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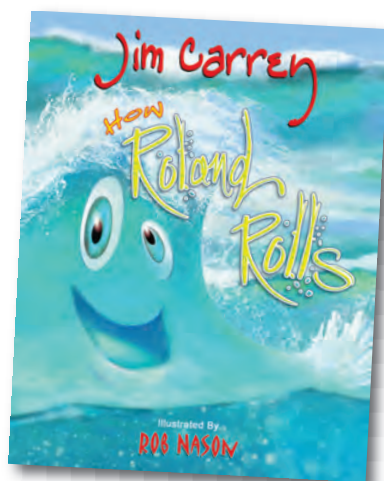
# How Jim Carrey ROLLS

By Allan Richter

DURING A RECENT BREAK FROM filming the sequel to the 1994 comedy “Dumb and Dumber” in Atlanta, Jim Carrey leaned back in his seat in the Georgia Dome and relished the showdown between the Atlanta Falcons and New England Patriots. Carrey didn’t care one way or the other that the Patriots won, or who had even played for that matter. He reveled in the scene like a sun worshiper at the beach.

“A lot of people watch football to see the game and to get into the thrill of competition,” Carrey said. “I love football but I don’t have this burning competitive edge to me that is going to die if one of the teams doesn’t do well. I’m a weird fan, a spiritual fan. I like everybody to have a fantastic game, and mostly I like to be at the stadium. It’s a feeling of oneness, a feeling of

being with people and being connected to them. I kind of sit there and expand my consciousness and



## **Spiritually. And as the Author of a New Children’s Book That Ponders Identity and Existential Questions.**

take the whole stadium in and feel all that energy. It’s really a blast.”

That holistic view means you won’t find Carrey in a fantasy league or tallying player statistics. “I don’t do any of that stuff, so I’m kind of useless in the broadcast booth,” Carrey chuckles. “I look at it on a different level. I look at sports as presence, I really do. When guys are at the peak of their abilities and they’re running after a ball and trying to do the best they can to accomplish a task, and they’re completely focused on it, you can’t help but be focused on them, and therefore you’re free from the past and the future.”

# Jim Carrey

Fans of Carrey's zany and sometimes naïve, often sanguine characters, and even of his more dramatic roles—Truman Burbank of “The Truman Show,” for instance, about a hapless insurance salesman who discovers his life has been one long TV reality show—might have a hard time squaring the extroverted comic with introspective terms like “oneness” and “presence.” Yet here is the man who played the goofball pet detective Ace Ventura by speaking from his posterior like it was a ventriloquist's dummy now talking of expanded consciousness and spirituality.

If Carrey's fans haven't recognized these deeper concepts in his work thus far, they will now. The two-time

Golden Globe-winning comic actor has added children's book author to his résumé with the September release of *How Roland Rolls* (Some Kind of Garden), about a wave named Roland who worries what will happen to him when he hits a beach. Roland wrestles with fears about his mortality but finds a far more profound existence in the realization that all things are connected and boundless. The story, which Carrey dedicated to his grandson Jackson, reflects Carrey's own childhood fears of loss.

## A Mystic's Life

For Carrey, 51, the book and the lessons it conveys, gleaned from what he says are a lifetime of mystical experiences, signal a spiritual coming out of sorts. “It's one of the simpler things I've ever done,” Carrey says, “and yet it's really an important moment because it's the purest spiritual message I've put out there as far as how I

feel about things. From the time I was a very young kid, I've had wonders and miracles in my life. I've had a very mystical life, and I haven't really talked too much about this with anybody.”

Carrey's spiritual bent is most famously evident in the \$10 million check the then-struggling comic wrote himself “for acting services rendered,” post-dating it to Thanksgiving 1995. By then, Carrey had become a superstar on the successes of “Ace Ventura,” “The Mask” and “Dumb and Dumber.” The story is part of modern Hollywood lore.

After his father died, Carrey slipped the check into Percy Carrey's pocket. “It was his dream, too,” Carrey reflects. “He was always supportive of me. He drove people crazy, he was so thrilled about my talent.” Carrey says he gives a “shout out” to his father in each film performance by integrating the older man's mannerisms or traits; his father is most evident in Carrey's earnest and optimistic Truman character.

