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**Finding Heidi's Story:**

**The Evolution of "Dynamo Berlin"**

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**Finding Heidi's Story:  
The Evolution of "Dynamo Berlin"**

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**Report**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of the University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Master of Fine Arts**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**August 2012**

# **Finding Heidi's Story: The Evolution of "Dynamo Berlin"**

By

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2012

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"Finding Heidi's Story: The Evolution of 'Dynamo Berlin'" examines the creative process of Margot Pamela Newcomer's feature length script, "Dynamo Berlin." It chronicles the thought process and revisions throughout a seven-month period.

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## Introduction

My first love is swimming. It has always been a family affair. My mother and her siblings were swimming stars in upstate New York. My mother reached the highest level when she made Olympic Trials in the 200 breaststroke, but with respect to my mom I will not divulge which year. With my aunt being a successful coach and an older sister in the sport, I started racing at the age of three. I continued with success through high school. My times earned me a spot on a mid-level Division 1 team, where I competed all four years, was a school-record holder, and MVP my junior year. Upon graduation, I entered into the profession that seven of my relatives have done before me and became a swim coach. This is the long explanation of the statement: I know swimming. And I also know that having “Swim Fan” as the only pop-culture movie reference to a sport I loved is unacceptable. Even before I became serious about screenwriting, I wanted to write the first real swimming movie. At the University of Texas, I was learning the skills to do just that.

Write what you know. This is inevitably the first piece of advice that aspiring screenwriters are given. However, now that I was learning the correct tools to create a script, I wanted to distance myself from swimming, proving I had more to say. I wanted to really learn how to properly write a script, not just be the “sports girl.” My first set of pitches did not include one inspirational sports story. Instead, I focused on my other favorite genre, mystery. In my quest to learn as much as possible, I was willing to be wrong, a lot. And for that I am eternally grateful. However, at the start of my second year I was eager to write stories I thought would come a little more naturally. My second

script melded my love of sports and mystery. It was a fun challenge, but afterwards I was finally ready to give into my childhood desire. In my fourth and final semester, I decided to conquer the task of writing a swimming movie with absolutely no similarities to “Swim Fan.”

## **Chapter One: Origin of the Idea**

This story stemmed from two separate thoughts that merged to form “Dynamo Berlin”. The first glimmer of this concept emerged when I was breaking a script from the fall semester. It was about retired athletes who use their acquired skills to pull off heists. I was having a difficult time justifying why high-level athletes would fall to criminal status. My momentary fix was to change the time period to the early 1990s, after the fall of the USSR. More specifically, I was interested in the East German females that had learned they had been systematically doped by the state without their knowledge. That would provide me with many athletes displaced and who would be in financial distress. It would also provide a motive for revenge, a nice element in a heist movie. However, as Chad Nichols pointed out in class, it is a fun idea but it would get lost in a heist movie, and the tones did not match. Luckily, I imagined a better fix that worked better with that story, and I had a strong concept for my next script.

When I was in high school, I had a teacher that would say on a regular basis that the most interesting stories embody the concept of moral ambiguity, stories that do not necessarily provide the answer but instigate discussion. While I knew the part of history I wanted to explore, the East German doping machine in swimming, I was uncertain as to which story to investigate. There were so many options. Do I tell it from an American’s perspective or an East German’s? Which time period? In 1965, East German disappeared from the sporting world to emerge as a powerhouse at the 1976 Olympics, winning ten out of eleven medals in the swimming portion. The next two Olympics were marred by boycotts, creating a twelve-year gap until the next match-up between the

historically powerful Americans and the new East German swimming power. My number one goal in narrowing the time period down was to find the era that created the most opportunity for moral ambiguity.

The 1976 Montreal Olympics was the obvious choice to most people I spoke with. My mother was actually in attendance at those games. She was in the nosebleed seats, but she still remembers the awe of seeing the East German walk out on deck. Even from where she sat, she could appreciate their impressive stature. Worse, she remembers the devastation of the Americans getting beat race after race. But then there was that last race, the 4 x 100 free relay, where the Americans took down the imposing East Germans, winning their only gold of the games. As exciting and amazing the piece of history is, it would be a fairly black and white story: Americans pure, East Germans evil. It lacked the complexity I was searching for in a story.

I found the perspective of an East German swimmer more complex, conflicted, and interesting, than an American swimmer's. I could only imagine the intense feelings these women felt when they finally understood what had been done to them. Some of these feelings were documented in a trial years of ex-swimmers against their East German doctors and coaches. This could be a fascinating story, as well. But the story did not have the high stakes that I wanted in a story.

The 1988 Olympic era appealed to my sensibilities. With this marker, I would be able to have a main character whose only memory consisted of East Germany and their dominance in athletics. She would only remember a time when the Berlin Wall was normal. She would have heroes in her sport to look up to. This would also create challenges in creating a character that would be able to break free from this system.



However, it also created an interesting solution to allow her to see the dangers of her sport. But by 1988, the women from the 1976 team would be having major health effects. It would be more normal for international swimmers to question their legitimacy. By setting the story in 1988, I felt it really gave me the best option to create a complex story with interesting characters facing impossible challenges.

With the era, specific time, and perspective thoughtfully chosen, the concept of an East German teenage swimmer struggling inside the doping system to be a 1988 Olympic Champion, was born.

## **Chapter Two: History and Script Research**

With my time period and focused narrowed, I needed to do quite a bit of research on the time period. While I know swimming, I had very little understanding of the effects steroids can have on your body. I did not know the specifics and techniques they used to dope athletes, or how they kept the swimmers in the system. I also needed to understand the East German's mindset better. How could they not understand they were being doped? If they figured it out, why did they stay in the system when their bodies were being destroyed? Did anyone try to defect? How did they pick people for the Olympic team? And that was just the swimming aspect of the story, not to mention the research I would need to do about the Stasi.

A film called "Doping for the Gold", produced by PBS, was recommended to me by Kris Kubick, the assistant men's coach at UT. He sent me the link: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/secrets/episodes/doping-for-gold-2/42/>, and for the next hour I listened to the retired East German swimmers describe their training, the terrible effect the drugs had on their body, how their coaches treated them, how their parents felt about the situation, and their overall mental state of that time in their lives. Listening to them was heartbreaking and fascinating at the same time, and also solidified my resolve of telling the story from their perspective. Most of these women truly believed that they were clean, until the wall fell down and meticulous reports proved otherwise. Some had suspicions, but felt helpless. The discontented swimmers only wished to leave the swimming system. Not one past swimmer they interviewed that swam for the East German National team in the 1970s and 1980s even hinted at the idea of leaving the

country. But on the flip side, there were also the swimmers that were willing to ignore the trauma occurring to their bodies, because they loved how fast they were swimming. Listening to their stories and learning about the range of their reactions to the system was invaluable research.

The film also did a wonderful job of explaining how the East Germans were able to cheat. Even as the wall was falling, the Stasi were shredding documents. However, a wealth of information did survive that was terrifying in nature. The state targeted swimming, volleyball and track and field as sports they wanted to dominate in the Olympics. Using many scientists from the former Nazi party, they studied ways to use anabolic steroids and to beat the drug tests. I am not a science expert, but my understanding it is that they test the testosterone levels in an athlete by comparing them to another hormone. All humans have varying levels of testosterone, so the easiest way to detect abnormalities is to compare the ratio. In an ingenious move, East German scientists realized that if you take a synthesized version of this hormone with the steroids and keep the ratio the same, the drug test would come up negative.

How the drug was taken and when was also important. Orally ingested steroid pills, that came to be known as the little blue pills, were enormously effective. This allowed athletes' muscles to recover quicker and to do more work. The main issue with the little blue pills is that they have a long life, which means they stay within your body for a long period of time. To resolve this, weeks before the competition they would stop giving the pills and instead inject the hormones. A final measure to prevent detection was religious self-testing. If an athlete's blood tested positive a couple of weeks before the competition, they stayed home. In the years of their dominance, with hundreds of

athletes competing internationally, only one East German woman, who competed in track and field, ever tested positive.

In class, Sally Bergom mentioned that her professor, John Hoberman, was one of the leading experts in the history of drug doping. She put me in touch with him, and I was lucky enough to meet with him. He was extremely helpful in explaining the side effects that these women suffered through: permanent lowering of the voice, joint issues, heart disease, liver disease, and children with special needs. The most chilling part of this was that the doctors knew and detailed every injury and illness. They were 100% aware of the risks with giving young women these drugs and they not only gave the drugs, they believed in why they were doing it. Years later, a few retired East German swimmers sued the head doctors for purposefully harming a minor. The professor was kind enough to give me translated documents of their testimony, and the doctor's responses were chilling. The head doctor has zero regrets for his actions and said that he would have given the drugs to his children. The Professor also helped me with my protagonist, explaining that she would have to possess special characteristics to even think about leaving the country; the East German government's hold on its people was a death grip. He also recommended that I read Faust's Gold: Inside the East German Doping Machine. This book was insightful and supported the PBS documentary and what the Professor had been explaining to me about East Germany.

This research really helped me to understand the mindset of the swimmers, coaches, and doctors of this era. This was vital if I was going to create a story that felt authentic. Google was also a fantastic tool to look up incidents of successful and failed defection attempts. On the movie side, deconstructing the movies: "The Lives of

Others”, “Good-bye, Lenin!”, “Swing Kids” and “Searching for Bobby Fischer” helped me to figure out which storylines I wanted to highlight in my script.

“The Lives of Others” and “Goodbye, Lenin” are two German produced movies that shed light on East Germany from different perspectives. “Lives of Others” explores how the government affected the arts, and centered on the high rate of suicide in the country. “Good-bye, Lenin!” has a little more humor but is just as eye-opening when focusing on a woman who falls into a coma a month before the wall falls and wakes up three months after. It shows the rapid change the country was forced into and the trials the people faced because of that change. It was an interesting exploration to show how the elderly were actually hurt because of the regime change. The third movie, “Searching for Bobby Fischer” was helpful because the protagonist was a seven-year old child that had little agency in his life. It is also a sports movie that is unfamiliar to most people, and it was a great lesson to see how they wove the exposition of the sport into the script. Finally, it has one of the most intelligent climaxes I have ever seen in a sports movie.

The most significant lesson I learned from watching these movies was the importance of staying focused with regard to my storyline. The world I am entering is so fascinating and there are so many historical anecdotes that it is easy to create a convoluted story without a strong purpose, and allowing the interesting details to improve the script, now weigh it down. “Others” is about the art in an oppressed society, “Good-bye” is about blending the past and the future to move forward in a changing world, and “Bobby Fischer” is about a family dealing with genius. This is what my script was missing, that clear “about”. However, after breaking down these three movies, it really helped me to focus my own movie.

Research for my script was absolutely vital, from primary sources, secondary sources, and other movies made about the subject. Because of my intense research, I believe my script was able to capture that elusive honesty quality.

### **Chapter Three: Treatment and Outline**

I had quite a few struggles with my initial story. The biggest challenge I faced was properly dealing with the issue of the drugs. My instinct was to use it as a plot twist in the middle of the story. In any other story, it would serve as a strong midpoint. However, because this story is based on true historical events, the audience already knows the surprise. My challenge was to push the introduction of the drugs as soon as possible. Through my outlines, I slowly moved it forward in the story, to the first act break, and then the inciting incident. However, that did not leave room for a proper set-up, and ultimately, the most natural moment to have my protagonist take the drugs was around minute seventeen.

