Chapter 1: A New Breed
pp. 3-4

As revolutions go, the Young Turks' was short, sweet, and relatively bloodless. It lasted twenty-two days in July 1908. Only a few dozen officials and army officers died. Its purpose was not to overthrow the sultan, but to force him to restore the constitution of 1876, which guaranteed justice for all subjects of the Ottoman Empire, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press.[1] When news spread of the abolishment of the sultan's vast espionage network, release of political prisoners, amnesty for political exiles, and most importantly, a restored constitution, a "carnival of joy" erupted throughout the Empire. "We are all brothers!" declared Ismail Enver, one of the revolutionaries. "Under the same blue sky, we are all proud to be Ottomans!"[2]

A young missionary in Constantinople wrote to her friends back home in the United States, "Last Sunday Turks, Christians and Jews in one wagon were seen embracing and congratulating one another. People can scarcely take time to sleep for their joy!"[3]

In Brousa a man who had been falsely accused of being a spy "made an impassioned speech, among other things, denouncing the spies and the spy system, in words of fire! Oh, the joy of uncurbed speech at last! As he stepped down into the crowd again, he exclaimed, 'I have lived for this hour!'"[4]

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[1] Tachat Ramavarma Ravindranathan, "The Young Turk Revolution, July 1908 to April 1909: Its Immediate Effects," (master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1970), 64-71. Several members of the sultan's inner circle, and only a few administrative officials and army officers died.
[2] James L. Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1908), 282.
[3] Anna B. Jones, "Missionary Letters: Western Turkey," *Life and Light for Woman* 38, no. 10 (1908): 458. (Hereafter, *LLW*.)
[4] Harriet G. Powers, Ibid, 458-59.

Susan Wealthy Orvis, an American missionary stationed in Talas, was on vacation when she heard the news. It was midnight as her boat approached Beirut. Fireworks lit up the sky. "The city was beautiful," she said. "The many lights in the houses, which are in terraces, reaching up from the shore and in a curve around the harbor, were more brilliant than usual that evening, for the city was celebrating the new constitution." She was surprised when she reached Jerusalem that there had been no celebration. The reason became clear two weeks later, when they started "putting up their flags. They have had to wait till the governor of the city would give permission,"[5] she added wryly.

The Young Turk revolutionaries proclaimed "Liberty, Justice, Equality and Fraternity, for all the races and religions of the empire, with equal rights and equal duties for all." George Washburn, American-born president of Constantinople's Robert College, had "no reason to doubt the honesty and sincerity" of the Young Turks, but he cautioned that lofty goals were one thing, and implementation quite another: "As we in America proclaimed these principles in 1776, and have not yet been able to put them in force in all parts of our country, we may expect to wait some time before they can be fully carried out" in the Ottoman Empire.[6]

No one had to wait long before they saw which way the wind blew.

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[5] Susan Wealthy Orvis (hereafter SWO) to Home Friends, August 8, 1908, Susan Wealthy Orvis Papers (Hereafter, SWOP).

[6] George Washburn, *Fifty Years in Constantinople and Recollections of Robert College* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909), xxx.

Chapter 9: In the Valley of the Shadow of Death
pp. 94-97

In Constantinople, American Ambassador Henry Morgenthau was beside himself as he listened to the accounts of deportations from missionaries. "For hours they would sit in my office and, with tears streaming down their faces, they would tell me of the horrors through which they had passed. Many of these, both men and women, were almost broken in health from the scenes which they had witnessed. In many cases, they brought me letters from American consuls, confirming the most dreadful of their narrations and adding many unprintable details." They implored the Ambassador to try to persuade the government to stop the madness. Otherwise, they believed "the whole Armenian nation would disappear. It was not only American and Canadian missionaries who made this personal appeal. Several of their German associates begged me to intercede," he said.[7]

