

Chess and the Gottvater's Daughter

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Cast:

VIOLETTA ATILSAVA - a Bulgarian exchange student

BRUCE WILSON - All-American boy, Violet's green card husband

Setting:

Student-housing apartment

Time:

Present

*At lights up, VIOLET sits reading a book while 'Low Rider,' by War blares from neighbors' apartment.*

VIOLET

*(A knock at door is heard. Loudly.)* Oh happy day! Someone is at door, I wonder who is?  
*(Knock.)* I hope is not horrible, horrible American husband! *(Opens door.)*

BRUCE

*(Enters.)* Violetta, what's going on?

VIOLET

*(Loudly.)* Oh! Crapburgers, is pig husband! Ah! Rat farts!

BRUCE

Violet! What the hell?!

VIOLET

*(Excited.)* Yes! Yes! Excellent! But must say louder!

BRUCE

What the hell?!

VIOLET

*(Flashes 'thumbs up.')* You too can also go to hell, swine!

BRUCE

What's wrong *(VIOLET shushes BRUCE. Quietly.)* What's wrong?

VIOLET

We must have fight, terrible, terrible fight!

BRUCE

Why?!

VIOLET

You never here! (*BRUCE tries to speak. VIOLET shushes BRUCE.*) Neighbors never hear us fight or (*VIOLET punches her hand*) they will know not really married and send me back to Bulgaria before I graduate!

BRUCE

That's crazy!

VIOLET

Why crazy?! (*BRUCE opens his mouth. VIOLET slams books to the floor. Screams.*) I hate you, my husband! I hate you so much I want to die! (*Hands book to BRUCE.*) Here, throw book.

BRUCE

No! Why?!

VIOLET

(*Steps on BRUCE'S foot. BRUCE yells and drops book.*) Yes! Is excellent sound for KGB neighbors! (*BRUCE laughs.*) Vat?! Vather say neighbors KGB maybe!

BRUCE

Oh! Vlad says 'KGB!' Now I understand.

VIOLET

Why always say name like that? 'Vlad,' like he is wampire?!

BRUCE

Well I wouldn't put drinking blood past Vlad!

He will drink your blood maybe – he is Gottvater!

BRUCE

It's nice you think he's a good father, but I'm sure Dr. Spock would have issues with him!

VIOLET

No! No! He Gottvater like famous American movie! You know, 'I make offer can't refuse... (*Draws a finger across her throat.*) Then you sleep vith fishes.' He big criminal boss!

BRUCE

All I'm saying, your neighbors aren't KGB, they're Mexican!

VIOLET

Deep cover! Wery, wery deep!

BRUCE

The Cold War's over! There's no KGB anymore! That's vat they vant you to think, comrade! (*Taps her forehead.*) Besides, KGB, CIA, INTERPOL all same. All think people are puppets, happy on string, but that not happiness!

BRUCE

What is happiness?

VIOLET

Happiness is great stag running vild on shore of Black Sea!

BRUCE

Meaning?

VIOLET

Happiness is wery elusive. (*BRUCE nods. Loudly.*) You stink of soiled linens, my husband! Go back to prostitute where belong!

BRUCE

Damn it, Violet! Even if they are KGB! Just stop!

VIOLET

Still, must fight! But play chess now. Every time I take piece, say terrible, terrible thing to me – understand?

BRUCE

Yes... (*BRUCE AND VIOLET sit and play chess.*) You are a chess-playing machine!  
(*VIOLET nods.*) The female champion of all Bulgaria! (*VIOLET nods.*) It's good to see you  
– It's been two weeks, maybe more.

VIOLET

Busy. Wery busy. School, chess club, cheerleading... (*Captures a chess piece.*) Say thing  
loud!

BRUCE

Jerk! (*VIOLET nods.*) I know you're busy... (*VIOLET nods.*) It's... I was afraid you were  
angry with me... (*VIOLET shakes her head.*) No? I thought maybe... It's crazy! We're  
married, but not really. We're friends, we got married so you could stay here and graduate,  
but the last time I was here we... Well, I guess we weren't supposed to, but maybe we  
should talk about it. You know, last time when we... You know...

VIOLET

(*Focused on chessboard.*) Make boom-booms? Not mad. Not tickled pink, but not mad.  
(*Takes another piece.*) Say thing!

BRUCE

Skank! (*VIOLET nods and moves a chess piece.*) You really are very beautiful, Violet. Did  
anyone ever tell you that?

VIOLET

(*Seems touched.*) No. No, no one ever say this to me.

BRUCE

Violet, you are stunning! No one ever told you?

