

FOREWORD « HALF ZERO »

by Sylvie Tenenbaum Psychanalyst in Paris

I thought I knew passion, I quickly changed my mind after meeting Sophie Reverdi.

Sophie IS passion, I do not know other words to describe it. A passion to take your breath away, in pleasure, in joy, in enthusiasm and in the momentum of life, as also in sadness, in nostalgia, and sometimes in despair and in rage to overcome all the difficulties that she went through - and not least. As I am listening to her, this verse from Baudelaire comes back to me: "I kneaded mud and made some gold".

Sophie Reverdi is a land of contrast: there are two women in her. An old obese who dreams with faith and determination - even fiercely - to save the people who know this suffering. Her ardent fervor allowed her to design a program that led her never to give up in her battles against "giants": the lobbies of the food industries, the pharmaceutical industry and bariatric surgery. And the other woman, is a poet, a writer and a musician, author of several books, collections of poetry, two albums of music, a script, ("an ode to her departed mother and about their love"), film director on occasion, all of her gifts wrapped in immense sensitivity.

Sophie Reverdi is a firework display that, from storms in the trade winds, light breezes to hurricanes, succeeds everything she undertakes. A firework display with a thousand gushing flowers: whether she sings or writes, in New York or Paris, whether she learns drama in Paris or opens a starred restaurant in Brussels, or whether she is going to realize her great life project in Tunisia to fight against diabetes and obesity and continues in Paris.

Sophie who has known in her flesh the trauma of overweight, cannot bring herself to do nothing. She also knows that henceforth her cause has become the greatest scourge of humanity, exterminating every day in the world 7,000 forgotten souls. She goes to the end of her strength, never give up. The extreme violence of certain episodes of her life, her immoderation sometimes to counter all the blows of life, her physical and moral sufferings, her visions, her faith in life, in her, in her children, in her project, in God, and all that in it allowed him to continue his efforts. A Sophie who is almost invincible ...

She knows nothing of resignation, leaving in her wake loves of legends, an enchantment. She gives without counting, inexhaustible, as she knows how to receive. Daughter adoring her mother and adored in return, by this woman marked by fate and a violent father, bark too hard to show his tenderness, but always present, loving evil but loving yet.

Sophie is a dazzled mother. Generous lover. Inexhaustible creative. The unchanging force of the Carpathians brings Sophie ever farther, beyond the oceans and seas, from the grisailles of the north to the light of Carthage. I miss words, it would take so much! How to describe an interior life so fertile, of an intensity to make the stars pale, a generosity so selfless? Sophie, who does not look like anyone, quickly learned (a gift from her suffering and revolting years) what she had to flee at all costs. Her inexhaustible creativity feeds all her desires. She decided to exist, guided by her dreams, holding her bar in all weathers. In order not to succumb to the waves of emotions that could engulf her, she transformed her innovative visions into energy to make them live.

Aesthetized to perfection, committed to reality, she also enjoys the serenity that brings success and pleasure. Frank and direct, she learns, undertakes, tirelessly, follows her instinct and her convictions. Sophie finds her bearings, embarks on projects as she enters in love, passionate, one road after another, tirelessly. A meeting and the flames are rekindled - never burns. She is a builder. An encounter, I said? A thousand encounters! Men and women who understand her: Sophie is a magnet. She knows how to feed the bonds so well: spontaneous, receptive, tolerant and available. She knows how to surround herself, adapt to everyone, attentive to all, share her ideal for everyone to participate.

Sophie Reverdi is a survivor of one of the worst tragedies in the history of the twentieth century, the source of this desire to live. A revenge. It took so little that she did not see the light of day. Her mother gave her the best example of a fight for survival, her father the example of relentlessness to succeed. Treated of "half a zero" So, nicknamed by him, Sophie is also a survivor in her body: she knew how to master it and restore it to its original beauty after almost dying of a morbid obesity. She knows too well the pains and the sufferings, the shame, the disenchantment of oneself. The fight against weight has become her fight - for her first and then for the others. A fight she has been fighting for decades. This struggle won for itself, it has offered to all those who want to lead it for them to own it. In an instant of availability so that they do not undergo more than she has endured during eighteen years. So much suffering, so many battles!

Her face sometimes capsized: knowing how to get up is one thing, to forget is impossible. Returning to live in the universe of her youth, Sophie is beset with ghosts and memories that she will strive to transform into beautiful vibrations. Sophie carries in her two lineages who have suffered from exile and barbarism, with their procession of tragedies (she too, with her two children, will experience exile and exodus). With dramatic years followed by a tumultuous way of life, filled with events sometimes happy and gay, sometimes sad or destructive but always rewarding. A path of encounters, fraternity, love, construction, elevation, strength, surprises, beauty, understanding, sharing. A story (hardly more than half a life only!) That encourages us to get out of the morosities of habits.

Always outside of her comfort zone, Sophie demonstrates with panache that it is always possible to find her way, here covered with petals of roses, there with sharp pebbles. No matter the roses or the stones: when Sophie, demanding and valourous, is on the move, standing upright towards the sun - that she gets up or goes to bed, she goes forward, a son in each hand, strong and sensitive at the same time. Despite the collapses, the cracks and the wounds, when we have to start all over again. With pride and joy. In tribute to her parents, Sophie Reverdi decided to tell her story: a legacy to her children. A story of reconstruction and love, of faith and courage, of joy and solidarity, of sweet follies and disappointments, of freedom and magical moments, of forgiveness. Never a story of abandonment or resignation, fear, scorn or resentment.

"Sophie, is a miracle," say those who know her. It is this miracle she tells you here. For who better than a mother can tell a story to her little ones, the story that built it? Even if "it was complicated, dramatic, serious, foolish, wild, violent, unfair, crazy, trashy, unbearable ..." she said. For her sons, Sophie considers it an absolute duty to transmit all that she wants to leave behind forever to finally live the present moment, soothed. To also rewire the net of his life, loop after loop, bless this past once and for all and move on its way. Her. If the story of our lives is built of what we do with it, Sophie's is only wealth, love, intuitions, glittering glances, fixing a point far ahead of her.

She knew very early - far too soon - that her life was in her hands. This certainty was her great luck. I can only quote her when she addresses her children: "My beloved children, my sons, find in you the strength to lead you to the light with confidence, have faith in you and in life. Find your way, feel it fully, go beyond what seems immutable, irreversible, untouchable. Nothing is forever. Find your happiness, feel it in your heart, thank the life for that, learn to express your desires, as long as they do no harm to anyone and your intentions are good. Love yourself, make peace in yourself. Sweep from your thought's hatred and judgment, discouragement and fear, jealousy and bitterness. Then you will find happiness. For me, this path was certainly the most difficult, because behind this difficulty to live in harmony with the rest of the world, was a form of bitter and bitter thought that I took for granted, and that seemed to be able to relieve me of my anger. To find happiness is to succeed in loving and loving oneself. Today, I am at peace with myself and feel connected to the universe, to our humanity".

The story of Sophie Reverdi is a beautiful lesson of life.

Sylvie Tenenbaum, Paris, September 2018