Even though he had no legal right to interfere, he certainly tried. On several occasions he discussed with Talat the Ottoman government's deportation policy and appealed to him on justice and humanitarian grounds for ending it. Talat responded with a variety of excuses: Armenians had enriched themselves at the expense of Turks, they were determined to establish a separate state, and they openly encouraged the empire's enemies. The destruction of the whole race was inevitable, he said.[8] ~ ~ ~

There was enormous pressure on Armenians who were still in the Talas area to become Muslims to avoid deportation. In fact, Ali Ghalib Bey, a former member of Parliament for Cesarea and an old friend of Stella, told her privately that the only way to save their lives was to

[7] Morgenthau, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*, 327-28.
[8] Ibid, 332-37.

advise them to do it.[9] The hodjas were happy to have as many new converts as possible, and chose to ignore the reason for their conversion. The gendarmes who, as part of the Special Organization rounded people up for deportation, were happy when Armenians converted because it meant they did not have to work hard for their meagre pay. But conversion was not always a simple or easy decision for Armenians to make. Theda overheard some students behind the hospital discussing the ramifications. Even these young boys understood it was a matter of life and death.[10] The American Board was pleasantly surprised that the anticipated wholesale conversion of Armenians "to save their lives or their possessions" had not taken place. "A noble army have preferred death to denial of their Lord," the Board exclaimed.[11]

"I have been simply amazed at the heroism of some of these people," Genevieve said. "In cases where men would have turned Muslim, women with little children have said, 'No, I will go with my children, but will not give up my faith.'" . . . However, it was the hypocrisy of Sabri Bey that really angered her and her colleagues. His wife was German, and was not required to become a Muslim because, Sabri said, "Germany was leading the world now." And besides, "Islam is simply as a waterproof [coat]—to be put on when it is raining, and discarded when the sun shines again."[12] He demonstrated this cavalier attitude toward religion again when he changed the record of his friend, Mibar Muncherian, a former pastor, from Protestant to Muslim in the government's registration. "To us it seems such a cowardly business," said Genevieve. "We are filled with humiliation. They say Mibar slipped out before the congregation rose at

[9] Loughridge, "Facts in Regard to Armenian Atrocities," 116.
[10] G. Irwin, September 1, 1915, 16.
[11] *MH* 112, no 4 (1916): 171.
[12] Ibid.

yesterday's service. May his heart be filled with such remorse that even yet he and others may turn back. He firmly holds that he has not turned, but to the world he is in that position."[13]

The conversions may have saved some Armenians, and may have strengthened CUP's commitment to Turkification, but as Faik Bey, a mudir in Talas, told Herbert, "Though the hodjas are pleased to have their new converts, the government isn't deceived. These new Muslims will be sent out later, too."[14] In many cases, he was right. The Ministry of the Interior generally viewed the conversions "insincere and unreliable, and as only being a response to the deportation order."[15] When the district governor asked what he should do about about the villagers of Derevenk who had applied for conversion, he was told to continue the deportation even if they had become Muslims. However, in other areas Armenians were allowed to convert and be relocated in small numbers within the Muslim majority, where they would be "governable."[16]

An exceptional example of neighbours helping neighbours was in Tavlusun, less than three miles northeast of Talas. It was a small village of Turks, Greeks and Armenians who earned their living farming, breeding animals, and trading with the surrounding towns and villages. Of the 120 Armenians in 30 households, many were artisan plasterers. When the gendarmes came to deport them, the entire village banded together as one. The Turks and Greeks declared that if the Armenians went, they would go, too. No one left the village—except the gendarmes.[17]

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[13]Ibid, November 15, 1915, 20.
[14] Ibid, September 9, 1915, 16.
[15] Gözel Durmaz, 83.
[16] Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 290-291.
[17] [Translations for author by Kamo Mailyan] T. Kh. Hakobyan, St. T. Melik-Bakhshyan, and H. Kh. Barseghyan, *Vocabulary of Locations in Armenia and its Surroundings,* 2nd D-K [Hayastani ev harakic shrjanneri teghanunneri bararan] (Yerevan: Yerevan University Publishing House, 1988), 41; Gerasim Aharonean, ed., *1915-1965 Memory Book about the Great Tragedy-Massacre* [Hooshamadian To Mets Yeghern] (Beirut: Zartonk/Atlas, 1965), 259; Gözel Durmaz, 35.

