

to his office and asked me to accompany him to a secret meeting² He was a man of stature, a former officer in the army of the first independent Republic of Armenia. We had heard so many tales of his valor. On the way to that secret meeting, he told me that they had arranged with the Iranian Secret Police to allow a short visit with my dad at the house of Aslan Stepanian, known as *Khmbapet* (Captain) Aslan, another veteran *fedayee* from the days of the Armenian Republic and a fellow well respected by the Iranian government. Evidently, my dad had been transferred to Tehran but was still in custody, and I was the member of our family privileged to see him before his final release.

My heart pounding with fear and anxiety, I entered a room where a tall, well-built officer greeted me in perfect Armenian (I later learned that he was a high-ranking Persian officer in the Iranian Secret Police and the government's liaison with the ARF). I looked around the room. An emaciated old man stood up and walked toward me with open arms, exclaiming, "Oobik jan!" That must be my father, I thought. He was the only one to call me Oobik in my childhood memory (I was known as Oobi among my very close friends and family). His only recognizable features were his thick, round-rimmed glasses and his broad forehead that I remembered from old photographs. It was a moment of realization, a dream

2 *Unger* (ընկեր) means "comrade," which is how Dashnaktsutiun Party members of all ages address one another. By the way, at that time I too was a Dashnaktsakan, having taken my oath of loyalty and service to the Party before my sixteenth birthday. This was a special concession to me in memory of my father, overlooking the minimum age requirement of eighteen years.