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AYŞE KULİN

After graduating from the American College (ACG) of Istanbul, Ayfle Kulin worked many years as editor and writer for newspapers and magazines and also in the cinema industry. Her first story book won two prestigious literary awards (Haldun Taner & Sait Faik) and her first novel became a best seller. Kulin also holds other literary awards and has been selected the author of the year numerous times. Some of her stories and novels became TV series and motion pictures. Her works have been translated into German, French, Italian, Dutch, Greek, Spanish, Polish, Hungarian, Georgian, Latvian, Porrtuguese and Serbian. She is the Goodwill Ambassador of UNICEF since 2007. Her major novels translated so far:

Face to Face

Farewell

Sarajevo Of Love and War

Last Train to İstanbul

Books in Turkish

1. *Güneş Dön Yüzünü*
2. *Bir Tatlı Huzur*
3. *Foto Sabah Resimleri*
4. *Adı: Aylin*
5. *Geniş Zamanlar*
6. *Sevdalinka* (Love Song of Bosnia)
7. *Füreyâ*
8. *Köprü*
9. *İçimde Kızıl Bir Gül Gibi*
10. *Babama*
11. *Nefes Nefese*
12. *Kardelenler*
13. *Gece Sesleri*
14. *Bir Gün*
15. *Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş*
16. *Veda*
17. *Sit Nene'nin Masalları*

18. *Umut*

19. *Taş Duvar Açık Pencere*

20. *Türkan-Tek ve Tek Başına*

21. *Veda* (Graphic Novel)

22. *Hayat-Dürbünümde Kırk Sene*

23. *Hüzün-Dürbünümde Kırk Sene*

24. *Gizli Anların Yolcusu*

25. *Saklı Şiirler*

26. *Sessiz Öyküler*

27. *Bora'nın Kitabı*

28. *Dönüş*

29. *Hayal*

30. *Handan*

30. *Tutsak Güneş*

31. *Kanadı Kırık Kuşlar*

32. *Kördüğüm*

33. *Son*

KENNETH JAMES DAKAN

was born in Salt Lake City in 1964. After spending a year as an exchange student in New Zealand, he attended New York University's Mass Communications Department. On 1 January 1988 he set off on around-the-world trip. He has not yet returned. Currently he resides in İstanbul, where he works freelance, translating, writing a morning news bulletin, contributing to travel guides, editing and doing voice-over narratives for industrial films.

FAREWELL

A Mansion in Occupied Istanbul

Ayşe Kulin

Translated by
Kenneth J. Dakan



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Farewell
A Mansion in Occupied Istanbul
Ayşe Kulin

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*In loving memory of my great grandfather, Ahmet Reflat Yediç
and
of my beloved mother, Sitare, whom I lost as I was writing this book*

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PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

a as in father

ç as in jam

ç as in chicken

e as in bed

ğ (soft g) elongates the vowel preceding it

ı as in nation

i as in piano

j as in the French fleur

r somewhere between the English and the Spanish r (right and pero)

ş as in ship

u as in cool

ü as in the German über

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Note

Hanım is the equivalent to Mrs., however it follows the first name. Similarly 'Bey' is the equivalent of 'Mr.' and it too follows the first name. 'Efendim' is the equivalent of 'Yes, sir' or 'Yes, madam,' and is a frequently used term of respect.

I would like to thank my dear friend

MURAT BARDAKÇI

*for agreeing to translate into contemporary Turkish
letters written by Ahmet Reflat Yediş to his family while in exile;
for granting me access to the memoirs in his private archives
of the late Interior Minister Ahmet Reflat Rey
and to those of Hayriye Hanımefendi, the wife of Talat Pasha;
and, finally, for putting at my disposal various
books and documents
from his own library*



FAREWELL

A Mansion in Occupied Istanbul

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A MANSION IN OCCUPIED
ISTANBUL



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Snowfall loses its grandeur out of season. Instead of transforming Istanbul into a shimmering city of mother-of-pearl, the snow, which had arrived at the end of a long and arduous winter just as the flowers were expected to bloom, was like icing sugar haphazardly strewn over the muddy streets and peeling wooden houses. In the district of Beyazıt, the driver of a two-horse carriage, his face red, his hands numb with cold, drew in the reins at the top of the second street leading down to the sea. The carriage slid for a few yards before coming to a stop. Sensitive to shod hooves on slippery ice patches, Ahmet Reşat had decided to spare

the horses and walk the rest of the way home. He stepped down from the carriage, paid the driver, and with cautious footsteps made his way down the street and over the sprinkled snow. It would soon be time for the morning call to prayer. Reşat Bey was worn out from a meeting prematurely concluded when its participants had become too exhausted to think, let alone speak. He paused for a moment in the middle of the street before entering the stately home standing to his right, uttering a silent prayer that his wife was sound asleep. That he was in no condition to be interrogated on the reasons the meeting had lasted so late into the night was clear to himself, at least.