Another comment I kept receiving in workshop was the issue of having an inactive protagonist. Because of the oppressiveness of the government and swimming worlds, it was difficult to create natural storylines to give the protagonist the opportunity to be proactive. On the flip side, the world is one filled with conflict. My goal became to attempt to balance these interesting burdens and giving her a way to drive the story forward. My way to attempt this was to have her investigate Gunter's death, to follow the breadcrumbs to defection left by Kristen, and to figure out how to expose the East German doping system. The negative side to this action was a lot of it felt forced and unnatural with the cause and effect off. This was especially true for the defection storyline.

The other issue was addressing the question of why doesn't she just quit or fake illness once she realizes what the drugs will do to her? This was why I created a sick

sister for Heidi. With the health of her sister on the line, she was forced to stay in the swimming system. I also was stubborn on having the ending be where Heidi has the opportunity to escape but that she cannot. The sick sister helps support this character moment.

To achieve the honesty I desired in my story, it was important to create a complex and clear antagonist. The East German government and the Stasi were almost like an omnipresent force. I needed a character to embody the dark side of the government but without making him caricature. Heidi's coach and doctor became the embodiment of the East German agenda. There is something so terrifying to me about having a young girl trust a doctor and to have him treat her like a science experiment. I was depending on the doctor to have these chilling scenes with Heidi. But August is the true antagonist.

Swimmers have a special connection to their coach. They have complete control in your life, almost acting as an all-knowing, god-like figure. There has to be a trust between the coach and athlete to achieve success. The betrayal of a coach is the worst thing that could happen to an athlete. And that is what August does in dramatic fashion. He is the one that brings her into the world, promises to make her a champion, and he is the one filling her with drugs without her knowledge. For me, August is the worst type of person I could create. The big issue I struggled with in his character was the sexual element. In the history of the sport, not just in East Germany, it is a common occurrence for coaches to become romantically involved with their swimmers. It is also relevant in this story, because one of the side effects of steroids in females is a heightened sexuality. Coaches were even encouraged to engage in sexual relationship to help the girls release



their energy. My debate was whether I should make August a father figure or a lover figure. In the end, I chose to lean more towards the father figure, but have one scene to bring in the sexual element.

Heidi's family situation was also a topic of debate in my script. I felt it was important for her to not have a strong father figure in her life. This would do a multitude of things for the protagonist; it would make her family more dependent on the state. She would become the hope for the family to help provide through her swimming. And this would give August more power in her life. The biggest issue I struggled with was to show how the mother felt about Heidi swimming. I decided the most natural progression was to have the mother enjoy the benefits from Heidi's swimming; a bigger house, care for her sister, but then to have motherly concern overtake financial incentives. Like any good mother, she would want Heidi to escape and to be safe. With her mother pushing her leave, this would also create more conflict in the third act about if she should defect or not.

Another challenge was creating the world of Dynamo Berlin. I wanted a world that would be familiar to most swimmers, but have odd disturbing twists. Besides August, the two most important people in Heidi's journey are Kristen and Gunter. Both were meant to propel her to question the East German state. Kristen is the one that brings the concept of defection to Heidi. Before Kristen, Heidi would never even be able to imagine that act possible. Gunter is her heart in the story. His death is the catalyst to force her out of complacency to question what the state is doing to her, and to understand the true stakes of the story.

Finally, the third act was the hardest part of the story for me to conceptualize. I really was stubborn about the fact that I wanted an ending that would create a conversation. Was defection the correct choice for her? Was drugging herself really a heroic or cowardly decision? How do I intertwine all the storylines of defection, drugs, and the Olympics into a satisfying climax? My resolve was to have the Olympics finish and then for the defection to take place, as that was the true emotional moment in the story. Although in the first treatments and outlines, I was never completely satisfied with this solution.

## **Chapter Four: The First Draft**

Writing this first draft was different than my other screenwriting experiences. For the first time I had a step-outline for the entire movie. Usually I just know the major plot points, the ending I want to tell, and know only a few specific scenes that I want. Having the step-outline was helpful, but also at time restrictive. Instead of being able to fix a problem, I wrote the problem knowing that I would have to go back and fix it later. Even though it was not the perfect way to write, it was an invaluable learning experience for future drafts.

The other major change I made in the process was how I took in information at the workshops. My first year, I would try to take in what the class told me, and try to fix the past problems while working forward. This technique not only did not work for me, it created many challenges and difficulties in my draft. For the spring workshop, I learned from my experience and tried a different process. My plan was to write down all the notes given to me written and orally into a word document labeled with the sequence number, and then I put it into a folder not to be looked at until the end of the draft. In writing my next sequence, I would stay with my story, and continue to do so until its completion. The only exception to this was the comments with regard to my writing style. For example, if the week before my reel was not focused or I had a tendency to get into scenes too early, I would make a strong effort to correct this in my next set of pages. This process definitely worked the best for me, and I felt like I was able to get more out of the notes that I was given by Stuart and my classmates. It allowed me to not only look at the trees, but the forest, as well.

Looking at the notes on a whole, the areas that needed work were clear. One of my biggest issues was clearly defining the protagonist's motivations, goal and character arc. I have a tendency to highlight my characters' good traits, and to bury the negative ones. In my first draft with Heidi, I was so focused on making sure that she was a character that Americans would be able to relate to and to show how badly these women were abused by their coaches and government, that I did not write a complex character. In the first draft, Heidi was a victim, and when she tried to then be active, her actions felt forced because her motivations and character were not clear. Heidi had potential for a good character, but she needed a lot of work.

I also struggled with the how to incorporate the Stasi into the script. My original intention was to have August and the doctor be the character manifestations of the government of the Stasi, but in my first draft, I had brought more characters in to add more tension. Ava started out as a character to only show Heidi's love for swimming, and became a darker figure in the script. In my continued research, I discovered that the person that was head of Dynamo Berlin was also the leader of the Stasi. This amazing historical fact was too good to leave out of my script, so Hans slowly became a more important character. And finally, Martina was another manifestation of the Stasi. It was important to demonstrate the sheer force of the Stasi, and my technique to represent that power was to keep adding characters with ties to it. The problem with this is that I think it diluted the script instead of creating the feel that I wanted. It was also confusing for people to read, because there were so many characters coming into play at critical moments.

Another important lesson I learned in the first draft and feedback from my classmates is how hard it is to write about swimming to a group of non-swimmers. To avoid the practices feeling like double beats, I tried to add little swimming moments to create authenticity. I quickly found out that this usually just made the descriptions confusing and long, and they slowed down the pace of the script. The technical writing was also a challenge. I could not just write the technical jargon to explain a practice, but at times I would have to explain the dialogue in the description. An example of this was when August said to “leave on the top”. This is a very traditional swimming phrase, but I realized that most people would not understand it. Therefore, when describing when Heidi left the wall, I could not say, “Heidi waited a few seconds and then pushed off on the top.” Instead I wrote, “Heidi waited until the second hand of the large timing clock reached the 60, and then pushed off”. I really wanted to write it in a way to let the reader in on the language, without sounding condescending. Basically, I wanted them to enter the world of swimming without feeling lost or having the exposition too heavy handed.

The other challenge with writing about swimming was building the races. It is not like football where you can imagine fifty different ways for a player to catch a ball. Traditionally, swimmers swim lots of races at a meet, and they are long and boring. And it is really a person moving back and forth down a pool with very small differences. Without heavy exposition, how do I explain the difference between prelims and finals? How do I show a swimmer winning six races without it feeling repetitive? My fears were confirmed in the comments. I also struggled with the tones of the meets, especially in the first two meets. I wanted to show how Heidi began to garner attention, but I also wanted to build the tension and the importance of the meets. The Olympics was easier, because

you show the Olympic rings and people immediately understand. The final area I received notes in about swimming was the relays versus the individual events. I wanted the relay to be the race in the climatic moment, because winning the relays shows the dominance of the country. A country can have one fantastic swimmer, but winning a relay in the Olympics takes four great swimmers. I also felt that the whole team aspect of the relay would fit in better with the theme of the movie. However, I failed in my execution to make the reader's feel this in my first draft.

In looking at the script as a whole, the balance between what the story was about and the political environment of this world was off. I never set-up the Berlin wall, and the radio was speaking about Americans but I never explained what having the radio meant and why she was listening to the western news. This imbalance was glaringly obvious in the defection storyline and the third act. In my research, I had learned so many facts and perspectives that I wanted to force it all into my script. One of the results was Johann. Instead of having him as a character, I forced him to embody too many ideals. He was Kristen's boyfriend, a spy, a westerner, but also a person that thought he was doing the right thing by forcing a girl to betray her country, and basically embodied the major question of would East Germans actually be better off in West Germany. It was too much of a burden for a minor character in the third act to carry. The result was a third act with too much rhetoric and not enough character moments and heart.

In listening to critiques in class, my final big issue with my first draft was that I was writing too much in an American voice. My classmate Kevin caught many a baseball metaphor. The fascinating part to me was that while I was writing, I had no idea of my love of American sports metaphors. This was extremely helpful to have pointed

out to me in class. It was also surprising how many cultural questions came up in writing this script. My father being a funeral director, I thought I could write a funeral scene in my sleep. But as a few people in workshop wisely questioned if the East Germans have a funeral in a church. With more research, I learned that the official religion of the GDR was atheism, but some people still tried to go to church. Therefore, I needed to completely change my funeral scene. And there were many cases my research would not result in an answer. For example, I still have yet to know exactly how the East Germans picked their swim team. In many instances, I made it up and hoped it sounded authentic.

Overall, my first draft was a good start but needed quite a bit of thought and work to improve the story. However, my new technique for notes really helped me to pinpoint my strengths and weakness and left me confident that I would be able to work out the proper fixes. My final workshop at Texas proved to be a great culmination of my two years at school, and a wonderful learning experience.

## **Chapter 5: Fast-Paced Polish**

The next step on my Dynamo Berlin journey was to do a quick polish and to enter my script in the Nicholls and Austin Film Festival competitions. As a bonus, I would also have a polished draft for my thesis review. The challenge was that I had two weeks to complete this polish. The plan was to complete one sequence every four days and then take a day off. I would use the last three days to fix all spelling errors.

The first change I implemented was to create a more personal opening scene. I wanted Heidi's love of swimming and adoration of Ava to be clear. Then I got her to Dynamo Berlin as quickly as possible. Because I took my time in the first draft, I was unable to spend the pages necessary to set-up the world of Dynamo Berlin. By getting her there early, I was able to spend more time with Kristen and Gunter. The other major change was the act break. In the first draft, the break is Heidi making the worlds' team. In the second draft, Heidi gets another girl thrown off the team to make it. The act break is when Kristen disappears. The goal was to make Heidi more active, and to introduce the idea of defection early into the story.

Through worlds and the midpoint, I made several fixes. Heidi's races stayed similar; however, to create a more active force in Hans and August, I had them be the creators of Heidi's rise to fame as the face of East Germany. With regard to the drugs, I slowed down the problems occurring to allow more of an arc. I did this by switching out the acne scene with the shaving of facial hair. The scene where Heidi learns to drive with August is added for two reasons. The first is to give August more complexity as a father



figure. The second is to show the Berlin wall, and to demonstrate the difficulty in leaving.

I also tried to make the mother's arc more clearly show how she felt about Heidi's swimming career. She is a caring mother and is glad that her daughter is getting better, but she is not willing to sacrifice one daughter for another. It was important to show the scene where the mother's is terrified by the changes in her body and wants her to stop swimming.

