**SPEECH FOR THE REASSEMBLY OF THE PARIS BAR ASSOCIATION**

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His shoelace... is undone!

And it irks me.

I've never been able to stand undone laces.

The gendarme in the sentry box on my right had his black shoelace trailing on the floor.

If someone has an undone shoelace, it’s necessarily because they did it up wrong in the first place...

Laces are made to be tied, gently... with your fingers. And in the end, you tighten them so that they don’t come loose.

People have always taken me for a bit of a misfit, rather dirty and unkempt.

But they’re wrong, I’ve always been clean, clean hands, with clean clothes and laces well done up.

And that’s why I hated Christiane, um... my sister... she always had something undone.

A shoelace, a loop, a button...

Jeanne, my adoptive mother, had not raised us like that. She was quite manic.

Everything had to be just right and we had to be squeaky clean.

But in fact, that’s where it all began, the day I wanted to strangle my sister with an iron bar.

And what happened after that was just a logical sequence.

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Monday, 19 March 2001.

All cameras are filming me when I enter the box, with my green sweatpants and my grey wool cardigan.

I’m appearing in court for eleven misdeeds.

So... murders... seven,

attempted murders, ... one

sexual assault ... three.

They’re all here to see the “East Paris Killer”, hunted by the Crime Squad for seven years, until the day of his arrest on 26 March 1998, at the Blanche metro station, right next to the Monoprix supermarket on Boulevard de Clichy.

The hearing begins, I rise.

The Presiding Judge addresses me:

“Good morning Sir, your name is Guy Georges.”

I answer:

- That’s not my real name. My name is Guy Rampillon.

He goes on:

“When were you born? ...”

- 15 October 1962

“Profession?”

- None

“Address?”

- None

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My nickname has always been “Joe”, I didn’t like being called Guy.

“Guy” sounds old and it sucks, just like “George” ... That makes it suck twice!

I have no name, no family, no lineage, no blood in my veins.

My name was taken away from me when I was six, like you confiscate a toy, except that it was never given back to me.

Instead, they had to cobble something together so they chose two first names.

I am Guy and I am George.

George... plus Rampillon ... no, GEORGE!!!

George, like a truncated identity, like a slit throat.

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During his closing arguments, my lawyer Alex Ursula read a letter to the Court that I had written, at 21, to the Social Services of the Maine-et-Loire department.

This is what I wrote:

*"Dear Sir, my name is Guy GEORGES, I was born on 15 October 1962 in Angers.*

*At birth, my name was RAMPILLON. What is the exact identity of my true parents? Where are they now? Do I have brothers and sisters? Would it be possible for me to know them?*

*I am old enough to understand. Why did they abandon me?*

*More importantly, would it be possible for me to find them again?*

*Why was my name changed and how could I resume my former name?”*

Social Services never answered.

I think they just couldn’t give a damn...

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Given that my mother never wanted me, no more than my father, in fact, I went from foster home to foster home, ever since my birth.

In 1966, the Social Services formalised my abandonment.

In 1968, they changed my identity.

They erased “Rampillon” and replaced it with my middle name, “George”.

From then on, I never had a surname.

I was just Guy George.

I was barely six years old, but I remember very well.

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In my adoptive family, Jeanne, my mum, had had seven children and raised 13 more, sent by Social Services for foster care, including me...

When the older sons left, I found myself the only boy, among all these girls.

At fourteen, and I still don’t know why, I jumped on my sister Roselyne, when she was taking the garbage out. And I tried to strangle her.

Although she was mentally retarded, she managed to escape from my grip, all twenty-six years old that she was, and she told the whole thing to my mum. I was severely scolded...

But actually, I loved Roselyne a lot. It was therefore impossible that I really wanted to harm her.

At the time, I was young and a bit impulsive. It was just to play and my parents had understood.

Well... for Christiane, it wasn’t the same.

As I said to psychiatrists when they assessed me:

“Every time I’d do something stupid, she told on me. She wanted my place. It was hard to be a boy, I wanted to be the boss. They all accepted, all except Christiane.”

So one day, I was fifteen, our mother had sent us to the attic with buckets of water, to clean the floor.

I picked up an iron bar, to jump on her and strangle her.

