

Micheline Aharonian Marcom knew very little about her family and the history of her people. She says this was one of the reasons she began to write what would be her first novel, *Three Apples Fell from Heaven* (2001). She set out to discover the past that was denied to her, to find the missing link in her identity. "I had an incredible need to know my family history, to figure out my place."<sup>13</sup> She wanted to fill in the world behind the phrases she had heard here and there about her grandmother, that brave woman who had walked the death march and saved her sister and three younger brothers and raised them in Beirut. She wanted to know about Kharbert and Mezre which her grandmother had called home. Micheline's mother was raised in Beirut on stories of the Genocide, but to escape from her family's gloomy past she married an American and moved to the U.S. She habitually refrained from speaking of the past—a typical second-generation reaction. On occasion, however, a few sentences would slip out of her mouth: "The Turks pulled out their fingernails, beat the soles of their feet.... Pregnant girls had their babies torn from their bellies. Nané [Micheline's grandmother] saw them march to their death."

In a skillful blend of the facts of the Armenian Genocide, the traumatic experience of the survivor generation, and the fun and attractions and the multiple opportunities that American culture can offer a third-generation Armenian teenager, Carol Edgarian's *Rise the Euphrates* (1994) clearly

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<sup>13</sup> This citation and the following are from Marcom's remarks in the UC Berkeley *Armenian Alumni Newsletter* on the occasion of the publication of her book.