The other major difference in the second draft is a change in midpoints. In the previous draft, the midpoint is Gunter drowning in the pool. In the new draft, I changed it Heidi discovering that Kristen died at the wall. The reason for the change is that I wanted the turn in Heidi's thinking to be propelled by a strong enough force for her to question the system and brings the idea of defection into her consciousness as something possible. This is the moment that will begin her search for Kristen's breadcrumbs.

In both scripts, the second half of the second act is about Heidi finding out the truth about what the drugs had done to her body and how she will react to it. However, the second act breaks are much different. In the first draft, the break occurs when the Stasi find Kristen's hiding spot under the floor and suspect Heidi of knowing something. She loses her freedom and is from then on under suspicion. I did not think that this was a strong act break. It had little to do with Heidi's character, was a passive act, and she was still able to compete at the Olympics. Therefore, I changed it to when she rejects Johann's offer to help her defect. At this point, Heidi still is not sure she wants to leave East Germany and still has not let go of her Olympic dream of gold. This was a more complex and active act break in comparison to the first draft.

In the third act, I did not make any major changes to the climax, except to try to highlight the Olympics more and to clear up descriptions. The resolution is where I spent most of my attention. In class, people commented on the fact that the Stasi were too easy on her, and that she never had that important final moment with August. To improve that in the second act, I attempted to create a more intense interrogation scene with Ava unable to break her. And then I gave a moment for Heidi and August to have their last moment, to bring a resolution to their relationship. The story ended with the wall falling, but Heidi still having to live with the physical consequences of the drugs.

The changes throughout the script in the second draft helped to focus and clarify Heidi as a character. She also became a much more active character. The political environment was beginning to take shape, and drugs and what they did to Heidi's body had a more central place in the story.

## **Chapter 6: Thesis Draft**

I met with my thesis committee members, Stuart Kelban and Richard Lewis, to meet about my thesis. We discussed it in length for an hour, and I came away with many good ideas to make my script stronger. The main issue with my script was the third act. It still was not working. The main problem was Heidi's sacrifice. The script as written did not give a large enough pay-off. She had endured all these trials to have none of it affect her own life. The other issue was that she was placing her sick sister and mother in a terrible position and seemed to only be worried about herself and the larger cause.

Another main issue was how the story built up to the climax. The Olympics needed to be intensified a bit, but the races were in the correct place. The problems came after. The interview moment with Johann was more from a political thriller genre movie than the tone in my script. The dinner with August was forced and awkward. A reason for this is I was trying to force the sexual nature into a relationship that had previously been more like a father-daughter bond. Finally, the reaction to Heidi's positive drug test did not ring true. The eighth sequence needed to be completely revamped.

There were also question as to which action was the driving force of the movie. Was it the defection part of the movie, the drugs, or the sports? This also brought up questions as what were the antagonistic forces in the script. It was confusing as to who was placing the most pressure on Heidi. Part of the reason for this is that her relationships with the other characters were not always clear. This also caused issues with the clarity of Heidi's character arc.

The final big note was about the deaths of Heidi's friends. Having two was a double beat, and I needed to figure out how to structure the story to only have one. Both advisors thought it was a better idea to only kill off Kristen. Gunter's character would be a better sounding board for Heidi's character arc, and his position could also be an opportunity for conflict.

After the meeting, I took a couple of weeks to just think about the notes, the characters, and what this story was truly about. After a few weeks of thought, I felt very strongly that my story was about betrayal on all levels. Heidi is betrayed by her philosophy, her government, her doctors and her coach. And Heidi's response is to return the betrayal, to her country, coaches and teammates. The other important decision I made is that I wanted the story at its core to be structured like a sports movie. The journey to the Olympics and winning gold is what would drive the story forward. With these two important and vital questions answered, the rest of the fixes started to fall into place.

With my script refocused, I also needed to streamline the characters. I had too many people serving the same purpose. I was very serious about getting rid of the sister. Her sickness was causing problems and felt too contrived. However, instead of completely deleting her, I only got rid of her sickness. Ava and Johann did not fare as well. I felt that Ava was too distracting and it was better to leave her out of the draft. With regard to Johann, I dropped the story line of Kristen defecting completely. It just was not serving my story and only creating noise. All outside media was deleted, because I did not think it was historically accurate and did not work for the story. There were other ways to demonstrate Heidi's place in East Germany. My other goal was to

build the events and tension in a natural manner. It was vital that the cause and effect of the plot not feel forced.

To accomplish these changes, I followed the advice of Stuart and wrote out of order. It was the first time that I had done a rewrite in this manner, and it really helped me to focus on the scene and the individual themes, instead of getting overwhelmed by the idea that I needed to perfect everything all at once. Because I felt like my third act needed the most attention, and I had always written it last, I chose to write it first this draft.

With the deletion of Johann and the media scenes, I had a lot of story to fill. After a lot of back and forth and trying to play with every possibility, I came to the conclusion that Richard and Stuart's idea of having the family defect while Heidi sacrifices herself was the best possible climax. My fear with this idea was that the theme of defecting from East Germany would take precedent over the athletic aspect. I did not want this to be a story that could be about any family in East Germany. It had to be a story about an East German swimmer in the Olympics. That is why for the climax, I wanted the defection to overlap with Heidi's Olympic experience.

The next area of the script I set out to tackle was the first act. After spending months with Heidi, I finally understood a lot of answers to questions that people had been asking since day one. I knew where her motivation to swim lay. She wanted to be like her deceased father, and even surpass his accomplishments. Her character flaw is her willingness to do anything in her power to reach her goals. She loves her family, but in the beginning she is completely okay with leaving them to if it will make her a better

swimmer, even though she loves her sister. I really tried to actively set-up these motivations in the first act.

The other major change I made in the first act was Heidi's relationships with the other swimmers. Instead of having her isolated, I thought it was important to have her embraced. This was important, because I did not want to give Heidi any reasons to suspect the state. I want her separation from the group to be as painful as possible, and this only works if she is totally immersed in the system. Finally, I needed to make the act break stronger. The second act is about what will break Heidi's allegiance to her country, and how will she then respond. Therefore, the end of the first act needed to be her first warning or challenge the East German swimming system. That is I created the scene where it is Mrs. Waltz challenging the changes in Heidi, and she responds with roid rage.

The next two sequences I wrote were three and five, because these were the two meets before the Olympics. As I have stated previously, I wanted to build the meets and did not feel like I had accomplished that. I wrote the two meets together, so that I could easily write the differences between the two. I changed the first meet from Worlds, to a Soviet bloc meet. It still allows for Heidi to shine, but she is still not quite at the elite level. I also wanted to change Heidi's reactions to the meet and swimmers. In the beginning she is naïve and very nationalistic. At the second meet, which is the European Championship, she starts to eye the competitors differently, without the same disgust. It also was a good platform to show Heidi's growing dominance in the sport.

The last two sequences contained highest emotional tension. In sequence four, it is the death of Kristen at the midpoint. It was important to me to have Kristen's death be as traumatic as possible to Heidi. This event is the propulsion to Heidi's change. It was

important she understand that Kristen's death could be her future. This was also the sequence where I wanted to show Heidi's denial of what was occurring in her body. She was reveling in the fast swims and competing with the best, and she was willing to ignore the strange effects it was having on her body. Until the midpoint, this is where Heidi's happy, blissfully ignorant moments at Dynamo Berlin occur.

The sixth reel is the complete opposite experience for Heidi. By the end of this reel, she is now completely aware of the dangers of her situation. By the end of the sixth reel, I wanted her to feel completely alone and with her future completely in question. She loses Gunter, her family cannot help, and with the arrival of Martina she understand she's under the scrutiny of the Stasi. For the second act break, I thought long and hard of what could be the worst possible action for Heidi to take at this moment. The worst action would be to betray one of her friends in her final act of naiveté. Louise's eating disorder once again highlights that they feel something is wrong with their bodies. On Heidi's part, she wants to win and she trusts August to take the correct action, to get Louise help. Of course, she is wrong and this strips her of the last bit of trust she had for the East German leaders.

Overall, my biggest goals in this draft were to address the major concerns brought to light by my advisors, and to simplify and tighten the story. I wanted there to be no doubt concerning what this story was about, and to feel as authentic with regard to the history, swimming and characters.

## **Chapter 7: Revising the Thesis Draft**

For revising my thesis draft, I received notes that highlighted six specific areas that needed work: the descriptions, Kristen and her death, Gunter, Erika, Mr. Waltz, and the third act. Some of the revisions would be simple and contained, but others would have a ripple effect and cause other scenes to be changed. I decided the best plan of action was to decide the order in I would attempt to change the script. The first revision note I worked on was the description paragraphs. My habit is to add action lines to try and keep the feeling active, but it was pointed out that a lot of the lines were not so much as actions as directions for the actors. To create smoother dialogue passages, I went through and deleted any action that was unnecessary to the scene. As I was working my way through the script, I also would fix any self-contained page note.

My goal with Heidi's father was to give just enough exposition about his past where the audience understood Heidi's motivation, and to only have his affect on Heidi to be present in the script. However, I was too sparse in details so the pay-off was not strong enough. I did three changes to fix this. When Heidi tells her mother that she wants to try out to swim, I had Mrs. Waltz more strongly express her feelings and to clearly state that she needs Heidi to help out financially. To show how their father's death affected the family, I compared Heidi's dress to her classmates, to emphasize their poverty level. Finally, when Mrs. Waltz gives Heidi advice, I bring up the idea of health. This should better set-up the idea that Mrs. Waltz understands the system and her fear of it. This also strengthens my next revision. It was unclear that Hans was threatening to bring Erika into the swimming world unless she better cooperated. Clearing this up will



also add tension, because it will show that Hans knows that Heidi is questioning the system. The conversation will better reflect the idea that Hans expects Heidi to do something to demonstrate her loyalty to the GDR. Instead of telling August, Heidi will immediately reveal to Hans that Louise is sick.

The next order of business was to have a stronger set-up for Kristen's death. To foreshadow this better and to add more conflict to the third sequence, I have Kristen orchestrate Heidi beating Olga in the race. Here she is starting to feel physically unwell and to doubt her own body. It will become worse, and conflict will arise when Kristen back out of going to visit Heidi's family with her. Heidi will want to tell Dr. Helm, but Kristen makes her promise not to reveal her illness to anyone. This set-up will strengthen many parts of the story. This will make Kristen's death more guilt-ridden, it will be the force that brings Gunter into contact with Heidi's family, and it will also better explain why Heidi turns in Louise. This is one change will affect the entire third sequence and about nine scenes.

This change also overlaps with Gunter's character changes. With Gunter the only visitor in the Waltz house, he will have more focus on him. It is here that Gunter will first approach the subject of defection with Mrs. Waltz. This will bring in more tension when we find out that Gunter is an informer for the Stasi, and it will better explain why Mrs. Waltz leaves so easily with Gunter during Heidi's race.

The final change deals with the entire third act. I will deal with this last, because I want to spend most of my focus in the next few weeks on these pages. While I know the Olympics and the climax moment, the specifics and plot of the third act has been a challenge since day one. I agree with the note that it will be more tension-filled if Heidi's

drugging herself, the defection and Heidi's last race coincide with each other. However, Hans and August's reaction to this is my main roadblock in this story. In my research on the Stasi, it said that they tended to use mental torture over physical torture. Rearranging a person's furniture in their house was an effective way to control people, because they knew they were always being watched. However, my way of mentally breaking Heidi, making her think her family was dead, is confusing. In this case, it may be better to have a reaction that the audience is expecting and is more visual, than trying to be too historically accurate. While I am excited about how first seven-eighths of this movie progresses, it deserves a perfect ending. This is why I will give the third act its due and not rush a revision, but work to find the right conclusion to this story.

