***Without Return: Memoirs of an Egyptian Jew 1930–1957* By Jacques Sardas**

**TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS**

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| 1923 | Jacques’s mother, Dora, from Turkey, and father, Raphael, from Crete, meet in Marseille, France, then marry and settle down in Alexandria, Egypt. His mother speaks French, English, Spanish, Turkish, Ladino, Greek and Arabic.  |
| 1930  | Jacques Sardas is born, the youngest of four. He grows up in a house situated between Greek and Italian neighbors.  |
| 1934 | Jacques’s first memory at four years old: sitting shiva for his paternal grandfather at home on Kenya Street in Ibrahimieh, a suburb of Alexandria where most people speak Greek and where several priests live because of the Greek Orthodox church there.  |
| 1935 or 1936 | Jacques begins going along with his father on sales calls. His father works twelve-hour days selling fabrics from door to door. Abdul Meguid is his dad’s Arab assistant. |
| 1935 | Jacques learns of his father’s experiences with anti-Semitism: An Englishman was about to buy fabric from Jacques’s father but changes his mind when he finds out that the family is Jewish.  |
| 1935 | The Sardas family is threatened with eviction. |
| 1940, 22 June | Jacques experiences his first World War II air raid in Alexandria. The window from which his brother had been watching is blown away. The children never again watch raids from the windows. The Germans and Italians bomb Alexandria more heavily and more frequently. The Italian army, already present in Libya, prepares to invade North Africa, starting with Alexandria.  |
| 1940 | Not even ten years old, Jacques loses his mother to a pulmonary embolism.  |
| 1940 | Jacques discovers the painful feeling of being discriminated against by an adult because of his religion. The Ibrahimieh Sporting Club, where Jacques used to play with an Arab friend, has been sold to the Muslim Brotherhood, an extremist group, and Jews are no longer allowed.  |
| 1941 | Jacques’s father remarries and moves the family to Cairo to avoid advancing German soldiers not far from Alexandria. They are the only non-Muslims in the area.  |
| 1942 | Jacques organizes his school’s first-ever student strike so that the headmaster will agree to sponsor a school basketball team.  |
| 1943 | Jacques’s École Cattaui team becomes the champion of the Egyptian Basketball Federation.  |
| 1948 | The state of Israel is created. Jacques father gathers the family to tell them that when the British leave Palestine, there will be war between Jews and Arabs over Israel.  |
| 1949 | Jacques graduates from high school with high grades, qualifying him to study tuition-free at an Egyptian university. However, this was not to be. His father has a heart attack and is unable to work. Because of the country’s political situation and his father’s illness, Jacques begins looking for full-time employment.  |
| 1949, August | Egypt closes the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping. |
| 1949, December | Jacques begins a job at Maison Gattegno department store. He also plays for the store’s basketball team, along with several Italian teammates. He joins the Maccabi club, a mix of Jewish, English, American, and French players, and enjoys his leadership roles on the team.  |
| 1952, 26 January  | “Black Saturday” in Cairo. Jacques is caught up in mob violence, escapes death twice, and ends up home safely. |
| 1955 | Jacques meets his future wife, Etty, to whom he is instroduced by his sister, Denise. |
| 1955, December | Jacques and Etty enjoy their first kiss, at a New Year’s Eve party.  |
| 1956, January | Jacques and Etty become engaged. At their engagement party, a man tells them in Arabic, “Your luck is beyond heaven.”  |
| 1956  | Jacques’s Maccabi basketball team wins the 1956 championship. |
| 1956 | Jacques’s father obtains Greek passports for Jacques and Etty, anticipating that they will need to leave the country soon.  |
| 1956, 26 July | The Suez Canal is taken back from the British and nationalized. |
| 1956, 29 July | Jacques and Etty are married. Although hatred for Jews was prevalent in the streets, Jacques’s Arab friends wish him well on his wedding day. On their honeymoon, at Marsa Matruh, on the Mediterranean Sea, they enjoy spending time with members of a Bedouin tribe.  |
| 1956  | By the end of the summer, all Jacques’s and Etty’s relatives are prepared for exile. The couple’s parents and Etty’s sister—along with a close friend and the friend’s mother and brother, all of whom live in less safe Cairo neighborhoods—move in with them. |
| 1956, 29 October | Egypt begins purging “undesirable” residents. Jews suspected of being Zionists are ordered imprisoned in detention camps. The wealthiest families are specially targeted so that their property and assets could be seized. Hundreds of Jews are ordered, along with all British and French citizens, to leave Egypt on short notice, carrying only their clothing and twenty Egyptian pounds, the equivalent of one hundred American dollars at the time. British and French citizens are repatriated to their countries with the assistance of their consulates. The few Jews who were born in Egypt and held Egyptian citizenship are denied their nationality and became *apatrides*, or stateless. All non-Egyptians are ordered to quit their jobs at major institutions, such as banks, insurance companies, utility companies, and government offices, where many Jews hold important jobs. Jacques and his teammates fold the Gattegno basketball team and close the Maccabi Club.  |
