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From 1989 to 1994 he has participated in the war for freedom of Karabagh (Artsakh).

His published books are:

- 1-“Commander of Partisans”, 1999, Yerevan.
- 2-“The Return of Anahit, the Goddess”, 2002, Yerevan.
- 3-“A Novel for Men”, 2003, Yerevan. The novel, although high honored by well known writers and literature critics, was not permitted to be published. The permission has been given thirty years after.
- 4- “Labyrinth”, 2003, Yerevan, a collection of stories.
- 5-“Talks with Hrand Matevosyan”, 2003, Yerevan.
- 6-“The Call of Gods”, 2004, Yerevan.
- 7-“Nine Dwarfs Play bagpipe “, 2004, Yerevan.
- 8-“Avik’s alphabets”, 2006, Yerevan.
- 9-“Liberation of Shushi”, 2007, Yerevan.
- 10-“The Torch”, 2010, Yerevan.
- 11-“Limit Line”, 2010, Yerevan.
- 12-“The Memory of Soil”, 2011, Yerevan. A collection of stories for children and teenagers.
- 13-“A story for Naughty Boys”, 2012, Yerevan.

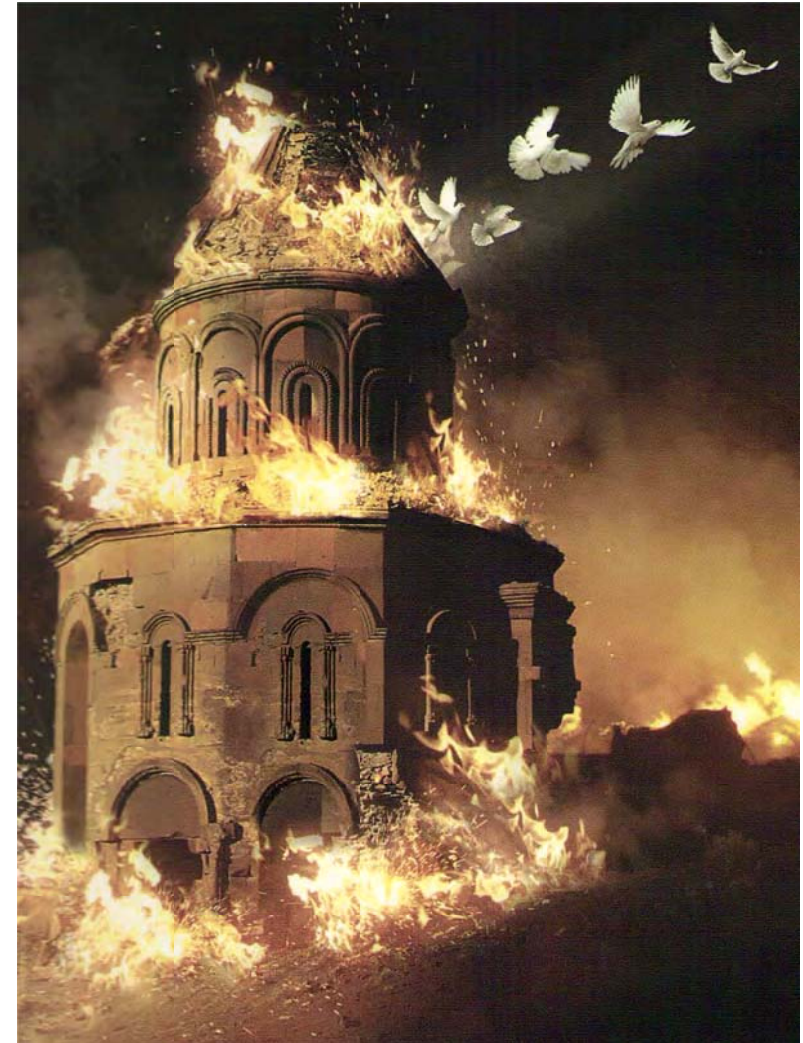
During his literal activities, Hovik Vardumyan has been entitled to different rewards. His works are translated in many languages such as; English, Russian, Georgian, Persian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Ghazakhian and Ukrainian.

In late 2009, by the order of “L’Harmattan” Publications in Paris, “The Immortal”, a collection of stories was been translated into French and was published.



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Hovik Vardumyan



If You Forget, I Will Curse You

Translated By
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Translated from the Armenian By
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Dedicated to Mrs. Dsaghik Harutunyan and
1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide in 1915



From The Editor

Taking advantage of the outbreak of war, the Turkish authorities set out to implement the long-planned program of extermination of the Armenian population of Turkey. Documentary evidence irrefutably attests that the plans for the extermination of the Western Armenian population had been in preparation even before the beginning of the World War. After the liquidation of the Armenian conscripts in the Turkish army (February, 1915) the Turkish authorities issued an order in April of 1915 on the deportation and extermination of Armenians in all regions of the empire. On the evening of April 24 arrests began of the Armenian intellectuals in Constantinople. The detained, over 800 writers, journalists, doctors and clergymen were deported into the sticks of Anatolia. Many of the deportees were killed along the way, the remaining were killed upon arrival. Since then April 24 is commemorated by Armenians all over the world as the day of remembrance of the victims of genocide.

In 1915-1916 the destruction of the Armenian population of Western Armenia took place in the provinces (vilayets) of Van, Erzeroum (Karin), Bitlis, Kharberd, Sebastia, Diarbekir (Tigranakert), Trebizond, as well as of Cilicia, Western Anatolia and other locations. The deportation of Armenians pursued the final objective of their liquidation. There were concentration camps for Armenians created in Mesopotamia and in Syria, only a part of the deportees made it there and the massacres carried on in the camps as well. The actions of the Turkish villains marked by unrivalled cruelty. There are many eyewitness accounts preserved that describe the unprecedented suffering borne by the Armenian population. The total number of victims reaches 1.5 million people, approximately 800,000 Armenians became exiles and dispersed over the world, adding to the existing Armenian communities and establishing new ones. Tremendous damage was done to the material and spiritual culture of Armenians. The intellectual potential of the nation suffered irrecoverable loss. Famous authors and poets Grigor Zohrab, Varoujan, Siamanto, Rouben Sevak and others, many columnists, painters, actors, scholars fell victim to the atrocities. Unable to withstand the mental overload the great composer Komitas went mad. Hundreds of historical and architectural monuments and thousands of manuscripts were destroyed, many sanctuaries of the people were desecrated. In some locations the Armenian population came up with stubborn resistance

against Turkish villains. The Armenians of Van resorted to self-defense in the Spring of 1915, they succeeded in fending off the attacks of the enemy and kept the city in their hands until the arrival of Russian troops and Armenian volunteers. The Armenians of Shapin-Garahissar, Moush, Sassoun, Fintichag also came up with steadfast resistance against the overwhelming forces of the enemy. The epic of the Suetia lasted for forty days.

Progressive mankind condemned the atrocities of Turkish pogroms. Public figures, politicians, scholars and intellectuals in many countries stigmatized the genocide and participated in extending humanitarian assistance to the Armenian people.

After the defeat of Turkey in the World War I the leaders of the Young Turks were accused of leading Turkey into the disastrous war and were taken to court. They were also accused in the perpetration of the genocide of Armenians. But the verdict against the former heads of Turkey was passed since they had fled the country immediately upon its defeat. The capital punishment of some of them (Talaat, Bekhaeddin Sakir, Jemal Azim, Said Khalim etc.) was executed later by Armenian avengers.

In 1914, when the sinister shadow of World War I was casting itself over the world's power nations, the atmosphere everywhere was like a time bomb ready to explode. The adrenaline was running high in Turkey as well. The Young Turks had just overthrown Sulatn Hamid, also known as "the bloody sultan, and were promising peace to the battered Christians; a promise that sounded too good to be true. For centuries the undereducated Turks have harassed and massacred the Armenians and other Christians in Turkey, turning what once was their homeland, and the proud home of their kings into a prison. As the Young Turks started preaching "brotherhood and unity", the Christians started to get their hopes high. But, as it turned out, it all was a deviously and very carefully planned step to get rid of the Armenian Question that has been plaguing the Turkish government ever since the San-Stefano agreement in March 3, 1878, where a special article (16) was introduced that granted the Western Armenians certain safeguards and rights within the a Turkish State. In 1815, as the World War I took the world by storm, the Turkish government saw a perfect opportunity to rid itself of the thorn on its side - Armenian Question. Their reasoning being if there are no Armenians there won't be an Armenian Question, the Young Turks

government put in motion the horrid plan that came to be known as the First Genocide of the 20th century.

The Turkish government's first move was to conscript the Armenian able-bodied men, whoever could hold a rifle from young to old, in the Turkish army. Their next step was to liquidate all of the conscripts, thus eliminating any chances the Armenians might have had to self-defense. Then began the massive killing, the massacre that was to wipe away the Armenians off the face of the world, with an exception of one corpse that was to be placed in a museum to show that such people did exist, as a Turkish Minister, Thaliat, boasted. The inhuman slaughtering of helpless women, children and elderly (no men to fight) was documented in some cases by German officers (who were there encouraging the Turks). April 24th is the day of commemoration of the Armenian Genocide for the Armenians all over the world. It was on that day in 1915 that over 200 Armenian religious, political and intellectual leaders were arrested in Istanbul (Constantinople), taken to the interior of Turkey, and systematically murdered. 1.5 million Armenian were massacred, and 800,000 were exiled from their homes to seek shelter and spread all over the world. By 1923 the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and Western Armenia had been either killed or deported. The Armenian Genocide is one of the most inhuman acts of our history, yet it has not received the recognition it deserves. The Turkish government till this day denies any wrongdoing and, what is even more disappointing, the US has not yet recognized it either!

When a horrible crime against humanity goes unnoticed, ignored or unrecognized, it gives a monster like Adolph Hitler the arrogance to say, before the massacre of Jews, "who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of Armenians? "

The story of this book is a small corner of this horrible crime which the author Hovik Vardumyan has written originally in the Armenia language and has been translated from the Armenian into English and Persian by Mrs. Armineh Ghazarian and is published simultaneously by the Armenian Research Center of Toronto.

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Translator's note

When I read the novel “If You Forget, I Will Curse you”, as a member of both Armenian community and world society, I felt a great responsibility and the duty to translate it. The translation was done both to decrease the weight of the heavy burden put on the shoulders of the author by the hero of the book and actually to draw the attention of the world to the question of genocide and for the hundredth time to urge the mankind to hear the scream of the one and a half millions innocent Armenians who were massacred in 1915.

2015 is coincided with the hundredth anniversary of the first genocide of the century. The Ottoman Turks massacred one and half millions of Armenians in their homeland, Western Armenia. The Government of Young Turks committed this killing with a preorganized program. Young Turks deported the Armenians out of their homeland, ruined their homes, forcefully possessed everything of Armenians and the most important, their Motherland, killed all their enlightened and massacred the Armenian people, the ones miraculously survived were exiled and were killed on the way.

The worst fact is that the successive governments of Turkey deny the genocide and do not take responsibility of the brutal actions done by their ancestors. Moreover, they try to destroy Armenian cultural and historical monuments in their homeland (Western Armenia), not to leave any trace.

It should be mentioned that Ottoman Turks had not only butchered the Armenians but the bloodshed spread to other nations, regardless of their religion or nationality such as the Greek, Arabs, Serbs, Assyrians and others.

The hero of the story who is a survivor of the Genocide seems to suspect the existence of God or His, the Almighty's justice but when the reading is continued, in her expressions everything is precisely explained and justified. Another important point which is emphasized is that the beliefs and religion of each should be respected and no one has the right to insult or disgrace the ideas of others.

The Great Powers and so called the civilized world of the time witnessed all the atrocities done but they remained silent and did not punish the responsible and the perpetrators. This fact caused that new butcheries and massacres to occur; the holocaust of Jews during the second World War, Cambodians killed by Khmer Rouge, Massacre of the people of Rwanda, massacre in China, massacre in Karabagh (Artsakh) by the forces of the Government of Azerbaijan created on false basis and the intrigues of those responsible of the time and even today (as of mid 2014) atrocities of ISIS group, feed by Turkey, who have brutally killed thousands of the innocent men, women, old ones and children in Syria and Iraq and forced them to take the journey of misery with an uncertain future. By comparing the photos and documents, it is really simple to find the similarities of both the Armenian genocide and the killing of people of Syria and Iraq, the only difference is chronological.

Any genocide, regardless of the responsible parties and the victims is a crime against the humanity. The killings, crimes and genocides are not barred by statute, so it is the time that the humanity should condemn all such acts and demand the maximum punishment of the perpetrators and heal the physical and spiritual scars left in the new generations to prevent the occurrence of any new crime.

Hope to see the Justice is done and “the united soul of one and half million massacred Armenians” find the real and final peace.

Armineh Ghazarian

Author's Preface

In the following pages you'll read the life story of a lady who witnessed and experienced many cruelties and described ferocious actions against herself, her family and her nation which are beyond imagination. And the Lady made me write her story, to free her from the terrible burden of revenge of two million Armenians and other Christians massacred in 1915 by the Young Turks, after which she would have the possibility to leave the world and her soul would live in peace. She would curse me if I didn't do the mission.

