

601 **FADE INTO: EXT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY**

601

The maroon Corvair parked out front.

JOLENE (V.O.)

This whole house belong to you?

602 **INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY**

602

Jolene wanders around, taking it all in as Beth fixes a pot of coffee in the kitchen.

BETH

Yes.

JOLENE

You're no orphan. Not anymore.

BETH

Have you been living in Lexington this whole time?

JOLENE

Louisville.

BETH

What are you doing back here?

JOLENE

You don't seem to like answering your phone.

BETH

I keep hearing that.

JOLENE

Mr. Shaibel died.

There's silence in the kitchen. And Jolene now goes back and peers in on Beth standing there frozen.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

There's a service day after tomorrow. I thought we'd go together.

Beth nods, takes it all in. Then--

BETH

Where are you staying?

JOLENE

What kinda question is *that*?

603

**INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - BETH'S BATHROOM - NIGHT**

603

Jolene, in a nightie, brushes her hair as--

JOLENE

I'm working as a paralegal.

Beth beside her, just as they used to do at Methuen.

BETH

You went to college?

JOLENE

I sure did. Kentucky State. I got a Physical Education Scholarship. But when I found out the school used to be called "State Normal School for Colored Persons," it made we wanna study history. Which pissed me off even more than I already was.

BETH

That seems hard to imagine.

JOLENE

I switched my major to poli sci. Now I'm saving up for law school.

Jolene finishes, turns and sees Beth staring at her.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know. Me. A lawyer. But the world's fucked up, and if I'm gonna change it, I can't spend all my time teaching white girls how to hold a badminton racket. I'm gonna be a radical.

BETH

I didn't know that was a career.

JOLENE

It will be.

Beth goes back in the bedroom and Jolene opens the medicine cabinet. Several vials of green pills in there.

604

**INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - BETH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

604

Beth is getting the bed ready when Jolene enters. She takes out a pack of *Virginia Slims*, shakes out a smoke.

BETH

You just brushed your teeth.

JOLENE

So?

(lights up)

When your picture came out in *Life*, I put it up on the bulletin board in the library. Just to fuck with Deardorff.

(smiles)

*Girl Mozart Startles the World of Chess.*

(then)

My my.

(then)

Was a whole week before she finally noticed it and took it down.

She sits down on the bed. Sees the bottle of pills there.

BETH

I still take them.

JOLENE

Looks like you've been doing more than pills, honey.

BETH

I haven't had anything today.

JOLENE

Not yet anyway.

BETH

I'm supposed to go to Russia at the end of the year and play Borgov.

(then)

I'm afraid of him.

JOLENE

Then don't go.

BETH

If I don't, there's nothing for me to do. I'll just drink.

JOLENE

Looks like you do that anyway.

BETH

I need to quit the wine and the pills. And clean this place up.

JOLENE

That'd be a good start.

BETH

I've got to study chess eight hours a day. They want me to play in San Francisco, and they want me on the *Tonight Show*. I should do all that.

JOLENE

Who's *they*?

BETH

The Chess Federation.

Jolene nods, smokes, waits.

BETH (CONT'D)

But what I want is a drink. If you weren't here, I'd have a bottle of wine.

JOLENE

You sound like Susan Hayward in one of those movies.

Beth sits down beside her.

BETH

What if I've already done it to myself?

JOLENE

Done what?

BETH

Ruined my brain.

JOLENE

Are you serious?

BETH

I read about this pop artist. He bought an original drawing by Michelangelo. When he got it home, he took a piece of art gum and *erased* it, leaving blank paper. I remember being shocked by that. And now, I wonder if I haven't somehow erased my brain.

Jolene looks back at her a moment, then puts out the cigarette.

JOLENE

Let's pretend that you didn't just compare yourself to Michelangelo. And let's look at where you're at. Which after being here all of five minutes, I can see is at the bottom of a fucking hole that looks a lot like you dug it yourself. My advice: *stop digging*.

BETH

I think it might be in my blood-- My mother went crazy.

JOLENE

Went crazy or always was?

BETH

I don't know.

JOLENE

She drink or any such?

BETH

Never.

Hmm. Jolene thinks about that a moment, then gets up and moves to her suitcase.

JOLENE

She's gone-- Quit thinking about her. It's not doing you any good.

Jolene opens it, pulls out a book.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

I got you a present.

She hands Beth her old copy of *Modern Chess Openings*.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

Was me all the time. I was pissed at you for being adopted.

Beth looks at the first page, the name *ELIZABETH HARMON* written in childish scrawl. Beth smiles--

BETH

What about for being a white trash cracker bitch?

JOLENE

Who could forget?

605 **EXT. KENTUCKY HIGHWAY - DAY**

605

Follow the Corvair along the highway--

606 **INT. JOLENE'S CAR - DAY**

606

Jolene at the wheel in dark sunglasses. Beth in her own sunglasses taking in the countryside. She turns to study Jolene, her regal profile with that big Afro, then looks around the car.

BETH

How much does a paralegal make, anyway?

JOLENE

Not enough to buy this car if that's what you're wondering.

(smiles at Beth)

Was a gift. From one of the partners at the firm.

BETH

(smiles back)

Was it now.

JOLENE

He wants to marry me... Soon as he divorces the wife he's already got.

BETH

He sounds like a real peach.

JOLENE

He's white, too. Rick, his name is. He's teaching me how to play *squash*.

BETH

Squash?

JOLENE

A game rich white people play. I bet you'd be good at it.

(off Beth's look)

It's like a one-on-one fist fight with wooden rackets.

BETH

You'll have to teach me.

JOLENE

Whole firm is white. They hired me to keep up with the times. Instead of the usual black cleaning woman, they wanted a clean black woman with a nice ass and a good vocabulary.

BETH

And you are very clean.

JOLENE

When I did the interview, I made sure to drop a lot of words like *reprehensible* and *dichotomy* and they perked right up. But I'm gone the second I pass the Bar.

(then)

What I want is what you've got.

BETH

Well, I'd like to be half as good looking as you are.

JOLENE

I'm talking about your *talent*, stupid. You've been the best at what you do for so long you don't know what it's like for the rest of us.

Beth takes that in the best she can. Changes the subject.

BETH

What will your fellow *radicals* think of you being with a rich white lawyer?

JOLENE

Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke.  
(looks ahead)  
There it is...

**BETH'S POV - THE METHUEN HOME**

Looming up in front of her. No one outside. The place looks deserted.

