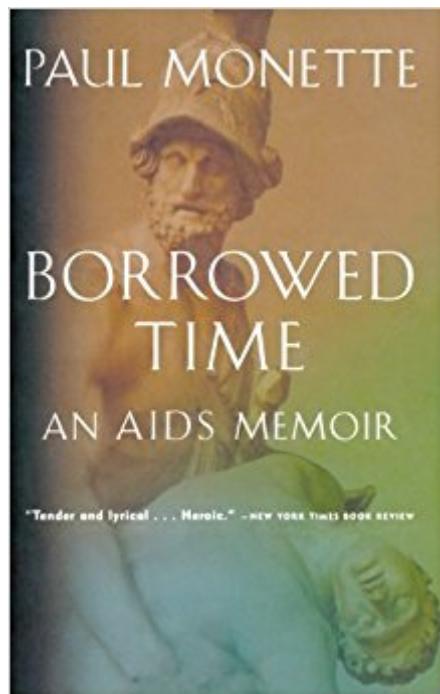


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# Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir



## **Synopsis**

This "tender and lyrical" memoir (New York Times Book Review) remains one of the most compelling documents of the AIDS era—"searing, shattering, ultimately hope inspiring account of a great love story" (San Francisco Examiner). A National Book Critics Circle Award finalist and the winner of the PEN Center West literary award.

## **Book Information**

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Grade Level: 1 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Wrenching in its detail, this account of the author's final two years with his companion and "beloved friend" Roger Horwitz, who died of AIDS in 1986, personalizes the epidemic's appalling statistics with heartbreaking clarity. Poet and novelist Monette (Love Alone: 18 Elegies for Rog) applies admirable candor and control to the task of chronicling the suffering endured in the months between the diagnosis and death of the man with whom he had spent over 10 years. Monette brings to the narrative a poet's eye for the telling image or metaphor, and makes this far more than a simple compendium of medical disasters: the memoir transcends the particulars of the AIDS epidemic to stand as an eloquent testimonial to the power of love and the devastation of loss, the courage of the ill and the anger, fear and dedication of their loved ones. Despite its universal resonances, the book is perhaps most valuable as a vital addition to the literature of the AIDS epidemic. Affluent and exceptionally well connected in the L.A. gay elite, Horwitz was no typical AIDS patient: Monette

maneuvered him into various experimental programs (he was the first AIDS patient west of the Mississippi to have access to AZT), and the firsthand glimpse of the "netherworld of the sick," negotiating the byzantine route to the next "magic bullet" offers vivid confirmation of the human cost of the government's initial policy of informed neglect. "A gay man seeks his history in mythic fragments, random as blocks of stone in the ruins covered in Greek characters, gradually being erased in the summer rain," the author writes of a trip to Greece he and Horwitz took shortly before the diagnosis. Monette's moving history is just such a fragment for future generations, a touchstone reference to a tragic time that we cannot allow to be erased. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Why don't you write about this? Nobody else does." These words, from one of the doctors treating Monette's lover Roger Horwitz during his well-fought but losing battle with AIDS, prompted this book. Purged of the tendency toward jeremiad he displayed in *Love Alone* (LJ 4/1/88), poems written during the last months of Rog's life, Monette has fused "unresolved rage" with eloquence to produce a gripping, accessible, and essential book. Monette captures the everyday minutiae and roller coaster emotions of living with AIDS, taking us from his first personal exposure to the epidemic via an old friend, through the 19 months between Rog's diagnosis and death. Monette's solipsistic dedication to a community of prosperous, white gay men can be annoying, but the book's strength is that it is always annoyingly, believably real. BOMC alternate. Rob Schmieder, Boston Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The book is primarily the story of the author's agonizing experience of tending to his lover illness and final death from AIDS while all around them scores of their closest friend were succumbing to the disease. But the work is also a moving testament to the fight that the gay community on those first years of the discovering of the disease had to face to overcome the indifference or even hostility of society, from the federal government, to local authorities and the media that chose to ignore their plight. It also depicts the search from the afflicted and their lovers and friends not only for the available treatments but their desperate hunt sometimes though the gay's underground to find out of the latest "miracle" drug and to be admitted into the clinic tests with those drugs being conducted at the times. It makes us meditate on the prejudice and outright hatred that blamed a generation of human beings that happened to be different for the suffering and death that brought them by this devastating epidemic.

I grew up in the 80's, when AIDS was just setting in the country. We knew little about it then and it was pretty much a death sentence to any poor soul who contracted it. Borrowed time is a love story to Paul Monette;s longtime companion. It follows the path of the disease, from first finding out to the final stages, and eventually, death. Monette, who also died of AIDS in 1995, recounts the fear, anger, denial and all the stages of grief throughout the two years his companion battled the disease. Never before have I read anything so heartfelt and true. His heart is literally an open book in Borrowed Time. Anger at the government for ignoring what was quickly becoming a pandemic issue and the ignorant members of the public that felt AIDS was God's judgement on homosexuals. I dare you to read this book and not be transformed.

This book enlightened me on the subject of AIDS. There were so many things I had no idea about that were carefully explained in this outstanding book. Paul and Roger's love and devotion to one another was beautiful and so very touching. I hope many more people, gay and straight, will read this eye opening true story written with love and compassion.

I could not put this book down. Normally a speed reader, I forced myself to slow down to savor the writing as well as the tribute. I sat with him through the terror, the confusion and anger. He invited me there. He raged, he loved, he quaked with the terror of watching death. I have been in his seat and he captured it all in beautiful phrases.I wanted to write to Paul Monette to share my love of his work but alas he too had died from AIDS. He lives on through this beautiful work that also records the epidemic in its full blown horror. A masterpiece.

This book truly gave me the broad spectrum of life living with aids, by the caregiver. This is a very intense, account of the daily, even moment by moment accounts of what goes on in the life of someone suffering with aids and the lives of those who fear the upcoming sentence of aids. It's a great read written by a great author, Paul Monette.

If you ever doubt that 2 men can love each other, here is all the proof that you need. There was so much suffering during the worst of the AIDS crisis it's nothing short of miraculous that the kindness and love that these two had for each other managed to survive. It's a stark reminder of how far we've come, and how very far we still have to go.

The most eloquent, loving, and brutally honest memoirs of the AIDS early era. We were all afraid, but some people fought to remain human. They fought for pride. For love. They testified to the horrors and became heroes. I love this memoir so much. mbr

The only negative issue I had with this memoir was that I thought it could have been edited a little better, but it was well written nonetheless. Although I lived as an adult in the time period it was written and watched friends die in the wake of AIDS, I am glad that this memoir pointed out that no one knew what was really going on and the government dragged its heels for far too long, especially Ronald Reagan. The younger people of today (who are still having unsafer sex) should read this book!

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