In those early years on the comedy circuit, after finishing performances at two or three clubs a night, Carrey would sit in the hills above Los Angeles and look over the city. With arms outstretched and millions of fans before him, he recited a paragraph in which he envisioned great success. “Basically I was doing the law of attraction before I ever heard about *The Secret*,” Carrey said, referring to the 2006 book about the idea that experiences are the direct result of one's thoughts.

“I was just stating things as if they already are and feeling the result,” says Carrey, who as a young comic was already the father of a young daughter. “So I would go down to my single apartment with the bed on the floor and the baby in the basket across the room, and I was already a rich man, and I was already famous. I was already living the dream in that single apartment.”

Carrey traces his first application of visualization techniques to when he was a boy of seven growing up in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada. One morning before prayers at Catholic school, a substitute teacher said she prays when she wants something, and promises something in return. Carrey's



Photo by Armando Gallo/Retna/Corbis

father, a saxophone player with his own orchestra who later became an accountant to make ends meet, could never afford to buy his son a bicycle. So the youngster went home and prayed for one, promising to say the rosary every night.

"Two weeks later I came home from school, and my family was standing around a brand new lime-green bicycle with a banana seat and chopper handlebars," Carrey recounts. "It turned out that I won the bike in a raffle that I didn't enter. A friend of mine had entered the raffle for me when he went into a sporting goods store; he had no idea about my desire to have a bike. It happened, and I've been doing it ever since.

"The only time I don't get what I want is when I really don't want it," Carrey laughs. "You know how you want what you think you're supposed to want? You'll visualize and you'll put it out in the universe. But there's some part of you that's saying, 'I don't really care about that.'"

Fast forward to 2006, and Carrey is having another mystical experience. Led blindfolded to a remote spot atop a mountain plateau near Tucson, Arizona, by Lakota tribesmen, Carrey is on a vision quest, a rite of passage among some Native American tribes involving solitude in nature.

### Desert Visitations

After fasting for days, he is equipped with 12 ounces of water, a knife with a four-inch blade and a small Indian blanket. The water is to last him 24 hours and the knife is to ward off mountain lions. He is warned not to lay or sit on the blanket because of scorpions, keeping him standing awake later that night for hours.

As the afternoon wears on, the shifting sun casts moving shadows that Carrey says tell him stories and answer questions.

"There would be images. They were kind of speaking to me that way. I went, 'Oh, that's what the visions are.' There was this crest of mountains that were above my head, running along beside me for about a

mile. As the night came on it got a little cold and a little scary. There were a lot of coyotes howling and things shuffling around. I was actually kind of terrified. Finally I was so exhausted that I decided to lay down on the blanket. I was laying there, and I hear all this wildlife going on around me. This is heavy to relate, but I said, 'God be with me.' And I heard a little internal voice say, 'I'm with you. I'll lay with you all night.'"

At that moment, Carrey says he looked at the mountain range beside him and saw the shape of a man lying on his back. "A mile long—nose, chin, lips, every detail, a giant man lying on his back beside me. His feet were this mountain peak at the end. It was unbelievable. We were laying in the same direction. I quickly looked away. Then I went, 'This is happening. I'm being visited. I'm actually seeing God.'"

As Carrey gets deeper into the story, his words slow and his voice softens



# Jim Carrey

to a near-whisper. "I just lay there, and the fear went out of my body," he continues. "I felt completely elated and safer than I've ever been. At one point the full moon started coming up over the mountain between our feet, and I waited. I didn't look back at this thing for the longest time. I was freaked in the most wonderful amazing way, but I watched this moon come up. Once it had gotten even with our toes, I looked back at the mountain, and the shadows of the mountain had shifted again.

"Now the man had turned his head and was looking toward me with a big smile on his face, and I was in heaven. It was bliss. I laid there all night completely in bliss. I've had three or four of these moments in my life that have been so profound, and they're hard to relate to people."

