from Paris for good was one reason that I decided to leave. There were other reasons but the loss of Jones made things at the Center seem hopeless. And the loss of Jonesy would somehow make Paris a more lonesome place for the uncertain expatriates that we were. In any case, at my final meeting with the Center Board, I proclaimed the austerity measures misguided at best and suggested that the heinous appropriation of the funds raised for the *Montparnasse Review* was a criminal deed, announced my imminent departure for the States, and resigned in protest. Jones and the Count supported everything I said at that meeting while the rest of the board members cowered in befuddled silence, and as I wrote in my 1974 notebook:

> After the [other board members] left, the Count shook my hand and thanked me for all I'd done for the Center.

"I'm afraid," he said, "the majority of the Board is more concerned with money than with civilization. But we do not despair, we keep fighting in our own ways. There is only and always resistance. *La Résistance*." He left and Jones went in the outer office with him and they talked for a minute before Jonesy came back in.

"Let me buy you a drink, kid."

v

Jones and I walked up to the *Dôme* and sat down at a sidewalk table . . . *Jones loved Paris and we realized, a little too late maybe, that we loved him.*

H. R. Stoneback *Voices of Women Singing*

I don't know what happened to the *Montparnasse Review* manuscripts that survived. I remember wanting to throw them in the Seine. Maybe I did and I don't remember because I immediately repressed the entire unpleasant episode. I don't remember the names—except for a few first names—of my unknown contributors. Unknown then, maybe they later became well known. And I don't have a copy of my own Paris prose poem that I was going to include in the *Review*. It's probably well-lost. If you live certain chapters of your life only and self-consciously as if they are an important part of the historical literary record then you risk ceasing to truly live your life. Jonesy and I discussed that problem one day in Paris that spring of 1974. It was in the same conversation when he said that we should found another club, like his wife Gloria's Writer-Fuckers Club, and we should call ours the *Fuck Writers Club.*

Over the years, Jones's name has come up in conversations I have had with other writers. The most memorable such talk was with Willie Morris one long afternoon in Oxford, Mississippi in the early 1980s. It was after Morris had gone back South to live out his days. In a conversation well-fueled by alcohol, Morris talked on and on about Jones. He was a good talker and he was funny. He talked about Jones's Hemingway problem and I recognized some of the things Morris said as things Jonesy had also said to me in Paris: Hemingway was a *poseur*, his Paris didn't exist, *A Moveable Feast* was crap and was not about any real Paris. (Jones had told me in Paris that he spent days trying to retrace carefully Hemingway's steps in *Feast.* Only

the Paris of *The Sun Also Rises* was real he conceded.) Jones never got over being "Hem-haunted," Morris said. I didn't know much about Willie's life and work and until that day I hadn't realized how close he had been to Jones. In everything he said that day it was clear that he had loved Jones. When I got home from that trip I got a copy of *James Jones: A Friendship* and read it straight through in one sitting. Willie's book made me wish I had stayed in touch with Jonesy after Paris, had accepted his invitation to visit him in Long Island, then maybe I would have heard him recite Yeats on his deathbed, maybe I could have made an act of presence at his funeral and memorial service in 1977.

Jones also came up in my conversations with Mary Hemingway and Carlos Baker in the late 1970s. Mary seemed well informed—through literary grapevine gossip I assumed—about Jones's dislike of *A Moveable Feast* and more generally about Jones's anti-Hemingway tirades. And she did say that Hem's vehement condemnations of Jones were some of the nastiest letters he'd ever written. I had not yet seen those letters, since there was no Hemingway Archive at the Kennedy Library then and the *Selected Letters* volume was years in the future. Carlos Baker also told me that Hemingway's letters on Jones were some of the most hateful things he'd seen, and he showed me a copy of the ugliest letter there in his office at Princeton. And that made me remember the day in Paris when Jones asked me *Have you read Baker's biography of Hem*? I lied and said I had not (although I was just finishing the biography) because I did not want Jones to know that I had seen Baker's brief notice of Hemingway's anti-Jones vehemence. Why ruin a good lunch? But now I wonder if Hemingway was somehow aware—literary gossip again?—of Jones's anti-Hemingway tirades and that fed his anti-Jones virulence, and so on and on the gossip and the cycle continued to the end: from Paris to Hem to Eternity.

An entry in my 1974 notebook reads as follows:

> Jones keeps insisting Hemingway was a *poseur*. People around Paris keep telling me Jones is a *poseur*. What is a *poseur*? Sounds like some terrible disease you tried to avoid when you were a kid. Like being a phoney. But that's not exactly the same thing. What the hell does this writer-as-*poseur* thing really mean? Of course writers are trying to impress readers. Adopt a pose and make it work if it helps you get at the truth of living. Move from *suppose*

> to *pose* to *position. Positif. Positionnement.* And every real writer's pose invades the pose of the real writers of the next generation and so on down. What the hell is this: a rewrite of *Tradition and the Individual Poseur?* No writer who writes well is a mere *poseur* or maybe every writer who writes well is a *poseur-écrivain.* And that American girl at the Club tonight trying to talk in French, saying Hemingway was the greatest American *écrevisse* so far. Oh well, give her a break—*écrevisse* is close enough to *écrivain* . . . And the *chanteur/chanteuse* does not exist without a stage and an audience.

