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## How the Grinch got a Spanish accent

The Boston Globe

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"I was always writing," she said. "I write to imagine." That writing bug touched her as a 6-year-old in Havana. That's when she had her first poem -- one about a love for a teacher -- published. She hasn't been the same since.

At the University of Havana, Canetti focused on journalism. In graduate school, she turned her attention to linguistics and literature, eventually attaining a doctorate. Her years in Cuba earned her the reputation as a "writer's writer" after the publication of her first collection of short stories, "Secretos de Palacio." The more she published, the more literary awards she won.

In 1991, Canetti left Cuba for California to marry an American journalist. They later divorced, but it was in California that Canetti was introduced to the world of translations. At first, she worked for a publishing house in Beverly Hills. Afterward, she started doing contract work for Boston-based Houghton Mifflin Co.

Then James D. Chapman, a vice president and editorial director for Houghton Mifflin, invited Canetti to visit Boston.

Canetti fell in love with New England. "I was so fascinated," she remembered. "I came in autumn and I was sold. I said, 'I'm moving here.'"

[Globe writer Russell Contreras reads a portion of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"](#)

[Yanitzia Canetti reads a Spanish portion of "¿Cómo el Grinch robó la Navidad!"](#)

Since then, Canetti has made Andover her home. She has produced more than 30 novels, children's books, collections of short stories, poetry, and translations. Canetti is known internationally for her works, "Al Otro Lado" and "Novelita Rosa."

All of those accomplishments are great, Canetti said, but not as important as her two children, Eros, 4, and Ares, 7. "I picked out their names," she said, smiling. Her boys, she noted proudly, are bilingual and can read both "¿Cómo el Grinch robó la Navidad!" and "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

Cambridge BrickHouse is now opening satellite offices in Argentina, Mexico, and Spain, she said. Her clients include publishers in New York, Boston, and overseas.

When she's not attending to maternal or editorial duties, she is working on her next novel "wherever I can." It's a story about a middle-aged woman in Spain navigating through a fake world of plastic surgery and implants. "The world is my place," she said. "I write about everything."

She acknowledged a longing for Cuba. But Canetti said her writing soul can no longer survive there because of censorship on the Communist island.

"I can be more creative here." ■

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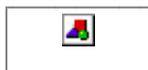
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