

members of a Diasporan Armenian family in *The Bastard of Istanbul*. In this novel, Armanoush, the young half-Armenian third-generation survivor, is the center of affection and concern for her grandmother, Shushan Tchakhmakhchian, her great uncle, Dikran Stamboulian, and her three aunts, Surpun, Varsenig, and Zarouhi. They are worried about her upbringing in the home of her divorced American mother, Rose, who is now dating a Turkish man, Mustafa Kazancı. Grandma Shushan raises her typically Armenian concern. Against her will, her only son, Barsam, had married an American. And now, after the couple's divorce, what will happen to Armanoush, the only hope of the Tchakhmakhchian family? Her concern reflects her tormented soul and the hope that Armenians will perpetuate in the Diaspora, a hope she has cherished for many long years:

Only an Armenian can understand what it means to be so drastically reduced in numbers. We've shrunk like a pruned tree.... Rose can date and even marry whomever she wants, but her daughter is Armenian and she should be raised as an Armenian.³⁵

Armanoush's Armenian side of the family is afraid of losing not only a granddaughter and a niece, but an Armenian, a member of the race who, as Auntie Varsenig puts it, has been "Assimilated! Massacred! Orphaned! Deported! And then forgotten!"³⁶

The struggle of Diasporan Armenians to survive and uphold their identity as Armenians in less than favorable

³⁵ Shafak, *The Bastard of Istanbul* (2007), p. 59.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.