

“THE SUCCESS OF RAY”

After rather difficult school years, it appeared obvious to very young Ray that he was not made for promising studies; medicine and law were of no great interest to him. Just the thought of being confined in a closed room made him feel sick.

Although only twelve years of age, Ray knew exactly what trade would fulfil him, but he did not dare say so to anyone. One day in history class, his teacher started talking about the future of his students. So he went around the class asking each pupil what they would like to become in the future. As he made his way through the class, all kinds of ideas were heard. “I will be a doctor like Dad. And I will be a banker. And I will be a chemist...”

They were all asked except for young Ray. As if destiny had had him wait until last...

The teacher

- *What about you then Ray, what are going to be when you grow up?...*

Ray

- *I want to become the greatest vine grower in the world and own my own land...*

Silence in the class. All eyes were on little Ray, and then, all the pupils burst out laughing, along with the teacher. There was no stopping them.

At that very moment, Ray understood he would be alone in this adventure, and that, once he would grow up, he would have to leave his own, for his birth place had no land offering such possibilities.

The years went by and little Ray had grown into a nineteen year-old young man. He graduated from high school but chose to stop studying.

An oenology association had been set up in his home town. He enrolled and began to learn how to appreciate all the secrets of wine tasting, to spot a vintage wine...

The young man had not been mistaken in choosing his life course. He was absorbing the secrets of wine with unbelievable speed. The president of the association showed a keen interest in young Ray's future. One day after a course on wine tasting, he asked Ray whether he finally felt ready to embark on a career in the world of vine growing. Without even thinking about it, Ray answered that he did but that unfortunately, he did not know any vine grower likely to take him under their wing. The oenologist then explained to Ray that an old friend of his, a vine grower for generations, would be happy to welcome him on his property to train him. Stunned at first upon hearing this unexpected opportunity, Ray smiled and understood that dreams were over. The time had now come for him to act to fulfil his lifelong dream: becoming one of the greatest vine growers in the world. Ray accepted.

Luxembourg 1966. Ray left his home country to discover Luxembourg, this small country up until then unknown to him. Ray immediately felt in total osmosis with this land and made new friends very rapidly. Nineteen people worked within the vineyard and lived together.

After a few days of work, Ray finally met his employer, M. Martin, who had come back from abroad where he exported his wine. This proved to be a revelation for Ray. He could see himself, see his own future through the eyes of this man.

M. Martin was a very respectful and respected gentleman in the world of business. Ray did not miss any part of what this elderly man revealed him, telling his young apprentice the history and secrets of his vineyard. M. Martin could feel Ray's love for vine growing. Feeling special affection for this audacious young man, he entrusted him with more important tasks than he did to his other vintagers. Ray was given the job of turning the bottles in the large cellars of the house, helping wine fermentation. He thus learned to turn bottles one quarter of a turn and developed such skill that he was able to turn 40 to 45 thousand bottles per day.

That was the starting point of Ray's career. He learned more every day and this closeness brought the two men together. M. Martin devoted himself entirely to his protégé: Ray.

One year went by in M. Martin's wonderful company. All were present to celebrate young Ray's birthday. M. Martin even surprised him: he invited his parents over. All were delighted for this young apprentice whose life course was now set. Then harder times came along. Other competitors started to produce wine on more production-based methods whereas M. Martin always emphasised quality.

Ray had just turned 22. Another year had gone by, but this one had not been as joyful as the previous one.

More afflicting news would ensue. In addition to disloyal competition from other vine growers the company was no longer viable. M. Martin learned that his accountant had embezzled him and stolen large sums of money, resulting in the company going bankrupt. There was nothing to do; sales were insufficient to face the huge amounts claimed by banks to settle the debts left by the accountant.

M. Martin saw his employees leave him one by one, for lack of funds to pay them. And his greatest regret tormented him all the more as his life was drawing to an end: whereas the family vineyard had been passed on from generation to generation, there was for him no way of continuing this succession since he had never been married and had never had any children. He had devoted his whole life to his land.

In April 1968, there only remained M. Martin and his young, audacious and loyal apprentice who had not given up on turning the situation around.

Filled with sadness, the old man, now aged 79, had to face the facts: it was all over. After losing everything, his own health was now failing. Ray learned with great sorrow that M. Martin was condemned.

Ray remained with him right to the end. He took care of him morning and evening, while working on the last plot of land that was left after banks had repossessed the greater part to cover debts.