And I did write her story hoping that each new reader will share the burden with me. In this way it will be easier to take it, for the writer, for each reader and two million massacred innocent Armenians and other Christians.

Recently, I watched a movie where a German woman found out that her father, a former Fascist had been the chief of one of the concentration camps. He had signed the death verdict of many of the war prisoners. The woman had got some photographs which confirmed the terrible truth. "The six year old child has embraced his shot mother's head and cries, and you've shot him dead too with so coolness. I hate you", says the woman. "You're a monster. I'm leaving you."

The woman left his father's house with her son and forbade him to meet his grandson. "I don't wish my son to grow up in a murderer's family."

I tried to imagine a Turkish woman instead of the hero of the movie... Imagining the case was incredible for me and even funny. Although the act done by the German fascist was simply a childish play comparing with the atrocities of the Young Turks, but the hero of the movie convicted her father and broke off her relations with him.

The Ottoman Turks did not simply kill but their creative imagination was always searching for new methods of torturing their victims... And they felt the highest joy in killing and torturing them. They were prosperous when they witnessed human sufferings... This is the way of nourishment of monsters and devils... So no Turk artist can create a character just a little bit similar to the hero since no Turk woman can even think to condemn her father who has torn the womb of the pregnant woman with a dagger just for a bet "To see if the embryo is a girl or a boy".

If you forget, I will curse you

I got off the taxi in the square of the village. It was quiet and somehow deserted. A man was waiting there.

-Do you know Naneh? I asked. – How can I reach her house?

-It's one week she is waiting for you. He said while smiling:

-Why are you late?

The answer confused me. I had never known Naneh, but it was one week, I continuously saw the same dream. Naneh was calling me. It was just a dream but the man said that it was one week that Naneh was waiting for me.

-Don't be surprised. The man smiled. –Naneh knows that you'll be here, she herself has invited you. I'm her grand grandson. My name is Andranik.

I was more confused. Wasn't it a dream? The world is incomprehensible. You can never know what will happen just a minute later.

-Let's go. And the man held my arm: - Mareh (mother) is very old. She cannot wait so long. If you were a little late more than this, you wouldn't be able to meet her at all.

I followed him obediently. We entered a half opened door of a two storied house and reached the balcony of the first floor where on a wooden bed an old woman was sleeping.

-Mareh, the man called. -Wake up, he has arrived.

The woman moved up her head leaned on her breast very slowly and with faded eyes looked at me. I went to her and said hello. I was astonished. She was the old woman of my dreams. No mistakes. The same faded look and wrinkled face and with no specific age...

-Why were you so late man, for God's sake? She said. -I was tired of waiting.

I stood still. Everything was so strange and not comprehensible. I wasn't able to recover. For one week, I saw her in

my dreams, every night. I felt forced to come to this village, ignoring the danger of being ridiculous or abnormal with the most stupidity. Now everything was clear and real. But how? ... Not a dream? What could be the connection between me and this old woman?

-In 1915 I was a fourteen year old girl, my name is Naneh. She spoke again.-Now how old am I, can you count? ...

I counted quickly: - One hundred and twenty.

-I should have left this world a long time ago, but I cannot go with this burden on my shoulders... Anything which belongs to this world should be left here. You should take it on your shoulders to free me of this burden after which I'll be free and it will be possible to leave. I looked in the eyes of the old woman.

-You are chosen, she said, while looking at my questionable glance. You should write the story down to transfer it to the next generation. Our nation should never forget the terrible acts the Turks committed against us. The world has nothing to do, it doesn't care... We are the ones that should never forget.

After a short interruption, she balanced her breathing and then continued.

-There are people who think we should not talk about the genocide anymore. We should forget... but how can we forget... If we forget, if you do not listen to me, I cannot die... Help me please! Take the unendurable burden from my shoulders to let me have a rest! The millions of women, children, the old, men who died with terrible inhuman deaths, they are still screaming, the land still groans, it cannot digest so much human innocent blood... Even if the human beings choose the silence, the blood will call from the land. The world continues living its life with its problems and only the injured heart feels the pain.

And she read a poem with her silky soft but half-extinguished voice, which I had never read or heard before.

*Hundred years have gone by
Armenians' blackest sorrow,
The world is not humanized yet
And the Turk still remains Turk.*

*With the blood of innocent children
The land, the desert is still choked,*

*And of the crazy Der Zor¹
The moaning can still be heard.*

Her eyes were blurred for a while; she sighed deeply and closed her eyes, remained still and continued.

-It is wrong to call a Turk a human being, my son; the Turk is not a human being. A being walking on two feet which has grown from an unknown seed fallen on the earth. Whatever he has done with the Armenians no beast will do with its fellow creatures.

The Turks have killed us and seized our motherland.

How can we forget all?

And Naneh relaxed properly in her wooden bed and started to tell her life story.

I was born and lived until fourteen years of my age in the village of Shogh one of the villages of Province of Van². Our village was just the heaven on the slope of Dsaghkants Mountains, on a plain in the concave of high hills. There was a small river streaming from the mountains running through the village and trying to reach Aradsani River. At the time of reaching the village, its infuriated stream got calmer and its depth became so much that the boys could jump into the river from the higher points of cliffs and swim. In the heat of the summer the bulls, while sneezing, entered into the water, and got rid of mosquitoes and flies. The birds sat on the bulls' back or on their thorns comfortably. The fish jumped out of the water reflecting the sunshine.

All the seasons were so beautiful in our village. In winter, there was a lot of snow, and during spring, the fields and mountains were covered with beautiful and colorful flowers. The farms of the village became green and the houses were hidden among the waves of colorful nature.

In the beginning of the spring, many birds returned to the village and the air was full of their lyrics and songs. Everybody was waking up in the spring, the farmer was going to his farm, and the cattleman was going to the mountains of Dsaghkants with their cattle.

¹ *It is a province in the borders of Syria and Iraq and besides Euphrates River. In 1915 hundreds of thousands of Armenians were martyred there. Until now, the bones of the Armenian refugees can be found there.*

² *One of the most important provinces in Western Armenia*

There were so much fish in the river which made it possible for men to catch them even by hand.

The people, the beast and the animals were all satisfied and full. The bees were so many that the scent of honey was smelled from all over cliffs.

The church was on the height on the right side of the village. On Sundays, the liturgy was held there and the church choir sang the holy songs. Priest Mambreh thanked God for all the goodness and prosperity of his believers.

And the people were living in such a heaven just like angels in the sky, with love and in peace. When the summer ended, the ones on the hills returned back to their village, and the time of weddings started. There was the tune of Zurna and Dhol (folklore music instruments) from different corners of the village and everybody was participating in the wedding parties.

Our village was one of the exceptional villages which had a school and its choir, its storytellers, its art creators. During the long nights of the winters, the neighbors gathered in one of the houses of the villagers and the storyteller said stories for many long hours.

At the end of summer and beginning of autumn, the village was full of the scent of ripe fruit. God was so generous. He has given plenty of everything...

At the end of autumn, when the cold weather started, the smoke of the stoves rolled out of each house and reached to the sky just like that they praised God for our happiness and peaceful life.

Our family was a big one, four uncles, three aunts, and there were also so many relatives connected to my mother. All of them with their children and grandchildren made a high percent of the habitants of the village.

I was going to school. I liked to continue my education and my parents had promised to send me to the University of Constantinople (Istanbul). Our teacher was Miss Astghik; she was a real angel, educated, beautiful. I loved her more than anybody and anything.

Until the misfortunate and evil year of 1915, the village was living with its heavenly and prosperous life. At first the annoying news about the spreading war was heard, the persecution of Armenians. Sometimes the received news was not taken so seriously, we assumed that after all, there was a government and there existed laws and orders. At the beginning, since they were only news, we could not believe that humans are capable of taking such beastlike and

cruel actions. But unfortunately, the horror and the panic were going to happen soon. One day the Ottoman Turk gendarmes came to our village and gathered all of the young, the strong and the healthy and capable boys and men informing that there was war and soldiers were needed. At that time, there were a few who succeeded to escape to the mountains, forests and be free.

After the men were gone, the life of the village changed completely. The farms and fields were deserted. The village became like a mourning mother and the news got more terrible.

The men who had fled from Turk asgars (soldiers) returned to their homes only in the darkness of nights and they left for the mountains again before sunrise. My father also was in the mountains too. When he returned, he first kissed all of the children and then he and my mother started to talk to each other in private for a long time. My mother cried and sighed very often.

They said that Ottoman Turks have evacuated the people from many villages and cities and had forced them to march towards the deserts. But still didn't believe, but there were a few who had fled from the neighboring village who informed us about the deeds of Turks. We were all frightened. The men of our village who had fled to the mountains came back and decided to defend our village. There were only a few groups of ten. Although it was difficult to fight against several gendarmeries and the mob of Turks and Kurds ready for robbery with so small group of fighters, but they decided to defend our village until their death.

The gendarmes were not late. The horse riders were coming towards the village at all their speed; behind them, the mob was running which caused a huge cloud of dust.

The habitants of the village, big or small, were watching the enemy getting near standing on their roofs. Their hope was our defenders and the mercy of God. Priest Mambreh and the elderly were praying in the church and asked God to give strength and power to our men to rescue us from the ferocity of the soldiers and the mob.

The leader of the defense of the village was my father. He was in touch with the Committee of the city of Van and he fetched all the news and orders from there. Just from the beginning of spring when there was different news about the terrible actions of the Turks, the men of the village gathered in our home and were speaking about the war, the future development of the events, the Great Powers and their plans, the destiny of Armenian people and our village.

The Turks were not expecting any resistance, so they were riding very fast toward our village.

I remember everything very well. I was a grown girl. It seems it is happening just now. Suddenly and unexpectedly broke up the voice of the gunshots. The Turks of the front line were confused and lost the control of their horses and fell down. The ones in the back rows could not control too and rode over each other. The shouts of happiness of Armenians and horror of the Turks were mixed up. We were standing on the roofs of our homes watching the scene. We felt the ecstasy. It seemed that we are able to defeat the enemy, or we had already gained victory.

The Turks were still in confusion, the ones who returned back to normal, got off their horses, took proper positions and started shooting, but still did not have all their concentration. The battle continued until the evening. Then, the shooting stopped from Armenian positions. They were saving the bullets but the Turks continued their shooting toward our village.

The commanders came to our home with my father. They felt so courageous of the victory but my father was anxious since there was no communication with Van and with the present forces and amount of bullets, it was so difficult to resist the enemy. We were listening to their talking to each other in the next room. My mother was preparing the table. She called us to help her.

-Tomorrow or the next day the Turks will enter our village, said my father. – We should decide our next plans.

-God will help us, said one of the men. – We will decide what to do when the moment arrives. We will continue fighting as much as it is possible.

-Let's send someone to Van to inform them about us, suggested another man.

-It is meaningless, said my father.-It is many days that fighting goes on in many places. They have neither the time nor the possibility to think about us.

- We will fight, but our bullets are not enough. If we had ten more guns and bullets, we would continue fighting.

-Whatever happens, we will fight until the end. The Turks will enter our village only on our dead bodies.

Their comments were terrible. My mother was sighing all the time.

-Saint Mary, please help, she asked while crossing herself.

-Let's take our people out of the village and while fighting reach to Van, said one of the men.

My father smiled.

-If we get out of the village, they will surround us immediately and kill everybody.

-By night, insisted the man.

-How can you take the women, children, opposed another man.

My mother put the dishes of lunch on the table but nobody felt hungry to start eating.

The happiness of the victory had already disappeared.

-It is the same, we are going to die, insisted the man. -Let's try at least, it won't cause any catastrophe.

-No, it will cause catastrophe, sighed all the men together.

-The lunch is getting cold, my mother said with modesty and shyness.

My father invited them to have lunch. They continued their speech. He listened to all of them and said finally.

-I've an idea. If we are going to die, it should be an honorable death.

All stopped eating.

-We will attack them during the night. If we succeed, we will have both bullets and arms.

-They have lit fires and are waiting, said the men.-It will be very difficult.

-Before sunrise, they will take a nap. That will be exactly the proper time. Moreover, they don't expect us...

There was no other way, everybody agreed.

-Make a group of youth, at least ten persons, said my father after they finished their lunch. -I'll take them with me. Everything should be done in full silence with knives and guns only.

The men were against this idea. They convinced my father not to go; they thought if he was martyred, they would lose their leader, since he was the hope of our village.

My father was awake and waiting. Nobody could sleep. The barking of the dogs had filled the village. They were also feeling coming of the horrible times. My mother like a hen which gathers her chickens under herself, hugged all of us in her arms and tried to relax us. We were so much scared and were waiting for the sunrise.

In the morning, my father was gone. Before leaving, he stood in front of the door, for a moment then came back and kissed all of the children, me, my brothers, and two little sisters who were asleep. My mother was waiting. He hugged her and went out in silence. What should be told? Any words would be meaningless. May he want to tell "If I don't return, take care of children"? But everything had changed in one day and had lost its meaning. She sent him away with no words. After he was gone, she crossed and whispered, "Please care for him, Saint Mary." I hugged her and started crying quietly. She said "Don't cry my darling, God will help us".