## **APPENDIX A: Short Outline**

**Act 1:** HEIDI OTTO (5) a skinny beanpole watches the Olympics on TV with fascination. She forces her family to go to the major rally to watch the Olympic display. AUGUST JANNINGS (50) watches the swim practice with interest. August and the coach talk about the swimmers as if they were cattle. How long has this one had breasts? This one is already menstruating? This boy's dad has an athletic background? At the end of practice, MRS. OTTO (35) tall, over 6 feet, and her small sickly daughter pick up Heidi, now 13. August notices Mrs. Otto, and Heidi for the first time. He grills the coach about Heidi, a bad swimmer but loves it, the coach tells him. In their very modest living room, August recruits Heidi to swim for him. He believes that she can be a champion. Heidi begs her mom to let her go.

Heidi moves to the training center and lives with GRETTA in the dorms. Heidi's first order of business is meeting with the team DOCTOR. The doctor explains in great detail all of the pills Heidi needs to take and why. Heidi nods. The doctor hands her the first batch, including these little blue pills the doctor calls vitamins. Heidi takes them without hesitation. Everything goes smoothly. She gets stronger and faster. She dates a cute boy GUNTER (Gun). In practice, she dominates the reigning world champion CLAUDIA. After the practice, in the bathroom, Heidi catches Claudia sticking her finger down her throat. Heidi, in the most innocent way, questions Claudia's actions. Claudia gets nasty, lets her know how her body is about to change, all because of that little blue pill. But it makes you go fast. Shaken, Heidi confides in August. August comforts her, and he gives her the weekend off to see her family, and he promises to take care of Claudia. Heidi has a wonderful visit home. The house is a little nicer; her sister looks a

little healthier. When she gets back to Berlin, Claudia is gone. After practice, August gives Heidi the exciting news that she is on the World Championship team. When Heidi asks about Claudia, August questions Heidi's dedication. Heidi promises that all she wants is to make her family, August, and East Germany proud by winning Olympic Gold medals.

**Act 2:** Heidi does very well in the meet. She isn't the star, but oddly she is the only one chosen to be interviewed by the international press. On her way out of the studio, a British girl calls her a "cheating Commie Pig". She comes home to a hero's welcome. August buys her a car so that she can drive home to see her family. They are in a very nice house, and her little sister looks normal. But Mrs. Otto worries about the changes in her daughter: the weight gain, deeper voice. Heidi goes back to Berlin and endures brutal training. On a normal training day, Heidi freaks out when she finds Gun's dead body at the bottom of the swimming pool. No one will tell her anything, just that he died of a heart attack. Heidi breaks into the Doctor's office to find what killed him, and instead finds her file. In the report is the brutal truth about the little blue pills. Heidi stops taking them. She wants to beat the East German system. At first, everything is okay; her acne clears up, she feels good. But without the steroids, her body can't handle the insane amount of training. She ends up in the hospital and off the World Championship team. Her car and family privileges get taken away as a result of her not competing. The nurses allow Heidi to run in the hallways at night, to try and keep her fitness level up. On one of her runs, she finds Claudia's room in the mental ward. Heidi breaks in, and Claudia only manages to tell her that August works for the Stassi (the east German secret service), and that is why she is there. Claudia mocks that Heidi thought she had any control over her

mind, body our soul. Heidi goes back to swim. She trains insanely hard and resumes taking the little blue pills.

**Act 3:** Still unsure if she is going to make the Olympic team, because of her past illness, one girl fails the drug test and Heidi is on the Olympic Team. Heidi wins 6 gold medals, the most of any woman EVER. With one week left in the Olympics, Heidi works with a West German cyclist that had defected ten years earlier, to help her get out. Heidi sees a broadcast on her amazing feats. The next night, Heidi chokes during the defection, and she stays with East Germany. (will be much more exciting than it reads here, I promise). During closing ceremonies, a report comes out that Heidi failed her drug test. Back in East Germany, in a concrete room, Heidi sobs to the Stassi that the West German cyclist lured her with childhood pictures of Gun, and then he drugged her. Heidi watches TV with her mom and sister in their tiny apartment. A report comes on about how the Evil West Germans and Americans tampered with their athletes at the Olympics. This report is contrasted with the report to the rest of the world about her the IOC stripped Heidi's gold medal and World Records and shed light on the type of drug was found in her system. Heidi smiles and cuddles with her sister on the couch.

## **APPENDIX B: Treatment**

In the town of Leipzig in 1976, 5-year-old HEIDI OTTO watches the showcase of the Olympic Athletes, in a small soccer stadium, with awe. A tall woman, her mother, holds a baby, and watches with her. Heidi sings with her whole heart, in a sweet voice, the DDR national anthem.

Now a 15 year-old Heidi, skinny beanpole, trains in the water. AUGUST JANNINGS watches her. He talks with the COACH and points her out.

In the Otto's very tiny apartment in the large concrete building, Heidi plays with her 10 year old sister HANNA and the three of the neighbor KIDS. The Kids run up and down the stairwell and chase after each other. Hanna coughs and trips on the stairs. One of the Boys laughs. Heidi pushes him and tends to Hanna.

Inside the apartment, August speaks with Mrs. Otto. He explains who he is, the past success that he has had. Mrs. Otto is reluctant, but August in a very subtle threatening manner lets her know that she has no real choice. He is merely letting her decide if the family would like to stay in Leipzig or do they want to come to Berlin. Mrs. Otto calls Heidi in from the stairwell. She sits Heidi down and explains the situation. Heidi is over the moon. She can't wait to go to Berlin. But when Mrs. Otto tells Heidi that they have to stay in Leipzig, she is upset; she doesn't want to leave her mother or her sister. August tells Heidi not to worry, that there is a great doctor in another city, that is where her sister and mother are moving. It is closer to Berlin and has better doctors to help her sister. This news calms down Heidi.

On her first day, Heidi meets with KRISTEN one of the top swimmers, 20, who on a couple of GOLDS at the last Olympics. This is going to be Heidi's roommate and her mentor. Kristen shows Heidi the dorms and the facilities.

August meets with DR. ADORF. They speak about Heidi, her background and what they think her potential is. Dr. Adorf asks how much enhancers she's had. August says none that is the beauty of it. She was late in puberty and size that is how the recruiters missed her. It is all very creepy and technical speak, little emotion.

Heidi sits in the hall. The door opens and August ushers her in. He introduces her to the Doctor. His demeanor has changed, much softer. He explains that they need to do a check up on her, because of all the intense training she is about to endure. August tells her not to worry, she is in good hands, and he will see her this afternoon for practice. August leaves. The doctor tells her to take off her clothes and put on the little robe. He turns his back. Heidi, sort of uncomfortable, undresses and puts the robe on. Dr. Adorf starts to measure her. First the weigh in, but then he measures her leg muscles, back, height, arm muscles, bra size, everything. He explains why he is doing that. Joints can only hold up so much muscle, and she is about to endure a lot of stress. Even though it is clinical, Heidi is uncomfortable. He does a quick check on her heart and blood pressure. **INCITING INCIDENT** He hands her a little blue pill along with a variety of others, including a contraceptive. He tells her that she needs to come to him everyday at 11:30 to get her vitamins from him. It is better for the body to do it this way, you get tired your forget, take it at the wrong time, ect. Heidi takes them and swallows them.

Heidi goes to swim practice. The huge bodies intimidate her. She gets rocked on her first practice. GUNTER (a cute 18 year-old boy) is nice to her and helps her.

At bedtime, Kristen asks her a lot of odd questions. It is basically an interrogation. Kristen pulls out a radio from under the floorboard. They listen to a specific news program, Kristen's favorite. Heidi is so tired, she falls asleep almost immediately, missing the news about what is going on in the rest of the world.

Everyday is similar. Heidi swims, eats, goes to the Doctor and goes to class. With time, Heidi gets bigger and bigger.

Heidi goes on a date with Gunter, basically eating in the dining hall, but together.

In class, Heidi gets fed propaganda, and the correct ways to behave. It is a basic education, but at least an education.

In practice, Heidi is beating the other girls quite soundly. August is happy with her. Hugs her after practice.

In Dr. Adorf's office, Heidi complains about the acne that now covers her body. Dr. Adorf inspects her naked body and writes notes into his journal. After Heidi has put her clothes on Dr. Adorf jokes that the girls just don't have enough sex. In all seriousness, don't worry, it is just part of puberty.

Heidi and Gunter have sex.

Heidi reads a letter to Kristen about how well her sister is doing with the new treatment. She can't wait to see them. Kristen isn't really paying attention, but Heidi mistakes it for anger. She apologizes, didn't realize the time. She takes out the radio and puts it to Kristen's favorite show. Kristen turns to Heidi and asks her to do her a favor. Heidi nods, of course. Kristen tells Heidi that what they are doing to them isn't right, the drugs, the mental games, the lying. Kristen always wants Heidi to remember the phrase: perseverance will set you free. Heidi repeats it, and says she will always remember. But,



is everything okay? Kristen snaps out of it, gives Heidi a hug, and says to be quiet and listen to the program.

Heidi, wet hair, walks into the cafeteria. She looks around, no Kristen. Gunter calls her over and she eats with him.

Heidi goes to her room and Kristen's stuff is gone.

**TURNING POINT #1/ END OF REEL 2:** Heidi walks into August's office. He explains to her that Kristen is sick and had to go home. On Heidi's upset face, August tells her not to worry, that they will take very good care of her. Heidi asks to see her, but August explains that she is in another city getting treatment. He explains that this affects her in a positive way, as well. They now have an open spot for the World Championships. She has worked so hard these past six months, that out of the large group, he chose her to come. August showers her with praise and gets Heidi super excited to leave East Germany for the first time in her life to represent her country.

## **ACT 2**

Heidi travels on her first plane ride ever, on her first time out of the country. She watches with terrified awe and she looks out the window on their flight.

When the plane lands, Heidi and the team, surrounded by security, race through the airport. Heidi has a difficult time taking everything in.

Heidi and her teammates are taken to a hotel where they are still guarded by security. In their rooms, there are only bed, no TVs or phones. Heidi is thrilled by the excitement of it all, and the mini fridge.

At the meet, Heidi is so excited and nervous that she doesn't seem to recognize all the negative looks she is getting from the other competitors, or that they are so much more feminine than her.

In Heidi's 100 freestyle she dominates for the win. When she finishes, she is so excited she can barely contain herself.

On the podium, August hands Heidi her medal at the top. As they play the DDR national anthem, Heidi cannot sing along, because she is sobbing with happiness.

August and a top guy in charge of sports HANS debate who should be the one athlete that is allowed to speak in front of the foreign press. Hans thinks it should be another person, but August fights for Heidi. His argument is that she is the more feminine looking of all of them, with the highest voice, and a natural beauty. Hans doesn't trust her, because she is so green. August says he will be with her the whole interview.

August talks with Heidi in the hallway. Tells her what she is allowed to say and answer. He blames the restrictions on how the foreign press can spin certain things. Heidi is very nervous.

August and Heidi enter the green room. August sits near her the entire interview. Heidi does a decent job of answering questions, comes across as very sweet.

A man, KURT WERNER, watches Heidi on television. Only Heidi and the Interviewer can be seen on the screen.

Heidi changes in the locker room. A BRITISH SWIMMER comes up to her and spits on her. Calls her a Commie Pig. Heidi stands frozen.