The last evening, next to his mentor, lying in bed under a thick duvet, Ray made a significant promise. He promised his old friend, whom he viewed as a father, to create one of the largest vineyards in the world, the reputation of which would be high quality wine produced by M. Martin, a wine produced with the greatest of

generosities, love. Upon hearing these words, the aged man took one last breath, turned his eyes filled with emotion to his young apprentice, reached out for his hand and said:

Mr Martin

- *A happy man is passing away tonight. Happy to see the son he would have wanted, become a man...*

M. Martin died on 15 May 1968 at the age of 79. Ray took care of his old friend's funeral but very few people travelled to pay their respects. Returning to the property, he made a strange encounter. A young lady was standing there waiting for him. Ray thought this was a distant cousin of M. Martin's who had come late to bid the old man farewell. But nothing of the sort. This was simply a young postwoman on her first day of work. After a brief confusion, the young lady handed him an envelope that bore the stamp of a reputable notary firm. Ray opened the envelope but could not stop gazing at the young woman as she elegantly cycled away.

Ray finally came around. It seemed that bad news was relentless. A message was written on the envelope. It read: "To be given to Ray, from M. Martin". With tearful eyes, the young man sat down on the steps outside the front door of the house and opened the envelope. He pulled out three sheets of paper. On the first one, he read the header "M. Martin's inheritance", followed by a long list of materials, but Ray did not pay any attention to this. Instead he noticed the last page, a blue page, one of those M. Martin used to scribble ideas on for improving his wine.

Ray immediately recognised his old friend's hand writing. It read:

"I, Richard Philippe Martin,
Leave as inheritance
All of my belongings
To my young and audacious apprentice
Ray...
Dated 12 February 1968..."

It had now been three years since M. Martin had passed away. Ray, rightful owner of the small plot of land he inherited from his only and best friend, had become a formidable business man. He had just hired two more people, had trained them in his ways, those ways of M. Martin, to create a close-knit team and develop a new vineyard, a vineyard that would now bear the name "**Les Caves Saint Martin**". But Ray quickly came to realise he would need money to keep up with competition and extend his business. So he went around banks to obtain a loan. Sure to be granted this loan, Ray made premature purchases, cisterns to store his wine. However another trial was looming. No bank was willing to trust him and they all refused to grant him any credit. Ray dreaded going through the same tragedy as had M. Martin, and having to give up on fulfilling the promise he had made on his death bed.

Shortly after this trial, he made a rather unusual encounter, one that would affect the rest of his life. A French couple, on holiday in Luxembourg, showed up on Ray's land. He welcomed them into the small house he had just finished building. After introducing themselves, Ray was very surprised to recognise two of his old school friends who had ended up getting married. The couple explained the reason for their visit: wine enthusiasts themselves, they had travelled over one thousand kilometres to visit "Les Caves Saint Martin", a great vine grower, reputed for his wine in France. The couple acknowledged they were not surprised to discover that behind this good wine, the wine grower could only be Ray, with his driving ambition... Dominique and Liliane were actually involved in the world of business, the sector of finance. Dominique told Ray that their visit was not just a friendly one. He then drew from his briefcase a folder which he handed to Ray. Ray did not understand. There, inside the folder, there was a cheque of a large amount along with contract.

Dominique explained that he had heard about Ray's efforts with banks. One of the bankers who had categorically refused the loan happened to be a friend of his. While attending a convention, he had told him about the crazy idea of one of his clients, who although it had no future, wanted to continue a vine growing business at all cost, to create 'the best wine in the world'. So the couple decided to act... Ray did not know what to say. Dominique announced that this money was loaned him by old school friends who heard of his reputation as a great vine grower and remembered that young boy whose dream it was, one day to produce the best wine in the world. Ray would remain the sole owner of the premises and was given twenty-five years to reimburse the funds. Ray considered it a great honour to use this money as an opportunity to show the whole world and his friends what he was capable of.

...today

Twenty-second of September 2006. Ray is greatly honoured to welcome on his vineyard, Dominique and Liliane, all his childhood friends along with their family to celebrate the success of his wine, which is now reputed worldwide.

Ray proudly offers a guided tour through this magical place, offers to taste his wine and thanks his friends for trusting him; those without whom his dream would never have come true. He is happy to announce that a part of the company is transferred to each one of them as a sign of gratitude for their solidarity and their life-long friendship.

Ray then introduces his wife, Marie, a recently-developed love story. Marie is none other than the young postwoman who had long ago delivered him the famous inheritance letter.

The group of friends ends the evening, as guests of Ray in his restaurant which he built on his land inherited from M. Martin, to whom he had promised to produce the best wine in the world, "Les Caves Saint Martin".

The end

SCENARIO

“THE SUCCESS OF RAY”

1a EXT – THE VINEYARD – DAYTIME

September 2006, it is the time for vine-picking.
Several shots on the “Caves Saint Martin” vineyard

1b EXT – SAINT MARTIN CELLARS - DAYTIME

A general overview of the great property that houses “Les Caves Saint Martin” is given.
A large solid wood door set in a huge rock is used as a front door.