VIOLET

No, I just poor girl from little village. No one ever... (*Lowers her eyes.*)

BRUCE

You're joking! (*VIOLET wipes her eyes. Kindly.*) Violet... Violet, hey...

VIOLET

*(Horse laughs.)* Of course I joke, captain of all things obvious! *(Stands.)* I mean, look at me! Head-to-toe, I total package! I graduate, go Florida, become undervere supermodel! Good times! Happy day! Yankee blue jeans! *(Takes a piece)* Say thing.

BRUCE

Asshole! *(VIOLET gives BRUCE a look then moves a chess piece. BRUCE moves a piece.)* Check! *(VIOLET nods.)* See, I can play too! *(VIOLET spins a finger.)* I got mad chess skills and you know I can beat you! *(VIOLET shakes her head.)* I almost did a couple times, but you always find a way to leave the game! *(VIOLET thumbs her nose.)* Yeah, the last time we played, right before you got all nice-nice-kissy-kissy, I had you on the run, didn't I? I had you!

VIOLET

You know, I never want to marry you, not even to stay in America! *(Takes a piece.)* Say thing.

BRUCE

Tramp! *(Moves a piece.)*

VIOLET

I want marry Joe from chess club. He strong like bull, strong in chess, too. Joe make gute husband, but Vlad say 'No, marry this one.' *(Points at BRUCE.)* 'Out of school, getting old and sad. You leave him anyway.' *(Takes a piece.)* Say!

BRUCE

Whore! *(Moves a piece.)* If I could have married any eastern European girl I wanted just to keep her in the country, of course I would have married Olga... *(VIOLET shivers.)* You know Olga! Big blond Olga from Russia! She's like Pamela Anderson – smokin' hot! *(VIOLET slams a piece down, then tries to move it again.)* What the hell do you think you're doing?! You took your hand off the piece! That's it!

VIOLET

But I... *(BRUCE shakes his head.)* Fine!

BRUCE

*(Takes a piece.)* Bye-bye queenie! In trouble now, aren't you, champ?! *(VIOLET makes a face and moves a piece. BRUCE quickly moves a piece.)* Check! *(VIOLET moves a piece. BRUCE quickly moves a piece.)* Check! This is getting good! *(VIOLET storms off.)* Where do you think you're going, champ?!

VIOLET

*(Picks up a book.)* You here only to fight for KGB neighbors! So ve fight! *(Slams book to floor.)* You vant Russian ice princess bitch?! Then marry Russian ice princess bitch! *(BRUCE laughs.)* Laughing?!

BRUCE

I'm winning! Sit down and finish the game, brat! *(VIOLET shakes her head and leans against the wall, arms crossed.)* Chicken, chicken, little chicken!

VIOLET

*(Kicks at a book, then sits down at the chess board and moves a piece.)* You love Olga! Olga... *(Gestures with her hands to make her chest look bigger.)* Big fat Olga?! Yes, you do! You vant to marry her and hiv like ten thousand of her babies!

BRUCE

*(Moves a piece.)* Check!

VIOLET

*(Stands.)* I vant vatch MTV! BRUCE

Sit down!

VIOLET

*(Turns on TV. 'Criminal' by Fiona Apple plays.)* Who this girl?

BRUCE

Whatever! Come back and play!

VIOLET

Girl on TV – who is she?

BRUCE

Fiona Apple. (*Snaps fingers and points to chair.*) Now!

VIOLET

Apple? Apple? Does she like apple? Does she eat apple? Why is she apple?

BRUCE

It's her name!

VIOLET

Her name is Apple? Why?

BRUCE

Why is your name Violet, Violetta?

VIOLET

My name is Violetta because I little flower! My family name is Atilsava because descend from great conqueror Attila. Family wery wery important in Bulgaria, so family name important too. Why is she Apple?

BRUCE

(*Stands.*) God knows! Now sit!

VIOLET

Look at her moving! This vay and that! She think sexy but she little girl!

BRUCE

You are a little girl! Olga is sexy! Now... (*VIOLET smacks BRUCE.*) Hey! (*VIOLET smacks then chokes BRUCE, then knees him in the groin, throws him behind the couch, and continues to beat him down.*)

VIOLET

(*Picks up the TV.*) Guess vat, Mister Cowboy Bruce Villis, you on TV with Vionna Apple now! (*Drops TV.*) Actually, TV on you! (Screams) I hate American husband! (*To BRUCE.*) I sorry, lot on mind. Feel better now. (*Overturms chessboard.*) Much, much better! (*Offstage someone yells 'Shut up! We'll call the cops!'*) Okey-dokey, time to get up! (*Helps BRUCE to his feet.*)

BRUCE

(*Pulls back.*) Don't even touch me you crazy little witch!