I can tell, from both style and content, that I scribbled this late at night, after one of our shows, a performance at Pershing Hall or some other club, and after too much to drink. But still I like to think that it says something valuable about Paris and Jones and Hemingway and Eternity.

In a few days I will be back in Paris, staying at another apartment rental a few steps from Jonesy's old home on the Île Saint-Louis, with a great view of the river and Notre-Dame and all of the Left Bank. I will be traveling with some young friends. No doubt we will talk about Hemingway. No doubt we will talk about Jones, too, and we'll walk the few steps along the quai de Bethune and pause in front of Jonesy's place on the quai d'Orléans and I'll tell stories about the parties there in the old days. Maybe I'll try to tell them who James Jones really was. Maybe I'll try to say how it felt the last time I saw him. He sailed home on the *France* on July 5, 1974. We had sailed over on the *France* in the summer of 1973 when we thought we might stay in Paris forever. But after my abrupt decision to resign from the Center and our decision to go home, we couldn't get a decent last-minute booking on the *France.* So we sailed on that doubtful ill-fated Soviet ship the *Lermontov.* And due to last minute complexities, we never got to say good-bye to Jonesy. But his homebound ship was out there in the storm-tossed North Atlantic a few days behind us—although the magnificent *France* may well have overtaken the slow-moving *Lermontov* in transit. Maybe I'll say to my young friends that I feel remorseful, given his imminent last days, that we never accepted Jonesy's invitation to visit him in Long Island. Or maybe I'll say nothing and when we go up to do our poetry reading at the Swan Bar, close to where the American Center once stood in Montparnasse, I will just read for that show the following passage, with which I want to end this essay. Even in this,

Jonesy was thinking about Hemingway, turning the events into a literary-historical Hemingwayesque lost manuscript tale. He couldn't help making everything circle back somehow to Hemingway's Paris. I wrote these last italicized words in 2011, as an update to my 1974 *Cahier*. And writing this 2012 meditation-on-a-memoir, these notes on an old notebook, has made me realize, more than ever, how it was in Paris in 1974 and how it was that I came to love Jones. And my heart highlights and underlines the last fifteen words in this passage:

> Jones and I walked up to the *Dôme* and sat down at a sidewalk table "Hell of a meeting. You put on quite a show, kid." He looked straight at me.
>
> "For somebody who was probably going home anyway. Right?"
>
> "Yes."
>
> The waiter came and took our order.
>
> "You don't have a chance with that Board. You've always had the Count and me on your side. The rest of them are just the money-guys, not culture-guys. Including the ones who didn't come today. . . .
>
> The waiter brought two *demis*. Jones lifted his glass, tapped it against my lifted glass, and we drank. Draft beer always tastes good in the afternoon in France.
>
> "Listen. I want you to know that I think you've done more fucking good at the Center in the short time you've been there than anybody has in the last six years combined. But you didn't have a chance. The Board is deeply split and most of those bastards care more about selling the place for a fortune than they do about culture. A couple of them want to get a famous architect to build a new Center so they can feel they've left their mark on Paris."
>
> "Really?"
>
> "Yeah. They're shits."
>
> "Another *demi*? My round."
>
> "That's shitty what they did with the money you raised for the *Review*. That wasn't their money to play with" . . .

The waiter brought two more beers. We watched the traffic lights change, the cars moving down the boulevard, the women walking by our table.

"I'm going home, real soon," he said. "I love this fucking city but I'm going home."

"Me, too."

Since he mentioned the *Review* I felt I had to tell him I took responsibility for the burned manuscripts. He said *the fucking drug-dealers burned them, not you.* I said I should have had them typed up immediately. He told me he hadn't heard from everybody but so far nobody had copies of their essays on Paris. He might be able to reconstruct his but he guessed there was no point now. I said if he rewrote his and any of the others found copies of theirs I would have them published in a limited edition pamphlet on hand-made paper. My expense. And I'd send autographed copies to the damned Chairman and his Board.

"You would, wouldn't you kid? Well, we'll see. And if I can't get my piece rewritten and nobody else comes up with theirs at least you've got your own version of Hem's lost manuscript myth." Jonesy was always thinking about Hemingway. When we finished our beers the waiter got him a cab. He had walked very slow when we walked down from the Center. He didn't look good but I didn't know anything about his health. We shook hands and he got in his cab. *{That was the last time I saw Jonesy. He went home to America about the same time I did. He invited us to come see him in the Hamptons once but we didn't go. We hated driving in Long Island traffic and we were tired of the Hamptons. A little later he was dead. I liked Jonesy and I don't care what anybody says.*

From Here to Eternity *was a damned good book when we read it when we lived in Hawai'i. Maybe it still is. I should reread it. And there was some other stuff, too. When I heard he'd died I dug* The Merry Month of May *out of the old wooden Krum Elbow trunk of papers and books we'd brought home with us from Paris that I hadn't looked at since we got home three years before because that Paris was over for me. I sat on the porch of my house in the Hudson Valley and finally I finished* The Merry Month of May. *In*

Paris at the club and at our other shows Jonesy always loved hearing Sparrow singing "Barbara Allen," all of it, even the parts that came after "Twas in the merry month of May" and that afternoon when we heard he'd died she sang "Barbara Allen" for him. Jones loved Paris and we realized, a little too late maybe, that we loved him.} (*Voices* 164–67).

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