3 INS – SAINT MARTIN CELLARS /CORRIDORS - DAYTIME

- A panoramic sequence shot -

As we enter, we discover beautiful architecture, several arched rooms built with hewn stones, used as storage areas for bottles of wine from the vineyard.
These are all stored by the thousands on shelves.

4 INS – TASTING ROOM/RAY - DAYTIME

Standing with his back to the camera, Ray faces a table upon which a number of bottles of wine are standing, waiting to be tasted. Holding a glass of wine, he tastes the produce of his work with great concentration. He raises his crystal glass with his right hand so that light penetrates the colour of the liquid, thus revealing a view of its magical aromas.

A man enters the room. It is one of Ray’s employees.

Man

- Sir, your guests have arrived.

Ray brings the glass of wine to his nose, inhales the captivating scents and puts the glass down on the table.
He turns to the man and says

Ray

- Thank you Rudy, I am on my way...

Ray has aged; he is in his sixties, with a round, jolly face.

DARK SCREEN

5 EXT – ARRIVAL OF GUESTS - DAYTIME

All of Ray's friends are there, along with their families. Over one hundred people are present to celebrate the success of their audacious friend "Ray".
Standing side by side outside the "Caves Saint Martin", they pause a few moments in silence in memory of Ray's idol, M. Martin.
Ray steps out of the cellars, opens the wooden door and faces the crowd.

- Sequence accompanied by music -

Ray is warmly surprised to see that all are present. With great emotion he looks at each of the faces of his nearest and dearest.
All are equally moved by the occasion. At that moment, two persons stand out of the group and step towards Ray. This is Dominique and Liliane. Ray draws close to them and hugs them.

Dominique

- *We are proud of you, Ray.*

Liliane carries on:

Liliane

- *They are all here for you my friend.*

Turning to the group, Ray smiles and says:

Ray

- *It is a great honour and pleasure to invite you to visit
« Les Caves Saint Martin »
My friends, you are here at home.*

(Slow motion scene)

Ray greets his friends. Hands are shaken, kissing, laughs...

DARK SCREEN

6 INS – THE VISIT - DAYTIME

Leading the way, Ray walks through corridors of the "Caves Saint Martin", telling about the premises, the materials needed to make his wine.

Ray
FREE TEXT

All are immersed in Ray's words.

Ray pauses for a moment in front of a slightly damp wall. He reaches for the wall and caresses the stone, his face showing signs of emotion. The whole group looks at him; Ray turns towards them as his hand stays on the wall.

CONTINUATION:

Ray

This wall is the only one that remains from the original warehouse that was demolished...

The only one I have preserved.

It was built by M. Martin himself

That is why the soul of my old friend is always here

In the Caves Saint Martin wine.

The group and Ray continue their visit. They walk through various rooms of the "Caves Saint Martin". As a habit, Ray tells of the right conditions that assist in processing good wine.

6 INS – TASTING ROOM/THE GROUP AND RAY – DAYTIME

The group enters the tasting room, a room located on the way out of the Caves Saint Martin. All the bottles Ray produces are exhibited here in display cabinets.

Ray gathers everyone near a small bar, and a woman in her sixties comes into the room. All eyes are on her as Ray announces:

Off voice of Ray

This is Marie.

Marie stands next to Ray who lovingly takes her into his arms. With a large smile on his face, he introduces her:

Ray

Let me introduce you to Marie, my wife.

All gaze at the couple, happy to see Ray has a satisfying life. They cheer the young audacious apprentice who has, at last, become a happy man. A few of the guests exchange some bad words. For example: Well, talk about coming at the right time...

Ray waves that he is going to speak.

The group stops clapping and listens:

Ray

After all these years I do not know how to thank you...

Marie and I have not been able to have any children. I regret not having had any descendants... so I have not been able to fulfil my dream to the full.

With Marie we have decided to leave the Caves Saint Martin

For a well deserved retirement.

All are stunned by the words of their friend Ray. A deep silence reigns in the room.

Ray

*That is why I have invited you all to come today, to announce to you
That, from now on, this wonderful company is yours.*

CONTINUATION:

As Ray finishes his sentence, a man, dressed in a black suit and carrying a briefcase enters the room. He approaches the group and draws a thick file. Ray announces:

Ray

This is M. Kremer, my Notary...

No one understands. Whispering resumes...

Ray

*He is here to finalise my succession, for I am leaving you everything.
Let us leave him to this business and celebrate this news.*

- Music accompanies the scene -

Everyone is happy. With great joy, they, as a group of lifelong friends savour a good glass of wine ... THE BEST WINE IN THE WORLD.
The group of friends raises their glasses and all say in unison:

To the Caves Saint Martin

What beautiful smiles for such an unforgettable event...

DARK SCREEN

THE END