After my father left, it seemed that time had stopped. The silence got deeper, only the Turkish melody could be heard from afar.

My mom couldn't relax; she was restless and was crossing on her chest and praying continuously. "Please help him, Saint Mary."

It was hard to tell how much time had passed. Suddenly there was enormous sound. The Turks started to shoot and shout, all of us ran out of our home, but we couldn't see anything in the dark, only the light of fires lit on the hills in front of the village and shooting guns when the bullets were exploded. We couldn't return to our home. We were just watching and hoping to see something, which would clear the situation for us. We hoped to see my father and ten young men returning back.

-Please, help them to return, Saint Mary. Please do a miracle, keep all of them alive."

I was looking at my mother and listening to her whispering and feeling that with how much deep belief she referred to Saint Mary and cried in secret. I was sure that my dad will return. It was impossible if her prayers wouldn't reach to universe.

And, Saint Mary heard the appeals of my mother. Some voices could be heard in the dark. My father returned with the youth of the village. They were alive. My mother while raising her hands praised loudly:

-Glory to God the merciful.

They entered our yard while speaking lively walking fast and breathless. It was clear that they had run away from Turks. They went to the second floor. Everybody had two or three guns. They had gone with knives only and returned with guns, with "Carrabin" as my father said. And, for this great success, they had lost one the youth.

-Alas,-said my father, -Sheramik was brave, just like a lion.

All of us were sad but we couldn't imagine that when the Turks enter the village we would be so happy for him and the ones who had been martyred earlier.

Very soon, all the commanders came. They were celebrating the success.

-Now we can fight. They said.

My father ordered the youth to get one gun each and go back to their defending points and present themselves to the leaders of their groups. The sun was rising, there was no time, and the Turks may start their attack any minute.

It was dawn. The morning was somehow different. Even the song of the birds was different. Everything had changed in one day. Before the sunrise, the color of the sky became deep purple. Maybe the redness wasn't so strange but everybody predicted a real horrible thing to happen. Although even without any prejudice, everything was clear but we still hoped to find a way to be rescued before the Turks would take their exact steps.

The Turks were still silent. The village woke up very early. Cows and bulls were mooing in their stable. Mom took the bucket and went to gather the milk as usual. It was so peaceful that one could think the battle and the shootings of the day before were just a dream. From one of the hills in front of the village the sound of "azan" could be heard just like

-It is really amazing, - said my mother, - how is it possible, they first pray and later they kill people.

Everything was still calm. The commanders gathered in our house again.

-They haven't recovered yet, - said my father, - but it won't take long. If they attack now, it will be more furious, the frontiers should be strengthened.

-They are, - said one of the men, - until we've got bullets, they cannot proceed.

-It seems you have done a good job last night, - said another one, - their crying can be heard. After they bury their killed ones, they will attack.

-Maybe they don't dare to take any action with their existing forces and they are waiting for help, - said my father, - a good opportunity to get ready.

-While they are in the same situation, we should take out our people from village and reach Van,-said another one.

-But we don't know what is the situation over there, or is it possible to enter the city, - one of the men opposed. - We don't know what will happen on our way.

-It's the same, death is the end. - insisted the man.

-We should organize, prepare the people, we cannot move altogether, - said my father, - there are children, old men...

Priest Mambreh who had come to our home with the commanders, said.-Everybody who has the power or can walk is better to leave with you; I'll remain in the village with the rest. Maybe they won't harm the olds or children; after all, they are human beings too... And God exists...

-Oh Priest Mambreh, - said my father, - God has forgotten us.

Priest Mambreh crossed with fear

-All of this is the result of believing in God,-one of the men said angrily.

-Well, it is not the proper time for such words,-said my father,- we should get our final decision. I think we will take all out of village or remain with all in the village.

They discussed a lot and finally decided to take all of the habitants of the village towards the city of Van.

The Turks had started shootings towards the village. The herd of Turks was restless. They were like hungry beasts waiting to devour their victims.

There was a very tiny hope that we will reach Van and we will be safe. We thought that Van was the big victorious city or an untouchable fortress. But, our last hope vanished when we saw the huge cloud of dust on the way to the village. My father hurried out of the house. The Turkish cavalry was reaching there to help.

The Turks who thought there would be no resistance and they could do whatever they wished, but they were confronted with the attack of the last night, they were more careful. Even when the cavalry reached, they didn't take any action immediately. The village defenders were following all of the actions of the enemy from their frontiers and try to foresee their future steps.

The movement started in the afternoon. Everybody was on the roofs of their houses again. Everything could be seen clearly. The

Turks came down the hills and moved toward the village and started shooting. On our side, to save the bullets no shooting had started yet. We were just waiting and horrified that they would not stop... They were progressing and shooting continuously. Reaching near the village they started to run and when they were near the first row of the houses of the village, all of a sudden, our people started shooting. We could see the bodies falling down while their hats were flying in the air showing their shaved heads. The movement stopped. The Turks had to lay down on the ground and continued the shooting and while both sides were shooting towards each other, the cavalry Turks appeared all of a sudden from behind the hills and while screaming "Allah, Allah" rode towards the village. Under heavy shooting, our people could not even get up their heads easily from the ditches dug in the last moments or from the windows of the first row of the houses of the village. The village was breathless and our heartbeats were so fast.

The Turk horsemen arrived and tried to pass over the laid down Turks but they didn't succeed and then a miracle happened, in the middle of this turbulence the horses stumbled and the horsemen fell down, after standing up with great difficulty they couldn't concentrate and just ran away. So our enemy was not too strong and dangerous as we thought and they could be defeated.

Oh God, what a great joy and happiness.

The children were jumping up and down and dancing on the roofs. Everybody was happy. For a short while, we forgot about our powerlessness and disconsolateness.

After this failure, the Turks didn't try to attack anymore. They were only shooting on the first row of barriers of our village. My father and the other commanders gathered in our house again. Their conversation showed that the plans should be changed. They wouldn't take our people to Van, instead they would take them towards the mountains and untouchable cliffs around, during the night, keeping the people sheltered and while fighting reach to Persia (Iran). But the Turks forced us to change our plans in the evening. They also think how to enter the village without too many victims, since in the last acts they had realized that by fighting on frontiers they would have great loss, so they decided to siege the village. In the afternoon of the same day, our village was besieged from four sides.

A new plan was needed. The fighters were not so many. There were injured or killed ones too. We had to divide our forces in little

groups and new frontiers. All the night shooting was heard from four sides of our village.

In our house, the commanders were discussing all the night. One of them suggested surrendering and some of the men agreed with him.

-It's the same; we can fight only a few days. Even if our fighters wouldn't be killed, our bullets would be finished.

My father was sharply against this idea.

-We all know how they behave with such persons, this is not the first time.-he said angrily. - Whoever wants to do so let him take his family and surrender? I'll fight till I die. If I finished my bullets, I'll fight with my axe ... wood, stone... Till I'm killed, after which whatever should happen, let happen.

Priest Mambreh agreed with my father.-Fighting is the correct decision.

-And then...- said the first man who wanted to surrender and enjoy the enemy's mercy.

-God have got thousand and one doors, even if thousands of them are closed, one of them remains open, let's fight and hope. - said Priest Mambreh.

Finally, everybody agreed to fight till the end.

The fierce and not equal fight continued for six days. Long six days, Armenians fought just like lions. But even in case of the most bravery and fearlessness, it was impossible to resist the continuous attacks of the Turk gendarmes and the enraged rabble. With small groups and with a little amount of bullets the Armenians fought, so many were killed or injured. The victims of the Turks also were too many but on the sixth day, at noon the resistance of the defenders was broken and the enemy, the gendarmes and bloodthirsty rabble invaded the village.

But the village didn't surrender yet. The fight was going on everywhere, in the courtyards of the houses, in narrow streets. Most of our mothers to defend their children, their husbands, family and homes against the enemy, the Turks and Kurds, fought with them like eagles with everything such as axes, sickles, pincers and killed so many before they were martyred themselves.

But the forces were not equal, the women, with no experience of fighting and without any weapon couldn't stop the enemy who was thirsty for the plunder and the blood of their victims.

My father was not there. My mother was confused and didn't know what to do. The children were frightened and crying.

The shouts and insulting slogans were getting closer. My mom was restless and was walking in and out, crossing on her face and praying while asking Saint Mary to help them.

All of a sudden, my dad and Father Mambreh appeared; my father's face was really changed and was unrecognizable.

-Siranush, there is no time,-my father called from the entrance, -take the children and go to the Church with Father Mambreh.

-What will you do?-asked my mother, - what will happen to us.

-No time for it, - my father said with a harsh voice,-hurry up.

My mother wanted to take some necessary materials, but my father got angry. He had never spoken with her with such a tone.

The children started to cry loudly. My father hugged all of us, kissed and we left in hurry.

That was the last time I saw my father. I don't know where he went or what happened to him.

My mother and Priest Mambreh hugged my little sisters and we run towards the Church.

Father Mambreh was consoling mom that the Church was safe. The enemy would not do any harm to the people and God will protect them.

A lot of people were killed, were choked to death, and were slain. The head of many were smashed with stones or axes. The screams of the innocents, the appeals for help, and the frightened shouts were tearing the curtain of the blue sky, but the Turks were killing anybody on their way since they were drunk of the smell of the blood and with the perspective of plundering, had become inhuman. But, after all, an important part of people succeeded to reach the Church. They closed the door from inside and started praying for God's mercy.

Father Mambreh was praying continuously. Although there was not a bit of place in the Church but everyone was on his knees looking at Saint Mary's image with Jesus in Her lap and praying with Father Mambreh.

Suddenly they started to beat on the door of the Church. They had finished their brutal butchery and plundering and had reached the Church. Just like a beast, they smelled the blood inside. For a minute,

there was silence, and then everybody started to call, to ask for mercy from God louder and louder.

The gendarmes sent aside the angry bandits and started shooting towards the door of the Church. The bullets screwed the door and inside the Church killed or injured the people but they were continuing their prayers.

The Turks continued to hit the door with a huge beam. The wild mob was howling. The small children and the young girls were clinging to their mothers and crying. The Priest tried to calm them down and gave the hope that they are protected there and God will care for His people. It seemed that the enemy's hits on the door were eternal but the door wouldn't be opened and they couldn't reach us. But, unfortunately, the truth was that the door didn't bear that much hits and fell down finally. The Turks entered the Church with shouts and screams.

I haven't seen the hell, but I think the scenes in hell would be more human. The beast like Turks attacked on the children, women, old ones who had knelt down and were praying. They butchered them with knives, swords, with sickle taken from the yards. Horrified people were screaming, sighing loudly with pain, but the Kurds and Turks who had lived for centuries in our neighborhood, and had shared everything with us and had participated in each other's happiness and sorrows, now they were enjoying killing of the innocents, abusing the church in front of the sad and horrified eyes of St. Mary's eyes who was looking from the altar of the church. Father Mambreh was still praying there but no one was paying any attention to him. The church was so full that the Turks couldn't reach the altar.

The mullah and the gendarmes entered the church quickly and breathless, shouting on the mob to stop slaying the people but no use. Finally, the mullah shouted loudly and ordered to stop the killing. There was silence for a while. Only Father Mambreh's prayer could be heard then who hadn't lost his hope yet, God would hear him and would help the people who had taken asylum in His house.

The Turkish forces dismissed the savage mob from the church. Then they separated the girls and the boys and with my teacher, Miss Astghik forced them into the chambers beside altar. For a moment, there was a hope in refugees that they are freed, even some of the women raised their hands and thanked for the mercy.

But the more ferocious scenes of hell were opening. Mullah and the commander of the gendarmes while guarded by a few strong-bodied ones walked over the knelt people and went towards altar. Mullah stopped in front of the picture of St. Mary and started laughing, and then he said to Father Mambreh who was still praying with a rooster like voice.

-Stop your barking. God does not listen to infidels.

Father Mambreh didn't stop his praying. Mullah made a sign and called the men to the priest. They held his hands and feet and laid him on his back and looked at mullah waiting for new orders. He while shouting invited his followers in and when they entered, one passing over the other; he took his knife from his pocket and bent over priest's head. Priest Mambreh prayed continuously. The victims started shouting and crying, some moved and tried to go towards alter to defend their Father but were shot dead.

-This is the way to behave with all infidels,- he screamed like a rooster and he put the sharp blade of his knife on Priest Mambreh's throat and while he was struggling hopelessly to get rid of the men's arms, the mullah cut his throat. The blood burst out of his vein. Mullah stood up and praised God. The mob waiting at the entrance howled like beasts and wanted to reach their victims but the gendarmes didn't let them.

Because of the strong bleeding, the struggle of the Priest weakened little by little and mullah felt the joy by looking at the scene.

Father Mambreh calmed down. The villagers were sobbing. Once again, the mullah bent over Father's head and cut his throat without any haste and through it towards the grieving people, then the four gendarmes through his headless body to another side on the people.

Waiting at the entrance, the growling mob tried to move and enter but the show hadn't finished yet. The mullah ordered the gendarmes to bring out Miss Astghik from the cell and they did it with a beast like skillfulness. They took her on the bloody altar. The Mullah was in ecstasy. She thought they had decided to kill her so she stood there proudly. No human being could imagine what had planned Mullah's "smart" brain.