One of the Talas Hospital's native nurses had been in a nearby village when people were being deported. "She had her own children with her, and two little grandchildren," said Theda. "She was protected by a Turk whom she had previously helped by dressing and caring for a scalp wound he had had. Not forgetting her kindness to him, he helped her to hide while the others were being sent out, and then brought her secretly to her daughter's home in Talas."[18] Clara wrote about one of her former students in another village who had been protected by a wealthy Circassian, who had arranged for her to go to Cesarea to find her relatives.[19]

When Tateos Minassian, a trader from the village of Keskin in Kaisarieh, was working in Angora, he was rounded up with other Armenians and became part of a deportation convoy. As they passed through Keskin, he was able to get a message to his Turkish friend and fellow trader, Omer Efendi. Omer managed to extract Minassian from the convoy and hide him in his house. He also found a hiding place in the village for Minassian's wife and children. He told Minassian that once, when he travelled to Yozgat, he passed through a valley full of the corpses of naked women and children. He shouted his outrage at the people in the village nearby. "He could not accept the massacres. He could not reconcile them with the religion he believed in."[20]

Omer hid Minassian for three years, at great risk to himself because it quickly became apparent to CUP authorities that many Turks were opposed to the government's policies, and were protecting Armenians. Djemal Pasha was particularly concerned about this, and condemned the practice. On July 23 the following order was issued: "If any Moslem protect a

[18] Theda Phelps, 134.
[19] Richmond, 123.
[20] Gerçek, 54-5.

Christian, first his house shall be burned, then the Christian killed before his eyes, and then his family, and then himself."[21] The order put a chill on any caring Turk.

[21] Hilmar Kaiser, *The Extermination of Armenians in the Diyarbekir Region* (Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014), 244-245, quoted in Gözel Durmaz, 85; Balakian, *Burning Tigris*, 204.

Chapter 12: More Evictions
pp. 118-19

By March 1916, the Russians controlled Van, Erzroom and Bitlis, and were fighting in Trebizond, Harpoot, Diarbekir and Sivas. The *Missionary Herald* reported that this was good news for missionaries, who would likely be treated favourably by the Russian army: "If we may believe the reports that come from various quarters, Turkey is now in desperate plight. With the Russians victorious over her armies in Armenia, with defeat attending the Egyptian campaign, with impending union of Russian and British forces in Mesopotamia, with her German ally rendering small aid or support, and with internal dissensions weakening her counsels and policies, the Ottoman Empire seems to be tottering to a fall."[22] Though the Russians never did capture Diarbekir, probably due to the command of General Mustafa Kemal,[23] a hero of Gallipoli, von Sanders pointed out a major flaw of the Ministry of War: "The ultimate cause of the failure of this campaign, as of all offensive operations begun in Turkey throughout the world war, lay in the long and imperfectly organized lines of communications."[24] Trebizond was the next city to demonstrate von Sanders' theory.

For most of April the inhabitants of Trebizond heard the sounds of war to the east of the city. The governor left the city on April 16 to the care of the Greek bishop. The police soon followed, leaving no one on guard. "It was a time for thieves to reap a harvest," said Olive Crawford of the Trebizond mission. Two days later, the Bishop's representative and the American Consul, Oscar Heizer, waved a white flag in the quarter of the city that was under bombardment. "When they reached the summit of the hill where the flag could be seen by

[22] *MH* 112, no 4 (1916): 153.
[23] Akçam, "Review Essay," 122.
[24] von Sanders, 129.

