

betty remembers /1/ stuck and sore

My world **used to be** England, California, India, and now I'm **stuck** in this little apartment **without being able** to go out. I live on the second floor, and I'm just not able to **make it down the stairs. It's been** five or six years since I **last got out**, maybe more. I used to go out **a great deal** -- I would go see a theater play, dance performances, concerts, or I'd **drop by a friend's place**. Well, **not anymore**.

I came to New York **so I could** act and dance and maybe **make it big someday**. I never **thought of not being** able to walk. It all started **by falling** in the street one day and **becoming afraid of getting hurt** out there again. I had an **appointment** with my eye doctor and I **was on my way over** to 23rd and Eighth Avenue to catch the uptown bus.

betty remembers /2/ on the sly

I **was crossing** the street and then suddenly I thought I must go back; I won't **make it in time**. I fell and my chin hit the ground. I was a little **afraid of going** outside **from then on**.

"Now, I **prefer to** stay inside. I feel **much** safer

being here. I'm **better off this way**. During the week, I get up before the girl **gets** here. I dress and get **over** to this chair. Sometimes I sweep and dust **on the sly**. I'm **not supposed to** do it. My daughter **keeps telling** me that I'll fall and break an arm or a leg. But if I listened to her, **there would be nothing left for** me to do.

Until recently, I **had been able to watch** TV. But now I'm **virtually** blind.

betty remembers /3/ shut off

I hear better than I see, but I don't hear **that** well. Jennifer, the lady who comes to help, **does** read me the news **each** week. I've started writing my life story -- well, Jennifer's **the one who actually writes it down**, I just sit here **recalling** things that have happened **to** me.

Most days, I sit **remembering**. Some of it **makes** me very happy. Some makes me **kind of** sad; certain things didn't **get fulfilled**. I never **used to** feel **shut off**, but this Christmas I didn't get cards from six of my friends who **used to** send them **year in and year out**. They **have** probably died. The outside world is starting to **feel** very far away.

Betty Langdon-Davies, 97