

story for publication. Thus, I was entrusted with the mission of her storyteller.⁵⁰

And thus, Mae opened her soul to the influence of these two survivors. She describes how painful it was to revise Vergeen's memoir for publication, reliving the degradation and deprivation Vergeen had experienced during her time in captivity, and Serpouhi's experience too as she told her story to Vergeen.

Marilyn Johnson writes about a meeting of the Lit Group, a book club in suburban Detroit where Mae Derdarian was invited to talk about her book in the spring of 1998. She describes Mae, then aged 76, breaking into tears when she spoke about her mother's ordeal. "'I'm sorry,' she said, touching her face with her napkin. 'There were times I sat at my computer and cried my eyes out.' She wasn't alone; most of us were tearing up."⁵¹ The burden of remembrance had been passed on to them too.

Haroutione Berberian, born in Aleppo and long resident in Canada, cannot forget his father's last days as he lay on his deathbed, having lost his battle with prostate cancer. He was hallucinating under the effects of heavy medication, confusing the past with the present, reliving his deportation experience, losing his parents and his siblings again, one by one, miraculously escaping from a pile of dead bodies. He had told this story to his children many times. Now, in his last hours,

⁵⁰ Mae M. Derdarian, Acknowledgments, *Vergeen: A Survivor of the Armenian Genocide*, n.p. Serpouhi's account of her own ordeal was tape-recorded before she died in 1982.

⁵¹ Marilyn Johnson, "LIFE—"The Book Club'," *Vergeen Reviews*, August 1998, http://www.cilicia.com/armo7_vergeen.html.