Carrey says he embarked on the vision quest looking for a break from himself and his worries. But mostly he was seeking answers—clarification on how to move forward in life. "No matter what, you can't have the same goals you had when you were in your 20s and early 30s ten or fifteen years later," he says. "You have to find a different reason to be thrilled about life, you know? So I was looking for those things."

There's no particular decision Carrey recalls making as a result of the vision quest, but he says bringing those experiences to mind whenever he feels troubled leave him feeling contented for a while.

"It's like God winks, or whatever it is that seems to want to visit me every once in awhile and remind me that there's something really big going on here. If you want to call it God or want to call it energy or whatever you want to call it, it just is. It doesn't necessarily have an intention. I'm not sure that we even matter. I only know that we are, and even that's debatable. A lot of people might feel disquieted by that, but I feel completely freed by that. If nothing

I do matters in the world, then there's nothing left but to feel love and joy."

Those spiritual experiences and sentiments also give him a deep feeling of security. "Fear is allevi-

ated by the realization of its unimportance," Carrey says. "I really am celebrating the fact that I've gotten to a place in my life where the fear of loss is not a driving force in my life at all."

It was an issue when he was a boy, however, when poverty forced the family to pitch tents and live out of their Volkswagen minibus. "To watch my father go through that really tore me up," Carrey says. Taking an added toll on the family were Carrey's mother Kathleen's emotional and physical illnesses, afflictions that she would constantly draw the family's attention to. Says Carrey: "I was always feeling like, 'Wow, it's a ticking time bomb.'"

Fanning Carrey's fears was his parents' heavy smoking, a habit so intense

the lamps and ceilings, when the family had those things, would turn brown. Carrey recalls locking himself in the bathroom with his parents' cigarettes. "I was sobbing sitting on the toilet with this big carton of Benson & Hedges while they were trying to get me out so they could have another cigarette," he says. Carrey himself later took up and abandoned the habit.

The family's emotional dynamics and depression left another, more indeli-

**Among Carrey's many faces on film are Stanley Ipkiss' alter ego in *The Mask*, Lloyd Christmas in *Dumb and Dumber* and, opposite, pet detective Ace Ventura and comedian Andy Kaufman in *Man on the Moon*.**



Photo by Bureau L.A. Collection/Sygma/Corbis

ble, imprint on Carrey. Because Carrey's talents were apparent at a young age, he says he found himself called upon, particularly by his mother, to be the one who defined the family's identity and worth. Carrey says he obliged with entertaining comic antics and filled that void because he saw the need.

"I was about seven years old, and I remember specifically deciding that I was going to prove to my mother that her life was worth something by proving to her that I was a miracle, that she gave birth to a miracle. That was a big driving force in my desire to become special in the world. But I also saw the way my father could turn on a room, and I said, 'Wow, that's what I want to do with my life.'

"She was very sweet," Carrey says of

"Mask" photo by Sunset Boulevard/Corbis



his mother, “but there was a need in her to feel the love that she didn’t get from her parents. I was always trying to take care of my mother’s emotional life.” As a young girl, Carrey’s mother was cast in the role of caregiver to her younger sister because her parents were alcoholics.

Years later, Carrey says he recognized the family dynamics when he read *Drama of the Gifted Child*, in which psychotherapist Alice Miller traced feelings of emptiness and alienation in adults to the pressures they endured as children to meet their parents’ expectations. “Steve Martin gave that book to me years ago, and said, ‘You might want to read this; it’s you.’”

Carrey says his childhood made him strong and wily. “Eventually it made me seek answers to these problems

and these questions,” he adds. “*How Roland Rolls* is basically the answer to the question of identity.”

### Serving the Audience

Even today Carrey’s selfless posture on entertaining is a throwback to the way he stepped up to support his mother’s emotional well-being through his talent, says Carrey’s friend Bennett Miller, director of the films “Capote” and “Moneyball.” “That personifies him as somebody who cares deeply and regards as a responsibility, perhaps in a bodhisattva way, that others enjoy his gift before he ultimately does,” Bennett says, referencing Buddhist enlightenment. “He is completely giving in that regard, and that dynamic has evolved into a global sensation.”

