

AT NINETY-THREE

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At ninety-three
Mary's hair all white
with soft shiny curls
surrounds her
wrinkly face.
Her eyes
bluer than sky
guard all that
she possesses
upon her lap.
Every morning
at nine
she quietly sits
upon her
chair of wheels
and opens her
black-vinyl
pocketbook
bulging
at its seams.
She counts
twenty pieces of
shiny jewels
won at bingo,
then wraps
and unwraps
each piece
in tissue with
care. "An heirloom,"
she claims to those
willing to listen.
She carefully
searches for
more belongings
and finds her husband's
remembrance card
and grieves again.

* **MARGARET SHAW** is currently in the M.A. in Writing and Literature Program at Rivier. She earned a B.S. in Elementary Education and Psychology from the University of Massachusetts-Boston. Peggy taught at the kindergarten for 15 years. Also she was an ESL tutor for immigrants for five years. Peggy lives with her husband, Thomas in Hudson, NH. They enjoy sailing the Prickly Heat in Wellfleet, MA and in the Lake Winnisquam, NH, cross country skiing at Windblown, and bike riding on the Niagara Water Front in Canada. They have no pets, but neighborhood cats do enjoy playing mortal combat with the field mice that inhabit Shaw's fieldstone foundation.