Well, the bitch managed to bite one of my fingers! ... So I dropped it.

Her nose was bleeding because I had strangled her neck tightly...

The idiot went and told mum that while I was strangling her I “was moaning like a beast”.

Wrong.

After that, Jeanne (my adoptive mother) told me they could no longer keep me.

So she informed Social Services and I found myself back at the Children’s Home in Angers.

From then on, I really started the bullshit.

And it never stopped.

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The first time I killed someone, it was Pascale Escarfail, on 26 January 1991.

What surprised me most, is that when I got back and met with my friends, I thought they would notice something.

But in fact, no, life went on like before, we drank a few beers and smoked some pot.

It’s weird, but in fact, people can’t see on your face that you’ve killed someone.

You, well, *you* know it, *you* can remember, but because the people around you don’t ever speak about it, it becomes a little less real, somewhat like a distant memory.

It’s like a secret that you keep for yourself and that you must absolutely never tell anybody because you know, anyway, that people wouldn’t understand...

At the hearing, the psychiatrists explained all kinds of things about me.

Sometimes I found their comments true, sometimes I didn’t agree and also, sometimes, I couldn’t understand a thing of what they were saying, but I don’t think I was the only one because when I was looking at the jurors, they didn’t seem to understand either...

They had talked about the fact that I got people to call me “Joe the Indian”, like the bad guy in Tom Sawyer.

And they had said, very seriously, “This totemisation determines his membership of the gang of predatory bad men”.

In truth, it wasn’t that, it’s that I loved hunting.

At eleven or twelve years old, I would go to the woods to poach with my adopted brother Laurent. It was he who taught me everything, how to catch rabbits with traps or kill ducks with a slingshot.

It’s around that time that I started to love knives and made sure I always had one on me...

So, extrapolating from that, the psychiatrists in the court room, said that I was “a born hunter”, a “predator”.

I find it a somewhat facile interpretation.

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The first six days of the trial, I spent my time explaining to the Court that I wasn’t the perpetrator of all these crimes.

My confession to the crime squad, to the investigating judge, all that was nonsense.

They obliged me... and then it gave me a feeling of importance at the time...

On the seventh day, around 2 p.m., the hearing resumed and it was Elizabeth Ortega’s turn to be heard at the bar.

The “survivor”, the one who had got away.

Of course, she was the only one who could talk about it.

I knew that this would be an important day.

I had shaved my head the night before and I had put on a sweater, a white sweater.

I knew that this would be the day...

Frédérique Pons, my counsel, asked me if I had something to say.

I said no.

Alex Ursulet, my other lawyer, followed on from there, asking me with a solemn tone if it was I who had done all those things.

I answered no, tilting my head.

He had both hands on the edge of box, just in front of me.

He came close again, bending as if to entrust me with a secret.

I also got closer and I put my hands on his.

And it was then that he told me, in a low voice, but that everyone could hear:

“For your family’s sake, for your father wherever he may be, for them to forgive you, if you had anything to with these things, you must say so. Did you, yes or no, attack Miss Ortega?”

My hands tightened strongly around his, enough to hurt him...

At that moment, I hated him, it was a strange and mixed feeling...

I hated myself too, surely even more.

He repeated very calmly: “Did you attack Miss Ortega?”

My hands tightened even harder, and I said "Yeah".

I then lowered my head to my knees, while continuing to hold him and the box.

My lawyer resumed gently:

“Did you kill Miss Escarfail?”

- Yes

“Did you kill Miss Rocher?”

- Yes

“Did you kill Miss Bénady?”

- Yes

“Miss Nijkamp?”

- Yes

“Miss Frinking?”

- Yes

“Miss Sirotti?”

- Yes

“Miss Magd?”

- Yes

“Did you rape Annie Le Fleouter?”

- No

“Did you attack Valérie Lauzanne?”

- No

“Did you attack Estelle F.?”

- No

And Alex Ursulet concluded:

“Can you tell us why, in the Bénady case, you accepted a DNA sampling, in September 1995, or two and a half years before your arrest?”

And I confessed in a breath:

- Because I wanted to be stopped before.

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People believe it’s easy to acknowledge.

They are wrong.