Miller recalls being a passenger in Carrey’s convertible in Hollywood when the actor noticed a bus of tourists doing the circuit of celebrity homes. When the bus stopped for a traffic light, Carrey pulled alongside, got the tourists’ attention, and said, “Hey everybody, stay alert and keep your eyes open. You never know when you’re going to see a celebrity.”

“I didn’t see anybody register in that moment that it was Jim Carrey, but you knew in two or three minutes they would,” Miller recalls, adding that Carrey didn’t need to stay for the payoff. “He delivers it, takes off and knows that he’s given them something they’re going to enjoy.”

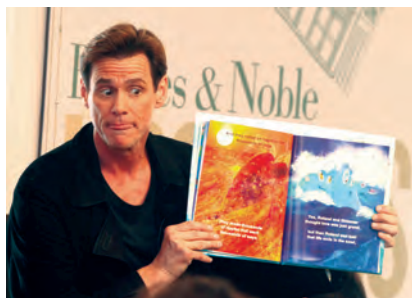
That roadside encounter with the tourists points to two sides of Carrey—the comic wildman and the



# Jim Carrey

meditative explorer with a divine goal. Carrey acknowledges he has struggled with his identity for years by trying to “reconcile” the “crazy, comedy guy” with “this guy who was searching for answers and looking for higher consciousness.” He adds, “That second guy has kind of taken over my life.”

That wrestling match over identity is illustrated in the distaste Carrey says he often has for acting versus the joy the result yields. He says he has always viewed his work as a service to his audience.



“That’s why it worked, and that’s why I did well,” he says, “because I thought of it as a service. What do they really need? I figured they need to be free from concern. So I have this thing that I jokingly call The Church of FFC—Freedom from Concern. That has been my focus all along.”

He pauses, then adds with a nervous laugh, “The job itself of acting is a psychologically troubling conundrum.”

He does not like memorizing lines and sometimes finds shifting between emotions draining. Carrey also tends to make the work difficult for himself by writing last-minute jokes or tricky 500-word speeches that he has to spit out in 30 seconds. And there are other business and production conflicts moviemaking is replete with.

“There are street sweepers at the wrong time and people yelling,” he complains, “drunks coming out of bars, screaming ‘Jim Carrey’ right in the middle of a line, when I’ve almost got

it. There’s all this interference and emotional noise.”

A case in point is his previous night’s work on the set of “Dumb and Dumber To.” In one scene, Carrey performs outlandish physical comedy but within seconds is called upon to cry realistically. In the same shoot, he wolfs down hot dogs and thinks a piece might have worked its way into his lung.

“There are so many physical difficulties with what I do,” Carrey says. “I generally go home thinking, ‘Okay, I got it done.’ But at best there’s the feeling of divine dissatisfaction, because I know the effect is going to be amazing, and yet I don’t feel so great emotionally.”

He has only recently begun to come to terms with the gap between his per-



former identity, the one enduring all the travails of human existence into which he, in his terms, has to descend, and that of the deeper thinker weighing matters of the spirit.

“I don’t want to make it sound like when I go home suddenly I become this lofty thing,” he says. “All it is, when I get into the car, it’s a little switch of perspective. That’s it. It’s a simple difference, and it’s completely freeing. ‘There is no Jim Carrey.’”

## Living the Flow

In his spiritual view Jim Carrey the man is as amorphous—and as peaceful and contented—as his book character Roland the wave after Roland crashes upon a beach. He is shapeless, yet plugged into the universe and wholly accepting of his self-discovery.

“In my life, all I feel is the energy field, and I’m free from myself completely,” Carrey says. “I don’t feel human. I’m literally just this part of

this flow that’s happening, this energy. And it’s a wonderful feeling. More and more I feel like the ‘me’ and the ‘I’ is disappearing, and sometimes I find it strange that these limbs flop out in front of my vision once in a while. I forget that I’m in a body because I do feel the whole field as one thing.”

