

KATHLEEN VEREECKEN

I THINK IT WAS LOVE

A UNIQUE AND FASCINATING PERSPECTIVE ON ROUSSEAU

I THINK IT WAS LOVE tells the story of Leon, supposedly the son of famous writer and philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In 1762, Rousseau wrote *Emile ou de l'éducation*, a groundbreaking book about the ideal education. No one knew at that time that he had taken his own five children to a foundling hospital on the day of their birth. Kathleen Vereecken imagines what life might have been like for Rousseau's eldest son.

IN THE ENLIGHTENED 18th century, 'Dieudonné' is abandoned in Paris and taken in by an uncaring foster mother in the French region of Morvan. Méline, the daughter of the family, takes pity on the tough little boy and renames him Leon. She makes his hard life bearable. When she commits suicide because of an impossible love, he is really alone for the first time. In spite of this loss, Leon knows there is only one thing he can do: live. So he sets off for Paris, looking for his roots and for love.

IN THE CHAOTIC UNDERBELLY of the city, he persists not only in his search for his mother, but also in his quest for education. He becomes acquainted with enlightened thinking and reads everything he can get his hands on. He also explores love in the beating heart of the industrious city of Paris. But then he discovers who his father is... .

VEREECKEN'S HISTORICAL NOVEL for young adults sweeps you along in an intense reading experience. The wonderfully evocative style brings to life the locations and the spirit of the age, in atmospheric, sensuous images. Vereecken slips a great deal of historical information into this extraordinary novel, without it ever seeming forced. Quite the contrary, in fact – her readers experience all the scents, colours and tastes of 18th century Paris as though they were there themselves.