VIOLET

Say sorry, lot on mind... We hiv good talk now!

BRUCE

You threw a TV at me!

VIOLET

I miss!

BRUCE

You have a nice life, Violet, see you around!

VIOLET

(*Panicked.*) Cannot, must not, leave me! Must talk... Matter of life un death! Sit please! Just to listen! Matter of life and death! (*BRUCE sits.*) In Bulgaria, I hiv Uncle Billo.

BRUCE

So what?!

VIOLET

I explain! Uncle Billo married to Aunt Rosa. (*BRUCE smacks his head.*) One time Aunt Rosa make goulash, Uncle Billo say 'Too cold!' Know what Aunt Rosa do?

BRUCE

She killed him and set his body on fire!

VIOLET

(*Horse laughs.*) No! Not really!

BRUCE

Not really?!

VIOLET

(*Laughs.*) No! Of course not! Why she kill Uncle Billo? She love Uncle Billo! She only stab in eye!

BRUCE

She stabbed him in the eye?! (*VIOLET shushes BRUCE.*) With what?!

VIOLET

Don't know. Big fork maybe. Was not there to see.

BRUCE

You come from long line of crazy women, don't you, Violet?!

VIOLET

(*Horse laughs.*) No! Aunt Rosa crazy, but she marry into family and she half-Russian!

BRUCE

Oh! That makes all the difference!

VIOLET

Not understand! Aunt Rosa, she do great thing!

BRUCE

Yeah! Blinding your husband is a humanitarian act! Too bad she didn't cut his heart out and eat it! She'd be Prime Minister by now!

VIOLET

She wake up five in the morning, milk cow, send Bella and Radu to school, then go to work at glorious, glorious hydroelectric plant, come home, make beautiful goulash, and...

BRUCE

Uncle Billo mentions it's cold, then the poor bastard loses an eye!

VIOLET

Yes, but now, when Uncle Billo go to room of bathing, when he look in mirror to shave, he see patch on eye. He think of Aunt Rosa. He think 'My Rosa, she could have killed me, but no, she is my little flower! I love her wery, wery much!'

BRUCE

Great! How is this a matter of life and death?!

VIOLET

I getting there. But ve play chess now, come!

BRUCE

No chess, darling, you cheat!

VIOLET

No cheat, just not let you win!

BRUCE

You just admitted it! Why won't you let me win?! (*VIOLET shrugs.*) Why?

VIOLET

Because, before, in chess club, you nice boy and I silly girl, but now am wife, your wife. Must beat you in chess because... You know what I say?

BRUCE

No, I'm more confused than ever and I didn't think that was possible!

VIOLET

I graduate soon, then I am American, but you nice boy. I think we stay married, OK?

BRUCE

Violet, I think you're... Stay married?! (*VIOLET kisses BRUCE.*) Yeah, maybe we can do that!

VIOLET

But hold horses Mr. Cowboy! More news! I... (*Gestures a round belly with her hands.*)

BRUCE

You're pregnant?! (*VIOLET nods.*) How? (*VIOLET shrugs and punches her hand*) Boom-Booms? Oh God!

VIOLET

I know, only want take mind off chess so you not win, but good times! Happy day! We make Yankee baby! (*Horse laughs.*)

BRUCE

You're kidding! Tell me you're kidding! (*VIOLET shakes her head.*)

VIOLET

Not to worry, I tell Gottvater baby from different boy. He kill somebody else.

BRUCE

Matter of life and death?! (*VIOLET nods.*) Unbelievable! But you can't...

VIOLET

It OK. He kill somebody else anyway.

BRUCE

But if we stay married... (*VIOLET nods.*) I'm the baby's father... I'm the Godfather's son-in-law... Family...

VIOLET

He get you job in glorious, glorious hydroelectric plant maybe!

BRUCE

I can do that!

VIOLET

So we stay married?!

BRUCE

Yes, we stay married!

VIOLET

But... But not only for baby? You like me little bit?

BRUCE

Do I like you little bit? (*BRUCE bangs on wall.*) Hey! KGB! Get up! I'm married! I'm really married to my brilliant, beautiful Bulgarian wife! (*Offstage 'Shut up!'*) I've fallen in love with my Bulgarian wife and she's giving me a baby! (*'Low Rider' plays loud.*) Hey! (*BRUCE dances the 'happy dance,' then dances with VIOLET. In unison.*) Good times! Happy day! Yankee blue jeans! (*Lights down.*)

END