John Raatz, the founder of the Global Alliance for Transformational Entertainment, a four-year-old group that counts Carrey and spiritual author Eckhart Tolle as honorary co-founders, says Carrey is going through a renaissance period. Raatz’ organization promotes entertainment and media content that improves society.

“I think of Jim as what I call a high-functioning creative,” Raatz says. “Their creative juices are available to



them 24/7. Yet the depth of that creativity I think in Jim keeps getting deeper and deeper as he opens to these new levels within himself.”

Carrey’s daughter Jane, who co-wrote songs for the *How Roland Rolls* eBook, says her father is the happiest she’s seen him. The book’s development, she said, was “organic” and marks a milestone because it allowed her father to connect the meaning of his parents’ lives with hers and that of her son.

“Having Jackson around, and seeing things the way a child sees things has taught us a lot,” Jane Carrey says. “I think that’s Roland; that beauty and living in the present is how kids usually see things until we muck it up, until we as adults put in the fear and doubt.”

Her father says his spiritual awakening, in addition to helping lift his fears and doubts, has given him clarity about patterns in his life. Every 15 years or so, for example, he denies his fans what they love about his work so he can

Photos by Ron Stanley



develop something new. The new project fosters some anger, then acceptance, and Carrey brings back the old work.

"They're relieved because the old thing is back as well, so they give the new thing even more of a chance," he says. "It's been that pattern all the way through: I deny them what they want, I go out there and suffer the slings and arrows, then I bring the old thing back, and they go, 'Okay, well you can do that new thing, too, as long as you give us what we want.'"

The most recent example in that cycle is some public derision Carrey has drawn for his stance against gun violence, criticism he meets with equanimity. "Now I'm coming back and doing 'Dumb and Dumber,' and I think people can see that my intentions are pure when they see something like *Roland*, what I really want to give to the world.

"Now, because I've suffered those moments of ridicule or whatever it is, I think people are more willing to see me as a whole person and a person who has actual thoughts and feelings that are serious. I'm not a lunatic. I'm not just this maniac. My funny happens on purpose. It's not a disease."

Enduring turbulence before periods of calm is a recurring theme with Carrey. "And it doesn't happen just once in your life," Carrey says "The hero's journey happens over and over again. You have to go through the forest to the unknown. You have to be willing to be sloppy and messy to get to that better place.

"It's funny how 'The Truman Show' became a very poignant message in my life that keeps coming back to me all the time," Carrey continues. "To be your authentic self you have to allow yourself to go into the unknown and walk through that door despite what everybody thinks is right for you and despite what everybody wants for themselves."

Carrey once took to Twitter to stand his ground and declare what he calls his authentic self: "The ambassador is dead. Long live Jim Carrey." He adds,



**Carrey as Truman Burbank in "The Truman Show," a role the actor says continues to resonate with him.**

"I'll play, because I love to play. But I'm not going to act outside the movies; I'm going to be who I am."

Carrey is moved by his book tour for

*How Roland Rolls*. At a New York City signing last month, he choked up as he finished a reading for a group of children sitting around him. Seated in the front row, McLean and Alice Frank and their daughters Sophie, 16, and Gemma, 10, from Glasgow, Scotland, hung on every word and watched gleefully as Carrey mugged for the cameras and pressed the flesh with fans giving the comic their best version of the Carrey catchphrase "Awwlrighty then!" The Franks had planned a visit to New York in November but rescheduled for last month when they learned about Carrey's signing.

Carrey may return to a book tour before long; he says he is keeping a journal of his observations to put into a New Age book. He counts spiritual

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authors Esther Hicks and Tolle among his friends, and *Roland* has garnered praise from Deepak Chopra and Marianne Williamson.

The multidimensional Carrey isn't stopping there. With an art studio that he steals away to in New York's West Village, he has become an avid painter whose work explores his feelings and

spiritual journey. Feeling unappreciated at one point, he says he painted a series of works about disappearing and feeling invisible. "Maybe that's true of all artists," Carrey says. "We

want to be appreciated, but we don't want direct scrutiny. So we create avatars, and our art is our avatar."

While Carrey sees his father in his film work, he is happy that his painting represents a part of his mother's side of the family; both his mother and grandfather were artists. He plans to build an art studio in his Los Angeles office.

