

# Author cherishes her new career

NEW YORK (AP) — Over the years, and she acknowledges more than 80 of them, Fara Lynn Krasnopolsky has been a law student, an immigrant, a wife, a mother, a dancer, a teacher, a grandmother, and, now, an author.

Not just someone who writes for a hobby, but an author learning how it feels to have a publisher, to read her work in public, to decide what to wear to an interview.

"I Remember" is a slightly fictionalized account of her childhood and she began it with the question many authors ask themselves: Why? Why should anyone care about the small Russian town where she grew up, about the time she begged her mother to let her take piano lessons, about the trip she took to her aunt's house?

"I always loved to write, and I loved words, because they sound to me just like music," said Krasnopolsky, whose book was put out in paperback by a London publisher, The New Women's Press.

"One day, my writing professor at Hunter College said I could write about anything, that the subject doesn't really matter. I could write about my childhood, or I could write about a pet. I thought, 'My childhood, let me see ...' I didn't know I had a childhood."

"Hannah," as she calls herself in the book, was born in the early 1900s in a lower middle-class family. Food was scarce, new clothes a luxury. Her father, a fur salesman, was usually away. Her mother was often unhappy. Her sister, four years older, shunned her for friends her own age.

Many nights she fell asleep repeating to herself, "Nobody wants me. Nobody wants me." She often found herself on the stoop of her house, waiting for someone to return.

"I showed a few chapters to a friend, who was a reviewer for a magazine," Krasnopolsky said. "She called me and said three words and never would three words mean so much again as that time. 'It has possibilities.'"

"I Remember" ends right before World War I, when housing shortages forced Hannah's family to share their home with another family. But at the same time, she was beginning to find



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**NEW CAREER** — Fara Lynn Krasnopolsky has been a law student, a teacher, a wife, a mother and a grandmother. Now the 80-year-old has taken up a new line of work. She recently had her first book published.

herself. Hannah loves math and music and cherishes the observation of one of the guests: "You have enough curiosity to send you to the moon."

Krasnopolsky grew up to marry a Russian symphony conductor and they emigrated to the United States after World War I. She notes proudly she was a feminist before the term existed, raising two children and pursuing her career in dance, even

finding time to earn a master's degree in sociology.

For the past 15 years, she has lived in a one-bedroom apartment in a quiet neighborhood on Manhattan's Upper West Side. The white walls are covered with drawings and paintings, one a Picasso, as well as photographs of herself as a dancer. A rocking chair waits near the window, but she's much too busy to use it.

Krasnopolsky, however, still feels lonely at times. Her husband died in 1988 and she sees little of her children. She has many friends but it's hard to make new ones. Young people are too involved with themselves, old people don't want to be reminded of their own mortality.

"I was taking a class at Hunter College," she said, "and they were all very young and they were absolutely like I didn't exist; it was very strange. They were occupied with their lives, but for some reason they couldn't imagine that old people should go on living."

The result can be terribly frustrating — an outgoing, intelligent person eager to learn about others, wondering how to find others eager to learn about her.

"I can't even begin to tell you how awful it is, sometimes," she said. "Strangers, when you have to sign something, who talk to you as if you never signed anything. I find it very easy to be with people if they want to recognize me as a person, but very often they regard old people as someone who should either be dead or should be prepared to die."

She is that much more thankful for the chance to write, to fill those gaps of loneliness with stories real and imagined. A sequel to "I Remember" is in the works and she has completed several short stories.

Krasnopolsky admits actually getting the words out can be difficult. It brings out the child in her, the side that still avoids responsibility.

At times, she approaches the typewriter like a student who doesn't want to finish her homework. She will suddenly recall all the other things she needs to do first, backing away from that blank paper as if it were a mirror reflecting something she doesn't want to face.

"My teacher told me, 'Look, if you write a page a day, at the end of the year you'll have 365 pages; this sounded very exciting to me,'" she said with a laugh.

"But I can't do that. I wish I could just get up at six in the morning, have a cup of coffee and write for six hours, but I'm very disorganized. I can only do the things I know someone expects me to do."