

A SIMPLE HEART

Written by

Courtney Zimmer

Based on, "Un Coeur Simple" by Gustave Flaubert

3740 Arcadia  
(248) 875 - 4185

FADE IN:

EXT. FIELD - JUST BEFORE DUSK

The sun is just about to set on a clear day and FELICITY, 25-30 looks older and worn, brown/dirty blonde messy hair, in a plain dress, is desperately running away from her home, tears are rolling down her face.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is empty until we hear the turning of a key and FELICITY enters the room, she sets the key down on a table pulls back the covers and lays in bed. As she is curled up in her bed, she begins to cry.

FLASHBACK/MONTAGE

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

Music plays as THEODORE, 20's, brown hair, good-looking, comes up to a shy, young FELICITY, 18, dressed in plain rags on the carnival dance floor.

THEODORE

I'm Theo, would you like to dance?

Felicity nods her head. The two begin to dance to an upbeat tune.

EXT. CARNIVAL - NIGHT

THEODORE buys FELICITY a silk shawl. She finishes her last bite of cake, throws the plate away and asks him to hold her cider. She puts on the shawl then takes the cup of cider back smiling.

THEODORE

May I escort you home?

FELICITY smiles and nods.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

(laughs) You don't say much, do you?

The two walk out of the carnival with arms interlocked.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. FIELD - DAY

THEODORE and FELICITY are sitting down on a picnic blanket.

THEODORE

So my father left Coleville and bought the farm of Les Ecots. We will be neighbors!

FELICITY

Ah!

THEODORE

My parents are also looking for a wife for me, but I'd rather marry someone who I get along with...

FELICITY lowers her head. THEODORE lifts her head up by her chin.

THEODORE (CONT'D)

Someone like you.

FELICITY smiles and tackles him into a hug.

EXT. ISOLATED TREE - DUSK

FELICITY waits by a tree, wind blowing. She stares off dreamily. THEODORE'S FRIEND 20's, well dressed, walks up to her.

THEODORE'S FRIEND

I'm a friend of Theodore's. I'm here to say that you will no longer see him.

He begins to grab at her.

FELICITY

(pushing away from THEODORE'S FRIEND) He doesn't want to see me?

THEODORE'S FRIEND

He has married a rich, old woman and took off to be with her.

THEODORE'S FRIEND pulls FELICITY in for a kiss.

FELICITY

What?

FELICITY raises her voice and fights back, she hits THEODORE'S FRIEND.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY (CONT'D)  
(yelling) What? We were going to  
get married! He promised he would  
meet me here. Get off of me!

FELICITY takes off into the field.

END OF FLASHBACK/MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

FELICITY cries herself to sleep.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. HOTEL FRONT - DAY

FELICITY is sitting outside of the inn asking people if they  
need a housekeeper.

FELICITY  
Excuse me, madame... Pardon me,  
sir?

MADAME AUBAIN 30-35, dressed in widow's weeds, hair in a  
tight bun, walks on the sidewalk.

FELICITY (CONT'D)  
MADAME, are you looking for help  
around the house?

MADAME AUBAIN walks past FELICITY then turns around and walks  
toward her.

MADAME AUBAIN  
Yes, I'm looking for a cook. Do you  
have any experience?

FELICITY  
I worked on a farm for a few years.  
I cooked for the family and fed  
slop to the animals. But I'm a fast  
learner and I will work hard.

MADAME AUBAIN  
Very well, I will give you a trial.

(CONTINUED)

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/STAIRS - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN is giving FELICITY a tour of her house. Paul 7, blonde hair, well-dressed and Virginia 4, blonde hair in pigtails, well-dressed, run giggling past them.

MADAME AUBAIN

Do not run in the house! (to Felicity) This is Paul and Virginia. You will make sure their clothes are washed and put away. You will also watch over them occasionally.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/FELICITY'S ROOM - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN

This is your room. Any questions?