**EXT. METHUEN HOME - DAY**

As Beth and Jolene get out of the car. Beth looks at the building. She sees Mrs. Deardorff in a window.

607 CONTINUED:

607

MRS. DEARDORFF (V.O.)  
Elizabeth!

608 **QUICK CUT TO: METHUEN HOME - MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM - DAY** 608

A younger Beth going down in a cascade of shattered glass and green pills.

609 **QUICK CUT TO: METHUEN HOME - MRS. DEARDORFF'S OFFICE - DAY** 609

A younger Beth sitting across from Mrs. Deardorff.

MRS. DEARDORFF  
There will be no more chess.

610 **QUICK CUT TO: METHUEN HOME - CHAPEL - DAY** 610

As Beth listens to Miss Lonsdale, writes up her lecture--

MISS LONSDALE  
Exactly how do boys think? Well,  
certainly not with their brains...

611 **QUICK CUT TO: METHUEN HOME - MRS. DEARDORFF'S OFFICE - DAY** 611

Mrs. Deardorff looking over the paper Beth has written, marking it up with a red pencil--

MRS. DEARDORFF  
Faulty organization... you need to  
rewrite this whole paragraph...

612 **EXT. METHUEN HOME - DAY** 612

Jolene takes Beth's hand and they stand there a moment, staring at the tired building.

JOLENE  
You wanna go in? Throw some rocks  
through the windows?

Beth stares at the window. Mrs. Deardorff, no longer there.

BETH  
I just realized that I don't ever  
want to go back in there.

JOLENE  
Let's hit the motel. See if they  
got a pool. I could use a swim.

BETH  
I know a better place.



613 **OMITTED**

613

A614 **EXT. TRAILER ON THE LAKE - DAY**

A614

The trailer Beth grew up in. Now a wreck. No one's around.  
Beth stands there taking it all in. Jolene in the b.g...

JOLENE

A trailer? Wow... you really were  
the gold standard for white trash  
girls everywhere, weren't you?

Beth turns and gently punches her in the arm.

BETH

My mama came from money, then  
married into more of it.

JOLENE

Then what were y'all doing way out  
here?

BETH

It's complicated.

JOLENE

I'll say. How 'bout it, cracker,  
they let black folk swim in that  
lake?

B614 **EXT. LAKE - DUSK**

B614

CRANING DOWN to the blue water. The same lake where Beth and  
her mother picnicked all those years ago. Beth lies atop the  
floating platform watching Jolene, a superb swimmer, swim  
toward her. Jolene pulls herself up onto the platform, lies  
beside Beth. After a moment--

JOLENE

Tell me about the boys.

BETH

The boys?

JOLENE

How many you been with? And by  
"been with" I mean *been with*.

BETH

Three.

JOLENE

Slut. Who were they?

BETH

The first was just a guy I met at a party. I was sixteen.

JOLENE

I always say make your mistakes early. How was it?

BETH

Quick.

JOLENE

I meant outside of the obvious. How'd it *feel*?

BETH

Like the answer to a math problem. It was mostly about curiosity.

JOLENE

Okay. Who came next, so to speak?

BETH

Harry. Beltik. He was very sweet. It was nice to be so... *wanted* by someone.

JOLENE

But you didn't want him back.

BETH

It wasn't fair. He worked so hard to make me feel good, to make me a better player. But all I did was make him feel worse.

JOLENE

Who was number three?

BETH

Benny. He's very handsome. He tried to keep me sober. He's a compulsive gambler.

JOLENE

There's irony for you. You break his heart, too?

BETH

I might have.

JOLENE

No one's broken yours?

She looks at Jolene. Who sees everything in the look.

JOLENE (CONT'D)  
Ah. So there's a number four?

BETH  
No.

JOLENE  
But you wish.

BETH  
It's not going to happen.

JOLENE  
You sure?

BETH  
Very.

JOLENE  
What's his name, at least?

BETH  
Townes. That's his last name.

JOLENE  
Does he have a first name?

BETH  
I honestly don't know.  
(then)  
C'mon, I'll race you to shore.

JOLENE  
You're a damn fool.

And we CRANE BACK UP AS THEY DIVE INTO THE LAKE.

614 **INT. LUTHERAN CHURCH - MORNING**

614

A MINISTER stands beside a closed casket speaking to a dozen mourners. Beth is restless and Jolene is dozing. Beth leans over...

BETH  
Mrs. Deardorff isn't here.

Jolene opens her eyes. Looks around.

BETH (CONT'D)  
None of them are.

JOLENE

Deardorff fell and broke her hip.

(off Beth's look)

Right after you left. She walked with a cane after. Was never the same.

(then)

Made me almost believe in God.

Beth looks around at the paltry group of mourners.

BETH

No one's crying.

JOLENE

They all look like they're waiting in line at a bank.

(then)

Are you okay?

BETH

I feel bad.

(looks at Jolene)

I owed him ten dollars.

Jolene looks at her, sees that she's serious and then cracks up. Beth looks at her, *what?*

615 INT./EXT. JOLENE'S CAR - DAY

615

They head back in silence. Beth looks out as they approach the turn off to the Methuen home.

BETH

Pull off.

JOLENE

I thought you--

BETH

--I changed my mind-- there's one thing I wanna see.

616 EXT. METHUEN HOME - DAY

616

As Jolene turns up the drive and pulls up to the main building. Beth gets out, leans down--

BETH

I'll only be a minute.

617

**INT. METHUEN HOME - ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY**

617

AS Beth enters the dark building and starts down the empty hallway. She passes the chapel-- "BEN HUR" PLAYS INSIDE. She pauses and looks in at the dark shapes of the girls' heads watching. Miss Lonsdale asleep in her chair.

Beth continues to the end of the hall to the door marked "MAINTENANCE." She's about to open it, but pauses as she hears ANOTHER DOOR OPEN at the other end of the hall.

**BETH'S POV - MRS. DEARDORFF**

Locking her door, A CANE tucked in the crook of her arm. She senses something and looks up the hall. Stares off in Beth's direction, squinting to see who it is in the dark at the far end of the corridor. Finally--

MRS. DEARDORFF

You should be in chapel, young lady.

BETH

Yes, ma'am.

Oblivious to who's actually standing at the other end of the hall, she turns and starts slowly hobbling towards the front door.

Beth watches her go outside and disappear into the sunlight, and then turns back to the door and slowly opens it. A LIGHT IS ON BELOW. She starts down--

618

**INT. METHUEN HOME - BASEMENT - SAME**

618

As Beth slowly comes down the stairs and over to the table beside the furnace. The chessboard and pieces aren't here, but the janitor's unpainted chair is still in position.

