

Spector's young wife shares her thoughts on experience

By Linda Deutsch, The Associated Press

Posted: 06/05/2009 09:34:30 PM PDT

ALHAMBRA - Rachele Spector will turn 29 next week, a pretty woman living alone in a 35-room Pyrenees-style castle while the lord of the manor - music producer Phil Spector - sits in prison.

Her story might seem the subject of a perverse fairy tale if it was not part of one of the strangest true-crime sagas in show business.

Through two trials in which she was ordered to stay mum, Spector's wife has remained an enigma. She sat down this week for an interview about her past, her life with the aging music legend and her new role at the helm of his financial empire while pressing an appeal she hopes will free him.

Her home is the "castle," a landmark edifice towering over Alhambra. She sat in the living room, a few feet from the foyer where actress Lana Clarkson met a bloody death six years ago. Rachele married Spector after he was charged with second-degree murder in Clarkson's death.

Rachele Spector's motives have been questioned by some. But she says it was all about love, not money, and expressed resentment toward

those who call him unattractive.

She said she has never seen Spector threatening. She describes him as "incredibly funny, witty and smart. A very caring person."

Spector, 69, was sentenced last week to 19 years to life behind bars for the murder of Clarkson, 40. The story of the aging pop maestro and the doomed actress has been told repeatedly during the trials, the first of which ended in a hung jury. But Rachele's story has not been told until now.

Their romance was unexpected, she said, relating a classic Hollywood story of a girl who went west in search of a show business career.

Rachele Short grew up in the small town of Beaver Falls, Pa. After high school, she studied business and music in college but didn't graduate. She wanted to sing and headed for Hollywood to pursue her dream.

On Sept. 3, 2003, she met Spector at Dan Tana's restaurant, one of the spots he had gone exactly seven months before on the fateful night he met Clarkson. She said Spector invited her to join his group, which included some celebrity friends, and later they moved on to a club where "We ended up talking until six o'clock in the morning."

"He's been telling me he loved me since the first day we met," she said.

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