Miss Astghik, while standing proudly was waiting for her death sentence. Beautiful, with elongated body, educated behavior, with St. Mary's virtue, the angel had stood in front of St. Mary's eyes and was

waiting for her death. The priest's blood was on the picture, on the floor, on the platform and everywhere. My teacher wanted to kiss the picture of St. Mary for the last time before her death and ask the mercy of her for her students but she didn't succeed. Four strong gendarmes with all their cruelty attacked on her and tore her clothes baring her thoroughly. Miss Astghik would endure all kinds of atrocities, but not this disgrace in the church, in front of St. Mary's icon, in front of the people and her students. She suddenly got a great power to fight against four animals. She succeeded to throw one of them down the altar and hit the other on the ground; there was confusion, other gendarmes hurried to help their colleague.

But she couldn't fight for a long time. One of them hit her with a dagger and succeeded to control the situation.

They made her naked in front of the eyes of the people and throw her on the ground. She was still resisting. Finally, four gendarmes caught her hands and feet and the commander started to open the buttons of his trousers. It was an honor presented by Mullah to the commander.

The Turks were raping Miss Astghik in front of villagers, students, Turk and Kurd herd which couldn't stop their saliva and growled again from ecstasy. She was resisting while bleeding from the knife stroke but she could not overcome the five men. Finally, the commander stood up. Astghik had fainted from shame, disgrace cruelty. He closed the buttons of his trousers. Mullah washed his hands with Priest Mambreh's blood, even he drank a little of it with his hands. Then he took the Bible, threw it in the blood of Father Mambreh and Astghik's blood and started to kick it like wild animal.

The herd standing at the entrance with restless movements shouted with great joy.

The gendarmes while disturbing each other was getting ready to continue the horrible ceremony.

St. Mary with baby Jesus in Her arms was looking at mankind catastrophe. It seemed that her astonished eyes were wide opened with deep grief. God was also looking at the scene and thinking how His created human being can be such cruel and horrible...

The Turk gendarmes were torturing the body of the teacher. The peasants in the church who were on their knees had closed their eyes of shame. Miss Astghik was senseless but her body was moaning with pain, which roused the senses of the butchers. With eyes glittering of sexual passion, they pushed each other to reach poor

teacher and bowing on her body kissed, licked with their saliva leaking, and groaning like dogs around the dying angel they fight with each other. Mullah was watching the scene with joy and great satisfaction. Astghik was painted red with the blood bursting out of her wound and her soul was leaving with her blood but the gendarmes were still surrounding her with viciousness while they were painted with blood too.

Mullah gathered all the silver crosses and decorations from the altar of the church and feeling the restlessness of the rabble let them in. Now the next episode of the hell started.

Under the arches of the church, the groaning of the beastlike mob could be heard. They attacked on the knelt ones, on the weak peasants, who was somehow standing up, started slaying, raping, mocking, insulting, abusing... For a long time the lamenting voices, the sighs, the screams from caused pains, the hopeless cries of the victims and the shouts of ecstasy and joy of the Turk and Kurd herd could be heard. Finally, everything was finished and got quiet. Now, the sound of footsteps of Turks and Kurds walking in the blood lakes of their innocent victims could only be heard. They were passing dead bodies, one after the other searching for precious things such as golden or metal coins hidden in the pockets of their clothes; they were taking off all the beautiful dresses or the golden and silver rings from their victims.

The mullah, standing beside the body of the angel in altar of the church was looking with satisfaction to children of Allah and felt joy for the victory, raised his bloody hands up and shouted.

-Thanks Allah...Thanks for enabling us to punish the infidels...I loudly praise You for hearing our voice...

It was getting dark... Under the arches of the church, a hysteric evil laughing could be heard... We were choked of fears, tears and pain. A girl got mad from so much fear. She was singing and laughing with a low voice. Sometimes she laughed so loudly that my body shivered. Then she started singing.

-Dle yaman... I missed my love, dle yaman³...

I had never heard her singing. It seemed that it was her first and last time...

The strong waves of her song bit the arches of the church causing really loud echo from which everyone got stunned for a while.

The sound of weeping and the insulting words stopped. In the nonsense silence, she was singing “Dle yaman”³...

Then, all of a sudden, she stopped singing and started laughing loudly. She was laughing continuously... The nerves of one of the Turk gendarmes didn't endure her voice. With quick steps, he went toward her and cut her throat with his sword. The abnormal silence dominated everywhere, again. While horrified, crying and shivering, we were waiting for our destiny. We didn't know what they would do with us...

Naneh was silent. She had taken me to hell, I couldn't return. She wasn't in this world too. Finally, her look returned from unknown and fixed on me and continued.

-In the church, they butchered my mom, my two little brothers. One of my elder brothers was martyred while defending the village; the other one was taken to army. My little three sisters were among the children of the village separated and taken away. I still don't know what had happened to them. Later, I read in the books, that the Kurds had taken many children, kept and grown them and changed their religion to Islam. My uncles, aunts, everybody of my family were butchered. I was the only one left alive and unaware of my destiny. Tens of girls and boys were the only alive ones from the village who were still in the cells beside the altar of the church waiting to see what they will do with themselves.

A fact which I've always thought about it during my whole life was that where was God when in his house the Turks were killing, slaying, abusing, mocking, raping and insulting His servant, pure and angel like innocent people. We can think that the old ones had committed sins, such as lying, stealing, envying, betraying and even adultery... But the innocent children ... The boys whose moustaches was not grown yet or the pure and simple girls, the children not still born from the womb of their mothers or just born ones... What was their sin for which they should be punished... Where was God's justice when the devils and monsters had got the permission to rub and kill the innocent Christians. Where was the justice of God... Why He

³ A love song where the lover is grieving to be far from the beloved. After the genocide the song got a new meaning. Actually the song shows misery and pain.

didn't see... And if He was seeing, why He was silent, pretending not seeing anything... And this had been the way for centuries and how long it would be like this, nobody can tell... I had thought one hundred years for this fact...

I don't have anything negative about any religion; I respect the peace of their souls... But the Turk is something else. The clergyman of the Turks is also a Turk. The Arabs and the Persians are the followers of the same religion, but during those years they had helped so many Armenians by giving them food and shelter. They had taken care for the sick ones and saved their lives.

I have thought constantly and I have realized that we've misunderstood the real meaning of devotion to God and the mistake has ruined our home. We have called God all the time but we have been indifferent, since we haven't believed in Him truly. We hoped for His help and haven't built enough fortresses. We haven't believed in God truly and we haven't grown soldiers. There are so many Christian governments in the world which have conquered the worlds, have grown powerful and they have the same power today. No, for sure, we have failed somewhere...

When the mullah abused the church and later he raised his hands and praised God, why there, was no fire falling on and burning him. Wasn't it the biggest sin man can commit... Weren't they the same enemies who had killed us for centuries, the people who had been the first to accept Christianity officially? For centuries they had robbed what we had gained by our own work, they had transformed our churches into their stables or toilets, with our cross stones they had made the walls of their stables or yards, they had taken our women and daughters... And, what have we done against all the injustice occurred... Just sometimes and partially we had defied... Then we had cooled down, we had hoped for God and foreigners' mercy... Every time we had lost everything because of the same mistake, but we had forgotten immediately and again we had trusted others and hoped only in God... Instead of building fortresses, growing soldiers, we have made churches...

All these thoughts have tortured me for hundred years already, since they have not been replied yet. I just pass everything to you to become free of this burden and to leave this world. May you find the answers for the questions? May the future generations will find... Perhaps it was better to build as much fortresses as churches, to have more soldiers, may we reply the atrocities of the enemy just with more

savageness...I don't know, I haven't succeeded to fix. But we have made a mistake somewhere... We missed something.

For more than a hundred years of my life, I've studied and read so many articles written about Armenians' biggest tragedy, the documents, the personal memories, wished to find out the causes. It has never been clear that why and how it happens that human beings can so obediently go toward death just like lambs to be sacrificed. They know that they are going to die, but they don't defy. They can fight, can be saved, but they don't take any action. What happens to a human being, how can his personality be so endangered that he changes to a naïve, weak, not a determined and helpless being and it is to a degree that even hundreds, thousands of persons don't dare to kill just few of the gendarmes taking them through valleys, mountains and deserted places where no one can be seen and be free. What is the reason, the extreme hopelessness or the indefinite hope to reach somewhere and be saved? How much should a man be weak and lose his will that instead of planning to kill his enemy and be saved, he bribes the enemy with three golden coins to shoot him. What a psychological situation one could have that his freedom is in easy death...

However, after all researches I've done during my life, more than a century, and examining the national disaster and the reasons, I've reached to that conclusion that the only right way is to fight and kill the enemy. Our history proves that wherever our people have fought, they have been rescued. If they throw you out of your home and take you to kill and you don't think about your freedom, you are already dead... Nobody will care about or respect you. Your sin won't be forgiven not in this world nor the next.

I'm the Job⁴, who is sitting in the ashes and destruction and am protesting against God... It's hundred years that I protest and fight with God but I don't receive and answer... Why is He silent... What is our sin... Maybe we have even misunderstood the meaning of sin...

Naneh was tired of talking, she stopped for a while. Her heart beating got faster. She was breathless. Her daughter-in-law brought her coffee, pastry and fruits. She was drinking her coffee in silence. I was just restless to hear the rest of her life story.

4 An Old Testament and qur'anic character.

Grand Mom continued: - After finishing the massacre, they pushed us out of the cells. It is really difficult to describe what we had felt when we saw what had happened in the church. The dead bodies were fallen on each other. Most of them were naked, beheaded, amputated. From thorn bellies and stomachs, the vapor was still rising, the blood was still bursting out of the cut throats, the eyes taken out of their sockets by knives were sliding left and right on the faces, it seemed that the cut tongues wished to express the last words, the bodies and the heads were rolling on stone ground touching everything like blinds, wishing to find their relatives... The old, the women, the girls, the boys, newborn babies, and the fetuses which were going to find human faces were looking out of the thorn bellies of the pregnant women...

We should pass walking on the bodies of our parents, brothers, and sisters with our naive and trembling feet sticking to the clots of blood.

A human being is really astonishing, how could we stand on feet after seeing the horrible scenes. But not all endured. Some of us fainted, the others lost their speaking ability and if they would stay alive, they couldn't talk during their whole life. And whoever endured and stayed alive diverted to complete or partial psychos. Whoever witnessed the horror and stayed alive got sick and continued his whole life like a sick... In this village, everybody knows me as an abnormal old woman, since it is more than one hundred years that I cannot forget all I'd seen and lived... But is it possible to forget...

We were crying, shouting of horror and mercy. Once more, our screams and the insults of the Turk gendarmes were echoed in the church: the screams of the angels and the insulting words of the devils. When they saw that we are getting slower they started to bit us with the whips just like animals.

Finally, we were all out of the church. And there was a wave like movement among the wild rabble. After stealing everything in the pockets of the dead, the rings and jewelry of mothers, their daughter-in-laws, their money, they wanted to take the girls now. We were tens of girls and boys without any protection, powerless just like lambs and while shivering were waiting for our unknown destiny. The gendarmes were surrounding and protecting us from the herd just like a shepherd protecting his lambs from the herd of wolves. We didn't know the truth. They were keeping us for themselves. Very soon,

everything was revealed. They divided us among themselves and cheered up in front of the mob. Again, the cries of the girls could be heard. The gendarmes tore up their dresses and raped them. The screams of insulted girls and the voices of excited gendarmes and the mob sighing of ecstasy and orgasm filled the air. The result was that the alive envied the ones martyred while fighting or the slain ones in the church.

They didn't touch a few of the girls. I was in that small group, while trembling and waiting in horror. All of us were crying but they didn't pay any attention.

Just at that moment one of the gendarmes pulled both my and another girl's arms and took us away.

We reached to the center of the village, where our house was located. A beautiful two-story big house for a big family. The Turk gendarme was young and silent; he took us to the second floor of our home and to the room where my dad and mom had slept there.

I was really sad. I fell down on the bed of my parents and started crying.

Hey girl, shut up, - while kicking me he said. - if not, I'll just kill you. He was speaking in Armenian.

I just became silent.

-If you'll need anything just call me, my name is Ibrahim. - He said and closed the door and went away.

I was at my home but it wasn't our home anymore. They have changed all of the furniture. Some chairs and a table were added from our dining room. There were different foods on the table, all stolen and robbed from us and others.

After a short while of rest, we started speaking. Her name was Hasmik and she was one year elder than me. We were both trembling of fear and anxiety. We were thinking all the time what will be our end. After seeing so much death and butchery, we didn't want to live. We decided to commit suicide, but we didn't know how to do. Hasmik suggested getting a knife from the kitchen...

We were just consulting that we heard some noises from the yard. Ibrahim hurried out to meet the mullah. He came up so fast and when he saw us, he smiled and shouted on Ibrahim. He came up breathless.

-Take them to bathroom, their smell is disgusting, -said the Mullah.

