



## Author tells grandmother's story

**VICKI CABOT**  
Author

With the completion of her third book, author Marcia Fine kept a promise to her grandmother.

A few years before her death at age 89, Fine's grandmother gave Fine a stack of letters she had received from family members who were trapped in Warsaw during the Holocaust.

The letters, dated 1938-1943, were all she had left of her family. "These are my paper children," her grandmother told her.

"Paper Children," to be released this year, "is the story of my grandmother and what it was like to be a Polish immigrant coming to this country," Fine says.

The letters were in Polish, Yiddish and German; Fine had them translated into English and was able to weave a fictionalized story around them.

"Paper Children" is told from the points of view of a grandmother, daughter and granddaughter and deals with issues surrounding children of Holocaust survivors, Fine explains.

She spent a week in Poland conducting research for the book and was able to find her grand-mother's former street from the return address on the letters.

"I felt that it was important for me to walk the streets where she had grown up, where she had been - where, in her mind, she had this idyllic life," Fine says. "I wanted to see what the weather was like and how things smelled."

After receiving the letters, she promised her grandmother that she would tell her story.

"This has been my mission ... because I feel it's so important for that generation to have their stories told," Fine says. "So many people didn't want to talk about it; it was like everything was hushed up."

She will read the prologue from the book at the Hadassah Jewish Women in the Arts program on Jan. 25 (see accompanying story).

"Paper Children" is a shift from her previous two novels, which feature a satirical view on life in Scottsdale.

She started her first book, "Gossip.com," five years ago while planning her daughter's wedding.

"So many funny things kept happening and my friends kept saying, you have to write this down," Fine says.

The novel introduces Jean Rubin, a Jewish woman planning her daughter's wedding. But "it's not me," Fine clarifies. "That's the fun part of being a writer - you get to make up things."

Her second novel, "Boomerang: When Life Comes Back to Bite You," was released in summer 2003 and continues to follow Jean Rubin's life as her son moves home with a girlfriend of a different ethnic background and faith. "A lot of people identify with that - with boomerang kids," Fine says. "Boomerang" also deals with the issues of intermarriage and friendship.

Before becoming an author, Fine owned L'Image Casablanacas, a local model and talent agency and taught high school English and freshman English at Arizona State University. "I've changed careers a number of times, but this is my last one,"



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she says. "I always joke with people and I say, well I changed careers a number of times, but I've kept the same husband."

She and her husband Skip Feinstein, members of Temple Beth Israel in Scottsdale, have lived in the Valley since 1976 and have two grown children, Jessica Lebos of Marin, Calif., and Ara Feinstein of Miami Beach, Fla.

Currently she's working on a book about Sephardic Jews. "The best part of writing is doing the research and learning so much, whether anybody ever reads it or I use it or not," she says. "Ninety percent of the research I find I don't even use because it's too much. I'm not writing a textbook. I've got to write a story that will grip people."

Fine encourages people to research their own family history and write it down.

"Every person in the older generation who passes on, we lose a wealth of information," she says.

"In one or two generations, the towns are lost, the names of the people are lost. I feel like that thread of our heritage is very precious and we have to start to preserve that."

Read excerpts from her first two books at [www.marciafine.com](http://www.marciafine.com).