Beth thoughtfully seats herself in Mr. Shaibel's chair. She looks down at the table where the board used to be, then up at where she used to sit and **sees something she hadn't seen before**. Now...

PAN FROM BETH TO THE WALL OPPOSITE. More of a rough partition than a wall. Boards nailed to two-by-fours. Instead of the calendar that once hung there, the partition is now covered with photographs and clippings and covers from *Chess Review*.

Each item is neatly taped to the wood and covered with clear plastic to keep it clean and free of dust-- the only things in this dingy basement that are.

There are PICTURES OF HER. PRINTED GAMES FROM *CHESS REVIEW*. NEWSPAPER PIECES from the Lexington *Herald Leader* and from the *New York Times* and from some magazine in German. The old *Life* piece is here, next to it is the cover of *Chess Review* with Beth holding the U.S. Championship trophy.

Filling in the smaller spaces are newspaper pictures. There must be thirty photographs.

Beth stands up and stares at all of it. She reaches out and pulls one photograph that's hidden behind a clipping... She looks at it, her breath catching...

Jolene watches Beth exit the building and walk to the car. She gets in and sits there a moment. Clearly rattled. She watches as girls begin running into the yard for a bit of exercise, LAUGHING AND SHOUTING...

JOLENE

Beth?

Beth looks down at the PHOTO IN HER HAND, begins to shake and come apart. Jolene gently takes it from her, examines it...

**INSERT - PHOTO**

The picture that the chess club teacher, Mr. Ganz, took of Beth and Mr. Shaibel all those years ago.

Jolene puts her hand on the back of Beth's neck...

JOLENE (CONT'D)

Oh, honey, did you bite off more than you can chew?

Beth sits there a moment, her head ducked. She finally turns to Jolene--

BETH

You have to help me.  
(takes her hand)  
Please. *Help me.*

Jolene smiles at her. Kisses her forehead.

JOLENE

You know I will.

620 **EXT. METHUEN HOME - SAME**

620

As the girls watch as Jolene now drives away from the place as fast as she can.

621 **INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY**

621

TWO WOMEN, one tall, one plump, sit primly on the couch. Both are dressed conservatively -- floral dress for one, beige for the other, with no-nonsense shoes. Meet MRS. BLOCKER and MRS. DODGE from the *Christian Crusade*. They each hold a tea cup.

MRS. DODGE

What we would really like from you, Elizabeth, would be some kind of statement.

BETH

Statement?

Beth sits across from them in Mrs. Wheatley's armchair.

MRS. BLOCKER

*Christian Crusade* would like you to make your position public. In a world where so many keep silent...

BETH

What position?

MRS. BLOCKER

As we know, the spread of Communism is also the spread of Atheism.

BETH

I suppose so.

MRS. BLOCKER

It's not a matter of supposing. It's a matter of fact. Of Marxist-Leninist fact. The Holy Word is anathema to the Kremlin and the atheists who sit there.

BETH

I have no quarrel with that.

MRS. BLOCKER

Good. What we want is a statement to that effect.

BETH

To the press?

MRS. BLOCKER

Exactly! If *Christian Crusade* is going to--

She stops, feels the weight of the manila envelope in her lap as though estimating its weight.

MRS. BLOCKER (CONT'D)

We had something prepared.

Beth looks back at her. Hating her. Saying nothing. Mrs. Blocker opens the envelope, passes her a sheet of paper.

MRS. BLOCKER (CONT'D)

There you go.

Beth reads it, then looks up at the two ladies.

BETH

I'm a chess player.

MRS. DODGE

Of course you are, my dear. But you're also a Christian.

BETH

I'm not sure of that.

They both stare at her as she lights a cigarette.

BETH (CONT'D)

Look, I have no intention of saying things like this.

MRS. DODGE

Why not?

BETH

Because it's fucking nonsense.

Mrs. Blocker leans forward and takes back the statement.

MRS. BLOCKER

*Christian Crusade* has already invested a good deal of money.

She motions to a large TROPHY on the table.

MRS. BLOCKER (CONT'D)

We paid for your last trip to San Francisco.



MRS. DODGE

We were all very proud of you.

MRS. BLOCKER

And we've already spent a good deal more on your upcoming trip to the Soviet Union--

BETH

Fine.

(stands up)

I'll give it back.

They watch dumbfounded as she walks over to the desk and writes a check. She then hands it to Mrs. Blocker.

MRS. DODGE

I hope you know what you're doing, dear.

Benny on the phone--

BENNY

It's now official: You're crazy. You're out of your fucking mind.

**INTERCUTTING BENNY & BETH**

BETH

Maybe. Probably. But I did it. And it's too late to undo it.

BENNY

Are the tickets paid for?

BETH

No. Nothing's paid for.

BENNY

You understand, you have to pay *Intourist* for the hotel in advance.

BETH

I know that. I've got two thousand in my bank account. It would be more, but I've been keeping up the house. It's going to take a thousand more to do it. At least that. I was wondering--

BENNY

--I don't have it.

BETH

What do you mean? You've got money.

BENNY

*I don't have it.*

BETH

Did you gamble it away?

BENNY

What difference does it make? You can call the Federation. Or the State Department.

BETH

The Federation doesn't like me. They think I haven't done as much for chess as I could have.

BENNY

You should have gone on *Tonight* and *Phil Donahue*.

BETH

I don't want to go to Russia alone.  
(silence)  
Benny?

BENNY

Are you kidding me?

BETH

What--

BENNY

First you don't come back to New York, basically tell me that you'd rather be a drunk than be with me. And then you pull this crap? You can fucking well go alone.

She sits there a moment, suddenly regretful--

BETH

Maybe I shouldn't have done it. Maybe I didn't have to give them the money back.

BENNY

"Maybe" is a loser's word.

622 CONTINUED: (2)

BETH  
Benny--

BENNY  
Don't call me anymore.

And he hangs up. She stands there frozen.

623 **INT. SQUASH COURT - DAY** 623

As Beth and Jolene play hard against one another.

624 **INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY** 624

Beth on the phone...

VOICE  
What money the federation has,  
comes from the magazine. Four  
hundred dollars is the most we  
could possibly spare.

625 **INT. SQUASH COURT - DAY** 625

As Beth and Jolene battle it out...

626 **INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY** 626

Beth once more on the phone...

VOICE  
State Department. How may I direct  
your call?

Beth starts to speak--

VOICE (CONT'D)  
--Please hold.

