

## I Smell a Rat Part 2

Hi James,

Thanks for the reply. I smell a big rat too. I agree and saw this too yesterday. My brain keeps feeding me the story that I get happy with stuff in the world and I keep falling for it at subtler levels every time. Although this time it might not even be so subtle. I talked to my business associate yesterday and told him I am withdrawing from putting all my effort and tears into pursuing results and just focus on painting and music itself (not results in the world and selling the damn things). It's a big relief and it was a wonderful day again today and I could enjoy cycling to work in the autumn season here, which isn't possible when I'm caught up in achieving goals and worrying about MY life. So that's nice. On paper it's a really messed up deal, but strangely the best thing that can happen is that you lose your life.

James: Good for you, Maurice. Keep it simple and do what you like. As long as you have a roof over your head, food and clothing, what more do you need? You are still young so there will be some ambition left but I think considering the strength of your spiritual *vasana*, the ambitious pursuit of worldly goals would only conflict you. If you can learn to be happy with very little, you are a big winner. For inquirers less is always more.

Maurice: I also thought about exactly what it is I think you're saying and that is to put god on canvas and in music and what a wickedly good thing it is to be able to share music in such a way. My mind wants to come around the corner too with this one, of course, and will say that if I do that it will generate even more success because of the God factor. But that is just what it does...the clever brain...always making schemes and plans for itself.

James: I would say just put God on canvas and let the success thing take care of itself. You are a success when you are free of ambition and worry. Since the publication of my book I have gotten what wordly people call success and I can tell you first hand it is not all you might imagine it to be. There are just a million

things to do and everybody wants a piece of you. If you have never had it...I had it twice before...you imagine that it solves all problems, but it doesn't. It's fine with me now because I am an old man and I know how to take it easy and let things slide. Life is a zero sum game, Maurice. There is an upside and a downside to everything all the time. You can't win. You can't lose either, but the whole thing is a wash. So it is best to follow your heart, keep bread on the table, keep it simple and smell the roses as you go.

Maurice: I have another point. I may also be a fraud with the witness position. I do think I've switched, but I'm not sure because actually I feel I've always seem things from this perspective and maybe I haven't switched at all. It's just that when I would think about a time 'before the switch' it seems exactly the same as now... just without the information that I'm **looking** at the body and mind. So it's more of a switch in psychological stance, not a real one.

James: Well, the witness position is always good, even if it is just more psychological non-attachment. But I suspect that you are just noticing something that has been there all along...the self observing through you...or something like that. The thing about the witness is that if you are identified with it, everything is the same to you. So it is just as important to take care of business as it is to read I AM THAT. There is no difference to the witness. So you can't use the fact that you are enlightened to not take care of business in this world. Anyway, ask yourself who observed the shift. That is the true witness.

Maurice: Perhaps I'm fooling myself. Nowadays I cannot really make firm statements about myself in an I-Am-this or I-Am-that type of way with a straight face, because it makes me laugh and I feel like a fraud. BUT!! It's not a REAL switch. Is there a chance I'm fooling myself? I ask this because I hear in the back of my mind Tony Parsons saying: There is an explosion into boundlessness. And I think, hmm No. No explosion. Although there was an explosion a few years ago. But that didn't last (of course). Or someone else saying: When you know, you know! And I think: I don't, I doubt!

James: Everyone who is spiritually awake feels like a fraud, Maurice. It is quite natural. I hear this all the time. Because the person, the ego, is a fraud. It only becomes authentic when it knows with confidence that it is whole and complete. It is good that you see this. It is not the kiss of death. And anyway, if you see the fraud, you can't be the fraud. As far as Tony Parsons is concerned, I think you would do well not to listen to him. There is no teaching there, just mindless denial and lots of hyperbole, like the 'explosion' bit. Of course he talks like that...makes it all seem like some big glamorous thing...because it makes him look special. Wow! Look at me. I had the explosion! I'm enlightened. I 'got it.'

Maurice: That's it. Thanks James, It's the greatest thing to talk about this stuff to someone. I wrote to Annette a few times, but apart from that I never talked to anyone in real life or on the mail who was clear about this. I like it when stuff like this is stated so clear, impersonal and implementable. That's truly priceless. Thanks. I ordered the book.

James: It is my pleasure, Maurice. Take your time with the book. Sign on to the logic at every step. I think it will point you in the right direction. Once you have read it, write me if you still have doubts.

All the best,

James