

*Background: After 16 years away, Taliesin returns to Stoney Creek & Galt to reunite with an old love, Elodie. He brings with him Bronwyn, a 14" fully alive Stuffie. In this scene, Elodie is bemoaning her physical state.*

Looking at herself in her bedroom's floor mirror, Elodie pats her belly. "How did I let myself get so fat?"

"You're not 'fat'." Bronwyn, assures her, sitting as she is at the edge of the bureau. *fat-alina, fat-aletta, fat-aloni* This addendum is of the sing-song variety, the delivery that of a solitary child's soft incantation to itself.

"I used to look like Almeisan," Elodie says, turning to take a look at her backside. "I used to look *precisely* like my daughter. Only an inch and a half shorter." Now, from the other side. "Still, I used to be 'willowy'. 'Svelte'. 'Statuesque'. 'Lithesome', even. And now?" she asks, frumping-in-place, rounding her shoulders and letting her belly loose to a comical extent. "Now I hardly resemble that person at all. And I hate my daughter."

"No you don't," Bronwyn points out.

"No. I don't. Of course I don't. I just don't like myself."

"OK," Bronwyn says, getting up, instantly segueing into a Winston Churchillian stroll, hands behind her back. "So you're not the same woman you were back then."

"I'm *more* of her."

"OK. You are."

"Holy shitballs!" Elodie laughs. "You're supposed to *lie!*"

"I'm not your husband or your boyfriend, so I don't 'have to lie'," Bronwyn counters. "Do you *want* me to lie?" *lie-alina, lie-aletta, lie-aloni*

"No. I want you to tell me that you have a wand you can wave to remove some of me."

"Where?"

"Just about everywhere!"

"It's been how many years since you saw him?"

"Sixteen."

"And during that time, how *happy* have you been?"

"Not very," Elodie sighs. "I mean, with The Ladies, yes. The store, yes."

"And the rest of the time?"

"Lonely. Angry. Unhappy. *Miserable*. God, I feel so much better already!" Elodie laughs, throwing her hands overhead, doing a pirouette. "Talk-therapy is *so* good for the soul!"

"Whatever," Bronwyn says, dismissing Elodie's sarcasm. "So you let yourself go."

"Once again, thanks."

"You let yourself go because you didn't have the fight in you to be a good steward of your body." *stew-alina, stew-aletta, stew-aloni*

"Whatever!" Elodie laughs. "*How did I get so fat?!?*"

"How many pounds of extra *you* do you figure you're carrying around?"

"I weigh one-sixty," she says with the volume set at 1. "One-sixty-five. Ish. I used to be one *forty*. Ish."

"OK. So we're talking say, twenty-five pounds over 16 years. Including a pregnancy. That's about what, less than a pound-and-a-half a year. That's..." She does a quick calculation in her head. "...about seven one hundredths of an ounce a day. So for about the weight of a crumb, you over-ate and under-exercised."

"Oh."

"So to review: once again, you let yourself go."

"Once again, thanks."

"Stop that!" Bronwyn chides her with a gust of laughter. "You need to be honest with yourself. A contentious marriage, the absence of a previous-primary friendship, effectively raising your kids yourself, fighting to keep a business afloat... It all adds up." *up-alina, up-aletta, up-aloni*

"I feel fat," Elodie sighs. She plunks herself on the bed. And with the sigh, she wells-up a little. "Like I'm not going to get asked to the prom."

“And I bet that when you look at Dad...who you *want* to ask you to the prom... you curse yourself even more.”

“Oh, you mean when I’m not creaming my jeans?” She ends this with a poked-out-tongue.

Bronwyn returns fire.

“Holy shitballs, he looks amazing!” Elodie says, face in hands. “He’s in better shape than he was when he left. He looks *vibrant*. He’s got a body to be proud of. In comparison I feel *frumpy*. And I feel no small amount of shame over having let myself go the way I have.”

“Over the course of *sixteen years*.”

“I’m not happy with my body. That doesn’t mean I don’t love myself. I’m just unhappy that I look the way I do, because I shouldn’t.” She thinks on this. “Like you said, I let myself go.” Pause. “I don’t feel attractive. I can’t imagine *him* finding me attractive.”

“OK, now you’ve ventured into territory where you don’t *know* things, but *assume* things.” *ass-alina, ass-aletta, ass-aloni*

“Every time I see Almeisan and him together, because she looks so much like I did at her age...when he knew me ‘before’...I can’t help but imagining that he’s comparing us.”

“Does that sound like Dad?”

“No.” *pause* “It sounds like Drift.”

Bronwyn considers all of this. “You should get him to do your hair.”

“What’s wrong with my hair?”

“Are you happy with it?” the rabbit asks.

“Why shouldn’t I be?”

“Conversation-wise, is this the *sabra* in you rising up? Answering a question with a question? Don’t get me wrong, it showcases your *pluckiness*, which is *clearly* one of your best features...but seriously; is it? Can you throw a little Yiddish in for good measure? *Tshutzpah makht di velt geyn kaylekhik, dontsha visn?* (Chutzpah makes the world go round, doncha know?)” *yid-alina, yid-aletta, yid-aloni*

“Are you always so contrary a wab? And since when do you speak Yiddish?!?”

"Are you changing the subject?" Bronwyn asks.

*pause* "What's wrong with my hair?"

"Assuming that the repetition is a benign plea for honesty--"

"And seeing as we've already established a paradigm of honesty with regards to my weight--"

Another pause. "It doesn't entirely suit you."

"Oh."

"Do *you* think it suits you?"

*silence*

"He won't ask you," Bronwyn points out. "To do your hair."

"Why not?"

"Because- Because *that* line of questioning follows the same path as 'Does my bum look big in this?', and we've already established that *that* particular path has puddles of major suckage on it. He won't ask you."

"I don't under--"

"'Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid'." *cass-alina, cass-aletta, cass-aloni*

"What about it?"

"The beginning. Where Robert Redford has been accused of cheating. The accuser, once he's realized that the best gunslinger in the west is standing across the table from him, is shitting his pants. Butch suggests that he invite The Kid to stick around. He only has to ask. That's all. They won't take him up on the offer, The Kid just needs to feel that the guy's not calling him a cheat. That's how it'll all end peacefully."

Elodie ponders this. "You are one special--"

"Ask him to do your hair," Bronwyn interrupts. "Just *sayin'*..."