Heidi comes home to a hero's welcome. The East German press is singing her praises. Heidi gets settled back in the dorms. August walks in a hands her a pair of keys.

Heidi doesn't understand. August explains that they are car keys, for her birthday. Heidi is shocked, it usually takes East Germans about 15 years to get a car after being on a wait list. August explains that after her wonderful service to the country, she deserves something nice. He also tells her that she may drive home this weekend to see her family.

Heidi shows up in the car, and her sister runs to her. Hanna looks great, so much healthier than in the beginning. Mrs. Otto is also very happy to see Heidi, but a little disturbed by the enormous physical change in her daughter.

Heidi and Hanna play together, just like old times.

After dinner, Mrs. Otto expresses her concerns to Heidi. Her voice is so deep. She remembers her singing voice used to be so pretty. The mom is resigned, what can she do now? Heidi is too valuable. Heidi tries to tell her mom not to worry, even though her mother's reaction shakes her. Heidi notices the time and asks to be excused.

Heidi pulls out Kristen's radio from her bag. She turns it on and listens to Kristen's favorite program. The news is interrupted by a moment to recognize all the people that died at the Berlin wall this month. Heidi is shaken when she hears Kristen's name.

### **END OF REEL 3**

Heidi spends the morning with her family. Heidi hugs Hanna tight. The mom, noticing Heidi's strange behavior and thinks it was her that Heidi is upset about. Mrs. Otto tries to comfort Heidi and they all have a sweet moment before Heidi heads back to Berlin.

Heidi returns to training, but it is lackluster. She has a hard time in the pool.

Heidi lifts weights, but she hurts herself.

Gunter tries to get her to hang out with him, but she goes to her room, sad.

August calls her into his office. He says that he noticed that she is having a hard time. A lot of times, after a huge success people have a hard time getting back into the swing of things. Heidi tells him that he misses Kristen. August says he can't do anything about that, but he has a special gift for her. A tall woman, AVA ABEL, one of the hero's from 1976 walk in the door. Heidi's jaw drops. August leaves the room.

Ava talks to Heidi about her experience, and how to try and stay mentally sharp. She asks Heidi what she is having trouble with, that she can confide in her. Heidi explains that she is worried about her voice. Ava laughs, listen to my voice, it is the same. It doesn't mean anything. Heidi is a little sheepish, but she tells her that her whole body hurts, especially her joints. Ava asks if she has told Dr. Adolf. Heidi says she is afraid to. Ava encourages her to talk to him, he is a great help and knows what he is doing. Finally, Heidi says that she misses her roommate. Ava tells her that not everyone is tough enough to handle doing what they do. It is hard, but the reward is amazing. Not only is she helping her country, but she is helping her family. Heidi nods and leaves.

Heidi jumps into the pool and starts her warm up.

Ava, Dr. Adolf, and August speak behind the class. Ava says not to worry about Heidi. She is easily manipulated and bought into everything she was saying. From now on, Ava would bet that she would go to Dr. Adolf or August if she has any problems. She just needed some reassurance. But, a bit of advice, put a Stasi informer as her roommate. Dr. Adolf nods, thanks Ava for her time.

Heidi and the swimmer groan. They have to wear a mask as they swim in the flume.

Exhausted, Heidi comes back to her room to see BRIGIT. Brigit explains that she is Heidi's new roommate. She is so excited to meet her. Heidi tries to fake enthusiasm for the new arrangement.

Brigit follows Heidi around everywhere and grills her on a million questions. On the pool deck, Heidi almost looks relieved to get into the hard workout, just to get away from Brigit.

**MIDPOINT:** Heidi swims, stares at the black line, up and down. She sees Gunter messing around, trying to get her attention by swimming under her. Heidi ignores him and keeps swimming. Heidi does a flip and Gunter is still there. Heidi does another flip, sees Gunter again. She dives down. Gunter is slumped on the bottom of the pool. Heidi pulls him up to the top of the water and screams for help.

August, Dr. Adolf, the head guys of sports argue about how they are going to spin this and what to tell the athletes. August calls in Brigit. She tells them how Heidi has been reacting to the news. She is surprising quiet about it. She just acts like a robot. She hasn't said anything negative about the DDR, the program or any of the people. She just looks sad.

Dr. Adolf explains to the athletes in a large room what happened to Gunter. It was a freak occurrence. He had a heart defect that was impossible to know about.

Heidi sits in her room alone, stares at the wall. August comes in. He acts very paternal. How is she doing, he knew that she and Gunter were close. Heidi asks him to

tell her what happened. August tells her the cardiac arrest story. Heidi looks at him, gives him a hug. Heidi asks permission to see her family. August grants her wish.

Heidi goes home and tells her mother about Gunter. The mom is very upset, but hides it. She takes Heidi to a busy market.

At the market, Mrs. Otto explains that she thinks that the house might be bugged. Heidi thinks her mother is off her rocker, but Mrs. Otto tells Heidi to be very careful about what she says around anyone. Mrs. Otto tells her daughter to get out, but to be smart about it. With her being the top swimmer, they won't just let her quit. She needs to get hurt or start swimming slow so they let her retire. Heidi nods, okay.

Heidi drives home. For the first time, she notices that she is being followed.

Heidi gets ready for practice. She trains slow. August yells at her. He says they are trying to win a war and they are disgusting. He singles Heidi out for the first time. Heidi is humiliated and picks it up. At the end of practice, Heidi hits her hand on the wall. It swells up.

Dr. Adolf looks at Heidi's hand and shoulder. He says that she just needs a little shot. He goes to get some, but he is all out of it. He thinks that there is some more in the supply closet. Dr. Adolf leaves. Heidi immediately goes for the locked cabinet. She finds uses a paperclips to open it. She searches through the files. She reads Gunter's file. Her face is white. She hears footsteps. She replaces it, but sees something. She grabs the file. Heidi puts the file in the butt of her swim suit and quickly puts on her sweatpants just as Dr. Adolf walks in. He asks her if she wants the shot in her arm or butt. Heidi quickly says her arm.

Heidi goes back to the room, and luckily Brigit is not there. Heidi hides the file with the radio. August walks into the room. Heidi looks up in surprise. August tells her that he is sorry for yelling at her. Is her hand alright? Heidi shows him the swollen hand, but tells him that it is just a bruise. August smiles and says “thank god”. He kind of gives her a speech, questions her loyalty. Heidi answers with all the right answers. He tells Heidi that congratulations, they have picked her to be on the Olympic Team. Heidi jumps up and gives him a hug.

Still trying to figure all of this out, but somehow a message gets to Heidi from Kurt Werner telling her that perseverance will set her free, and to meet him at a certain address on a certain day.

END OF REEL 5

Heidi joins a different set of classes: preparation for the Olympics. She sits through a propaganda filled presentation about how the West will try to influence them, and rules about the Olympic Village.

Heidi goes to her Dr. Adolf appointment. She gets a smaller amount of pills. She asks why they are different? Adolf says that they just look different now.

Heidi trains and she swims really fast. She starts to feel better. Her acne clears up.

Government testers come and take their urine and blood. August says it’s to make sure that none of them are going to get sick during the Olympics.

Heidi asks permission to go home to be with her family for one day. Her mom wants to throw her a small party with her and her sister. August allows it.

Heidi stops at a gas station on the way. Her Stasi follower also stops. Heidi checks her watch and goes to the restroom. Kurt Werner is there. He explains that he was a friend of Kristen's and was going to help her defect. But he also said if anything happened to her, to help Heidi. Heidi asks what happened to Kristen? Kurt thinks that the Stasi were suspicious of her, so she tried to defect before they could imprison her. He asks her if she wants to leave, Heidi doesn't know. Kurt hands her a piece of paper. Here's the plan if she wants in. Heidi reads it, memorizes it, and then hands it back.

Heidi goes home. They have a sweet dinner. Heidi plays with her sister, now fully healthy and acting like a normal, active 12 year old. After dinner, Heidi tells her mother good-bye. Mrs. Otto seems to understand, tears up, gives Heidi a fierce hug, tells her she's proud and good luck. Heidi says she doesn't want to leave, but Mrs. Otto tells her that she has to. Heidi leaves.

### **ACT 3**

Heidi sits on the plane, but this time, she doesn't have the same excitement.

Heidi and her fellow Olympians get busses to the Olympic Village. Once they get in, they go past the "fun and free" Village and get taken to a different compound, one that is heavily guarded. They are told it's for their own safety.

Heidi is very nervous, and August gives her a very rousing speech.

Heidi dominates her race. She forces a smile and waves to the crowd. She looks over at August, and he has a huge genuine smile.

As Heidi prepares for the podium, the Women's 400 races. Heidi is very nervous before her race. August is very angry. Janet Evans, the 14 year-old super tiny American with the strange stroke kills the field. She cheers and hops out of the water. She is



extraordinary tiny next to the East German next to her. August swears, and Heidi has to hide a smile.

Heidi accepts her medal atop of the podium. She stands stoically as they play the national anthem.

August after asks if she's okay- she answers, she still has five more to win for East Germany. August grins and says that's the attitude I want.

Heidi wins race after race. (not quite sure how to show this).

At the end of the Olympics, August shows up at her dorm in the Olympic Village. He tells her it is tradition for him to take out the top athlete for a nice dinner.

August and Heidi have an awkward dinner, as August gets very drunk. The Stasi nor Heidi seem very surprised when August tells the to go to his hotel and not the Olympic Village.

At this "real" hotel, Heidi is truly impressed. For the first time in her life, she is seeing the outside world and how they live. She helps August up to the hotel room. Once there, he tries to sleep with her, but she hits him over the head. He falls to the ground. Heidi goes to the balcony.

## **CLIMAX**

Heidi uses the balcony to get to the ground floor, without the Stasi seeing her. (again this is very rough, still trying to figure out maybe a better escape route). Once she gets to the street, a car pulls up: it's Kurt. Heidi goes to get in, but she can't. She reaches into her bag and pulls out the file. She says it's Kristen's medical history. She also pulls out a small baggy with two blue pills, but when she gives it to him, there is only one in it.

He begs her to reconsider. He knows it will be tough, but he will help her. Don't let them win. She says, they won't. She slams the car door, and it drives away.

## **RESOLUTION**

Heidi sits in a cement room. Dr. Adolf interrogates her. What happened? How did she test positive for steroids? Heidi says she has no idea. She thinks that someone slipped it in her drink. That is the only possible explanation. She thinks it happened when she went out to dinner with August. Heidi begs and says she will still swim, but Dr. Adolf says her career is ruined. She has been embarrassed on the international stage. But maybe they can find some other job for her.

August and Ava watch behind the glass. Ava stares him down. August swears he was with her the whole night. The Stasi took her back to the Olympic compound.

Heidi, Mrs. Otto and Hanna sit on a couch with each other. They watch some crazy TV show. Both Mrs. Otto and Hanna hug up against her. Mrs. Otto makes some heartwarming subtle comment about being free and how proud she is of Heidi.

## APPENDIX C: Step Outline

### EXT. SMALL STADIUM IN LEIPZIG, EAST GERMANY - DAY (1976)

East German Olympic Athletes put on a show brilliant show of athleticism. Gymnasts show off their talent, track and field shows off their skills.

HEIDI OTTO watches with her pregnant mother MRS. OTTO from the audience with awe.

The ANNOUNCER at the podium who has been narrating, introduces AVA ABEL the hero of the Olympic Games, a big tall strong woman, who dominated in swimming.

Heidi watches with stars in her eyes.