Ibrahim bowed and went out quietly. After about ten minutes, he returned and took us downstairs. Our bathroom was warm.

-Take out your clothes and take a bath, - said Ibrahim laughing and showing his teeth.

We were looking at him without making any motion.

-If you don't want to die, do whatever I tell you,-said Ibrahim.- Now you worth nothing...

And then he pulled us by force and tore our dresses up making us naked. We asked him to get out and promising to do whatever he ordered.

-I would wash you, - He said again with his mouth open, - but you belong to Mullah...

Then he burst out laughing. He didn't touch and didn't come close to but didn't go out. His tongue was dropped down like a dog and his saliva was leaking and his eyes were sparkling.

There was so much blood on our dresses from which the water was painted red. It was the blood of our mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters... Oh God, how we were enduring... Everything was turned to stone, our hearts and our souls. It seemed that was the reason that we succeed to endure.

When we finished washing ourselves, we changed our clothes and put on the ones which Ibrahim has brought and he took us upstairs.

-Now it's something else, - The Mullah smiled just like a devil and caressed Hasmik's cheek.

When we looked at Mullah's eyes boiling of aroused feelings, we realized everything. If there was just a drop of hope to be released since, there was a little humanity in God's servant that was also vanished.

While we were taking a bath, the Mullah had also changed his clothes. He embraced Hasmik, and tried to take her to the bed, but she run away like a little beast and got to the door but it was locked from outside. The Mullah opened his disgusting mouth, went to terrified Hasmik took her into his arms brought her to the bed and threw her there. I was hiding in the corner of the room, watching them with fear. Hasmik was resisting, crying and trying to escape again but no use. The Mullah was even more excited to see his victim in most activity. He looked at me and called me over there.

-Hey you! Come here!

I was more contracted in the corner; he wanted me to watch them while he was enjoying the raping. He would feel more ecstasy then.

Hasmik was struggling vigorously which provoked mullah's desire of lewdness and his saliva had started pouring on his whitened beard.

But how can a fifteen years old girl continue resisting a man whose sexual instincts are awoken or had reached to maximum level. Mullah was taking out her clothes without any hurry; Hasmik was shouting and striving just like a bird being slain.

Finally, she was naked but while he was taking out his own gown, Hasmik again jumped out of the bed and run away again. Completely naked mullah with all his disgusting parts of body arisen was following her and grabbed her pushed her on the rug and fell on her. He started kissing her just grown breasts, her hands, and her navel and then started to lick the middle of her feet with most savagery... Hasmik was shouting and scratching mullah's reddened face continuously but mullah didn't stop and on the opposite, he was more vicious.

The servant of Allah reached his goal. Hasmik shouted loudly once more and fainted. Mullah was torturing the body of Hasmik's unconscious body for a long time, sighed, shouted and sounded like barking till he was released. His saliva was leaking on the innocent body of the angel girl's striving body.

Hasmik was still unconscious. I was in worse situation. I should watch all and be ready for my turn.

After raping Hasmik, mullah left her on the floor, put on his gown and called Ibrahim. He rushed in and opened the door and bowed.

-Prepare water to wash, - mullah said, - The time of evening Namaz (Islamic prayer) is getting near and went out.

When the door was closed, I ran towards Hasmik. She was still unconscious. There was water on the table, I took a glass of water and poured it on her face. Just then, I noticed that was my father's glass. He always liked to drink tea in that glass. Again, I was choked with tears.

Hasmik was conscious and sat down. Her eyes were not blinking; she was looking at me with an empty glance. I hugged her

indifferent and with no reflex body and started to cry. There was no reflex in her. She was looking at me with a silent and dead look.

-Hasmik, dear sister...- I was moving and calling her but there was no response. Extremely frightened, I took the blanket from the bed and covered her nakedness. The blood on her hips made me more afraid, and the sense of guilt was hurting my heart.

It was the time of evening ceremony of the Church. It was the time that Priest Mambreh should hold the ceremony. The girls and the young women should sing holy songs. The habitants of the village should praise God for another good day and a peaceful evening. The bells of the Church should sound in a simple and peaceful evening... But none of these existed, all were ravished, violated, raped, butchered, killed or abused, the bells of the Church were silent. The church and the court were full of human corpses, covered with blood and human sins' stagnates.

It was only me sitting beside the raped and not responding body of Hasmik, whose body and soul was lingering between life and death...

It was not understanding and senseless silence. In this hour of the evening, the peasants were returning from the fields, the shepherds were bringing back the flocks of animals. All were calling each other to separate their own sheep and cattle from the whole group. The dogs were playing with the returning animals. Oh, where was the peaceful shout which was mixed up with mild heat of the day and covered the village and lured the angels of the sky.

They had massacred that peaceful shout and the sincere peacefulness too. Even the barking of dogs had stopped. All of them had either run away from the village or had been shot. In the abnormal, senseless and cemetery silence sometimes the terrified mooing of the cows could be heard. They were taken out from suitable and warm stables at improper time, were axed or driven away to the far villages...

Tearing up the silence of the sky of the village, instead of the voice of church bells, mullah's azan was spread and heard which sound like the shouting of the ravens. He was thanking Allah and worshipping Him for the great opportunity which was handed over to his followers.

But our God was silent. With a bent head down and with wide opened eyes, He was looking at the carnage, His dead church, surprised at the human savagery, the abused, tortured, and butchered

corpses of humans living with His name at their lips and their eyes toward the Saint Mary's picture with Jesus Christ in Her arms. Father Mambreh and my teacher covered with blood and the Bible trampled under the dirty feet of mullah. And why He was silent, I cannot understand till now.

Hasmik didn't succeed to return to life anymore. Two days long, she was silent. She resigned of eating. She had become a doll with no will: she remained in the same posture wherever and however you put her. The saliva was leaking out of her mouth just like a little baby and couldn't talk anymore.

Mullah disappeared for two days and we felt comfortable. I was thinking with horror what would happen when he returned. It was impossible to run away since his servant Ibrahim was always in the yard.

And the feeling of vengeance was born in me. I thought my destiny is death so I should plan to kill the disgusting mullah and his servant. At least, I could take the revenge for myself, my family and Hasmik.

They didn't close the door of the room anymore since they believe we didn't have any place to run away. I moved in and out freely. It was our home. I knew all the corners. I went to the kitchen and took my mother's most-liked and the sharpest knife and hid it under the mattress of the bed where mullah was sleeping. Now that I have decided everything, I was impatiently waiting for mullah.

At the end of end of the second day mullah returned. Ibrahim went to meet him. Mullah gave him his bag and came upstairs. I came out, bowed and said hello to him. Mullah was surprised. In two days time, I was just grown up. Realizing the change, he was delighted and caressed my cheek. I held his hand

-Just like this, good girl, - and he caressed my cheek again.

Then he turned back and looked at Hasmik who lied in the bed indifferently, went beside her and wanted to caress her cheek too. She was looking at him with no sign of life in her eyes and her saliva was still leaking from her mouth in the bed, mullah took his hand with disgust. He called Ibrahim when he entered, he shouted.

-Get rid of this disgusting creature.

It seemed that Ibrahim was waiting for this order. He took Hasmik in his arms and went out immediately. All the night his groaning and shouting could be heard. He was enjoying the nearly dead body of poor Hasmik.

I didn't see Hasmik anymore. The next day tens of gendarmes had grabbed her body from Ibrahim, had raped her and cut her throat finally.

I was trembling with fear and anxiety. Ibrahim laid down the table while murmuring a Turkish melody. Mullah was outside. Ibrahim went to the kitchen and brought the food in a tray. The smell of the fried meat filled the air of the room. It was the same tray on which my mother served coffee to my father whenever he was at home and was working in his room. Father was a teacher in our school, he brought all the homework of the students and checked them or read book at his free hours. Now, there was split around the clothes and different subjects belonging to mullah on the same desk. When I saw the tray, I burst into tears again and I couldn't control myself.

-My sweet lady, - called my father.

-What is it, my dear husband,-answered my mother while smiling, although she knew that my father wanted a cup of coffee.

-Would you bring me a cup of coffee, please, - said my father.

-Just now, my dear husband, - she smiled again and started making the coffee.

My mother really enjoyed to prepare coffee for my father and to serve him. There was astonishing love and warmth in their relationship.

Every morning they got up early, took care of their animals and got the milk. My father took them out of the stable to join them to the herd of the village and returned back. My mother boiled the milk and served a glass of it with a piece of her own made pastry with the same tray in the dining room of our home. The glass was made of silver and engraved beautifully. It was one of the old and precious objects. Moreover, the silver tea and lunch spoons also were inherited all from our past generation with a history of a century and now they are in possession of mullah.

Ibrahim invited mullah for lunch when everything was ready on the table. He came upstairs and sat down, while looking at me he offered me to join him. I was hardly enduring not to attack on him and take out his eyes but he was offering me instead to have lunch with him while smiling.

Finally, he was convinced that I was not going to eat anything, so he started devouring his food just like a beast. Then he drank the wine taken from our basement with the same silver glass of my father.

He ate just like a wolf, actually without chewing, almost swallowing all the meat in the plate and the extra food, he drank a big bottle of wine while hiccupping, he stood up and moored like a bull which gets into water in a hot summer day. He stood up. I was waiting breathlessly. I was shivering more strongly from fear and anxiety. The fatal moment was approaching and I was more restless and terrified. I had the decision to kill the monster, who was acting against God hidden under the dress of clergyman.

But mullah didn't hurry. He was full and had drunk a big bottle of wine. He was singing with a low voice in the room and was looking at me and smiling. Then he lied down and called me to go to him. The feeling of disgust and terror had alerted me. When he was opening his mouth, the smell of his rotten teeth caused a feeling of vomiting. Once more, he signed with his hand to approach him. I couldn't move and after he called me several times, he got angry and started to insult in Turkish and got up from the bed and came over me. I just ran away. This play raised his vicious needs and from over eating and being drunk of wine his sexual instincts were waken up too. I was running away faster and faster. And he was following me angrily and breathlessly. He succeeded to catch me several times and wanted to force me down on the ground, but I was laughing strongly and running away with a cat's skill. He was forced to start everything again.

I was a stranger even for myself. It seemed the god of revenge had entered in me and urged me to act like that.

Finally, mullah got tired and threatened me to cut my head when he caught me. I ran towards the bed and throw myself on it and started laughing. It wasn't me. It was a power, a being which had overcome my soul and body. Mullah stopped insulting suddenly, he came to the bed and lied down beside me and started to caress my hair left on my shoulders, my cheeks, my neck and started to open the buttons of my clothes. The created disgusting feeling got stronger. The smell of his rotten teeth caused the same feeling and I couldn't breathe. I imagined what had felt poor Hasmik when her flower budlike mouth was in his animal like one and he had sucked and kissed her lips.

Mullah's breathing had gone faster. Lust feelings were getting higher endangering his senses. He fell on me while he was so furious and started to tear up my clothes. His eyes were wide opened like a beast. I was thinking "God, help me, please, if I lose my consciousness, everything will be ruined, please keep him away from

kissing me at least". But I was enduring. The power existing in me had kept me strong. The desire and lust had blinded mullah's brain. He started to shout loudly, making inhuman voices and torn up even his own gown and threw it away. I shivered for a moment and seemed that I was going to faint but I controlled myself. Can you imagine a fourteen years old girl with a beast like him ...

Mullah was really excited. He had closed his eyes and was mooing like a bull. It was the right moment. I took out the knife rapidly and with all my strength pushed it into his testicles. Mullah shouted loudly grabbing his bloody testicles. I continued to hit him with knife in different points of his body, he was crying, lamenting until he was weaker and weaker and finally he became silent.

I didn't worry about Ibrahim, he would not come upstairs for the shouting of mullah since he was used to abnormal sounds made by him.

The children of Andranik the great grandchildren of Naneh returned from school. The house was delightful with their noise. All five children came to Naneh and kissed her one after the other. Andranik returned from the garden too.

-How are you mom, please don't exhaust our guest...

I hadn't realized how it became noon. Grand Mother apologized for torturing me.

-Please, have a rest. I'll sleep for a while too to concentrate my thoughts. -she said and lied down.

Haykanush, the wife of Andranik had prepared the lunch and was setting the table. The smell of the prepared lunch was spread all over the house and was tempting. But I was so carried away with the story of Naneh that I haven't even felt the hunger and smelled the tasty scent of the food.

We sat around the table. The children were making noise and were explaining about their passed day in school, everybody didn't let the other to speak.

-But Grand Mother won't eat anything, - I said.

-It is a long time that Mare doesn't eat anything,- said Andranik while smiling.

I looked at him with enquiring eyes.

-More than half of Grand Mother is in the other world, she doesn't need physical food-, said Haykanush.

The children started laughing.

-Grand Mother is nourished only with water, weather and coffee,-said one of girls and they laughed again.

-We have given Mare's name to our daughter, - Andranik said while looking at her with a passionate look. At that time Mare has been at the same age of my Naneh... When I think, I cannot understand how they could behave like that with such innocent angels.

-If they had behaved with newborn children... Even with pregnant women tearing up their stomachs..., - said Andranik's wife with a great grief.

The children stopped laughing. A sad silence was spread.

