

## ON DEATH – MY OWN

Not long ago, I had a heart attack.

The emergency room. Needles. Tubes.  
Machines of all manner and kind.

Net, net. I didn't die. I didn't (so they told me)  
Even have permanent damage. At least not to my heart.

There was a change, however.

As I lay there freezing, nude, except for a small swatch of cloth with a string at  
the collar - they called it a gown ...

I felt a sensation that told me I was dying.

It was a wave. Not hurtful. On the  
Contrary, it was rather pleasant. Warm.  
Dark. Like the lights going dim.  
Even a little sweet to the taste.

And in that moment, I felt such a flood of regret. Not like in the movies.  
Not like "oh, if I had only ..." or "gee, I wish I hadn't ..."

It was simply that I wasn't going to know where my  
girls were going to go to high school. Or what they were  
Going to be when they grew up.

I didn't cry. Tears are too slow. But I was sad.  
And I deeply regretted my wife wasn't there.  
I hadn't told her I loved her – probably not in a very long time.  
But certainly not then, when it counted the most.

Well, I didn't make a resolution. I don't have enough self-discipline to keep them.

But in that moment, I came to know a few things that really ...  
Yes, I mean real "really"  
Not like everyday speech "really"  
But down where the rubber meets the road "really"  
I came to know a few things that really, really mattered to me.

And I haven't forgotten them. That's the change.  
I actually found out something that I haven't just as quickly been able  
to dismiss or forget.