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Alexandrian Summer

Yitzhak Gormezano Goren

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"A powerful novel of tensions–sexual, familial, religious, and political–and an affecting but unsparing portrait of the petit bourgeois world of Egyptian Jews standing obliviously on the edge of a precipice. Alexandria-–sensual and enchanting-–shimmers in these pages." —Dalia Sofer, author of *The Septembers of Shiraz*

"A fine work of art . . . riveting from the first page to the last."—*Zo Haderekh*

"A reason to rejoice. . . . You can't help but keep on smiling with great pleasure."—*Maariv*

"A profound literary experience."—*Ahshav*

Alexandrian Summer is the story of two Jewish families living their frenzied last days in the doomed cosmopolitan social whirl of Alexandria just before fleeing Egypt for Israel in 1951. The conventions of the Egyptian upper-middle class are laid bare in this dazzling novel, which exposes startling sexual hypocrisies and portrays a now vanished polyglot world of horse-racing, seaside promenades, and elegant night clubs. Hamdi-Ali senior is an old-time patriarch with more than a dash of strong Turkish blood. His handsome elder son, a promising horse jockey, can't afford sexual frustration, as it leads him to overeat and imperil his career, but the woman he lusts after won't let him get beyond undoing a few buttons. Victor, the younger son, takes his pleasure with other boys. But the true heroine of the story—richly evoked in a pungent upstairs/downstairs mix—is the raucous, seductive city of Alexandria itself. Published in Hebrew in 1978, *Alexandrian Summer* appears now in translation for the first time.

Yitzhak Gormezano Goren was born in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1941 and immigrated to Israel as a child. A playwright and novelist, Goren studied English and French literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University. In 1982, he cofounded the Bimat Kedem Theater.

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