"The world is amazing, - I thought, - These children are Naneh's fifth generation. If she had been massacred also, neither this house would be here, nor the children: and they wouldn't through their laughter on the world... And if millions were not massacred how many such families would be there... And how big and prosperous would be our Armenian motherland..."

-Would you like more wine, - The voice of Andranik brought me back from past to reality.- It is Mare's prepared wine. Every year, she is the one who prepares the wine with its special method. She says that her father has prepared excellent wine and she has learned from him.

The wine was fantastic with an unusual and a special taste and smell.

-Let's drink for the peace of the souls of all who had passed away, - said Andranik. - For the soul of our massacred fathers. Their souls couldn't rest since most of them didn't die as men while fighting. For sure, there have been fighters who had killed many of the Turks but the dominant part of them were martyred and slaughtered just like innocent and weak lambs. And, the soul of a man who is butchered because he doesn't fight will never rest and will always be sinful.

- I agree, I said.- Let's drink for the peace of their souls but drinking is not enough we should do something that they didn't succeed to do and that is to bring back our sacred land. If we are really determined we will succeed.

-Yes, that's right. - said Andranik,- we were determined and wanted a lot so we earned. Isn't it true that, nearly without anything, only with our brave souls and hearts, we gained victory in Karabagh ... And we proved to ourselves that we are able to... And we are

really a soldier nation... Most of my friends were martyred. We were going to the war, recognizing that we may not return but we were determined. We were going while laughing, dancing and singing with death... We were martyred just like men. And, I'm convinced that the souls of my friends are in peace and they don't cherish like the ones of the slain just like lambs.

While we were enjoying our lunch, Grand Mother was in deep sleep and she was calm. The children were laughing and eating. Their laughter was mixed up with the lazy barking of the dog resting under summer midday sunshine. The mixed sounds were ringing on the silence of the village. In the past, there had been such a prosperous tranquility which suddenly had changed into an immobility of a cemetery and everything was silent eternally... May the village exist today or not? Even if it exists, there are living Turks or Kurds... This is the way of the world, one creates and the other enjoys the created.

And the ridiculous fact is that both live in the name of God... None of them feels guilty.

Grandmother didn't sleep for a long time. She woke up, sat down and asked for a glass of wine made by her. She started drinking little by little and was going to continue her life story. I returned to those harsh and unfortunate days again.

-I couldn't kill even a mosquito but now I had killed a man, but surprisingly I felt very strong. The life I've lived during the last few days had matured me and changed me to a beast. It is unbelievable that a small girl, without any experience that had not passed farther than the borders of our village, now is in such a situation, but human life and its psychological aspect is not easy to describe. For a moment, knelt on my knees I was looking at mullah who was fighting with death, dumped in his blood, then I stood up and I took the knife put it in a cloth, took all the food left on the table and went to the kitchen and took some bread and meat and ran out. It was dark. The darkness was stripped by the fires lit in the yards of the village houses. I tried to hear all the noises. Ibrahim was in one of the rooms in the first floor and was murmuring a Turkish or Kurdish melody. While, I was keeping the knife firmly, I came down the stairs. I was ready to kill Ibrahim too, if he would come on my way.

I was asking St. Mary to help me. I came down the stairs in the darkness and went out breathing deeply. But after two or three steps I

hit a metal pail. I was just petrified (stood still). Hearing the noise, Ibrahim burst out and in the darkness, he saw me and came towards me. I kept the knife ready and threw my parcel aside.

-Where are you going, - with a woman like voice he asked me and took me drawing to himself. – Come with me.

I ran away from him, but he grabbed me again

-Come on, come on, and don't be shy... Actually, there is no place to shy. He bowed down to kiss me.

Again, I was enraged and felt disgust. Again strength overcame me and I cut his face with my knife with all of my power. He shouted and held his face with two hands and sat down.

-Mother...

I started to hit with my knife on his body one after the other, and he was shouting, lamenting and finally, he was powerless and fell down and started shaking.

After a while standing over there, I gathered all the food of my parcel in the darkness and ran out of the yard.

Fortunately, everything passed successfully. I passed from the paths in the mid-village, which I knew. In the yards, the corpses of butchered Armenians with a lot of flies on them could be seen. The robbed and empty houses and the stables looked like blinded eyes in their sockets which in the darkness of the night created more horrible impression than the bodies themselves.

Just after the village, the fields and farms were spread and farther on several hundred meters the thin jungle layers started which continued toward the summit of the Dsaghkants mountains.

I have never been in those jungles. At first, I wasn't afraid but later when I was far from the village the fear increased in me. I was convinced that in the village there was only a few days left for me and I would be killed, insulted and disgraced but after all, I was frightened. I was controlling myself with difficulty not to return to the village and fell in the hands of furious herd.

The most difficult part was the first night, since everything seemed to be beasts, wolves. I shivered with fear and kept the knife in my hand firmly and waited for the attacks, but when I was convinced that the imaginary obstacle was a stone, a part of tree, I just concentrated my mind and continued my way. I know that in the morning when they found the body of mullah, will look for me so I was trying to go far from our village as much as I could.

I walked all night. When the day started, it was obvious that I had gone too far towards the summit of the mountain. After the thin layers, mountains and cleaves started. Getting on top of one of them, I could see our village. There were a few houses burning. After the first day of robbery, plundering and massacre the smoke was still getting up the burned church. There, in the church the portrait of St. Mary with Jesus in Her arms was burning with the victims of the carnage and thick smoke was going up taking with itself the protest of them to God. The ravenous birds were flying over the village. I sat down and thought about my destiny. I had been left alone in this world and I didn't know what should do. Everything was uncertain. I knew only that the Turks had killed all of my relatives, all of my nation and I was the only Armenian left alive just by chance. The instinct of living and self-defense reminded me to keep a distance from mankind. How much farther, I would be much safer because there had remained only the enemies in the world who would search for me. It was better to live with beasts and wolves than with human beings.

At the first sunrise, I looked towards our dead and butchered village far from there and cried with all of my heart but after a few days when I finished the last pieces of bread taken from our kitchen, the route of my thoughts were changed. I, a girl of fourteen, without any experiences and power, was suddenly found in the nature without any self-defending tools. Every creature, in an open nature has got something to protect himself from any kind of harms or enemies. I was the only one without any arms or methods. I was the only not guarded creature. If I didn't get used to the conditions, didn't sharpen my nails and my teeth, any kind of beasts would devour me or I could die of hunger.

But if the opportunity of living had been given to me, so I should be given also the necessary aspects to continue my existence. All the beasts were full. The mountains and the fields were full of corpses, and the knife and the woolen blanket taken from our home were real strong arms, the first to defend myself and the second to keep me away of the cold weather. It was the end of spring; the weather was getting warm and there could be found different birds' eggs in the holes of the cliffs. Sometimes, during nights, it was possible to catch birds from the same holes. The hunger makes human being to eat everything. I was used to eat the raw meat of the birds.

The Turks didn't find me. It seemed that after a few days of useless searching, they had stopped it. And I got used to living in the nature little by little. At nights, I slept whenever it was dark. I got nourished with whatever I could find. I succeeded to run fast and to climb the rocks. It seemed that I was getting used to my situation, the only thing that disturbed me were my dreams. I woke up and I couldn't sleep anymore. Actually, they were not dreams but nightmares. I saw my massacred parents, relatives, and my teacher. The head of Father Mambreh was still screaming, calling God and then burst into laughter loudly... Frequently mullah appeared with his tongue out of his mouth leaking like a dog and was following naked Hasmik... And the Turks, Turks with swords, guns were killing people... And the carnage didn't have any end... Every night the same scenes and when I got up, I couldn't sleep anymore...

The nightmare has continued for hundred years and it will continue till when I'm in this world. I'm sure, there is no freedom... That is an illness which will be cured only by death.

I don't know how many days had passed; I had lost the number of days. One day, when I had gone into the jungle to gather some fruits, suddenly I saw a woman far away. She hadn't noticed me and was eating fruit while bending down. My heartbeat was somehow sweet. So I wasn't the only Armenian. She couldn't be of other nationality. She was also with torn and old dress; her hair was not combed, she had a wild face. I was used to getting near with no noise and without being noticed. I got near and looked at her from a less distance. At first glance she seemed to be an old woman but now it was clear that she was a young girl too.

She had become wild too. But it seemed that she had been in the nature for a longer time comparing with me, since her long dress was really thorn apart. I was hidden behind the bushes and was frightened that with a mistake this miracle would be lost. The miracle of being together, to have one beside myself, to speak with somebody about our agonies and miseries...

She was like a wild goat, careful and ready to jump. I was trembling with all of my body, my heart was bursting out I had missed so much the presence of a human being, of one hand to hold and to feel the warmth.

Probably I have made a wrong move. The girl stood still, looked towards my side, I was afraid to lose her and never could find her. I stood up; she took a stone and threatened to throw.

-I am Armenian, don't be afraid, - I called her impatiently.

The girl threw the stone away and came to me. We were standing and looking at each other like two little beasts.

-I'm Armenian,- called again not knowing what to do.

She was looking at me in silence. Then she straightened her hand and touched my face. I held her hand. She jumped back frightened.

-Don't be afraid, - I said. - I won't harm you.

-I thought there was no Armenian left in the world... So you are Armenian...-she pronounced the words with difficulty...

Because of the events she witnessed and lived and her loneliness, she had nearly lost the skill of speech.

It seemed that the whole world was given back to me. The wave of prosperity was spreading in my body and my heart. "So there is another Armenian in the world and I was not alone,-I was thinking, - we would be together, would help each other, speak together. Together it would be easier to bear the pain of the tragedy".

I was nearly happy. The difficulties and the feeling of loneliness had made me forget what I had seen and endured. But now that my life had become just a little easier, the pain of loss got stronger.

The girl took me to her dwelling place, a small cave within the ditch of the cliff. It was covered with grass and the leaves and the branches of the trees. We were safe from the continuously falling rains and the beasts. And the blanket of my mother kept us against the cold weather of the nights although it had become old and was muddy but was useful for us.

There was a little waterfall besides the cave. At noon when the sun heated the water, we went there and washed the blanket and myself. I was clean.

-How beautiful are you,- said the girl,- you were so black that your beauty was hidden.

We became so friendly just like relatives, because we were the only two Armenians who had found each other.

She had a pretty name, Nareh. Her power of speech which was lost because of the pain, horror and loneliness, returned step by step. We sat under the shining sun and speak to each other. When the happiness of the first meeting had passed, we remembered again our dreadful destiny.

Nareh was from a village named Gomshevar, in the neighborhood of our village. The Turks had killed her parents and the whole population of the village, plundered the village and burnt the houses. She had also her tragic story.

-There was a chaos in the village. The Turk and the Kurd rabble with Turk gendarmes and mullah's leadership were taking out the habitants of the village from their houses rubbed, raped and butchered them. The screams and lamentation for help were echoed in the mountains. My father and mother didn't know what to do. My two sisters and my brother were in school. My mother wanted to run towards the school to bring the children but my father didn't let her since the village was full of enemies. It seemed so difficult to reach there. He added also that may they would be safer in the school and would be saved, they may leave them alive. Our dog was feeling the tragedy and was instinctively and furiously barking, trying to cut the chain.

When the Turks were getting near our home, my mother hid me in the flower house of our garden and ordered me not to make any movement and noise, not to come out in any case. Dad opened dog's chain and took the axe himself. The Turks invaded through the gate while insulting and shouting. They were armed with swords, woods, and sickles. My father stood in the middle of our yard and threatened to kill all of them. Just for a moment, they stopped and then attacked. Our dog also attacked on one of the gendarmes and with its jaws dragged him on the ground and started choking him. The Turks were beating the dog to free their friend, in the same time my father attacked another Turk with his axe and hit on his head. Mother who was watching the unexpected progress of the fighting fetched the fork from the hay house and joined with my father. I was watching breathlessly to see what would be the end of this not equal fighting.

The Turks were confused at first. My father while rotating his axe, attacked the other Turks. My mother inserted the sharp fingers of the fork into the stomach of one of the Turks.

During first fight, we had only one victim and it was our dog and the Turks had three killed. For a short while the mob decided to run away from the yard, but at that moment two gendarmes came in and shot at my father. I wished to come out of my place to run to my parents and to take out the eyes of those devils with my nails but I was

stunned in my place from horror and unexpectedness of the whole situation.

My father was wounded, he tried to get up. But they started to beat him roughly. They had grasped the fork from my mother. While she was shouting and calling God for help just like a hen defending herself, she was attacking the ones who were beating my father, trying to help him but no one was paying any attention to her. Finally, one of them hit on her head and she fell down on the ground and remained there for a long time.

They were still beating my father when mullah entered. He made a sign to the herd to take a distance from him. There was a hope in my heart that maybe the servant of God wanted to save my father. He took some of them to a corner and gave them some orders. From yarn house they brought woods, hammer and gums. I couldn't understand what they were going to do with him. After a while they made a cross with the woods, they put on it my father who was terribly wounded but was conscious, then they tied him firmly with a rope and nailed my father's feet and hands. Then they dragged the cross up and leaned it on the wall of our house. Mullah raised his hands towards the sky screaming nonsense words. The beastlike mob was shouting like a mad and was dancing in front of my father.