The Ava leads the CROWD in the East German National Anthem.

Heidi sings with her whole heart, in a nice sweet voice.

### INT. LEIPZIG COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL - DAY (1985)

Heidi, now a 15 year old beanpole, trains in the water. She jokes around with one of the girls, and then pushes off the wall, glides through the water.

The COACH points Heidi out to AUGUST JANNINGS (55). August gives the Coach a slight nod.

### EXT. CREEK - DAY

Heidi plays with the neighborhood Boys and her sister HANNA (8) follows them.

Hanna tries to keep up, but it is obvious that she is sickly.

One of the boys makes fun of Hanna, but Heidi stands up for her, and they walk away on their own.

### INT. OTTO APARTMENT - DAY

August speaks with Mrs. Otto about Heidi joining him at his swim team. The great benefits that she will have, how she can make her proud and the country proud. How he sees real talent in Heidi.

Mrs. Otto is very reluctant.

### EXT. CREEK - DAY

Hanna and Heidi throw pebbles into the creek. Hanna says that she wants to swim like Heidi. Heidi promises her that she will teach her, when Hanna gets a little bigger.

They sing their song together, in high sweet voices.

### INT. OTTO APARTMENT - DAY

August explains that they can move her and Hanna to just outside of Berlin, where there is a specialist that can help Hanna with her illness (still trying to come up with a good chronic illness due to malnutrition).

Heidi and Hanna walk in the door.

August introduces himself to Heidi and is brief about how he is, and then he leaves.

### INT. OTTO APARTMETN - NIGHT

Heidi, Mrs. Otto and Hanna sit on the couch together and watch a small static TV. Hanna sleeps with her half of her body on Heidi.

Mrs. Otto brings up the idea of Heidi going to Berlin to swim. Heidi is really enthusiastic about it. This has been her dream since she was five years old.

Mrs. Otto says she knows, but that means they won't get to live together anymore. Heidi is now more tentative, but once she pulls it out of Mrs. Otto that they are going to help with Hanna's health care, she is 100% in.

#### INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi unpacks in her new dorm room, when Kristen walks in. Heidi is very excited, and knows who she is: she won a few gold medals at the last world championships.

Kristen quickly hides a radio and photograph.

August shows up at the room, and Kristen's demeanor changes, much more obedient.

August asks Kristen to show Heidi the facilities and to bring her by Dr. Adorf's office in an hour. Kristen agrees.

#### INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

August and DR. ADORF (65) discuss Heidi. August is very excited about her talent level. But the way he talks, it is more on a larger scale, like she will represent the DDR well.

He talks about her almost more like a show pony, rather than a human.

August and Dr. Adorf discuss what program they think she should be on.

The fact that they think she can make the Olympics in 18 months and why.

#### INT. HALL OF DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Heidi sits in a chair by the office. The door opens and August walks out with Dr. Adorf. He introduces to the two to each other and tells Heidi that Dr. Adorf is a great man and a great friend of the athletes. That he and August in a sense are both her coach.

Heidi nods.

August tells Heidi he will see her at practice in an hour and leaves.

Dr. Adorf motions to Heidi to come inside.

#### INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf explains to Heidi that she is about to endure a lot of training and he is there to make sure that she doesn't get hurt. They want to help her as much as possible.

But to do that, they need to get some data. Heidi nods.

Dr. Adorf asks her some normal questions to the increasingly uncomfortable.

He asks her to change into a robe for the physical. He turns around while she changes into the robe.

He weighs her, and then goes on to measure her entire body, including her legs, arms, chest, ect.

Dr. Adorf then gives her the pills, and explains that she needs to come to him every day at 11:00 AM to receive them. They are vitamins, but they want to watch out for the athlete's health, so they must be administered by him to her.

INCITING INCIDENT: Heidi swallows the little blue pills.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi shows up at the pool. Kristen ignores her and joins the group of guys in lane 1. All of the bodies are huge and once in the pool, Heidi's small body gets rocked. During the practice, August yells at her, and she finally gets pushed down the lanes, until she is in the slowest lane with the younger girls. At the end of the practice, Heidi can barely get her body out of the pool. GUNTER (18) and Heidi happen to be the last ones to go to the locker room. Gunter tells her not to worry, it just takes some while getting used to. He smiles at her and goes into the locker room.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Heidi walks like a zombie and is fascinated by the apples. Fruit? This is exciting. She grabs one and a sandwich and leaves.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heidi asks who the cute boy in the picture was. Kristen grills Heidi. Wants to know where she is from, why would they let someone so green into the program? (basically Kristen is paranoid that Heidi is Stasi). Heidi answers all of Kristen's questions. Heidi is very confused by all of this. Kristen really looks at Heidi and relaxes a little bit. She asks Heidi if she wants to listen to the radio, even though it is against the rules. Heidi says yes, but falls asleep before she really hears any of the news. Kristen hears something and writes it on her notepad. It is clear that it is news from the West Berlin side.

INT. POOL - DAY

Heidi swims in the early morning. She has moved her way to the middle lanes. Her shoulders are a little wider.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Heidi eats a nice big breakfast (major contrast to what she had with her family earlier) with Gunter and his friends. They laugh.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf weighs her, she is 20 pounds heavier than in her first weigh in. Heidi downs the pills without any water.

INT. GYM - DAY

Heidi lifts weights. It is pretty impressive what she can lift and the crazy dryland she can do.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Heidi sits in class. She can barely stay awake as she learns rudimentary math. The math teacher finishes his lesson and the students watch a propaganda video.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - NIGHT

Heidi swims in the in the second to fastest lane with only Kristen and two other girls.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heidi and Kristen listen to the news on the radio.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi has an amazing set and dominates all the other girls. She now looks like them, but her longer hair keeps the last bit of femininity she has left.

August gives a small smile.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

August stops Heidi and tells her how proud of her he is. She looks so good. Her mental toughness is a reflection of this great country.

Heidi beams with pride.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf asks about any stress on her joints. Heidi says that she is okay, but she has some bad patches of acne on her body.

Dr. Adorf tells her to take her clothes off. This time he does not turn around as she strips. He looks a little put off by the sight, but manages to hide it quickly.

He pulls out his notebook and inspects her naked body in the hard light.

He makes a joke about how the girls just don't have enough sex. But in all seriousness, it is probably just stress and a bad period. He gives her the cup of pills.

INT. GUNTER'S DORM - NIGHT

Gunter sleeps in his single bed.

Heidi slips in and wears a plain dress.

Heidi wakes him up.

Heidi slips off her underwear and then lies next to him in the bed.

Heidi hikes up the dress, but keeps it on to hide the acne.

She and Gunter have sex.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi tip toes to her bed in the darkness. Kristen surprises her in that she is awake.

Kristen tells her about her boyfriend, Max Schafer.

She doesn't think it's right what they do to them, the pills, the lying.

Kristen begs Heidi to remember the phrase: perseverance will set you free.

Heidi is upset, but agrees.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi wakes up. Kristen is not in the room.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi looks for Kristen on the pool deck. Gunther smiles at her, but Heidi wants to know where Kristen is.

August grabs her after practice and says that he needs to speak with her.

INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

August tells her that Kristen woke up with severe stomach pains. They found her in the bathroom. She had to go to the hospital and have surgery.

Heidi doesn't understand, why didn't Kristen wake her. August says that he doesn't know.

But that isn't all that he wanted to tell her. With Kristen being sick, there is a spot open on the World Championship Team. She's worked really hard these past 8 months, and she deserves the spot.

Heidi is very excited. August promises Heidi that she will be able to see Kristen when she feels better.

But right now she should be excited because she gets to fly to London.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Heidi looks out the window as they fly into London. She is terrified as they land.

August teases her.

End of Act One.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Heidi and GRETA (we have seen her on the pool deck) put their stuff away in the hotel room.

There is no TV, no radio, just two big beds and a small mini fridge. Heidi is very enthusiastic, but Greta just seems annoyed by it.

Greta says it's not that great, because all they will see of London is the pool and the hotel room.

INT. LONDON NATATORIUM - DAY

There are banners everywhere that read "FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 1987".

The East German Women warm up together. Heidi blends in with the uniformed swimmers.

LATER

August gives Heidi a pep talk. Tells her to go out strong, keep her kick up and she'll be okay. Heidi grins and says she's ready.

BEHIND THE BLOCKS

It's a relay- a four person race. Heidi steps away from the group a little bit to spin her arms.

The ITALIAN RELAY TEAM walks past them. The Germans are very obviously much bigger.

Heidi accidentally hits one of the Italian girls with her arm swings. Heidi tries to apologize, but they don't speak the same language.

The Italian girl glares at Heidi and spews Italian at her. At the end, in broken German she says "cheating commie pig".

Heidi looks taken aback.

Olivia brings Heidi back into the huddle and talks it away. They're jealous, they hate us because we're good. Let's go beat them.

Heidi is the first leg of the anchor and she dominates. She misses the WR by just a hair, according to the announcer.

#### A TOP OF THE PODIUM

The four girls huddle together at the top and they can barely squeeze on; while the two other teams on the podium fit nicely.

The GDR National Anthem plays and Heidi cries, sings, but the singing is lower, more horse.

#### INT. REST AREA - NIGHT

The GDR swimmers get their stuff ready in the background. August and the HEAD OF SPORTS HANS talk over who which girl they should use for an interview. August is very adamant on Heidi. She's young, pretty, naive, sweet. The perfect face for DGR. The Head of Sports acquiesces.

August calls Heidi over.

#### INT. STUDIO BOOTH - NIGHT

August and Heidi sit in the booth. August tells Heidi not to worry, it is just natural for each team to have one person answer questions. He'll be the interpreter for her and will be by her side the whole time.

He says her mom and sister will also probably see this, so make them proud.

Heidi nods.

August speaks with the interviewer in a foreign tongue. They do a little of the interview. Heidi comes off as very sweet. Says that this was the most fun she's ever had.

#### INT. PLANE - DAY

Olivia sits down next to Heidi "told you, only hotel and pool". Heidi says at least they got the sky.

#### INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi kicks on the board. August hollars at her that she they have made her lunch and she needs to go talk to a grade school. Come to his office before she leaves.

#### INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

August hands her something. She asks what it is. He says they are car keys, for her birthday. Heidi is speechless. 16 year olds don't get cars. August tells her she's not any 16 year old. And how else would she get to her mother's house after she talks at the grade school.

Heidi is so excited, and they hug.

#### INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi packs her bag for weekend. She stares at the floor. She opens up the floor boards and takes the radio, picture and note pad out of the ground and throws it in her suitcase.

#### INT. SCHOOL - DAY



Heidi talks to a group of school children. They treat her with complete adoration. She gives them a little speech about how to work hard.

INT. CAR - DAY

Heidi drives in her car. She is very happy.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Heidi drives into the driveway. Hanna and Mrs. Otto run out to greet her.

Hanna runs into Heidi's arms. Heidi swings her around.

Mrs. Otto is happy to see her, but seems to be a little more reserved. She walks over to Heidi and gives her a small hug.

INT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Hanna runs around and shows Heidi all the rooms. Heidi laughs as she follows her around.

Hanna wants to go swimming in the river.

Heidi says she cannot, because she didn't bring her swim suit.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Heidi and Mrs. Otto watch Hanna swim in the river from a blanket on the bank.

Mrs. Otto asks Heidi how everything is going. Heidi says it is good. She tells her mother about flying on the plane.

Heidi notices that Hanna is looking well.

Mrs. Otto nods, says the doctor's are really good.