| 1956, late | Jacques and Etty obtain exit visas from the Brazilian government.  |
| 1957 | Jacques and Etty leave Cairo to manage Etty’s father’s stores in Alexandria and make them more profitable in order to sell them before emigrating. Jacques is impressed with the trusting relationships his father-in-law, Raphael, has built with the many Arabs who respect him for his honesty and ethics. Loyal, devoted Arab business associates help the family at customs as well. |
| 1957, 9 June | Jacques and Etty, who is seven months pregnant, leave Alexandria, bound for Genoa on the passenger ship *Achilleus,* with their passports stamped “without return.”  |
| 1957, 30 June | Jacques and Etty board the *Cabo de Buena Esperanza* for the three-week trip from Genoa to São Paulo, Brazil. |
| 1957, 24 July | The young expectant parents arrive in Brazil as refugees. They were helped by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society but were taken to a government-run immigration center, where filth and crime are rampant.  |
| 1957, 26 July | On his third day in Brazil, after spending all day knocking on the doors of the banks that lined Fifteenth of November Street in São Paulo, Jacques impresses the owner of one of the banks, who offers him a job. |
| 1957, 29 July | Jacques begins his new job, in his new country, on his one-year wedding anniversary.  |
| 1957, August | Jacques and Etty move into an apartment. Jacques takes a second job in a warehouse in order to make ends meet. |
| 1957 | First daughter, Dora, is born. |
| 1957, 1 November | Jacques’s first day as an assistant at Goodyear, a job secured after he and Etty hand-write three hundred letters of inquiry to various English, French, and American companies in Brazil. Goodyear executive Chuck Pilliod, who hired him, becomes a lifelong friend. Jacques takes Portuguese and English lessons after working sixteen-hour days six days a week. As time goes on, he increases his value to the company by accepting assignments that were not part of his job—assignments that others turned down because they were unwilling or too busy to perform them. He is rewarded with a succession of important promotions. |
| 1958 | Second daughter, Marianne, is born.  |
| 1962 | Third daughter, Isabela, is born.  |
| 1963 | Fourth daughter, Claudia, is born.  |
| 1967 | Jacques’s father dies in Tel Aviv, Israel, where most of the family had immigrated.  |
| 1970 | Jacques becomes the top executive at Goodyear France. |
| 1974 | Jacques is transferred to Goodyear headquarters in Akron, Ohio. |
| 1979 | Egypt eases restrictions and allows emigrants back within their borders. To date, Jacques and Etty have chosen not to visit. |
| 1988 | Jacques is tapped as second in command at Goodyear, reporting directly to the chairman and CEO.  |
| 1991 | Jacques leaves Goodyear after the company restructures, and he becomes a sought-after executive who can turn around financially troubled companies. These challenging jobs allow him the freedom to achieve the kind of professional fulfillment he’d always craved and attain the level of financial security he’d been seeking since adolescence in Egypt.  |
| 1991-1997 | Jacques joins the small corporation Sudbury, Inc., based in Cleveland, Ohio, as CEO and saves it from liquidation just seven months after it had sought bankruptcy protection. He goes on to earn a substantial profit for the shareholders. One banker tells a reporter for Crain’s Cleveland Business, “This has probably been one of the most successful turnarounds that I’ve seen in my twenty years in banking.” |
| 1997-2001 | Jacques becomes CEO of Dal-Tile International, located in Dallas, Texas, a company that had gone through a lengthy period of serious operational and financial problems. Under Jacques’s management, this company becomes the leader in its industry. He negotiates a merger with Mohawk Industries, and a large number of Dal-Tile employees become instant millionaires.  |
| 2002 June  | T. Rowe Price’s Small-Cap Value Fund’s portfolio manager and chairman of its advisory committee publicly commends Jacques for his excellent stewardship in managing the Dal-Tile for the benefit of shareholders in the semiannual report. |
| 2010 | Jacques visits his old Goodyear friend Chuck Pilliod in hospice and asks him a question long on his mind: “Why did you hire me, Chuck?” Chuck answers, “Because you were a determined young man!”  |
| Circa 2008 | Jacques begins regular mentoring brunches with his teenage grandson Jake. His stories and advice make such an impression that Jake asks him to write *Without Return* for their family and future generations.  |
| 2010, 22 May | In Jacques’s eightieth year, he becomes a bar mitzvah alongside his grandson David. *Without Return* will be published on the seventh anniversary of that event.  |

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