

# **As soon as I saw him, I knew the truth**

**by Anne-Michelle**

**As soon as I saw him, I knew the truth...**it was him - Michel Rosier - my greatest love - as if in a dream, he rose from his seat, all eyes were on his illogical gait, and he wanted to reach my chair. I saw his approaching figure, but I kept playing. At this moment, imperceptibly instinctive, I moved aside to make place for the man who was stepping as if he was sleepwalking. And instead of two, our hands doubled. And instead of one - the melody became endless. And instead of drops of music - waterfalls of sound poured forth. And instead of neutral air space - citrus hues in ebony scents drifted through the hall... He was still blind...

The very first chords of Schubert's creation "Six Musical Moments" burst Michel into tears. I was playing under an artistic pseudonym, but he knew that style of playing. He knew that he should master every tone. He knew how to master each tone, the pianissimo, the crescendo, the diminuendo, and all the other nuances - he knew how to extract a sound that would make you shiver with the vibrations of universal breathing. He knew... something more - how the scent of ebony perfume with citrus nuances would waft over him. His chest heaved to the point of bursting, and his blind eyes erupted to fiery orbits...

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Not even his father, the renowned Doctor V éran, a luminary in French medicine, with his patronage, influential contacts, running, fighting, could help. Michel's eyes were suffering from Norrier's disease, a surprising, progressive, inevitable disease associated with retinal degeneration and loss of sight. Hope was spoken of as an impossible happiness. Michel, disheartened and hitchhiking, blocked all contact with family and friends. He stopped playing, he threw away the piano. He disappeared suddenly. He didn't want to be seen helpless, limp, blacked out. Though his fingers had the same nimbleness, even more, exacerbated, he wandered into his tunnel of fateful descent miles down into the darkness of his eyes and his life. He took a small apartment in a small quiet town in the Ile-de-France. He preferred asceticism, lifeless transformation on a level lower than vegetation. The guilt of having failed a brilliant project lodged in him a form of self-flagellation and self-loathing. Only in his weary, sleepless, bottomless thinking had invariably settled that scent of mine from which there was no escape and which tormented him more than the blindness of his eyes. I myself made attempts to find him, to bring him back to our classy, dreamy, creative life, but in vain I asked and went round to friends. I continued alone with the concerts, it was painful, but my love for art had ensnared me tightly, I could not betray it, give it up, leave it, to abdicate this essence of myself. I played the piano from the age of five, later graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, my life was music.

So time flowed out on piano keys, playing its hours days, months, years...

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On the eve of my first solo concert, the excitement was immense.

The glamorous hall of the "Philharmonie de Paris" at the Cité de la Musique seemed born for virtuosos of music. It glowed under the roof, all wrought iron and with birds on it. After the concert, Michel had taken my hand. We walked along the roof, along which circled an exquisitely steep staircase. This was our way up - to art and love. Suddenly, he gently released my hand. He was walking alone - he had taken our common path up - the path to art and love. Michel was beginning to regain his sight...

As soon as I saw him, I knew the truth...it was him - Michel Rosier - my eternal love...