

would appear in his hands, and manic shouts of “Richard! Richard! Richard!” would echo in the house (51–4). Richard could not imagine the source of his father’s temper and intolerance toward his own son. How could he have known that such behavior is typical in a survivor of the Genocide? His father never talked about his ordeal during those trying years. And then there were his father’s frightening cries in the middle of the night, “Վայ, մայրիկ, վայ” (Oh, Mother, oh!). “The fearless, defiant man whom night and memory had returned to his childhood, to the banks of the bloody Euphrates,” was helplessly reliving the past (55). How could Richard have known that this too is typical of a survivor of the Genocide? His father never talked about how a Kurd had snatched him from his mother’s embrace (12). It was only a few months before Kaspar Hovannisian died in October 1970 that he allowed Richard to record the story of his ordeal.

He spoke about his mother, Heghnar, his brother, Gabriel. He spoke generously, emotionally, plainly. He remembered everything in fresh detail: the stroke of the sun and the scent of the mountain flower. It was as if a part of him had stayed behind in 1915, stayed with his mother and brother, stayed to die with his people (92).

But when Richard was still at a young and tender age, all he knew was that, despite his awe and respect for his father, he resented his manner. He felt alienated and he longed to escape, and escape he finally did after he graduated from high school. Rebellion was Richard’s response to the predicament of living under his father’s authority. From an early age he had been fascinated by international ideologies, and the liberal atmosphere of Berkeley and San Francisco was where he could