FELICITY

No, madame.

MADAME AUBAIN

Good. You better head downstairs and start preparing lunch soon.

FELICITY

Yes, madame.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A different day. MADAME AUBAIN, FELICITY, PAUL, and VIRGINIA are walking in the field. PAUL is pounding the trunk of a tree with a stick, VIRGINIA is picking wild flowers and giving them to FELICITY. MADAME AUBAIN bats the flowers out of FELICITY'S hand and leads her daughter away from FELICITY.

A lone OX appears in the field in front of VIRGINIA, PAUL and MADAME AUBAIN. The three scream as the ox snorts. FELICITY slowly places herself between them and the ox.

FELICITY

(whispering to the family) Don't be afraid.

MADAME AUBAIN prepares to run away fast as FELICITY interrupts.

FELICITY (CONT'D)

No, no! Not so fast.

(CONTINUED)

Still MADAME AUBAIN hurries her children away as FELICITY snorts at the bull and throws tufts of grass in his eyes. The bull points his horns towards FELICITY.

FELICITY (CONT'D)  
(yells) Make haste!

MADAME AUBAIN and the children climbed out the other side of a ditch. The bulls charges and drives FELICITY against a fence and she slips between the two bars just in time.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN sits in a chair, reading as PAUL runs around his mother.

PAUL  
And then she threw the grass into  
his eyes and she saved us all!

MADAME AUBAIN  
Do not get too worked up, Paul.

PAUL  
Felicity is so brave, thank the  
Lord she made it through the fence  
in time! She's a hero!

MADAME AUBAIN  
Paul! Settle down. We had quite the  
shock today and Virginia is still  
anxious. Do not mention this  
incident ever again.

PAUL  
Yes, mother.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/STAIRS - DAY

FELICITY and MADAME AUBAIN wait outside VIRGINIA's room.  
MISTER POUPART, 40-50, confident, exits from the room.

MR. POUPART  
She is in shock. You should go to  
the South and have her bathe in the  
salt water in Trouville.

MADAME AUBAIN  
Thank you Mister Poupart, I will  
show you out to the door.

FELICITY and MADAME AUBAIN share a glance.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. PATHWAY - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN and VIRGINIA are riding in a horse drawn carriage while PAUL and FELICITY walk alongside.

EXT. SEA - DAY

FELICITY holds VIRGINIA and brings her to the water. VIRGINIA lies in her arms and takes a deep breath. She begins to move a little in water, FELICITY is pleasantly surprised and looks at her lovingly.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

FELICITY carries VIRGINIA to bed. She appears more lively than before.

INT. COTTAGE/VIRGINIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

FELICITY tucks VIRGINIA into her bed. FELICITY begins to walk out of the room.

VIRGINIA

Can you sing to me, Ci-ci?

FELICITY turns around, surprised. She sits at VIRGINIA's bedside and hums a lullaby tune. MADAME AUBAIN walks by the bedroom. She stops when she sees FELICITY and VIRGINIA. MADAME AUBAIN walks into the room.

MADAME AUBAIN

(interrupting Felicity's humming)  
Thank you, Felicity. I can take  
care of her from here.

FELICITY gets up and leaves the room.

EXT. SEA - DAY

Another week passes. VIRGINIA, towel wrapped around her, runs holding FELICITY's hand from the day at the beach.

INT. COTTAGE/FAMILY ROOM - DUSK

FELICITY walks up to MADAME AUBAIN.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY

Madame, I ran into my sister walking back from the sea with Virginia. She told me I have a nephew Victor and I'm invited to their home whenever they aren't working.

MADAME AUBAIN

(dismissive) That's nice, Felicity. We will be returning to Pont-L'Eveque as Virginia's health has improved dramatically.

FELICITY

So soon?

MADAME AUBAIN

Yes, I think it is the perfect time to go back home.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

A few years pass. Paul walks out the door with suitcases in hand. MADAME AUBAIN, FELICITY and VIRGINIA watch him leave from inside the house.

