

## Ready...Set...Stop! (2013)

Houston Hodges, for Writer's Corner, WLRH Radio Huntsville, AL USA

It was one of the most stressful days ever, disorienting, disconcerting, disappointing, and wonderful.

There I was on the gurney, just outside the door to the Operating Room, waiting for my heart surgeon to finish his first operation, so he could begin on me, to replace my failing aortic heart valve, courtesy of an involuntarily generous pig... and that was the last calm moment of the day.

They had given me some of the meds, but not the stuff to take me under... so I waited, and waited, and then the nurse came in, and told me I could get dressed and go home. My doctor had cancelled the operation, in order to meet a medflight emergency patient who was being flown up from the south... because I wasn't an emergency, and could reschedule the operation for later on.

Well, that's the wonderful part, though it took me awhile to figure that out. The first good news, the selfish part, is that I wasn't an emergency; it needs to be done (and still does), but I've got some time. The second good news, the biggy, is that some needy person got the services of a world-class heart surgeon, all scrubbed up and ready for action, because I could be postponed!

The rest of the day was something of a blur, as I tried to recollect my shattered thoughts and reconnect my scattered being; the other part of the story is that the doctor was leaving on vacation the next day and couldn't reschedule for about ten days; so I'm back in the waiting mode... but somehow it's different; bonus-time, special time, time to breathe deeply and look around me in gratitude for good news that at first seems like sheer coincidence.

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