627 **INT. SQUASH COURT - DAY** 627

Beth shoves Jolene against the wall--

628 **INT. WHEATLEY HOUSE - DAY** 628

Beth on hold, absently playing with the pieces on the  
chessboard. It's been a while.

O'MALLEY (PHONE)  
Cultural Affairs. O'Malley  
speaking.

She sits up--



632 CONTINUED:

632

O'MALLEY (PHONE)

I'm sorry. I'm really sorry. *But...*  
we will be sending one of our men  
with you. Keep you safe.

633 INT. SQUASH COURT - DAY

633

They sit on the floor, knees to their chests.

JOLENE

That's a lot of money.

BETH

I can go alone. I've been alone  
most of my life.

JOLENE

You said they're sending someone?

BETH

Yeah, but it's not the same thing.  
It's more like a chaperone.

Jolene looks at her a moment, then pushes herself up.

JOLENE

I'll give you the money.

BETH

What? No-- you just said, it's a  
lot of money--

JOLENE

I have it. And more. I been saving.

BETH

You need that money for law school.

JOLENE

I do. And you'll pay it back when  
you win.

BETH

And if I don't win?

JOLENE

It's still worth it.

BETH

I guess you're my guardian angel.

JOLENE

Oh, for cryin' out loud-- Hey Beth?  
Fuck you.

Beth looks at her. *What?*

JOLENE (CONT'D)

For someone so damn "gifted," you  
really are pretty damn dumb.

(then)

Shaibel wasn't the only one, kept  
after you. I know how you lost to  
Benny Watts in Vegas, then beat him  
in Ohio. I read the papers and even  
one time on a group trip into town,  
I spent all my ice cream money on a  
damn chess magazine had your ugly  
face on it.

(then)

For a time, I was all you had. And  
for a time, you were all I had. We  
weren't orphans. Not as long as we  
had each other. You understand what  
I'm saying? I'm not your *Guardian  
Angel*, I'm not here to *save* you.  
Hell, I can barely save *me*. I'm  
here because you need me to be here  
and that's what family does. That's  
what we are.

Beth takes that in, is rocked by the truth of it.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

Someday, I might need *you*-- it's  
doubtful, but you never know. But  
if I do...

(looks Beth in the eye)

...you'll come, won't you?

BETH

(shrugs)

I might.

She smiles and they sit there a moment, considering each  
other, before Jolene finally nods and now stands.

JOLENE

Get up. Let's play again. Only this  
time, get ready, cuz I'm gonna drag  
your crazy gifted ass all over this  
court.

633 CONTINUED: (2)

633

BETH

Good luck.

634 INT. AEROFLOT FLIGHT - NIGHT

634

MR. BOOTH, dark suit, horn-rimmed glasses, accepts a cup of water from the STEWARD. He drinks half of it, then reaches into his jacket. After some fumbling, he produces a little silver flask and pulls the cap off with his teeth.

He fills the glass and then slips the flask back into his pocket. WIDEN NOW TO REVEAL BETH BESIDE HIM, watching. He holds the glass towards Beth in a perfunctory way.

She shakes her head and turns to the window.

MR. BOOTH

Have you been to Russia before?

BETH

(shakes her head)

Have you?

MR. BOOTH

Once or twice.

But something in his smile and tone says, *Yes, many times.*

MR. BOOTH (CONT'D)

There's a few rules. One, you stay in your hotel at all times unless you're with me. Two, do not answer your door or your phone unless it's me.

BETH

How will I know it's you if I don't answer?

MR. BOOTH

(ignores her)

Three, no drinking.

BETH

You just offered me a drink.

MR. BOOTH

That was a test.

She just looks at him. *Are you fucking kidding me?*

MR. BOOTH (CONT'D)

Let me know if any of the Russian players try to speak with you. In particular, Vasily Borgov. If he signals in any way or sends you a note, I want to know immediately.

BETH

What would a signal look like?

MR. BOOTH

It could be anything. He could do it during one of your matches.

BETH

How?

MR. BOOTH

I don't know. I don't play chess. Just be on the lookout. I'm told that he may want to talk.

BETH

Talk about what?

He doesn't answer. She keeps looking his way.

BETH (CONT'D)

What part of the State Department did you say you were from again?

635

**INT. CAR - NIGHT**

635

POURING RAIN. Beth quickly gets in the back seat. Mr. Booth gets in up front. Beth hears/feels the trunk close, and now watches as THE DRIVER comes around and opens the door. When he bends down to smile at her, Beth can't help but notice A BLACK PISTOL IN A SHOULDER HOLSTER under his wet coat.

He gets in, starts the car and Mr. Booth begins talking to him in flawless Russian as they drive off.

636

**EXT. MOSCOW HOTEL - NIGHT**

636

Rather fancy. Beth gets out of the car and takes it in.

637

**INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

637

As Beth follows a BELLMAN into an incredible room. Booth tips him as he walks out, then looks around her room--

MR. BOOTH

I bet this one's nicer than mine.



637 CONTINUED:

He gives her the key.

MR. BOOTH (CONT'D)  
Remember-- stay in the room, don't  
leave the hotel unless you're with  
me.

She nods, looks at the key as he heads for the door.

MR. BOOTH (CONT'D)  
I'll come get you in the morning.

BETH  
Will you knock two times fast, one  
time slow?

MR. BOOTH  
Good one.  
(out the door)  
Welcome to Russia.

He's gone. She looks around the opulent room and sits down on  
the bed. Utterly alone. Quoting Mrs. Wheatley--

BETH  
Yes, this will do nicely.

RUSSIAN PIANO OVER...

638 **INT. RUSSIAN ORNATE LIBRARY - DAY** 638

Beth sips tea with the other PLAYERS in the tournament. The  
TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR addresses the group, but all we hear is  
the music. Beth turns slightly to one side, sees Borgov--

639 **INT. RUSSIAN SYMPHONY HALL - NIGHT** 639

ZOOMING OUT from a rapt Beth. Borgov over her shoulder...

640 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT** 640

Under the music can we hear the Tournament Director as he  
introduces the players to the crowd.

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR  
Beth Harmon...

Beth enters the hall to vigorous applause. She drinks it in.

641 **INT. SYMPHONY HALL - NIGHT** 641

CONTINUE ZOOMING OUT As the music washes over Beth, we begin  
to see other tournament players on either side of her.



646 CONTINUED:

646

**QUICK PAN TO A WOMAN IN THE AUDIENCE**

NONA GARINADASHVILI. Stone faced. Watching Beth.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
 But she's the Female World Champion  
 and has never faced men.