those on the attacking ships, the firing stopped! Can you imagine the relief it was? That was the end of it," said Olive. "The Russians could hardly believe that Trebizond had come into their hands without resistance."[25]

In the previous summer, almost 6,000 Armenians had been deported from the city. Many were marched south to the desert, but Special Organization forces also used a particularly nasty method to get rid of hundreds at a time: they loaded barges with men, women and children, headed out into the Black Sea, and returned without passengers.[26] Now Olive's husband, Rev. Lyndon Crawford, said, "We saw another pathetic sight. This time it was the Turks fleeing! Between forty and fifty thousand were leaving our city and leaving their homes and their shops and their goods behind them." It took a while for the Russians to catch up to the last group of fleeing residents, and suggest they return to their homes "in peace, without fear." The Red Cross took charge of the hospitals, and the Russians set up a "wireless telegraphic apparatus" to resurrect communications. But the most remarkable sight for the missionaries was the return of Armenians. "They began to come in from the further villages, and from the woods and the caves and dens of the mountains," said Lyndon. "Over five hundred in all, to whom God had sent modern 'Obadiahs,' in the shape of some kind-hearted Turks, and some Greek men, but mostly Greek women, who, during the storms of the winter, had secretly come to the city to get help and then to bake and carry bread to the hiding places in the woods, week by week for all these ten months."[27]

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[25] *LLW* 46, no. 7 (1916): 337.
[26] Kévorkian, 472-73.
[27] *LLW* 46, no. 9 (1916): 401-2.

Chapter 21: Suffer the Little Children
pp. 211-13

As the [returning missionary] group approached Talas [in April 1919] in the car and ambulance, followed by seven trucks filled with baggage, food and hospital supplies, Susan could not help but remember her first "triumphant" arrival in 1902. At least a hundred people had come out to greet her and Adelaide, carrying flowers and wearing smiles, the children laughing and clapping, so happy to see them. Now, there was no such greeting. As the automobiles slowly made their way up the steep hill, she remembered the children she had seen in Alexandropol. Not children, really, but "wizen and ancient dwarfs, with wrinkled foreheads and those downward cheek creases which deepen when one smiles. Not that they were smiling, however; they had forgotten the way of that, long ago."[28]

Herbert greeted them warmly at the compound's gate. He introduced them to Raymond Whitney, the new doctor, and Rev. Joseph Wickliffe Beach. During a bit of small talk, Susan was delighted to learn that Joseph was the nephew of Dr. Harlan P. Beach, her Uncle Gurney's roommate at Yale's Divinity School. She found him to be "a splendid fellow with a fine mind."[29]

But Herbert had disturbing news to deliver. His house was the only place fit to live. It had probably been occupied by an administrator or general, and had therefore been taken care of. However, the hospital had been used as a military hospital, and the girls' and boys' boarding schools had been turned into barracks. After the troops retreated from the Caucasus, the barracks had become state-run orphanages. The condition of the buildings was, Herbert said,

[28] Chater described the children he saw in Alexandropol a few months after Susan left the city. Melville Chater, "The Land of the Stalking Death," *The National Geographic Magazine* 36, no. 5 (1919): 407-9.
[29] SWO to Sister Harriet, November 23, 1919, SWOP.

"indescribable. Dirt, filth, vermin, destruction everywhere."[30] He took them on a tour to see for themselves. He was not exaggerating.

The once-beautiful yards and gardens that had taken the missionaries years of work to create were now garbage-filled cesspools. The schoolrooms were strewn with trash. The furniture was cracked or broken, but mainly non-existent. The walls and ceilings were stained with smoke and water from burst pipes and leaky roofs. In many places the plaster had cracked and fallen in pieces to the floors, which were crusty with dirt and broken glass. "All the windows in one dormitory were carried off, frames, glass and all," Susan noted. Every building, except Herbert's, was crawling with bugs.[31] Naturally his house became their temporarily crowded headquarters and home.