MADAME AUBAIN

He will enjoy time with other boys his age.

VIRGINIA bursts into tears and runs up to her room.

MADAME AUBAIN (CONT'D)

Felicity, you will accompany Virginia to her catechism lesson every day starting next week. (pause) You are baptized are you not?

FELICITY

I do not know, madame.

MADAME AUBAIN

Well, I would still like her to go as to not dwell on Paul's leaving.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

VIRGINIA runs ahead of FELICITY and sits in a row of chairs with two other girls.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY sits towards the back and listens to the PRIEST, older gentleman of 70-80, dressed in robes. FELICITY looks enamored during the PRIEST's lesson.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

VIRGINIA and FELICITY are walking back to the house after the service.

FELICITY  
Virginia, Why did they crucify him?  
Jesus loved little children,  
nourished the people and made the  
blind see.

VIRGINIA shrugged her shoulders.

VIRGINIA  
Sometimes bad things happen to good  
people.

The two continue home.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

FELICITY brings suitcases from the house to a car parked outside. VIRGINIA and MADAME AUBAIN are arguing.

VIRGINIA  
But I want to stay here with you  
Mama, and Felicity.

MADAME AUBAIN  
You are already registered at the  
convent. You will become a well-  
learned young lady. We will see you  
at Christmas. Go, safe travels, I  
will write to you!

VIRGINIA cries as she leaves her home. FELICITY passes VIRGINIA coming back into the house.

FELICITY  
(whispered to VIRGINIA) Now, be  
brave, be brave!

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MADAME AUBAIN sits in a chair knitting as FELICITY tidies up the house.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY

I wanted to ask you if I could  
invite my nephew Victor over on  
Sundays.

MADAME AUBAIN shoots FELICITY a glance.

FELICITY (CONT'D)

Sundays are my day off and I'd  
really like to see him.

MADAME AUBAIN

(Pause then sighs) Alright.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

VICTOR plays tag with FELICITY in the field.

EXT. FIELD/JUST BEFORE DUSK

VICTOR and FELICITY walk together.

FELICITY

Victor, you have grown into a  
handsome young man, I remember when  
you were so little.

They both laugh.

VICTOR

(pause)I wanted to tell you that  
I'm engaged.

FELICITY gives him a huge hug.

FELICITY

That's wonderful!

VICTOR

It just happened yesterday, I was  
scared to ask her.

FELICITY

Why?

VICTOR

Because I have to leave for 2  
years, she lives in America. I  
leave tonight.

FELICITY grabs a hold of VICTOR.

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY

No, I need you to stay here.

VICTOR

I will write you. Let go, Auntie.

FELICITY

Sorry. I have to go, have a safe trip.

FELICITY leaves suddenly. VICTOR calls out to her.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

FELICITY is preparing dinner.

MADAME AUBAIN

I haven't received a letter from Virginia, it has been four days.

FELICITY

I understand, madame.

MADAME AUBAIN

How is that?

FELICITY

My Victor has not wrote to me in six months.

MADAME AUBAIN

How can you possibly compare them? Victor was not your son.

MADAME AUBAIN storms off into the living room where she finds the mail on the counter. She tries to suppress her anger to give the FELICITY the bad news.

MADAME AUBAIN (CONT'D)

Oh, you received a letter. They tell you of a misfortune. Your nephew... has died.

FELICITY

Poor little boy, my poor little boy!

MADAME AUBAIN

You should see your sister in Trouville--

(CONTINUED)

FELICITY

They have no sympathy, they do not  
care!

FELICITY cries while MADAME AUBAIN leaves her be in the  
kitchen.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

A few days later, MADAME AUBAIN reads a letter. FELICITY  
dusts the room around her.

MADAME AUBAIN

Paul is doing well, he is married  
and living in Paris with his wife.