Heidi brings up the fact that she looks different.

Mrs. Otto nods. Heidi says "the way you looked at me when you saw me, you're upset."

Hanna comes running up to them and interrupts the tense moment. She's hungry.

Heidi smiles and says she will race her back to the house.

Heidi and Hanna run through the field.

INT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

The three have dinner. Hanna chatters quickly, happy. The three of them laugh.

Hanna tells Heidi that she'll sleep in their mother's bedroom, so that Heidi can have the bedroom to herself.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Heidi looks through Kristen's notebook. She sees a lot of scribbles and the phrase: perseverance will set you free.

She tries to play the radio but static. She messes with it, finds Kristen's favorite station.

The program is ended with a prayer for all the people that died that month at the wall.

They list the few names that they know. Kristen's name is mentioned.

Heidi stares at photograph of the boyfriend, cries.

INT. ROOM - DAY

They have breakfast. Mrs. Otto can tell that something is wrong with Heidi. She asks Hanna to do an errand for her.

Mrs. Otto asks her what is wrong.

Heidi tells her everything is fine. Mrs. Otto questions her about her body. Heidi tells her that the doctor is monitoring her. And Hanna's safety is all that matters.

Mrs. Otto says that Heidi is her daughter, too. Heidi interrupts her with a hug, and tells her not to worry.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Otto and Hanna say good-bye to Heidi. Hanna asks Heidi if she is going to make the Olympics so she can watch her swim on TV.

Heidi says yes, she is.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi swims, but she doesn't do well in practice.

August yells at her and kicks her out of the top lane.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Heidi sits by herself at a table. Gunter comes to her, asks if she is okay.

Heidi nods. Says she just misses her family.

He tries to help her, but Heidi doesn't really want much to do with him.

INT. GYM - DAY

Heidi dead lifts. She lifts up, and screams out in pain and grabs for her back.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf takes a huge needle and sticks it in Heidi's back. She has wet hair and her suit on, obvious that they are still having her swim.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi sits in her room with Gunter. Her whole body is covered in ice packs. She tries to be more sociable. But it feels awkward now.

Gunter tries to help, but can't.

August interrupts, asks Gunter to leave.

August wants to talk with Heidi, he knows that something is up.

Heidi tries to be as vague as possible, but says that she really misses home and Kristen.

She watches for his reaction, but August gives nothing away.

August tells her that girls would kill to be in her position. But swimming is her duty and she needs to have pride.

He tells her that one major meet months ago isn't going to guarantee her a spot on the Olympic Team.

August tells her to come to his office tomorrow. He has a surprise for her.

He asks her how her family has been doing.

Heidi, slowly getting it, says good.

INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

Heidi walks into the office and there is Ava Able, the Olympian. Ava shakes her hand. Ava tells her that she was very impressed by her swims in London.

Heidi is ecstatic to meet her idol.

Ava explains that August felt like Heidi might need someone, a woman and who has been through the training to talk to.

Ava says that she would do anything for August, that he loves his swimmers and that he just wants the best for Ava.

Heidi nods enthusiastically.

But Heidi does ask if she hurt all the time when she swam. Ava explains that it's just all the muscle from the training. As you can see, you go back to normal size when you stop. And the acne? Ava nods, that too. But Ava says that the sacrifice is worth it, when you stand on that Olympic podium representing your country. There is no better feeling. So what if your voice is a little low. It's a badge of honor.

But if she wants to leave the program, she can continue like she is now, but Ava urges Heidi not to do that.

Heidi hugs Ava.

#### INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Ava and August watch as they swim. Heidi looks much better, energized again.

August says Heidi is a good kid, reminds him a lot of Ava. Tons of talent.

August asked if she complained about anything. Ava says only that she misses her family and Kristen.

August thanks Ava. Ava says no problem, then looks a little sad, but she hides it from August.

#### INT. HALLWAY OF DORMS - NIGHT

Gunter and Heidi laugh as they walk down the hall. Gunter walks Heidi to her room, tries to talk her into letting him stay for a little bit even though Heidi is beat from practice.

When they get to the room, the door is open.

#### INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Olivia unpacks her bags in the room. Heidi is confused. Oh, Caroline, her roommate had an eating disorder that was just too destructive. She's been kicked out, told there's no way she'll make the Olympics. Since they were both without roommates, August decided to have them room together, since they did so well at Worlds.

Heidi gives Olivia a forced smile. Great.

#### INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Olivia wakes Heidi up. Time to get to the flume. Heidi tells Olivia that she can go ahead.

But Olivia wants to walk together, it's more fun walking across campus with a friend.

#### INT. HALLWAY OF DORMS - DAY

Olivia is by Heidi's side.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Olivia sticks close to Heidi, talks her ear off.

INT. FLUME - DAY

Olivia pulls Heidi into her group of friends while they wait to do the awful flume, where they swim in an endless pool. A GIRL comes out of it just looking wrecked.

The next girl jumps in with a dreaded look on her face.

Olivia keeps talking.

Heidi volunteers to go next and looks relieved to finally get into the torture device.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Heidi gets in between Gunter and one of his friends, almost boxing herself in to stay away from Olivia.

The guys laugh, still trying to hide out from Olivia? After a month you'd think she get the hint that they aren't best friends.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi swims during warm up.

Gunter goes underneath and makes faces at Heidi. She sticks her tongue out at him.

Heidi does a flip, sees Gunter at the bottom again, refuses to look at him, by doing breaststroke.

Heidi does another flip, sees Gunter limp at the bottom of the pool.

She dives down and brings him up, unconscious and SCREAMS.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf sits at his desk with tears in his eyes. August sits stonily in one of the chairs, and Hans paces the office.

They debate how they should handle the issue.

INT. ROOM - DAY

Dr. Adorf speaks with the group. Heidi is not there. He explains that Gunter died from a heart condition that was virtually impossible to detect.

INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

August speaks with Olivia. He asks her how Heidi is doing.

Olivia responds with an odd formality.

August asks if she has said anything bad about the GDR, blaming Gunter's death on anyone. Olivia shakes her head "no". She is just really quiet and seems really sad.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - DAY

Heidi listens to the radio. She hears the phrase: perseverance will set you free. Heidi jumps to attention and grabs the note pad. The program ends, but the next ad is for a gas station just outside of East Berlin and a date they are having a sale.

Heidi looks through the note pad and realizes that all of them are ads.

Heidi writes down the address. The sale is in two days.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi swims pretty well.

In a backstroke set, Heidi does two strokes at the flags, flips. 2 strokes to the flags, flips, on the third turn, she takes 4 short strokes (her rhythm change obvious) and crashes into the wall.

Heidi yelps.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Adorf sits with Heidi and examines the swelling in her wrist. He tells her she is lucky she didn't break it.

Dr. Adorf looks at Heidi and tells her it is normal to be upset at the loss of a loved one. He tells her that he will do her a favor if she will do one in return for him.

Heidi looks up.

He will advise to August to let her go home for a week, BUT she has to promise that when she gets back, she will train really hard.

August loves and believes in her, and he would be so upset if she wasn't able to make the Olympic team after putting his name on the line for her with Hans at the World Championships.

Heidi nods and agrees.

Dr. Adorf notices that he is out of medicine for her shot.

Heidi immediately goes for the file cabinets. She finds the key in the drawer to open it. She searches, finds a couple of files that she wants and stuff it in the back of her sweat pants.

Dr. Adorf comes in. He tells her to lie on the bed.

Heidi asks if she can have it in her arm, but he says no.

Heidi, as she lies on the table manages to move the documents to the front of her pants.

As she drops her pants, so do the documents. He gives her the shot.

INT. CAR - DAY

Heidi notices that she is being followed.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Heidi pulls up to the pump. AN ATTENDANT walks out and asks if she needs help.

The Attendant pumps her gas, and notices that her swimming gear in the back of her car. Recognizes her, impressed.

Heidi uses the phrase.

The Attendant smiles and says he will be right back.

Heidi waits uncomfortably by the car.

The Attendant comes back and hands her the bill. He asks her what she wants to tell Max. Heidi looks up in surprise, Max Schafer? The Attendant nods.

Heidi says she doesn't know. The Attendant asks if she will be back. Heidi says a week from today. He nods and tells her to know what she wants by then.

EXT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Heidi pulls up and walks in the door.

INT. TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Hanna and Mrs. Otto eat dinner, and they are shocked to see her. They jump up and hug her.

INT. ROOM, TINY HOUSE - NIGHT

Hanna and Heidi barely fit into the bed, but they sleep in each other arms.

Mrs. Otto puts away Heidi's things. She finds the radio, note pad, picture and files.

INT. TINY HOUSE - DAY

The group of three eat breakfast. Hanna whines that she has to go to school. Mrs. Otto says that she wants to spend some time with Heidi, too. And not to worry, that they will do something fun with Heidi later tonight.

INT. HEIDI'S CAR - DAY

Mrs. Otto (in the driver's seat) and Heidi wave at Hanna as she runs into the school.

Mrs. Otto drives away from the school.

EXT. CAR - DAY

They drive around. Mrs. Otto seems to notice something.

Heidi tries to talk, but Mrs. Otto puts a finger to her lips.

They drive past a cafe that is filled with people.

Mrs. Otto parks.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Mrs. Otto and Heidi sit in the window of the tight quarters. They sip coffee. Mrs. Otto leans in. She asks Heidi why she has a radio and a medical records in her possession and why are they being followed.

Heidi is shocked. But the mom tells her to keep acting normal.

Heidi thinks that they are drugging her to make her go fast. She's gained 30 lbs in 2 months, and was already almost to record speed. Kristen and Gunther have both died.

The mom nods. She says she felt like something wasn't right.

Mrs. Otto asks about the notebook. Heidi thinks Kristen was planning an escape.

Mrs. Otto asks Heidi if she wants to leave.

Heidi says she can't because of Mrs. Otto and Hanna.

Mrs. Otto interrupts her. She tells her that Hanna is in remission and is doing very well.

Mrs. Otto tells Heidi that she has done enough, that she can choose what she wants to do and it is okay to leave.

Heidi smiles and Mrs. Otto, and she drinks her coffee normally.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Heidi gives Hanna a swim lesson as Mrs. Otto watches on.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Heidi gets her gas pumped by the Attendant. He gives her the bill. Heidi writes something down. The Attendant nods.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Heidi pulls up to the dorm. She stares at it for awhile. She takes a deep breath and then gets out of the car.

INT. HEIDI AND KRISTEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heidi walks into her room to see the trap door on the floor open, but empty.  
Heidi doesn't know what to do.

INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

August is really harsh on Heidi. Asks her was the hole was for. Heidi explains that she just had a picture of Gunther and his goggles that she stole from his locker.  
She thought she would get in trouble if anyone knew.  
August really grills her, about Kristen, her loyalty.  
Kristen asks if she is going to be kicked out because of this. August stares at her, no, of course not. But she is going to have her car taken away from her and she will not be able to visit with her family until after the Olympics. Right now, she needs to focus on swimming.  
Heidi nods and says that she will work very hard the next four months until the Olympics.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi trains hard, but now there is no laughter and August has lost all his softness.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Heidi gets injections in her still mangled wrist, her back, her shoulder neck and stomach.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Heidi, her hair in a bun, walks, but not quite a normal walk, down the streets. A MAN passes her and torments her about her sexuality.

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Heidi does a great swim in practice that is only a few tenths off the world record.