647 **INT. BBC RADIO BOOTH - NIGHT**

647

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER  
 My guess is that Laev was expecting  
 an easy win. Not at all the twenty-  
 seven move thrashing that Beth  
 Harmon just gave him.

648 **CUT TO A KING BEING LAID DOWN ON THE BOARD**

648

QUICKLY TILTING UP to a stunned Laev who shakes her hand. The audience is SILENT as the Tournament Director comes over and shakes her hand as well. Beth walks off the stage to sudden, shocking APPLAUSE.

649 **EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

649

A DOOR BURSTS OPEN as Mr. Booth escorts Beth from the hall. A small group of RUSSIAN FANS rush over and call out to her for her autograph. Beth obliges under the watchful Mr. Booth...

650 **INT. RUSSIAN DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

650

A dinner for all of the players and their spouses. Beth is at the far end of the table across from DUHAMEL. LAUGHTER at the other end and she sees Borgov and his wife with the other top Russian players. They hang on Borgov's every word.

At one point, they look down the table at the isolated Beth. Someone leans over and whispers something to Borgov, who now looks at Beth, says something out loud to more laughter.

Beth looks away, notices Booth in the far corner of the room, watching everyone.

651 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

651

As Beth trades moves with Duhamel. The AUDIENCE HAS THEIR OWN PORTABLE CHESS BOARDS IN THEIR LAPS AND FOLLOW ALONG.

652 **EXT. RUSSIAN STREET - DAY**

652

Mr. Booth escorts Beth, his arms laden with shopping bags full of the day's purchases. Her purchases to be exact.

652 CONTINUED:

652

She takes in the strange surroundings. Particularly a strip in the center of a Boulevard where OLD MEN sit hunched over chess boards. She pauses to look that way. Mr. Booth takes her arm and drags her on.

653 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

653

Duhamel stands. They shake hands. Beth walks off stage to APPLAUSE. As she passes Borgov, he glances up at her, it's brief, but long enough to unnerve her.

654 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - BACK STAGE - NIGHT**

654

She pauses to collect herself. Turns around and looks back.

BORGOV'S CHAIR IS NOW EMPTY. She sees him at the other end of the stage looking at the display board with the game Beth had just finished. One hand cupped over his jaw and the other in his coat pocket, he frowns as he studies the position.

Beth quickly turns and leaves.

655 **EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

655

A larger group of fans wait for Beth, call out to her for her autograph. Mr. Booth not so patiently acquiesces.

656 **INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

656

She lays out clothing for the next day, walks to the window and looks out at the city.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Beth Harmon's games with Hellstrom and Shapkin were rigorous, grim affairs and, I'm sure for the young American, rather exhausting.

657 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

657

TILT UP FROM AN AUDIENCE MEMBER'S PAPER BOARD TO Beth moving pieces down below as...

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

But there was a solidity to her opening moves that she was able to maintain through the middle game and on to the point each of them resigned.

HELLSTROM stands up and walks away from the table without a word. Beth gets up to APPLAUSE.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER  
Hellstrom, it must be said clearly  
took it rather hard and didn't  
speak to Harmon afterward.

**JUMP TO SHAPKIN**

As he stands, takes Beth's hand and kisses it--

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Shapkin, however, was very  
civilized, very decent, and took  
his loss with grace even though  
Harmon's win over him was decisive  
and merciless.

He turns away, his eyes wet as he walks quickly off stage.  
Beth gets up and takes in the applause.

658

**EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

658

As Beth moves through an even bigger crowd of fans. A few are  
YOUNG GIRLS and they all reach out to touch her.

659

**INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - RESTAURANT - DAY**

659

Beth sits at a table eating *blinchiki* tea with blackberry  
jam. She watches as her WAITER -- a serious-faced boy of like  
fourteen -- serves the little buckwheat cakes onto her plate  
and spreads the melted butter and caviar and sour cream for  
her with a little silver spoon.

She looks around. Aside from group of MEN IN ARMY OFFICERS  
UNIFORMS and two AUTHORITATIVE LOOKING MEN IN DARK SUITS,  
she's by herself in the giant restaurant.

Her waiter was now holding up a pitcher of what looks like  
water on a silver tray, a little shot glass beside it.

WAITER  
*Vodka?*

She shakes her head quickly-

BETH  
*Nyet.*

--and pours herself a glass of water from the cut-glass  
pitcher in the center of the table.



663 CONTINUED:

663

MR. BOOTH

So then when do we finish?

BETH

Tomorrow. But right now, we really need some sleep.

664 INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

664

As Beth steps off the elevator. She hears voices, approaches a door that's ajar. She peers inside at--

**A SUITE**

A crystal chandelier hangs from an ornate ceiling. A pair of green overstuffed sofas and dark oil paintings, an open door leading to a bedroom.

THREE MEN in shirtsleeves stand around a table between the couches. One of the men moves pieces about on a chessboard while the other two comment.

BORGOV is the one moving the pieces around. One of the men seated at the table, leans in to get a better look at the board, it's LUCHENKO, getting help from the other two.

Borgov pours himself a shot of vodka from a crystal decanter and turns to look at the doorway. Beth is gone.

665 INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME

665

As she comes in and closes the door. She sits down and begins laying out the position of the game she just adjourned--

**PULL BACK THROUGH THE WINDOW**

As Beth sets to work studying all by herself. NOW TRACK ALONG THE WINDOWS TO THE SUITE where the three men analyze Borgov's position together. NOW TRACK BACK THE OTHER WAY...

...TO BETH. Alone in her room. No one helping her.

666 INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT

666

Luchenko enters looking calm and rested in another nice suit. He smiles at her with restrained politeness. She manages--

BETH

Good afternoon.

She sees the other table at the other end of the stage with Borgov and Duhamel's position. The two men walk in together and sit down at the board in grim silence.

666 CONTINUED:

666

As the referee brings out the envelope with her sealed move inside and opens it. He makes the move. Punches Luchenko's clock.

**TIGHT ON BETH**

As she plays.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Harmon had her ninety minutes of play and Luchenko had the same, along with thirty-five minutes he had left from the day before.

**TIGHT ON THE BOARD**

As the pieces are moved about.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
This put three things against her: Luchenko having the white pieces, his still unstopped attack, and that extra allotment of time.

667 **INT. BBC RADIO BOOTH - NIGHT**

667

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER  
So it was all the more impressive when she beat him with twenty-five minutes still on her clock.