My father who was half-dead, after being crucified, lost his consciousness. His head leaned on his body was just like Jesus on the cross which I'd seen in the church.

-They couldn't kill like a human being, - I said. - It is surprising they enjoy the torture of their fellow men... It seems that they are not humans.

-They are not humans, my sister.- Nareh said crying. -A human being cannot do such a thing. My mother was still fainted on the ground. I was looking with my eyes wide open and was unable to do any movement.

Getting tired of dancing and enjoying the scenes, suddenly they remembered my mother. They surrendered her unconscious body. One of them got some water and poured on her face. She opened her eyes and was horrified to see them. They got her on her feet and brought in front of my crucified father, she shouted and tried to run out of their hands. One of them was dancing in front of her and while keeping her arms up made her to dance. Fortunately my father was unconscious, God helped him.

Meanwhile they were torturing my mother, my brother came in running. When he saw what was going on there, he was shocked. He wanted to scream but his was voiceless. I didn't see my sisters. It was clear that what they have done with them. My elder brother was in the field. I thought that maybe he was rescued but when I ran away, I saw his body covered with blood fallen on the farm.

The mullah who was leading the massacre shouted when he saw my brother.

-Mashalla (a word of praise, Arabic) ..., - and ordered to bring him.

They tied up my brother near my father. He couldn't make any noise anymore.

My mother was shouting. Her voice was weakened but still she continued shouting. She was calling, but whom? The whole village was on fire. From different sides the sound of shootings, shouts, calls for help and insulting words could be heard.

Then they started to torture my mother. Two strong-bodied Turks tore her dress up and took it out. My mother was going mad from shame, was struggling but couldn't get free. She who didn't undress even in front of her husband, who was ashamed to tell any sweet words to my father, was standing in front of the eyes of beast like Turks, completely naked. She was shivering of shame, was trying to conceal her nakedness. The Turks were laughing, dancing and were making her to dance and were making disgusting gestures.

It was good that my father remained unconscious. My poor brother was just looking. He had escaped from the Turks who had attacked their school and reached home thinking that he was rescued. But it was better if he hadn't got home. He was gone crazy. Later, he started to laugh abnormally.

They were tired, so the mullah ordered to behead both my father and my brother and throw their heads toward my mother. Later, they raped my mother just in the blood of her beloved ones. After which they killed also my mother.

Later they opened the doors of the stable and butchered some with axes. The rest fled towards different directions.

They made the fire to prepare the meat. The yard of our home was like a battlefield. The corpses of my mother, father and brother were left there even the three bodies of their own people. They didn't bury them at least before devouring their food.

I saw all... I saw and I didn't go crazy...

Nareh was telling her story and was crying.

Actually, we were crying for the past, the present and our unknown future and destiny.

-I saw all and I lived...

-Me too. I had confronted with so many cruelties and I lived, dear sister... God may have a special plan for us...

-But what should it be? If we are the only two Armenians left in the world, dear sister, Naneh. – Nareh said with no hope.

She sighed deeply. - I'm thinking and cannot understand how they got so much hatred... We don't even know them; we hadn't treated them badly... Why they do feel so much hatred and wickedness...

I remembered my father's words and expressed just like him.

-It is not hatred, my sister, it's their nature... When a wolf attacks the sheep flock, it kills, injures and chokes them and leaves. But the wolf doesn't hate the sheep that is its nature. It only hunts...

That is what my father said, when during the long nights of winter our neighbors were gathered in our home, he spoke about the tortures of our nation, about the massacres and about the world affairs. He had always encouraged the people to get arms. We had two rifles which we kept them as icons. Unfortunately, there were just few people who believed in my father's words. Most of them thought that the Government will defend them; they didn't want to sell their cattle or sheep and buy weapons. This kind of reasoning has been the basis of our nation's destruction. If each family had one rifle and one fighter at least, everything will be changed.

It was easier both to cry and to live when we were together. During the days we were nourished with grass, fruit and bird eggs, sometimes we succeed to hunt birds and small animals. We even learned to catch fish by hands. And during nights we covered ourselves with the blanket just like two cats and sleep. I was feeling the smell of my mother from the blanket and imagined that she had embraced me.

Nareh was one year older than I, but she was like a mother. We were just so friendly that seemed we were born by the same mother.

We were living. But why, we don't understand. A human being should have a reason to live and should have a program for his future. We have neither reason nor program. We were living just like grass,

tree and animals. With such life, human changes to a beast. We were also like two little beasts.

From the height everything could be seen below precisely. We could follow to see what was going on down in the villages. It was a long time that the Turks were gone. They had robbed, abused, burned and killed all the alive and got lost. Although, we were sure, there were no alive there in the villages, but still we were afraid of going there. Finally, one day we decided:

-Let's go and bury our relatives. Nareh said.

The first one was our village. When we reached there, we were horrified. The smell of the putrid corpses was like a heavy cloud lingering not only on our village but spreading out of it too. No more horrible scene could be imagined. Ruined and burned houses were just like wide opened blind eyes, dark doors and windows, blotted and half-putrid bodies of our relatives and the people whom we know, with their white teeth out which seemed they were laughing on the world... and the thick smell of bodies which caused strong dizziness...

We had become wild and couldn't weep. I really wanted to enter the village, go to the village and bury my teacher's violated and abused body at least. I wished to cover her nakedness, her shamefulness but it wasn't possible. The smell made us dizzy. The flies and the vultures upset of our presence went a little farther and then they gathered again. Nareh started vomiting.

The village was a real cemetery, empty, silent and horrible. The Turks had done everything for final elimination of that prosperous, happy and heavenly village from the memories of mankind. We didn't go to Gomshevar since we were sure that the same situation would be there.

It was a long time that we were unaware of how much time had passed. It was summer but which month we couldn't tell. One day, when we were looking down from our place and were remembering the good days, we saw that a few men with horses were moving upward the mountains. We guessed that they were Turks or Kurds so we went to our hiding point and were following them. They got near Gomshevar village, stopped and entered there. It seemed that they are looking for something. We were seeing everything so clearly. They did the same with our village; they went near the church ...

We were thinking what they were looking for since everything was stolen, robbed and destructed. Moreover, we thought if

they could enter the villages so it would be possible for us. We decided to go there after they left.

The horsemen left after a short while. They were searching for something for sure. We should be careful. They were Turks or Kurds. We hurried to our cave.

The next morning we went down. Our shoes were torn apart since we had run or walked on the stones and all the harsh places of the nature. Both of us were actually bare feet. But it wasn't difficult for us. At the beginning while nourishing with grass or raw meat we had pain in our stomach but we got used to that also.

We reached our village. The smell had vanished. Skeletons could be seen around. There was grass grown in the house yards. Our home was burned and it reminded the mouth and the rotten teeth with its disgusting smell of the mullah. With a pain in my heart, I entered the yard to find something sincere for me but everything was burned.

Nareh was following me with grief. She hugged me but none of us could express any words. We had lost our delicate feelings, the tears were falling inward and everything was just harsh and frozen.

-Let's go to church, - I said.

-Let's go dear sister, - She said and held my hand.

The church, on the right height of the village was burnt but its stonewalls had remained not harmed. The scene was so terrifying even for beast like creatures like us. In the church and the yard the skeletons piled on each other had wide opened their blinding white shining teeth and were laughing at this worthless world and life. I thought to burry all but it was impossible. I tried to find the bodies of my mother, my sisters and my brothers but I couldn't recognize them... All were like each other with nothing which will help. The plunderers had taken everything from the bodies and the rest was burned. I recognized only my teacher's body in the altar of the church, still her feet wide opened. It seemed that the Turk gendarme had just got up and closed the buttons of his trousers. The half-burned image of St. Mary was still looking at the skeletons with surprise and sees their teeth out laughing. There was no one alive in the church. Even the birds had deserted their nests in the roof of the church. They returned every year, find their nests and have chickens there. Father Mambreh said:

-Let them live there; they are the creatures of God. They have the right to live.

They had returned this spring too and had filled the air of the church and the sky with their beautiful twitting sounds but after the massacre done by the Turks they had left...

We buried my teacher's bones in the churchyard. I was a little relaxed. At least, my beloved angel had got a tomb. I had revenged partially when I had killed the mullah and Ibrahim and had buried my teacher. I didn't have anything else to do. I decided not to return to this village any more. The place which had given life to me but instead all my beloved ones, my teacher and my family were butchered there.

Now we went to Nareh's village. The same scenes but it was easy to find her relatives. We buried her mother, father and brother. She knelt in front of her parents' tomb and prayed loudly and asked peace for their souls and she swore to take their revenge from the Turks.

Their home wasn't burned. We went in but there was nothing. Everything was rubbed. The nails just remained on the walls from which paintings and rugs were hanged which they had inherited from their ancestors.

In the village of Gomshevar the fruit was already ripe. We gathered and went back to our cave. It was evening. A village filled with skeletons. At the end of the day the ghost of death became more obvious. With the darkness everything seemed more fearful in the village and it was impossible to remain there. We thought to gather fruits and walnut during autumn and store it for winter. There were so many walnut trees in both villages. After eating so much raw meat and grasses, it was really enjoyable to eat different fruits.

The days were passing in vain and with difficulty. We often went to the village but again we returned to our place. Now my home was the cave between the cliffs...

We were just in the village gathering the walnuts fallen from the trees that we heard the noise of the hoofs of horses. We were confused, just stood still. The riders were so close that even if we ran away as fast as we could, they would reach us.

-Don't be afraid, girls, we are Armenians, - called the horseman.

It was not only unbelievable, but even ridiculous. How could the Armenians be riders? We were sure that it is a trap. They were following us and had noticed us for a long time and now they have found us. They tried to speak with us to comfort us.

-It is impossible that these men are Armenians. – Nareh said, - they are Turks or Kurds.

-Let's run away,- I said, - if we go through gardens the horses cannot reach us.

While they were convincing us, we fled through the gardens and run towards the mountains. .

We were running breathlessly with the thought that what would happen to us if they could catch us. We were out of the gardens near the village and ran toward the jungle. They were following us persistently.

We were still running but we were so much tired. Because of long malnutrition our bodies had lost the power. They were still following us and finally they surrounded us when we were out of the jungles.

-Relax, - they called again, - we are Armenians, in the name of holy cross, please believe us...

We were running from one side to the other trying not to be caught but we didn't succeed.

-We are Armenians, - called one of the horsemen, - we are gathering all the Armenian children from mountains. Why don't you believe...? The city of Van is in the hands of Armenians... We gather all children there...

We didn't believe but the surrounding circle was getting narrower. I'd kept my mother's knife firmly in my hand and was ready to jump. Nareh was groaning just like a tiger.

-They had gone wild, - One of the horsemen said with sadness. All is the fault of the Turks.

-Girls, - asked the other one, maybe their chief, believe us, we will take you to Van, you will be safe and can start a new life. With such a life how long you could live. What will you do in the winter...

-The Turks have drawn back. – said the other one, Armenians are the owners of Van, it will be good for you.

We didn't obey. Even if the whole world would come to convince us, we couldn't believe. We had seen so much and we were so hopeless that couldn't think that except Turks and Kurds there

could be other people in this mountains. And if we were caught by Turks, everybody knows what would happen to us.

Finally, they just hunted us. Nareh had bit the hand of one the horsemen, they were laughing. Finally we were relaxed just when we saw the cross hanging from his neck.

-Now did you understand? – Said their commander, - so you will come to Van and start a new life.

Each one of us sat on one horse and we went towards Van, the city of my dreams. My father went there and bought our clothes, shoes, accessories, anything needed for their farming, books for school and stationeries. He was describing about the city and its important points and my childish imagination flew over there. He had promised me to show all of the places but his promise was slain by Turks. “Oh, my dear father, - my heart was full of tears, - now I’m going to Van, but you are not here anymore, you are very far from here... I’ll see all without you...”

It was a long distance. We were passing through villages and plains one after the other. All were deserted. Armenians were massacred and the habitants of Turkish and Kurdish villages had fled when the Armenian detachments and the Russian army had arrived. The men were asking us about the events that had happened and we were explaining them, whatever had occurred with our villages and ourselves. They listened and sighed bitterly. They were trying to give us hope that everything had finished and now we can live comfortably and safe. The agony was so huge for us that we cannot believe. And we left our past behind, we told farewell to our hundreds of not buried dear ones and our people and went to start a new life.

We reached the city of Van in the evening. Under the red-orange light of sunset with all their grace, the historical monuments and the churches were showing their beauty. But there was no sign of the described miracle city as my father had told. In the wrecks of the square of the city the women with old dresses, with woods and shovels were turning and smoothing the wrecks of the ruined houses. From far they seemed like hens bending down and getting up to find seeds. With tired and hopeless faces the men were cleaning the streets from the ruins, but the general scene was disappointing; Ruins, poverty and misery.

Nothing was left of my father's descriptions as a prosperous, huge, vital and full of people city. Van was just like a dead which has been brought back to life.

We reached there with a sad and depressed impression. They took us to the center where hundreds of girls and boys were there. Alone or in small groups they were walking around but there was silence. They had gathered creatures like us from mountains and valleys wild, with no relatives and alone. They were looking at us in differentially.

