

Let Me Love You

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Category:	F/F
Fandom:	Der Besuch der alten Dame The Visit - Schneider & Reed/Hofer/Struppeck
Relationship:	Claire Zachanassian/Mathilde III
Characters:	Claire Zachanassian , Alfred III , Mathilde III
Additional Tags:	Angst , Very angst , So much angst , Alfred is an asshole , Swearing , i have no idea what to tag this , WIP , Major WIP , I cannot stress how much of a wip this is , it's so bad don't read it , but also I need validation from my rarepair angst , claire has some trauma , There Was Only One Bed , I used so many tropes this is so self indulgent , mathilde is like a tiny bit of self insert but shhh
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by [kommheimtotheemeraldcity](#)

Summary

Claire and Mathilde run away and have a cabin in the mountains. Mathilde grows to love Claire, who doesn't think she can be loved.

The wind whistled outside and inside the cabin the fire crackled. Mathilde shivered and pulled her woolen blanket tighter around her shoulders. She looked over at Claire, staring lifelessly into the fire.

After the verdict is announced Klari screams until she is removed from the courtroom. Mathilde swallows the pump in her throat. Even as her family returns home, she approaches the girl sitting on the courthouse steps. Snowflakes fall on the long blonde hair falling down her back. From this side profile she looks like a statue, an angel, something otherworldly and beautiful. Mathilde blushes in spite of herself. She shakes off these thoughts and approaches the girl quickly. She doesn't move, even when Mathilde moves to press a piece of paper into her hands. Her hands are so cold.

"The shop's phone number. If you need anything... please call. I'm sorry," Mathilde says quickly. She goes home, but the picture of the girl stays in her head for a long time. Even when Alfred Ill comes to sweep her off her feet and tries to explain that what happened with "little Klari was nothing, really," and that she really should focus on him and not that piece of his past. But of course, even this brief happiness could not last. They had been married not a year when Alfred made his intentions clear. He was not a man for love, only for his own gain, and the shop, her shop, the shop with the same phone number she had pushed into the angel girl's hands, was the only thing he could ever want from her.

Perhaps it was Fate, when the phone call came the next day. I am desperate, she said. I have no one to turn to. Please, help me.

Perhaps it was Fate, when Mathilde managed to get an address from that call and sent enough money for a hot meal and a train ticket. Fate, that the girl that came off that train was the same one, albeit older and sadder, that she'd never forgotten. Without telling her family, Mathilde packed her bags and took all of her savings and told her they'd go somewhere, anywhere, and whatever may come it would be alright because they could do it together.

They set out for a larger city, where by some miracle there was an open slot for a shop assistant. A small apartment above the shop was plenty large enough for both of them, although containing just one bed. At first, Claire shrank away from any kind of physical contact. She barely spoke, and by the way she often tossed and turned at night betrayed that she could not sleep either. Mathilde was not sure when it happened, but one night Claire slid up next to her and slept peacefully through the night. This became a part of their routine, and Mathilde felt her thoughts drifting to Claire even during the shop's hours.

"Cut it," Claire said one day. She held out a pair of scissors, and with reluctance Mathilde cut it as best she could until it barely brushed her shoulders. Without the aid of straightening tools, Claire's hair had returned to its naturally curly state. More than ever, Mathilde felt herself longing to run her fingers through her hair.

Mathilde never thought of herself as a wide-eyed, romantic lover, the kind that Alfred tried to convince her he could be. And yet, the more time she spent with Claire the more she became just that. Every touch became a cause for the quickened beating of her heart. This state of relative happiness lasted through several years of mild winters, but when an especially cold winter's icy tendrils reached inside their small apartment it was Claire who suggested they move somewhere else. She was the first to think of a small cabin somewhere in

the mountains, both far enough from the city and from the hometown they'd both managed to escape.

Mathilde walked over and sat next to Claire on the beaten up couch, just far enough away to acknowledge her space. Her curls hung just below her ears and reflected the fire light ever so slightly. She sighed.

"I'm sorry for dragging you into this mess, if you ever regret it," she said with a bitter laugh.

"Please don't apologize. I... I needed something to focus on, somewhere else to go after... never mind."

"Alfred?" Claire laughed, colder this time. "He fucked up both of our lives, it would seem. Even so, you didn't have to help me... that day in the courthouse, that was the worst day of my life. But that piece of paper, it kept me going for years until I worked up the courage for ask for help." She sat silently again. Claire didn't often talk about her feelings, not like this. Perhaps it was the glow of fire, or the atmosphere in the cabin, or something that she couldn't quite put her finger on, but Mathilde moved so she was next to Claire and placed her hand on Claire's. It was cold, like it always was.

"I love you, Claire. I have for a long time." Claire turned to her. Mathilde thought for a moment that those dark eyes might've shown some emotion, but Claire turned back towards the fire.

"No," she said flatly. "You can't. We can't." She closed her eyes as she said this. Mathilde opened her mouth to say something, anything, but Claire put up her hand.

"You cannot love me because no one can. I am broken. Unloveable and undeserving. You deserve someone who can show the same passion and kindness that you've shown me." Mathilde thought she saw faint tears forming in the corner of Claire's eyes.

"I don't want someone else, I want you. Let me help you. *Claire, let me love you.*"

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