668 **TIGHT ON LUCHENKO**

668

ZOOM OUT as Luchenko stands up--

LUCHENKO  
Excellent! A beautiful recovery!

His words are so conciliatory that Beth doesn't know what to say.

LUCHENKO (CONT'D)  
I resign with relief.

She holds out her hand to him and he shakes it warmly.

BETH  
I've played games of yours ever since I was a small girl. I've always admired you.



LUCHENKO

You are how old again? No-- please don't tell me, it will only drive a stake through my heart.

He smiles warmly.

LUCHENKO (CONT'D)

I've gone over your games at this tournament. You are a marvel, my dear. I may have just played the best chess player of my life.

She's unable to speak. Just stares back at him in disbelief. He smiles once more, leans in close--

LUCHENKO (CONT'D)

You will get used to it.

**EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

As Beth moves through the growing crowd...

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

So far Elizabeth Harmon is proving to be the biggest attraction since the Youth Festival in 1957. Some in Moscow are even calling her an Ambassador of sorts...

**INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

As Beth moves a piece against FLENTO.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This afternoon, she played the English Opening against Flento. A sequence I've always found to be like the Sicilian in reverse.

Various shots as the game goes on and on. Beth looks wiped out, exhausted.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

He's nowhere near her level and I don't think she expected the game to go on for nearly four hours.

Flento, looking rested responding--

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

But Flento put up quite a fight along the two main diagonals and played the four-knights variation with a sophistication that looked, for a while at least, like it was far beyond Harmon's.

Shots of the board and the big board and the audience as--

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

But by the middle game, she traded herself out of that position and ultimately forced Flento to resign. The result being she could come to her match tomorrow with Borgov exhausted.

671

**INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER**

671

As Beth collapses on her bed. She looks at the nightstand. RACK TO A BOTTLE OF GREEN PILLS now in immediate f.g. She reaches for it. Hesitates. Holds it up and stares at it--

ALICE (V.O.)

Most times when people tell us that something's for the best, it's for the worst.

672

**INT./EXT. CAR/LARGE HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

672

YOUNG BETH in the back seat. Her mother Alice, in manic mode sits in the front rapidly tapping her hand on the wheel..

ALICE

But this time, it's true? Okay?

She looks back at Beth who just nods.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I'll be right back.

And she gets out of the car. As Beth turns and watches her mother walk to A LARGE HOME, set back behind a giant lawn. THE FOG hangs low over the property.

Her mother knocks on the door, glances back at Beth, waves, then turns back as the door opens and a well-dressed WOMAN, appears. A small child in the doorway beside her.

Beth watches as they speak a moment, her mother pointing to the car and the woman immediately gets upset. She turns and calls to someone inside the house.

And now, a MAN comes to the door. Hard to see him from here. He and Beth's mother begin arguing. She again points to the car.

Beth hears bits of conversation like *I can't do that now... You should have thought of that years ago... you have room here-- please... I'm sorry--*

They close the door on Beth's mother. She pounds on it for a moment.

Beth turns away. It's quiet for a moment. She jumps as her mother gets back in the car starts screaming, tears at her own hair.

A hand reaches to her shoulder from the back seat--

BETH

Mama?

Her mother stops, leans her head on Beth's hand. Calms herself down.

BETH (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

ALICE

Just a problem I gotta solve. I just wish I had more time.

BETH

What problem?

ALICE

What I do with you.

BETH

What do you mean?

ALICE

I think you know.

BETH

(looks at the house)  
Who was that?

ALICE

A mistake. A rounding error.

She stares at Beth a moment.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Question is, now what?

672 CONTINUED: (2)

672

BETH  
Let's go home.

Her mother thinks a moment, then smiles.

ALICE  
Yes. Let's go home.

673 **EXT./INT. HIGHWAY/CAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

673

She pulls away from the house. Beth looks back at it as the car picks up speed. They drive in silence. She looks at Beth in the rearview mirror--

ALICE  
You hear people say they wanna end  
their pain...  
(pulling out onto the  
highway)  
But all they do is leave it behind  
for everyone else.

Beth meets her look.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
I won't do that to you.

Her mother smiles at Beth in the rearview, keeps looking at her as the car moves through the fog.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
I promise.

Beth sits up tall, sees A TRUCK emerging from the fog coming there way. Even the seven year old knows that she should keep her eyes on the road.

BETH  
Mama--

ALICE  
Close your eyes.

She does. THE TRUCK HONKING ITS HORN and we--

A674 **CUT BACK TO MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT** A674

As Beth lies there another a moment, then gets up and walks to the bathroom and DUMPS THE PILLS INTO THE TOILET.

674 **CUT TO NEWSREEL FOOTAGE OF BORGOV**

674

Borgov as a young man, various images--

## RUSSIAN VOICE

(subtitled)

*Vasily Borgov, besides being a chess master and World Champion, is also an amateur soccer player and once held a collegiate record for the javelin throw. It's said that he exercises with weights during a tournament in a private gym that the government keeps open late especially for him. He does not smoke or drink. He's been a master since the age of eleven.*

675

**CUT TO NEWSREEL FOOTAGE OF BETH**

675

And now footage of Beth in Russia, at the tournament--

## RUSSIAN VOICE

*Elizabeth Harmon has played with confidence during the tournament. But as we look back on Comrade Borgov's games, the most alarming thing for the American should be that he has lost so few of them....*

676

**EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

676

As Beth gets out of the limo, is greeted by a swarm of fans. MANY of them are young girls, many of whom dress like her.

677

**INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

677

Beth walks into the hall, hesitates as she sees that it's packed, every inch of the aisles are filled with standees jammed in behind the last row of seats.

There's a HUSH as she walks over to where Borgov is already seated, waiting for her.

It's not only his remorseless chess she has to contend with, she's terrified of the man. She's been terrified of him ever since she saw him at the gorilla cage in Mexico City.

He's merely looking down at his untouched black pieces, but she can barely breathe. There's no sign of weakness in this figure, motionless at the board, oblivious to her or the thousands of other people who must be staring at him.

He's like some menacing icon. He could be painted on the wall of a cave.

677 CONTINUED:

677

As Beth slowly walks over and sits down at the whites, a soft, hushed APPLAUSE breaks out in the audience.

