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# Algren Meets Donoso

Kurt Vonnegut

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KURT VONNEGUT

*Algren Meets Donoso*

True story, Word of Honor:  
Back in 1966, with the Vietnam War going on,  
in September, the start of a new academic year  
at the legendary Writers' Workshop  
out at the University of Iowa,  
I introduced the world-class novelist Nelson Algren,  
onetime lover of Simone de Beauvoir,  
wife of Nobel Laureate Jean-Paul Sartre,  
to the world-class novelist José Donoso,  
nickname "Pepe,"  
both of them now in Heaven.

We three had all gone bust,  
and so had come to work as teachers  
of Creative Writing.  
I explained to Nelson  
that José, that Pepe, was from Chile.  
Nelson thought a moment,  
possibly about Simone de Beauvoir.  
And then he said to José, to Pepe,  
"It must be nice to come  
from a country  
that long and narrow."