INT. AUGUST'S OFFICE - DAY

Hans, August and Dr. Adorf debate who seems the most physically able to go to the Olympics. Dr. Adorf talks about their injuries, and who seems to be holding up the best. August talks times and how they look in practice.  
Hans asks about Heidi. August says that she has been difficult, but that she will be the one to get him his bonus.  
Dr. Adorf says that her joints are having a little bit of difficulty holding up to the stress.  
Hans puts together a tentative list.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Heidi sits with a group of Older Swimmers. The girls joke about how it's almost shot time. Heidi gives them an curious look, but that is all they say about it.  
Heidi gets up a leaves.

INT. DR. ADORF'S OFFICE - DAY

Heidi gets her cup full of pills. Dr. Adorf turns around and Heidi quickly takes out the blue pill and puts it in her pocket. She takes the rest of the pills.

EXT. DYNAMO SPORTS CLUB - DAY

Some of the swimmers pile into a school bus with bags.

INT. BUS, STREETS - MOVING

August stands up in front of the bus and gives a speech about how many of them know what this means, but congratulations, this bus ride means you have made the Olympic Team. They are going to Leipzig to train as one team for two months before they go to the Olympics.

INT. LEIPZIG POOL - DAY

Heidi reacquainted with some of her past teammates on the deck.

INT. STERILE OFFICE - DAY

Heidi gets her blood drawn.

INT. ANOTHER STERILE OFFICE - DAY

Another Doctor gives Heidi an injection in the rear.

INT. LEIPZIG FLUME - DAY

Heidi and her mates train in the flume but this time with a mask on.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Heidi and some of the WOMEN walk on the streets. They walk past the stadium. Heidi tells the story of how that is where she first round out about swimming.

Maybe one of the girls makes a joke about she could wish she could unlearn it.

Heidi shakes her head no, she likes swimming and training.

They walk past a shop, and Heidi notices someone in a bookstore.

Heidi uses another childhood excuse to get away from the for a second.

INT. BOOK SHOP - DAY

Heidi meets Max Shafer, Kristen's boyfriend. Heidi asks how he knew to find her. He says he's been following her since she came to Leipzig, just waiting for her to notice him. He tells her that he is sorry, but the plan was for Kristen to not make the Olympics and to leave while August and the Stasi were away. He doesn't think he can help her.

Heidi upset, but nods. She tells him that if he would like, her mother has Kristen's medical records. She gives Max the address of her mother. He wishes her good luck, and that he is sorry that he couldn't be of more help.

INT. LEIPZIG CENTER - DAY

Heidi and her teammates listen to Hans and Ava explaining the proper way to behave at the Olympics- the proper protocol.

Heidi notices that Ava walks with a limp.



EXT. PLANE - DAY

A plane flies through the sky.

INT. BUS - DAY

Heidi and her teammates drive in a bus through the streets of South Korea. They are fascinated by the landscape.

EXT. OLYMPIC VILLAGES - DAY

The bus comes to a lively Olympic Village and drives past it to a check point just a little further down the road.

INT. BUST - DAY

A Guard walks in a checks the identification of all the athletes on board.

EXT. BUS - DAY

The bus drives through the heavily secured “communist” Olympic Village. It has a lot less energy to it, basically just dorms.

INT. OLYMPIC VILLAGE DORM - DAY

Heidi and Gretchen unpack. They laugh with each other, once again, hotel room and natatorium is all they’re ever going to see.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORUIM - DAY

Heidi and her teammates warm-up in pool. Heidi leans on the lane line.

A West German in the lane next to her leans over to her. She tells her that Max wants to know if you still want to persarvere? Heidi looks taken aback and says “yes”.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORUIM - DAY

Heidi stands behind the blocks, towering over the other competitors. She gets up on the blocks. She takes her mark and explodes off of it.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Heidi finds a room key in her bag with a small piece of paper wrapped around it.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORUIM - DAY

Heidi dives into the pool from a relay start. The East German are ahead.

INT. DRUG TESTING ROOM - DAY

Heidi tells the West German swimmer that she is sorry, she accidentally picked up her goggles. There is a piece of paper in them.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORUIM - DAY

Heidi swims butterfly. She is a good body length ahead at the turn.

INT. BATHROOM, OLYMPIC VILLAGE DORM - NIGHT

Heidi with wet hair quickly takes a pill.

INT. DECK, OLYMPIC NATATORIUM - DAY

Heidi and August watch the 400 free. The American swimmer (denoted by her swim cap) is ahead of the East German. August goes crazy.

The American touches first. The American and the East German hop out. The American is Janet Evans, a tiny 14 year old girl next to the gigantic East German.

She waves her hand as August's face goes red and Heidi hides a smile.

INT. EAST GERMAN DORM ROOM - DAY

Heidi gets a shot in the butt from Dr. Adorf. Dr. Adorf jokes about how she bets she misses the pills now.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORIUM - DAY

Heidi finishes first by a mile in the 200 free. She lifts her arms up in victory.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The West German Swimmer slips a small vial into Heidi's gym bag.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORIUM - DAY

Heidi stands at the top of the podium and stands stoically as the DDR national anthem plays.

INT. OLYMPIC NATATORIUM - DAY

Heidi gives an interview with August as her interpreter. However, the woman slips into German this time and asks Heidi what she says to people that claim they must be using steroids.

Heidi gives a brilliant answer about their training regimen and their discipline. August is very proud of her.

Heidi tells him that she wishes she could see more of the world, she doesn't want to just sit in the Olympic dorm the rest of the week.

August asks her if she would like to go to dinner. Heidi very happily accepts.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Heidi and August have dinner together. He is drinking a lot. They talk about how great the DDR is and how well Heidi represented them. August is very pleased with himself. August feeds Heidi alcohol.

Heidi slips some of the liquid that MAX gave her into the drink. She asks August if her drink is supposed to taste like this? He drinks it from it, and says it tastes fine.

Heidi "accidentally" spills the drink on her way to the restroom.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The Stasi driver rolls his eyes when August tells the driver to go to his hotel and not the Olympic Village.

INT. LOBBY OF HOTEL - NIGHT

Heidi and August walks into the lobby, his arm around her shoulders.  
The Stasi snicker and the two walk to the elevator. Heidi keeps her head down.

INT. HALLWAY OF HOTEL - NIGHT

Heidi and August wobble down the hall. They come to room 345 and Heidi pulls out the KEY that was sent to her.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Heidi staggers under the weight of August. She helps him to over to the bed and then throws him down. He lands face first.

Heidi rolls him over.

She searches the mini bar and pours two drinks, takes a sip out of one and puts them on the table.

She heads out to the balcony.

EXT. SIDE OF HOTEL - NIGHT

Heidi scurries onto the edge of the balcony. She drops down to the one below her. The next one is at an angle, and she reaches her long body to the awkwardly placed balcony.

EXT. STREETS OF SOUTH KOREA - NIGHT

Heidi falls onto the street from the balcony.

She waits impatiently by the road.

A taxi pulls up with Max inside.

Heidi hands him one little blue pill. She hesitates and then closes the door without getting in.

Max asks what she is doing, but Heidi says she can't leave.

Heidi walks back into the hotel.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Heidi sits across from August, Dr. Adorf, Hans and a STASI MAN. Heidi shifts in her seat.

One by one, they ask her what happened. They grill her on how she failed a test. They fight each other. Dr. Adorf says that she was clean when they left the country. They followed protocol in the strictest sense.

Heidi cries and says that she wants to still swim. She will do anything for her country.

August explains that her career is over.

Hans expels Dr. Adorf and Heidi from the room.

INTERCUT with

Flashback of Heidi slipping a little blue pill to herself and her taking the test right after her race.

INT. HALLWAY OF INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Dr. Adorf and Heidi sit there. Heidi asks him why he does what he does.

Dr. Adorf looks sadly over at Heidi and explains that he knew that he would kind and watch out for them, give them the proper amount of drugs and diminish their side effects. Another Doctor could have really mistreated them.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Mrs. Otto, Heidi and Hanna all play in the River. Heidi, her body decreased in size play races Hanna.

They all circle together and float. Hanna sings, Mrs. Otto joins in, and then Heidi joins in with her deep voice.

Hanna splashes Heidi and they all laugh.

## APPENDIX D: REVISION THOUGHTS

Heidi's character arc:

- Heidi ignores her mother's warnings and is willing to do anything to win an Olympic gold medal and follow in her dead father's footsteps.
- Heidi experiences the highs of having her times drop and being the best in the world. She is also starting to experience the side effects, but the good outweighs the bad.
- Heidi starts to re-evaluate as the side effects of the drugs become worse, and she learns more about her choices through her friendship with Kristen.
- Heidi realizes that the way she can help her teammates is not by winning, but by exposing to the world what the GDR is doing to them.

Characters:

Mrs. Heinrich: She is the person in Heidi's life that does not want her to be a swimmer. She wants Heidi to live a quiet life, marry a boy, and have a risk-free life.

Mr. Heinrich: He is the source for Heidi's desire to swim, metaphorically and literally. He died when she was 6 year old, and her main memory is of them playing in the creek together and his photograph of him at the Olympics. It is also his genetics that allowed to her to join the system so late- the one that her mother tried so hard to keep her out of.

Kristen: She is sort of on the outside of the group. She is older and disillusioned. Slowly, she becomes like a big sister to Heidi. Kristen's solution is to run away. However, on the day before she is set to flee, she dies in the pool from a cardiac arrest.

August Jannings: He is the fill in father figure. He loves Heidi not like a father loves a daughter, but more like how an owner loves their prize-winning pony. His main goal is to produce champions.

Hans: He is the head of the Stasi and the SC Dynamo Berlin. He runs a system of Stasi informers in the athletic department to make sure that with all the traveling the athletes do; they stay loyal and do not defect. He is Heidi's biggest threat to her dream besides the drugs.

Gunter: Is Heidi's love interest. He is a nice boy, but there is something a bit off about him. The goal is to have the audience really like him, and then think he is a Stasi informer, and then for him to be the person that was going to help Kristen escape, and then ultimately helps Heidi.

Louise- is part of Heidi's good group of friends and a good swimmer. However, she turns out to be the Stasi informer.

Dr. Waltz: He is the one that is always able to convince Heidi to keep taking the drugs- to be a “good girl”. He believes that he is helping these girls, because another man might come in and take advantage of them.

My goal with the changes is to really streamline the story. What I learned from the “The lives of Others” and “Good-bye, Berlin” is that my story is too convoluted, and needs to really to focus on the girls at Dynamo and the sports system and the DRUGS.

- Get rid of sister
- Get rid of Ava
- Get rid of Johann
- Getting rid of ALL television interviews
- To show her popularity within the community have a sporting expose.
- Build the swim meets better, and Heidi’s success
- Build the drugs better.
- The relationship between Kristen and Heidi is more like big sister/little sister.
- Hans needs to be that BIG antagonistic force
- \*\* I think I like the idea of Kristen being the one to die in the pool maybe right before she is going to defect.

Basic Structure:

Inciting Incident: when she takes the drugs against her mother’s advice.

End of Act 1: She cut relationship with her mother and becomes fully engrossed in the Dynamo Berlin lifestyle.

Reel 3 Moment: Heidi has sex with Gunter.

Midpoint: Kristen dies.

Reel 5 Moment: Heidi steal the Kristen’s folder.

2<sup>nd</sup> Act Break: She betrays Louise.

Climax: I am going to have Gunter take Mrs. Heinrich and use the Kristen way to leave the country- and Heidi sacrifices herself to save her sister.

Resolution: Her positive test comes out and the GDR system is exposed.

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