The referee presses the button, and Beth's clock begins TICKING. She reaches for a piece--

678 **EXT. TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

678

A group of people hover around a radio--

RUSSIAN RADIO ANNOUNCER  
(subtitled)

*Harmon moves pawn to queen four.  
The Queen's Gambit. Borgov plays  
pawn to Queen four. Harmon plays  
pawn to queen bishop four, offering  
the gambit pawn. Borgov declines,  
moves pawn to king four. The Albin  
Counter Gambit--*

679 **INT. BBC RADIO BOOTH - NIGHT**

679

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER

The dance in progress, I have to say, I found Borgov's seventh move to be a bit of a surprise...

680 **INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

680

Beth and Borgov both hunched over the board... we now move around the room... to the big board that shows the moves to the audience... to the audience... some following on their own portable boards... some getting up to stretch... to the board again, more pieces developed....

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER

Normally, Borgov would do something more solid. But here he's going against his own style and playing a rare line to win. He must win.

At one point, we go from the board to a young BOY in the tournament hall, he watches as they place the move, the director nodding to him and he turns and runs out...

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Harmon's response was a complete deviation from the Albin, which must have surprised him right back, while getting her out into the open.



REPORTER

Are you going to beat him?

BETH

I haven't made any mistakes so far.

REPORTER

Neither has he.

They're all shooting pictures of her.

REPORTER #2

Is it true you learned how to play  
in an orphanage when you were two?

BETH

I was nine.

REPORTER #3

Who taught you?

BETH

His name was Shaibel. William  
Shaibel. He was the janitor. We  
used to play in the basement.

REPORTER #4

The *janitor* taught you to play  
chess?

BETH

That's right. William Shaibel was a  
fine player. He spent a lot of time  
at it, and he was quite good. Will  
you all print that?

(has to turn away)

Now if you'll all excuse me, I'm  
very tired.

As she walks away, fighting back tears as from the back of  
the gaggle, we hear--

VOICE

Excuse me-- Miss Harmon?

BETH

Please, I really have to--

VOICE

--I'm with the *Lexington Herald-  
Leader*.



683 CONTINUED: (2)

683

She stops cold, turns back as TOWNES STEPS TO THE FRONT of the group and smiles that perfect smile of his.

TOWNES

Our readers back home in Kentucky would like to know if it's true, that you're here all by yourself.

And to the confusion of every other reporter, she throws her arms around him--

684 INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

684

A polished off meal on a room service cart.

TOWNES (O.S.)

I'm in Baltimore two nights ago...

A HAND reaches up and grabs a bite and we follow the hand down to the floor where Beth and Townes sit legs crossed, facing one another.

TOWNES (CONT'D)

...when I get a call from someone with a sexy voice, saying I need to get my ass to Russia. And I say, how exactly am I supposed to do that? And she says there's a ticket waiting for me at the airport. And when I ask her where I'm supposed to stay, she says *I'm sure Beth has a lovely room with a big ass bed.*

BETH

How'd you get a visa so fast?

TOWNES

The newspaper helped me -- I'm an associate editor now -- and the Moscow embassy.

BETH

Really?

TOWNES

I'm guessing they thought I'd *distract* you.

Beth shakes her head.

BETH

If they only knew.

He looks at her a moment.

TOWNES

I know you were angry with me. And I'm sorry-- I never said anything because I thought it would presume that there could be something between us. And there couldn't be--

BETH

Because you're so much older?

He smiles.

BETH (CONT'D)

Don't be sorry. I was stupid. You were a good friend. You are a good friend.

TOWNES

You broke my heart.

BETH

I have a way of doing that.

She takes his hand.

\*

BETH (CONT'D)

Do you forgive me?

TOWNES

*(I'm here)*  
Clearly.

He takes a breath, sits back.

TOWNES (CONT'D)

Consider me your Second. What do we need to do to help you beat Borgov?

BETH

I need the pills. And the booze. I need my head cloudy to win. I can't visualize the games without them.

TOWNES

Really? You think that's what's brought you here?

BETH

I think it's what I'm used to.

TOWNES

But you've been doing fine without  
all that.

(not sure)

Haven't you?

BETH

I have. I threw the pills away. But  
this morning, I asked at the desk  
where I can get some more. I need  
them right now.

She looks at Townes--

BETH (CONT'D)

Or I thought I did.

TOWNES

She's a good friend, that Jolene.

Beth smiles, nods, *That she is.*

TOWNES (CONT'D)

Let's get you onto that *big ass*  
*bed*, so you can get some sleep.

**EXT. MOSCOW PARK - MORNING**

AN OLD MAN carries a satchel to one of the tables. At this  
early hour, they're all empty. He's the only one here. He  
sits down at one of them and pulls a rolled chess mat from  
the bag. Then begins pulling the pieces from the bag...

**INT. MOSCOW HOTEL - BETH'S HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON**

Beth is sound asleep. Townes comes over with a cup of coffee  
and sits down beside her. Gently rubs her shoulder.

TOWNES

Hey.

She opens her eyes. Sees him smiling at her.

TOWNES (CONT'D)

Lady, you were *out*.

She sits up and takes the coffee from him.

BETH

What time is it?

TOWNES

Late.

THE PHONE RINGS.

TOWNES (CONT'D)  
I'll get it. Drink your coffee.

She obeys as he gets up and grabs it.

TOWNES (CONT'D)  
Yes? Put him through.

Beth looks at the clothes Townes laid out for her on the chair.

TOWNES (CONT'D)  
Are you all there?

She looks at Townes.

TOWNES (CONT'D)  
I'll put her on.

He hands her the phone...

BENNY (V.O.)  
If he moves the knight, hit him  
with the king rook pawn....

BETH  
Benny!

Benny on the phone.

BENNY  
If he goes for the king bishop, do  
the same. Then open up your queen  
file..

**NOW INTERCUTTING**

BETH  
How do you know--

BENNY  
It's in the *Times*. It's seven a.m.  
here and we've been working on it  
for three hours.

BETH  
*We?*

As Benny lists them, we see Harry standing behind him, and the twins -- Matt & Mike -- as well as Levertov and Wexler.

BENNY

Harry's here, and so's Matt and Mike, and Levertov and Wexler.

HARRY

Hi Beth.

BETH

Hi, Harry. It's good to hear your voice.

And now the others call out their own hello's, but Benny waves his hand and quiets them--

BENNY

Hey, assholes, this is costing me a bundle-- Beth-- listen to me-- you *have to get that file open.*

BETH

How do I--

BENNY

There are four ways, depending on what he does. We've each worked a way through. Do you have it handy?

Townes hands her the printout of the game.

BETH

Yes...

BENNY

Let's start with his knight to B-5, where you push the king rook pawn. You got that?