This one is from the convent,  
Virginia is sick, I must go to her.  
Felicity you stay here and keep  
watch over the house.

MADAME AUBAIN leaves.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/VIRGINIA'S ROOM - DAY

FELICITY looks around VIRGINIA'S room. She walks over to the  
vanity, where there is a doll, hairbrush and a cross.  
FELICITY takes the cross into her hand.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MADAME AUBAIN is weak and FELICITY runs to hear the news.  
MADAME AUBAIN looks incredibly sad.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN and FELICITY place flowers under a tombstone  
that reads VIRGINIA AUBAIN. FELICITY is wearing the cross  
from VIRGINIA'S room.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FELICITY works on the house as MADAME AUBAIN walks over to  
another room. MADAME AUBAIN faints and FELICITY catches her.

(CONTINUED)

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN takes a drink of liquor as FELICITY enters the house with a birdcage in hand.

MADAME AUBAIN  
What is this?

FELICITY  
A gift from the neighbors for your  
loss, Loulou.

FELICITY pulls out a card, gives it to MADAME AUBAIN and takes the cover of the cage. Inside is LOULOU, a parrot of many bright colors.

MADAME AUBAIN  
They gave us a parrot?

FELICITY  
He's from America, like Victor. I  
will take care of LOULOU, MADAME.

MADAME AUBAIN  
If you would like.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

FELICITY rolls dough LOULOU sits on a perch. He flies over and sits on FELICITY's shoulder.

FELICITY  
LOULOU! My treasure. You are so  
beautiful.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE/FRONT ROOM - DAY

FELICITY enters the house with groceries in hand. She begins to look all over the house.

FELICITY  
LOULOU? LOULOU? LOULOU?!?!!

FELICITY walks into the living room where MADAME AUBAIN is sitting.

MADAME AUBAIN  
You cannot find LOULOU? I can help  
you look.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

FELICITY and MADAME AUBAIN shout and call for LOULOU.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

FELICITY is putting away wood when LOULOU comes and lands on her shoulder. LOULOU squawks and FELICITY enters the house.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FELICITY runs in.

FELICITY  
MADAME, I found LOULOU!

Felicity puts her hands to her ears. She looks at MADAME AUBAIN.

MADAME AUBAIN  
Fantastic. We shall have tea and  
cookies to celebrate!

FELICITY  
MADAME... I'm deaf.

INT. FELICITY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lightning strikes and FELICITY wakes with a start. She looks over to LOULOU's cage to see that the bird has frozen to death.

FELICITY  
LOULOU? LOULOU?!

FELICITY begins to cry hysterically. MADAME AUBAIN comes to see the commotion but stops at FELICITY's door.

EXT. FRONT OF MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

MADAME AUBAIN takes a package from the postman and runs inside.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

MADAME Aubain rushes into the dining room to see FELICITY setting the table for lunch. MADAME AUBAIN taps her on the shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

MADAME AUBAIN  
Felicity, I have a surprise for  
you.

MADAME AUBAIN gives FELICITY a large box. FELICITY opens it to find a stuffed LOULOU. FELICITY is overjoyed and hugs MADAME AUBAIN.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

FELICITY puts LOULOU on a perch while she cleans the floors.

INT. FELICITY'S ROOM - NIGHT

LOULOU sits on a perch while FELICITY goes to sleep.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S ROOM - DAY

FELICITY goes in to wake up MADAME AUBAIN and finds that MADAME AUBAIN is dead.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - DAY

As LOULOU sitting on his perch, FELICITY sews a garment as movers come and take all of MADAME AUBAIN'S belongings.

INT. MADAME AUBAIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FELICITY stays in her room alone with LOULOU. She is breathing heavily and in a cold sweat. After awhile she finally closes her eyes.

FELICITY  
(whispers) LOULOU.

FELICITY sees LOULOU flapping his wings with a bright white light behind him.

FADE OUT.

THE END

(CONTINUED)