Because for me, all that was easier done than said.

It’s horrible to have to admit it! ...

When you can’t say it with words, you keep your “hands clean”, just like the saying goes.

Jeanne, my adoptive mother, she always wanted us to have clean hands, it was very important for her, with respect to other people, I think it meant she was a good mother.

But sometimes my ideas are dirty, they’re all black, like my skin.

But I always kept my “hands clean”.

What troubles me, is that when I made my confession to the Court, I was gripping my lawyer’s hands. Very tightly...

These hands, which I was now explaining to him had beaten, raped, slaughtered and killed.

I don’t really know if my hands have kept a trace of that.

But what I do know is that my lawyer didn’t seem to be asking himself the question.

I suppose that’s what a Lawyer is...

Someone who knows what your hands have done and still continues to hold them.

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The next part of the trial, after the confession, had gone much more calmly.

The Presiding Judge had repeated each crime and asked me many questions, I had to explain, to tell...

And then, at last, it was the fourteenth and last day of the trial.

The 5th of April 2001.

The Presiding Judge has to give the last word to the defendant.

And the defendant was me.

To make sure I forgot nothing, the night before I had written on some leaves of paper what I wanted to ask them.

I had written thirteen questions that were important to me.

Important because, despite all this mumbo jumbo, I had not received an answer.

So I stood up, stood in front of the mic and asked my questions:

Why had my parents abandoned me?

Why, when I was six or seven, did they take away my identity?

Why do Social Services keep telling me lies when I’m searching for my identity?

Why did no one try to take a bit of interest in me after my first prison sentence?

Why, in 1982, was I put in prison when I hadn’t done anything?

Why was I sentenced to ten years imprisonment by the Court of Assizes in Nancy, in 1984, after just two and a half hours of hearing, including the verdict?

Why did my madness begin in 1991?

Why wasn’t I stopped in 1995?

Why, when I’m asked about my CV, do they stop me when I get to 18 and after that others are left to tell the next twenty years of my life?

Why do they say I’m homosexual, when everything shows the opposite?

Why have I become a “ruthless and merciless killer”, as the chief prosecutor calls me?

Why, then, do I love my friends, my girlfriends and my family?

Why ... Why I am able to laugh when I’m hurting?

Madam Prosecutor, you described me in black...

But there’s some white in me too.

*(Addressing the court)*

I want to say that I accept being here.

I take responsibility for what I’ve done... but I have a **HATRED** for society! ...

I heard someone say yesterday that the sentence I was going to be given was nothing.

Yes, that’s it, nothing, nothing at all.

Yes, twenty-two years is nothing.

But a life sentence is a lot. It’s life.

I’m 38... which means I’ll never come out of prison. You can rest assured.

But I won’t complete this sentence, that I can tell you.

*(turning to the gendarmes)*

And then... I know it sounds a bit like I’m sucking up to you, but I do want to thank the gendarmes who are here, because they’ve always been kind to me.

*(looking at the families)*

For the families...

Whatever happens now, I’ll never do these things again.

And even if you don’t accept it, I want to ask your forgiveness.

**EPILOGUE**

So, there we are, the trial has come and gone, I've been found guilty.

In 2008, I was transferred to the Ensisheim penitentiary, in eastern France.

At Ensisheim, there is also Francis Heaulme and Emile Louis.

Truth to tell, I don’t really like being equated to those guys.

My trial took place 15 years ago.

And I still don’t know why I killed those girls.

A trial is something weird, it determines a whole life, but not just mine.

I don’t know what the families thought, did it relieve some of their pain? ...

When I confessed...

I’m still in touch with my lawyers, those kinds of moments create ties.

I hope that the investigating judge, Gilbert Thiel, still thinks of me sometimes, at least I haven’t forgotten him, even if his questions did sometimes annoy me.

As for the cops of from the crime squad in Paris, for them too it’s been a long time now.

But, I know that they haven’t forgotten. Because I know what they saw.

There was one, once, during a hearing, it was very late... who told me that he often found it difficult to fall asleep and that it was because of me.

I know what these guys from the crime squad saw, because I saw it too, each time, when I was leaving the scene.

When I threw a last look at what I had done.

With my own hands ... with my own hands.