BETH

Yes.

BENNY

All right. Here's Harry--

HARRY

There are three things you might do now...



The chess board. The park. Townes. People out front watching the moves on the display board.

Borgov is calm, gives her the barest of glances, and even then, only rarely. He makes his move and--

Beth leans on her cheeks on her fists, studies the board. She looks out at the huge audience. Sees Townes looking up at the display board--

TOWNES

Shit--

Townes looks at Beth, sees her face--

TOWNES (CONT'D)

He's not doing what he's supposed to do.

The RUSSIAN WOMAN sitting beside him shushes him.

Townes watches Beth look down at the board and close her eyes.

Beth opens her eyes and slowly looks up. We come around her to face Borgov looking at her curiously. We TILT UP TO THE ORNATE CEILING and see them all hanging up there-- her old friends, **the bat-like chess pieces, upside down, waiting...**

Beth begins moving them about, looking at the various options.

She makes her move. A SERIES OF CUTS as they trade moves. Beth brings her bishop out...

BETH

Check.

Borgov looks up from the board.

BORGOV

Draw.

Beth is stunned--

As the announcer tears off a sheet from the teletype...

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER

Borgov never offers draws, but he's offering Elizabeth Harmon one.

(MORE)

696 CONTINUED:

696

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

If she accepts, she leaves the stage in a tie with the world champion.

She looks down at the board...

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

If they play on, when the dust settles and the endgame emerges, she could find herself in a very different position. Borgov is death on endgames. He's famous for it. Harmon, however, is not. She's more known for coming out early and strong. Demoralizing her opponents from the get go. So I think she should accept the draw. The world will see it as a solid achievement.

697 INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT

697

She looks back at him. For the first time, he looks tired.

BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER

A draw, however, is not a win. And the one thing we've learned about Beth Harmon is that *she loves to win*.

Beth shakes her head.

BETH

No.

He shrugs and takes the bishop with his queen. She attacks his queen with her knight. He moves his queen where he has to. She brings the knight up for the fork.

We can hear crowd MURMUR the word *CHECK--*

He moves his king and she lifts his queen from the board. He takes hers. She attacks the rook and he moves it back by a square.

698 INT. BBC RADIO BOOTH - NIGHT

698

As he tears off another page from he teletype...



698 CONTINUED:

698

## BBC RADIO ANNOUNCER

That check has been the whole point of the sequence, beginning with the bishop -- cutting down the scope of the rook by forcing it to a less threatening rank. The question is, what will she do now?

699 INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT 699

She closes her eyes. And all goes QUIET.

6100 EXT. TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT 6100

Some listening to the radio, but hear NOTHING.

6101 INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT 6101

Townes watching her in the silence.

6102 EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT 6102

SILENCE as the crowd looks up at the changing display board.

6103 INT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT 6103

MOVING AROUND THE TABLE as they play. Finally, she picks up her knight and sets it back down on the board, the sound is BOOMING, the power in her fingertips exquisite.

When she finally looks up, Borgov is staring at her.

BORGOV

(in perfect English)

It's your game.

He pushes back in his chair, stands up and reaches down and picks up his KING. But instead of setting it on its side, he holds it out across the board for her. She stares at it.

BORGOV (CONT'D)

Take it.

The APPLAUSE BEGINS as she takes the black king in her hand and turns to face the auditorium, letting the whole massive weight of the ovation wash over her.

People in the audience are standing, applauding louder and louder and she receives it with her whole body, her cheeks wet with tears as the thunderous sound washes away thought.

She spots Townes applauding along with them. Bowing...

6103 CONTINUED:

6103

And now Vasily Borgov is standing beside her. And to her complete astonishment, he has his arms spread and is now embracing her, hugging her to him warmly.

6104 **INT. BENNY'S APARTMENT - DAY**

6104

THE PHONE RINGS and Benny grabs it on the first ring. The others watch him carefully as he listens to Townes on the other end, and JUMPS INTO THE AIR. They all do the same, screaming like banshees...

6105 **INT. JOLENE'S APARTMENT - DAY**

6105

As she answers the phone, listens, then--

JOLENE

Thank you.

And she hangs up, beaming, and lets her own tears come.

JOLENE (CONT'D)

Good for you, cracker.

6106 **EXT. RUSSIAN TOURNAMENT HALL - NIGHT**

6106

As Beth exits with Mr. Booth and is mobbed. Everyone shaking her hand. She sees Townes, but the crowd is too immense and she can't make her way over to him. He waves as she gets swallowed up in the affection and we now--

**FADE TO BLACK**

MR. BOOTH (V.O.)

The President has invited you to the White House...

6107 **INT. LIMO - DAY**

6107

As Beth rides with Mr. Booth.

MR. BOOTH

There will be a chessboard set up in the oval office and, of course, a photo op of you kicking his ass. Texas being more a checkers state. There's a dinner tonight after the reception at the Russian Chess Club in Georgetown. A lot of prominent dissidents belong, so...

(hands her an envelope)

We've prepared a list of talking points.

6107 CONTINUED:

6107

Beth just looks at it.

MR. BOOTH (CONT'D)  
It's a big deal, the U.S. beating  
the Soviets at their own game.

She looks out the window, says to the driver--

BETH  
Stop the car, please.  
(to Mr. Booth)  
I'd like to walk.

MR. BOOTH  
To the airport?

6108 **EXT. LIMO - DAY**

6108

As she gets out and Mr. Booth leans over--

MR. BOOTH  
You're gonna miss the flight--

She closes the door on him and starts walking. We stay with her as she briskly strolls along an avenue. Crosses now to--

6109 **EXT. MOSCOW PARK - DAY**

6109

The sun filtering through the trees, onto the now full tables and benches. Nobody pays her any mind as she walks up to the pavilion where the old men play chess.

She walks along the concrete tables, games in progress.

OLD MAN (V.O.)  
*Harmon?*

She turns to see an OLD MAN sitting by himself, looking at her.

OLD MAN  
*Liza Harmon?*

BETH  
*Da.*

Before she can react further, the man at the next table is standing up and throwing his arms around her, hugging and repeating...

SECOND OLD MAN  
*Harmon! Harmon!*

6109 CONTINUED:

6109

And now there's a CROWD OF OLD MEN around her, smiling and eagerly holding out their hands for her to shake, talking to her all at once, in Russian. She looks at the table...

The Old Man sits back down and Beth sits across from him behind the black pieces, smiles, says in perfect Russian--

BETH

*Would you like to play chess?*

**CUT TO BLACK**