

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT
EPISODE 5: FORK

Beth and Benny are sitting at a bar. Drinking beers.

Benny: Well, I never thought you'd let me trade queens.

Beth: I didn't think so, either.

Benny: Thirty moves, man, Jesus.

Beth: That many?

Benny: Hmm. *(beat)* Looks like you can outdrink me, too.

Beth: I really appreciate how you're taking this.

Benny: I'm raging inwardly.

Beth: Well, it doesn't show.

Benny: Should never have played that goddamn bishop pawn.

Beth: No, probably not.

Benny: What are you gonna do about Borgov?

Beth: I don't know. I don't even have a passport. Or the right clothes. I hear it's pretty cold in Paris that time of year.

Benny: I'm not talking about Paris. I'm talking about Moscow. What, do they not deliver mail in Kentucky?

Beth: What's in Moscow?

Benny: The Moscow Invitational. The US winner gets invited. You didn't know that?

Beth signals to the bartender.

Bartender: Yes, ma'am?

Beth: A couple more, please.

Benny: Uh, no, thanks. I'm still on my first.

Beth: Well, I'll drink them both.

Benny: Easy there, tiger.

Beth: How do I get to Moscow if I go?

Benny: Uh, well, I mean, when I went, the Federation paid for my ticket, and then this church group covered the rest of it.

Beth: Did you have a second?

Benny: Weiss.

Beth: Weiss?

Benny: It would be tough to go to Russia alone.

Bartender: Here you go.

Beth: Oh, thank you.

Benny: You always drink this much?

Beth: Sometimes, I drink more. (beat) Who else will be playing in Moscow?

Benny: Four top Russians, and four other countries. If you keep doing this, you're gonna end up washed up by the time you're 21.

While Benny is talking, Beth strokes a strain of his hair. He's taken by surprise. Beth covers up.

Beth: I like your hair.

Benny: Uh-huh. Yeah, sure you do.
What about Moscow?

Beth: Four Soviet chess players is a lot of Soviet chess players.

Benny: Murderous. But you're the only American I can think of that might be able to do it.

Beth: I went to pieces with Borgov in Mexico City.

Benny: When do you go to Paris?

Beth: In five weeks.

Benny: Well, you'll need a good trainer. Not Harry Beltik.
Someone... Better.

Beth: Mmm.

Benny: Someone more, um, mature.

Beth: Who'd you have in mind?

Benny: Can you come to New York?

Beth: I don't know.

Benny: You can sleep in my living room, and you can leave for Paris from there.

Beth: That's very nice of you, but I'm not even so sure I wanna go to Paris anymore.

Benny: What are you gonna do instead, huh?
Get drunk?

Beth: Now that you mention it, yeah, sounds pretty good.

Benny: Beth...

Beth: Borgov made me look like a fool.

Benny: That's 'cause you weren't ready.

Beth: I don't know if I'm good enough.

Benny: You're the best there is.
You beat me.

Beth: Okay, fine. I'll come to New York.

Benny: Great. We'll leave from here. I'll drive us.

Beth: When?

Benny: Tomorrow. Afternoon. Once everything here finishes up.
Oh, and about sex...
Forget it.