

a textbook. He was firmly of the opinion that girls “don’t need books to cook *dolma*” (67).

Mary was also aware of another shortcoming that required her to work harder and accomplish more than others did, and that was the fact that she did not have a country she could call her own, a government to take care of her, provide her with an education, and prepare her for her future life. She felt the weight of this burden when, as a student in an English Catholic school in Cairo, she was discriminated against and looked down upon as an Armenian. Years later, writing *The Immigrants’ Daughter*, she describes the predicament that was hers and that of all the second-generation survivors of the Genocide:

As children of a massacred generation, we are used to being ignored so we take it in our stride. We double our efforts at everything; learning foreign languages, mastering a few crafts, overcoming segregation, or living by ingenuity. We are veterans at facing hardships head on. In competition with other supremacist claims.... We Armenians can boast of our supremacy at survival. (189)

Mary learned to take the blame for everything, whether it was her quarreling with her brother or her stepmother’s constant complaints about her own misfortune in being married to a man with such unruly children and so much housework. Strangely enough, she even took the blame for her mother’s death. While her mother was in the hospital fighting for her life, Mary unknowingly blew out the candle of a household shrine. She was ten years old at the time, and for years afterward, she grappled with the tormenting suspicion that that act had caused her mother’s death. “The voice of