The name of the Manager of the center was Mayrik (mother). I didn't understand finally that it was her real name or everybody just called her as she was the manager. She came toward us, smiling, caressed my head and hardened hair, asked my name. I felt the warmth. I just thought for a moment that she was my teacher, her voice and her touch. A strong wave of longing moved my heart and I kissed her hand. She got back her hand and hugged me. Tears were in her eyes. I was hugging her too and for a long time they couldn't separate me from her.

-Poor child..., - Mayrik said with tears in her voice: - And Will God forgive the Turks? ... Take them, give them food, take them into bath and change their clothes ... Oh God, they have lost their human aspects.

The life changed completely. We had lived more than half a year in the mountains; we have eaten grass, bird eggs, raw meat and fish. We were deprived of normal food. We returned to humanity step by step. But there still lingered partially the nature of wolves in us. We couldn't endure other people's presence and often we were involved in fighting with them.

In the center, among children there were Kurds and even Turks. There was a Turk girl really naïve and defenseless. She had lost her parents while escaping or they had been killed.

It was the second or third day we were in the center. Nareh saw that girl and all of a sudden rushed on her, threw her on the ground and tried to choke her. All over there the shouting was heard. All were gathered but nobody interfered. The Turk girl was younger. She would choke her if Mayrik and other responsible workers didn't come out and free her from Nareh's hands. Nareh was groaning like a beast.

-How are you not ashamed? - sad but without any anger Mayrik said, - She is an orphan just like you.

-We haven't started, - Nareh said groaning again.

Mayrik didn't blame her. We didn't blame her too. We knew that what the Turks have done with her family and we understand her. When we were in mountain and she buried the skeletons of his family, she took an awe to take their revenge. I understand her too. I had taken my revenge but in her still was boiling the poison of revenge.

The Turk girl was crying, she was also a poor orphan with no relatives but she was one and we were one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand... And who pitied for us, which Turk... What happened to Hasmik, to my teacher... my sisters... Who pities for them... Who said a man can't behave like this with another man...

Mayrik was looking at us with sadness and I felt that how he had controlled her tears.

... Grandmother was tired, he closed her eyes and was silent. It seemed that she had slept but she was continuing fighting with herself in her thoughts. Then she opened her eyes again asked for a glass of water from her granddaughter took a little and continues.

-Mayrik pitied equally both of us and the Turks and the Kurds. They were also changed to wild and cruel beasts. She controlled her tears with difficulty not only for the tragedy of Armenians but also for Kurds and Turks... Maybe that is the mistake... Maybe we should be just like them...would the Turks and the Kurds pity us...? Those were the Turks who had butchered one hundred thousands of innocent, weak and unprotected Armenian children, kids... And the Armenians themselves who had lived so much sufferings, lost their relatives and motherland, were gathering the Turk and the Kurd orphans from the mountains, took care of them, feed them... the Turks had butchered our boys and sons not permitting them to grow up to be a soldier for their nation, but Armenians keep the equality and take care of their boys too... Maybe this has been our greatest mistake...? Maybe it was better to think and to act just like them to be able to keep our heavenly homeland ... She sighed deeply,- I don't know... God the rightful, He is the judge. But as much as I had understood He doesn't interfere in our works... Maybe we should make decision for ourselves, our duties and our responsibilities... If it wasn't like that, the blood of millions of slains would not scream from soil... Millions of innocents... The innocents were those who didn't have the power to defend their families and themselves. But the ones who were men, who could and knowing that they were going to be butchered, but didn't protest, they didn't try to

protect themselves and their family but went obediently to be slaughtered like lambs, they are not innocents. Their sin is bigger... The blood of the innocent women and children is not only on the conscious of the Turks and Kurds but also on those men. The persons who could protest but they didn't... The ones who didn't help their neighbor who was being murdered, thinking and being deceived that they would make an exception and could be saved, so they didn't take any action against the enemy until their own turn and time would come, the turn of their village, their city and their family.

Grand Mother's thought just flew again to the past towards the orphanage of the City of Van.

-Nareh didn't calm down. Like a captured wolf, she tried to get rid of the obstacles and reach the small Turk girl. She was crying in a corner. Mayrik went near to the girl hugged and caressed her head, tried to comfort her, and then got Nareh in her arms.

-Be calm please, my girl, it's not her fault, she has no sin... She is a poor creature like you...

-They had butchered all my relatives, all the villagers, even my young sisters and my brother... She is a Turk..., Nareh was screaming.

-Please relax, darling,- Mayrik said while keeping Nareh in her arms and she couldn't control her tears. She was a young girl, but she had seen so much agony and misery that she had grown old.

They were bringing new orphans every day. From mountains and valleys, got wild or mad, lost the power of speech because of hunger and misery, boys and girls of different ages. The life continued. The city of Van was restored step by step. The Armenians who were saved from the bloody hands of the Turks returned continuously. The hope started shining in the eyes of desperate people.

The orphans brought there were cleaned, cured, returned to life and later they were sent to Yerevan or Echmiadzin in groups. They were planning to send Nareh with another group. Since we were really like sisters I asked Mayrik to send us together. Soon we were transferred to Yerevan. In the orphan asylum of Yerevan also were hundreds of orphans. Here the conditions were better. We started to go to school. And we lived.

I had just got acquainted with a boy in orphanage who was from city of Arjesh and we got married. He had lost all of his relatives too. I finished the University and continued the work of my father. I was the teacher of the school of our village until I got old.

Since we couldn't take revenge from the Turks in another way, we decided to have many children. Four sons, three daughters as in my own family, four uncles and three aunts.

Whatever I could do, I had done, I cannot do more. My time has reached, I would soon leave but you, the ones who live, will continue the unfinished work. We have passed to you a very difficult heritage; we have done as much as we could. Try to leave for your future generation less unsolved matters.

My whole life was a battle with God. I believe that He exist, if I didn't believe I wouldn't fight. I fought because I haven't understood. You should live correctly, God give you as much as you can start. He give also a place and tell you this is your Country live and be happy. But if a nation is not satisfied with his own and wants to possess yours also so you should defend your wealth and everything you have. You should fight, and if it is needed you should even sacrifice your life. You should sacrifice your children and if it is needed a whole generation. A whole generation which makes everything easier for the future ones. You shouldn't demand from God, Don't expect for He will help, don't wait for help of others and friends. We have seen a lot that what friends can do. Be sure if they've got any interests then they may do something.

Who has given the permission not to kill your enemy, when he has invaded your home, rapes your wife and daughters, sisters, kills your sons not to grow up and become soldier. If you are able to kill the enemy who has entered your house and you don't do that, you don't rescue your daughters, your sisters from being abused so you are committing the biggest sin. You should kill since at that moment you are not killing the man but the devil by which you free the man and his soul. You should behave just the same way against the enemy who doesn't respect the borders and invades your Country because your Country is your family... Senseless and extreme passion and mercy are one the biggest sins. If you don't struggle and fight against evil, if you don't destroy it you are helping to strengthen the enemy and to cause to increase.

We have made the biggest mistake by wrong interpretation of the Bible... Instead of being a soldier we had become obedient sheep.

We have fought only when there had been no choice, instead of fighting in the beginning and kill the enemy at first not at the moment when all the doors are closed.

Nobody should forget that we have lost a great Country, the one that God had handed over to us. It is a great sin not to protect and keep something presented to us. We should always be ready to take and grasp whatever belongs to us. God won't come to deliver it on a tray. He can create a proper situation or condition and if we didn't use the right moment, we have committed the greatest sin. Tomorrow, there should happen so many important things and changes in the world, if we don't be ready God won't be satisfied with us and won't show His mercy and don't forgive our sin.

Whatever happen , how much it is difficult, it is not permitted to leave the land which is given to you God have given that as your Motherland. If you leave again you have committed the greatest sin. It is a betrayal against your own nation and the will of God. It is a bigger sin than killing somebody. If you leave your land where you should live and multiply there, you are not only committing a murder but you destroy a Country, a Motherland and the soul of national unity... When a nation spreads all over the world its soul of unity weakens and loses power that in the nation the self-defending strength dies and is impossible to keep the word of God and the nation dies too with the soul and vanished away just like the river which goes toward the desert... It is a punishment for not keeping God's words.

At that night Grand Mother died. She slept and didn't wake up. She went with a released heart from this world. I remained three days in the village. I just became so friendly, it seemed they were my relatives, since the burden has transferred on my shoulders. I was nearly her...

When the burial ceremony of Grand Mother took place, I was in her village with my thoughts, I was seeing the fourteen years old Naneh who was singing and playing around and taking their lambs to the farm. She smelled all the flowers and the voice of her laughter was filling the valleys... She is already living in me. Her village and the habitants are living in me... And as much as I exist they will be alive in me and in the world. And if I die, they will be alive in them and the

children of them... And in them who will read this book and will take at least a small portion the heavy burden of Grand Mother...

After the burial ceremony of Naneh, I said goodbye to the family and left. In the square of the village there were a few men and women waiting for the bus. One of the villagers seeing a new face just started talking with me. I said, I had come for the funeral of Naneh.

-Which Naneh? - He asked surprisingly,- and it is nearly one year the nobody died here.

-She was an old woman, - I said, - her name was Naneh

-There is no such lady,- insisted the man

-Maybe he is talking about March,- said one of the women standing there.

-Yes there was a woman named Naneh, she was a little different, she died twenty years ago.

Everybody participated in the conversation.

-She was interesting,- said one of them, - she lived hundred years and was speaking about massacre and immigrants all the time and curse the Turks.

I couldn't understand them. I had been at their place and had spoken with her. If not, how could I know her life story? And I just said goodbye to her family.

-I had just left Andranik's place, how could everything be wrong?,- I said.

The man who had started the speech first started laughing and he thought I was joking. - and he said - I can show her tomb. Her grandchildren loved her so much. After her husband died, she lived a long time. She was from Van, from a big family only they had been alive.

At first, I thought they were joking but all were insisting that the only woman named Naneh had died twenty years ago.

- If you don't believe, let's go to Andranik's place.- said the man.

- But I was just there,- I said, - and for funeral the whole village was present.

- Let's go ,- I said ,- I was sure that the man would be convinced.

And if he came, I would prove that he was wrong and while living in the village, he didn't know what was going on here.

-Andranik.- called the man, - come on I have brought a guest.

Andranik came out and looked at me with a questionable look.

-Andranik,- said I ,- this man insists that Naneh has died twenty years ago.

-That's right.- said Andranik,- Mareh had died twenty years ago, but sorry, I don't know you.

I just laughed.

-How... I had been at your house for 3 days

-Our home,- he said surprisingly

-But we have buried Grand Mayrik just today...

-But she has died twenty years ago.- insisted Andranik

I didn't know what to do. I just stood there like a silly one.

-Let's go to the cemetery.- said the man.- at the last moment she still spoke about her massacred relatives.

I was just hopeless. How did I know the story of Naneh and her family.

-Come in,- said Andranik,- Couldn't you stand just like that at the door.

I couldn't concentrate.

-Let's go.- said the man while pushing me in- it's the house of an Armenian.

-Naneh,- called Andranik.- accept our guests.

A shiver passed in my body, it seemed Grand Mareh would come out of the room.

But from one of the rooms of the second floor came out Andranik's daughter and said hello. I was just wandering. She was just fourteen years old Naneh, it was Mareh's childhood which was living in Andranik's daughter.

Naneh with fast movements set up the table. Brought a bottle of wine from the basement which has been prepared with Naneh's father method and she liked a lot. We remembered Mareh and drank for the peace of soul, and Andranik said:

-Let's go ... we will burn incense, will light candles... Mareh's soul is not at peace yet... it is twenty years she has died but still her soul couldn't find peace.

Andranik took out his car. We went to the cemetery of the village..

When we got off the car, the man said:

-We won't tell which is Mareh's grave, if you recognize so you are right...

We went toward the inner part.

I was checking one by one and going forward...And suddenly...

Just my heart would stop; my blood was freezing in my veins. From the upper part of the red granite tomb stone Mareh's picture was looking at me. It couldn't be wrong "Naneh Aschyan Mkrtichi 1901-2000".

We were looking at Grand Mayrik's tombstone. I couldn't come out from that abnormal condition. They were also surprised how I could know all the facts.

-Yes...,- the man broke the silence,- The soul of Mareh doesn't rest...

- The soul of the millions of the innocent victims couldn't find their peace...Mareh told that their innocent blood was screaming from the soil...

And again we were silent.

And from far, our enslaved St. Mountain was looking at us with grief. And a white dressed woman, standing at the summit was waving hands for us...

Maybe it was Grand Mother or another Grandmother...

Or the united soul of one and a half million innocent victims of 1915 deprived of their Motherland.

End

Հովիկ Վարդումյան

ԵԹԵ ՄՈՌԱՆԱՍ, ԿԱՆԻԾԵՄ ՔԵԶ

Անգլերենի թարգմանությունը՝
Արմինե Ղազարյանի

Էդիկ Բաղդասարյանի
(Գերմանիկ)
Խմբագրությամբ



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