"My plan is to create and to share and to love people," Carrey says. "I

don't have a desire to prove anything to anybody. I want to just kind of relax more and more into this field of energy that is responsible for an inexhaustible variety of forms and possibilities. That's where I want to be."

As long as his work comes from the Church of Freedom from Concern, Carrey doesn't need to see the end result. His friend Miller, the director, says Carrey recently told him how he envisions his own memorial. He will make provisions to fly his friends and family to a beautiful island where his ashes will go up in a lavish fireworks display. In the grand finale, the fireworks will form a smiley face. ♦

## Carrey's Natural Approaches to Wellness

One of Jim Carrey's big lessons about the link between physical and emotional health came from sliced bread, milk and sweets.

Carrey saw that connection firsthand when an acupuncturist recommended the film star stay away from wheat, dairy and sugar for a three-week trial. Look at labels with an eagle eye, do what you have to, but don't let those things in your body, the acupuncturist told him.

"It was very difficult at first. The first 8 to 14 days were super emotional," Carrey recalls. "I kept breaking down at stupid commercials and things like that. I'd watch television, and anything emotional I'd just start purging. All this emotion would come up."

With the floodgates open, Carrey says it occurred to him that many people repress their emotions out of fear. "I think it's responsible for a lot of cancers and stuff like that, feelings that aren't felt," he says. Instead of freeing their feelings, they use food, nicotine or some other crutch.

"They'll use whatever, but their feelings are trying to get out and be expressed. It's your body trying to get your attention and saying, 'Come back to your body. There's something you need to deal with. Come back. Stop living in the future. Get back in here, and love yourself—now. And feel your feelings.'"

Two weeks into the acupuncturist's trial, Carrey says he started to feel elated. "I started feeling really good about things. Not depressed. I got midway through the third week, and I started feeling so incredibly blissful that I was like, 'Wow. I don't ever want to go back. I feel incredible. I feel grounded. I feel free. I feel joyful. I'm clear. I'm not worried.'"

By the end of the third week, Carrey kept checking his image in the mirror. "My eyes were like diamonds. I was like, 'Who is this?' I even had a kind of disassociative experience looking in the mirror when I was at the gym at the end of the third week. I had a peek at myself in the mirror, and didn't know who I was looking at. I went, 'Who the hell is that?' I got kind of startled. Like, 'Who is that?' Then there was a feeling of, 'I really like this person.'"

That three-week trial was five years ago. Since then, the lanky

actor occasionally eats food with sugar but says he notices a change when he does.

"I wake up the next day and I'm concerned. And I don't know what about. I'm just concerned about nothing. The concern comes first, and then it attaches itself to things. It will point at something, because it's there already. So it will start to find targets to explain itself. A lot of anger is that way, too. Eckhart [Tolle] talks about 'pain bodies.' The pain body is there. It's how you are already, and then it attaches to things. It starts to blame things for its existence."

Carrey's conclusion after the three-week trial? "The food that we eat affects our ability to perceive the real joy of life, the real energy that's happening."



### Fighting Depression

Cautious about overreliance on prescription drugs, Carrey has adopted a natural approach to treating depression introduced by holistic healing author Burton Goldberg.

"He introduced me to this new way of kind of treating depression, which is without the uptake inhibitors, to slowly get off the uptake inhibitors with the help of a doctor," Carrey says.

Instead, Carrey began taking a therapeutic dose of hydroxytryptophan, tyrosine and

GABA (gamma amino butyric acid) to help build serotonin, a brain chemical crucial to mood regulation.

Before beginning the natural treatments, Carrey recalls, his doctors performed blood and urine tests. "The doctor called me and said, 'How have you been functioning?' You shouldn't be able to get out of bed. You have no dopamine and no serotonin, practically nothing.' And I said, 'It really has been an intellectual and willful exercise. I literally just take my thousand pound feet and put them one in front of the other, because I know what the right thing to do is. But it's been a struggle.'"

The natural treatments brought his levels to normal, he says. "I pretty much have been doing that since." —A.R.