

Still Crazy After All These Years

by John Wentworth Chapin

Dr. van Roos made quick observations at the midpoint of her Wednesday afternoon Stockholm group: the miller's daughter played with hem of her Chanel jacket, Hansel stared at his fingers, Rapunzel checked her headscarf in the pierglass while her thumbs worried a dark stone, probably that same filthy trichobezoar.

"I can't shake the feeling that he's lying in wait," the miller's daughter whined. "I dreamed we went to Six Flags. Rumpelstiltskin was too short for any of the rides, so we ate funnelcake."

Hansel groaned and shifted his gaunt frame. He quickly looked around at the group and muttered a quiet apology. Any mention of food did him in.

The miller's daughter continued. "Why do I *dream* about him?"

Rapunzel interrupted. "I don't mean to be rude, but — doctor? She married her *king* and he's the one who locked her up. The whole point here is that we're trying to stop having feelings for our *captors*, right? Not helpful elves."

"He wasn't an *elf*," the miller's daughter snapped.

"You all were only locked up for a few days. Try *years*," Rapunzel sniffed, tugging a ghost strand of hair.

"She wanted to eat me," Hansel whispered. "Now she's gone and I can't even friend her."

Dr. van Roos reminded the group that trauma is trauma, regardless. "This is not a competition," she admonished. The three queens' antagonism raised the emotional ante. Group sessions were a nice trick: her hourly take tripled.

