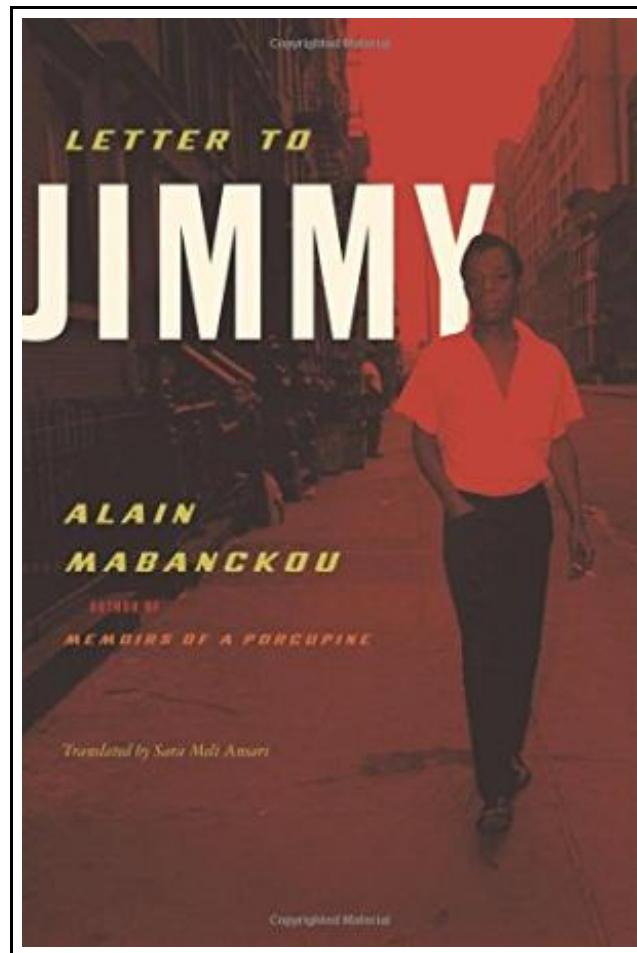


Letter to Jimmy



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Reviews

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LETTER TO JIMMY

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Counterpoint. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Letter to Jimmy, Alain Mabanckou, Written on the twentieth anniversary of James Baldwin's death, Letter to Jimmy is African writer Alain Mabanckou's ode to his literary hero and an effort to place Baldwin's life in context within the greater African diaspora. Beginning with a chance encounter with a beggar wandering along a Santa Monica beach--a man whose ragged clothes and unsteady gait remind the author of a character out of one of James Baldwin's novels-- Mabanckou uses his own experiences as an African living in the US as a launching pad to take readers on a fascinating tour of James Baldwin's life. As Mabanckou reads Baldwin's work, looks at pictures of him through the years, and explores Baldwin's checkered publishing history, he is always probing for answers about what it must have been like for the young Baldwin to live abroad as an African-American, to write obliquely about his own homosexuality, and to seek out mentors like Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison only to publicly reject them later. As Mabanckou travels to Paris, reads about French history and engages with contemporary readers, his letters to Baldwin grow more intimate and personal. He speaks to Baldwin as a peer--a writer who paved the way for his own work, and Mabanckou seems to believe, someone who might understand his experiences as an African expatriate.

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