His fingers had barely grazed the garden gate when it suddenly swung open. "A good morning to you, sir," cried Hüsnü Efendi.

"What are you doing at the garden gate at this hour, Hüsnü Efendi? Didn't I instruct everyone not to wait up for me?"

"I was about to get up to perform my prayers anyway. And I saw you from the window. You're worn out, sir."

"Of course I am. How many days have we been deprived of sleep. May God help us all."

"Amen."

The look Ahmet Reşat gave his manservant was intended to reassure. Not only were Hüsnü Efendi's eyes filled with anxiety, he was obstructing his master's passage.

"There's no bad news, Hüsnü Efendi; routine business kept me away. Now go and perform your prayers. Off you go."

Hüsnü raced ahead to open the front door, releasing a sharp whiff of disinfectant that assaulted Ahmet Reşat's nostrils the moment he stepped across the threshold. He grimaced, sank down onto the footstool next to the door, removed his shoes, placed his

fez on the appointed shelf, handed his *redingot** to Hüsnü and entered the *selamlık*** in stocking feet. Hoping to nap for a few hours, he threw himself face downward onto the divan in front of the window, resting his forehead in the cupped palms of his hands. He had a splitting headache. Casting from his mind the discussions and events of the previous twenty-four hours, he tried to relax as Mahir had counseled him, by clearing his mind and taking deep breaths. He took one, released it slowly... and another... and another. Yes, his friend's advice had been sound. He stretched and yawned as he rolled onto his back and placed the cushion he'd tossed onto the floor under his head. But he'd barely sunk into blissful sleep on the divan when he was startled by the tobacco coarsened voice of his aunt.

"What kind of person stays out until this hour, Reşat Bey, especially with an invalid in the house?"

Collecting himself as he sat up, he muttered, "It is not for our pleasure that we stay out so late, Aunt."

"Well what exactly is it that's been keeping you away until dawn?"

"Dearest Aunt, our state of affairs is surely known to you. Why do you speak so?"

"Affairs of state are best done by day, my son. Nights are for prayer and sleep. Your grandfathers' offices were no less exalted than your own, but come the night they slept in their own beds, Reşat Bey."

"And how fortunate they were that our country was not under occupation, Aunt."

* derived from French pronunciation of riding coat (*redingote*); an Ottoman version of a black frock coat.

** the part of a large Muslim house reserved for the men.

"That's all I hear about! The occupation! What's done is done. There's no fighting the past or death. But as for your nephew, he's still alive. Less concern for the health of the nation and more for my grandson, if you will! Last night, he coughed until morning again. He'll be spitting up blood soon. He needs to get to the hospital directly. Today."

"But he'd recovered? Mightn't you be exaggerating?"

"Do you not believe me, Reşat? Night after night he coughs, and you not even here to notice! I've been trying to catch you for days. Kemal's cough syrup is nearly gone, and we're running low on coal. We can't even heat the house properly."

"I'll see if there's any syrup left in the pharmacies of Pera. As far as the coal, Aunt, even the Palace is running short. We'll have to burn wood."

"But there isn't any wood to be had either. And we've got to keep Kemal's floor warm."

"Have the gardener chop down the trees at the end of the garden." Ahmet Reşat got up from the divan and patted his aunt's back.

"I'll go and have a look at Kemal," he said.

"Looking at him won't be sufficient. Take him to the hospital."

"You know that's not possible."

"And why is that?"

"Because he would be arrested on the spot. Kemal's photograph has been posted for months; he'd be recognized immediately."

"Are you saying my grandson is a traitor? Which of you went off to freeze in that white hell? Which of you took up arms for the nation? He's a traitor; the rest of you are heroes. Is that it?"

"I'm no hero, but neither am I sought by the police."