"The people were crying for bread," Herbert said. He had surveyed conditions in the sanjak, and made a conservative estimate of those needing assistance: Of 40,000 Armenians, there were 30,000 needy, including 5,000 orphans; of 90,000 Greeks, there were 8,000 needy and 1,000 orphans; of 800,000 Turks, 50,000 needy and 4,000 orphans. In total, 88,000, mostly women and children, needed aid, and 10,000 of them were orphans—who needed everything.[32]

[30] *MH* 115, no. 12 (1919): 500.
[31] SWO to Home Folks, September 21, 1919, SWOP; Richards, 14.
[32] *MH* 115, no. 12 (1919): 500.

Chapter 28: The Expulsion
pp. 290-91

On November 7, a version of their greatest fear did happen. They were notified of the government's planned announcement for November 14 to give "permission" to all Christians to leave Turkey by December 13.[33] There would be widespread panic as those Armenians and Greeks still around prepared to pack, find passage on a ship, and hope for a nation willing to accept them. Staying meant being "hounded back into exile or perish of hunger, cold, and sheer bitterness of disappointment." Even the average Turk was surprised by the edict. As one man in Constantinople put it, "We are astonished that Europe takes so easily what we have done to the Christians. We have massacred them, and deported them, and Europe does nothing. Some years ago they would have gone to war on less provocation."[34]

The Talas group had a few days' head start to arrange the transportation of 3,000 children out of the country. In 1919 they had found 10,000 orphans in the district, but in the almost four years since, that number was halved as they reunited thousands with relatives, either in Turkey or through emigration, and sent others to orphanages in Beirut or elsewhere. The government had established orphanages for Turkish children, who were safe from this new deportation order. Of the original 6,000 Armenian and Greek orphans, 3,000 were left in Talas, Cesarea, Erveke, Zinjidery and Yozgat.[35] The NER team was determined to ensure government compliance with the "suggested" exodus, and avoid a repetition of the previous years' traumatic massacres. But they were also concerned about the coming winter. Snow would soon make travel very difficult. Any delay could lead to disaster.

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[33] *The Near East: A Discussion Course for Students (New York: Student Volunteer Movement, 1923),* 22-3.
[34] The Talas unit received notification on November 7, though the "invitation" was issued nationwide on November 14. *MH* 118, no. 12 (1922): 477-78.
[35] Gözel Durmaz, 197; SWO to Friends, October 28, 1923, SWOP.

The unit held a quick and decisive meeting. The children would leave Talas in convoys of wagons, travel for four days to Oulou Kushla, where they would board a train for Tarsus, and be transferred to Adana or Mersine. In Adana they would go east by train to Beirut; in Mersine, west by ship to Greece or one of the islands. They would be guarded every step of the way by Armenian and Greek staff, who would leave with them.

Chapter 29: The Exodus
p. 301

Susan had been on the road for weeks. She checked in regularly with the workers at the khans to take their orders for supplies, and deal with any problems they encountered. She maintained friendly relations with the gendarmes to make sure they protected the children. One day she had to rescue a girl with a broken arm. The wagon the youngster had been riding in had turned over because two drivers had been running a race on the rough, slippery road. Another time a convoy had been robbed mid-route. No one had been hurt, but everyone had been badly frightened. It was a necessary but exhausting job.

The work was made all the harder because Susan was hiding a secret. Not long after the treks began, she was stricken with a terrible pain in her abdomen. She carried on in silence because the work had to be done, and there was no one else to do it. Everyone else was as busy as she was. As the days and nights grew colder, it was difficult to keep warm, and the pain in her kidneys and bladder grew worse. Still she carried on.

By December 13 the Talas unit had accomplished their task. They had removed 3,000 Armenian and Greek children from the orphanages in Kaisarieh, and seen them all safely out of

Turkey. The remaining native workers and three NER personnel had accompanied the last few convoys.