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Frisco Del Rosario ([@frdelrosario](#)) wrote,
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Jim Carroll 1949-2009

I never talked about how much Jim Carroll meant to me, because no one would give a shit, especially not Jim.

I once attended a signing in San Francisco, where the kid in front of me in line was a typical fat, sweaty, overeager fanboy. He hopped up and down in place, and when his turn finally came, he ran up to the table and blurted some shit about Jim's cameo in "Tuff Turf", which was one of James Spader's first movies back in 1985. Jim hardly looked at the guy as he signed the books and said the movie was just something that happened. The kid gushed like a fanboy fountain for another minute, and ran off.

Carroll didn't look at me, either. Then I said, "What didja think about the Knicks drafting Kenny Walker?".

He paused for an instant, then he tilted his head up and had to find me through all the red hair in his face. "I dunno. I think he could be pretty good. He can shoot a little, right? What do you think?".

"I like guys from Kentucky," I said, thanked him, and walked out.

I could've said that "The Basketball Diaries" saved me from killing myself, which was partly true. It was actually more important to me not to leave a corpse for someone to have to find — that wouldn't've been a nice thing to do.

I could've said that when "Forced Entries" came out in 1987, I sat on the stoop outside the bookstore to begin reading it, and on Page 1 I learned that his birthday was the same as Herman Melville's and Jerry Garcia's and mine!

If it had been five years later, I could've said I had an English professor who said anyone writing a paper about Jim Morrison could not expect a grade better than a C, but my papers about Jim Carroll changed her mind about rock singer/poets.

If it had been 15 years later, I could've said I put you on the acknowledgements page of this unpublished manuscript, because I never would've been a writer if not for you. Which would've caused Jim Carroll's bullshit meter to explode.

I never would've said any of those things because I knew he wouldn't have cared. Jim Carroll was not a writer or a singer for fanboys, he was a writer and a singer for himself.

ever finish whatever they're working on, because Leos don't care about what they're doing now nearly as much as what they're doing next. That was 10 years ago, and as far as I know, he never finished that novel.

So I occasionally wondered what his Next Big Project was, and I stopped visiting catholicboy.com, because I knew if there were ever some news, it would find me some other way. I knew when Jim Carroll died, the news would escape my attention for a while.

Jim died Friday, and I got the news from my brother's Facebook status on Monday.

It surprised me that I started crying immediately, and it might have been loudly. I don't know, because Pat Benatar was dialed up in the headphones.

I was actually mad at the guy for dying before I finished writing a book that isn't a piece of crap. The manuscript in which I acknowledged him? The U.S. Chess Federation said they were going to publish it. They had launched a little publishing division, and they loved my first Capablanca project. Then a financial crisis struck the USCF, and their publishing endeavor evaporated. Today I say thank goodness, because that Capablanca project was immature suck, not even as good as A First Book of Morphy, and I sorta regret writing A First Book of Morphy.

I've been saying for months that I'm trying to finish The Untitled Capablanca Project before my father and my old chess teacher die. I could take Jim Carroll's passing as a cosmic sign to hurry the fuck up.

I'm a writer. Jim Carroll was my favorite writer. I loved Jim Carroll in ways some can't imagine.

That's enough fanboy bullshit. Back to work.

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