

and loss of memory, but she couldn't forget the pain she felt when her mother didn't recognize her and asked Helene's husband to call the police and "get this woman out of the house" (247).

After her mother's death, Helene found her "box of valuables" hidden in the attic. It contained her nursing diploma from AUB and her wedding veil, things she had never shown to anyone (32). Her poem titled "Epitaph: In memory of my mother, who was one of the orphans at Ghazir," sheds light not so much on her mother's past as on the deplorable predicament of orphans of the Genocide in general, "kinder minds caught in/the World War I frame."<sup>36</sup> The poem extols the courage and dedication of Dr. Jakob Künzler and recalls the challenging trek he headed that brought thousands of orphans out of the Ottoman Empire:

The exodus bore dry mouth and hunger  
for food and sympathetic touch.  
Dr. Künzler took the orphans  
out by caravan of donkeys and horses.

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<sup>36</sup> I found this poem in Hagop Martin Deranian's account of *President Calvin Coolidge and the Armenian Orphan Rug* (Arlington, MA: Armenian Cultural Foundation, 2013), pp. 33-5. Deranian relates the story of the Swiss missionaries Dr. Jakob Künzler and his wife Elizabeth ("Papa" and "Mama" Künzler), their dedication to Armenian orphans, their tortuous 1922 journey out of central Anatolia to Lebanon, and the establishment of the Near East Relief orphanage at Ghazir where 1400 orphaned girls were sheltered. Here they were taught various crafts, including rug weaving. A fine "Isfahan-style" rug woven by the girls and measuring twenty-three square meters (eleven feet seven inches by eighteen feet five inches) was sent to President Coolidge in December 1925 as a token of appreciation for America's great moral and financial support for the relief of survivors of the Genocide.