

*Soliloquy, late February, 2007*

**A well-heeled man, 82, considers  
OLD AGE**

Well sure, it beats the alternative--  
so far.  
But God! What a drag!

The internist, podiatrist, dermatologist, cardiologist--  
bless `em all--  
just within the past ten days  
have dealt with  
wax in my ears, my varicose veins, assorted itches,  
blood pressure and cholesterol.

I'm moving up my date with the ophthalmologist  
because my dim vision is getting even dimmer.

The quadruple bypass surgery a few years ago  
was a great success.  
The prostate surgery the same year  
stopped the cancer --  
but I'll never again know erection and orgasm.

My dear wife of fifty-eight years has Alzheimer's  
but greets me joyfully when I visit  
the dementia ward  
and counts aloud with me the steps between floors,  
one to twenty, as we walk them together,  
down and up, before sharing the fruit I bring,

and I think I can pay the bills for another ten years--  
probably.

Our daughter makes waves of love, care and cheer.

I can and still do perform healthful exercise and useful tasks.  
I can and still do enjoy good friends, restaurants, concerts, plays.

From the windows of my thirteenth floor corner apartment  
I can watch the sun come up and go down  
and its annual march across the dawn and evening skylines,  
left to right, right to left,  
as the seasons pass  
and the birds fly by  
as they did a million years ago  
and likely will a million years from now.

My new cane helps a lot with my imbalance.

I am--  
happy.

–Raymond Day Watts

August, 2008