

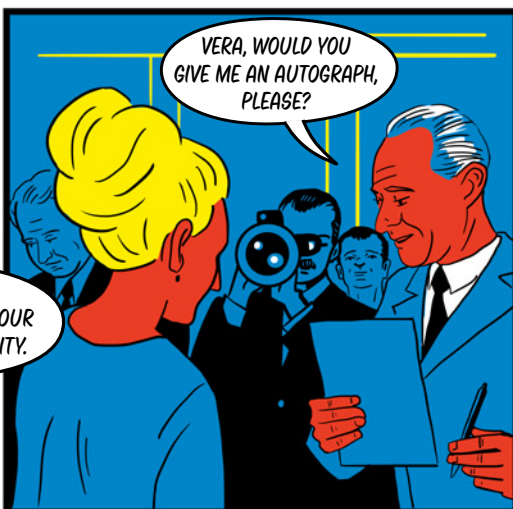
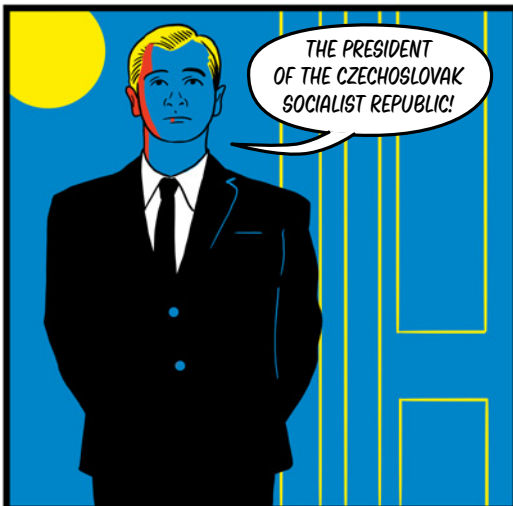


JAN NOVÁK JAROMÍR 99

ČÁSLAVSKÁ

ARGO

RIGHT BEFORE LEAVING FOR MEXICO, ALL THE OLYMPIANS WERE INVITED TO THE PRESIDENTIAL CASTLE. WELCOMING THEM THERE WAS THE PRESIDENT SVOBODA, ALEXANDR DUBCEK AND ALL THE OTHER COMMUNIST POLITICIANS WHO, A FEW DAYS EARLIER IN MOSCOW, HAD SIGNED THE MOSCOW DICTATE.





THAT LACE IS LIKE
A BREEZE. YOU COULD
ALMOST EAT IT.

HOPE I'M NOT DRAGGING
THIS DRESS ALONG FOR NOTHING.
WISH ME LUCK.



IT REALLY, REALLY
SUITS YOU.



SO YOU REALLY
WON'T GET MARRIED,
UNLESS YOU WIN
THERE?

DOES THE GROOM
ALSO HAVE TO WIN?

I'M LEAVING IT OPEN...
WHAT IF I DON'T DO WELL? THEN
I'D PROBABLY KEEP ON COMPETING,
AND YOU MUST BE SINGLE
FOR THAT.

OH, NO! IN THAT CASE
I'D END UP AN OLD MAID!
THEY DON'T EXPECT MUCH
OF HIM, HE'S LUCKY...

SO HOW DOES HE
HANDLE IT, YOU WINNING
ALL THOSE MEDALS
WHEN HE ISN'T?



NOT ALL THAT WELL,
BUT I HOPE IT'S MY LAST
COMPETITION AND ALL THIS
MADNESS WILL END. AND
I'LL ONLY BE A WIFE
AND A MOM...

BY THE TIME THE CZECHOSLOVAK TEAM ARRIVED IN MEXICO CITY, THE SOVIET GYMNASTS HAD ALREADY SPENT 14 DAYS THERE. THEY WERE PERFECTLY ACCLIMATED TO THE HIGH ALTITUDE AND ENGAGED IN AN INTENSIVE CHARM OFFENSIVE.



THE MEXICANS ASKED US TO DO A PUBLIC TRAINING SESSION. TOGETHER WITH THE RUSSIANS...

OH, BOY, TALK ABOUT A BULL FIGHT...



WHAT DO YOU KNOW, THE NURSERY IS STILL A NURSERY! WHERE'S DADA?

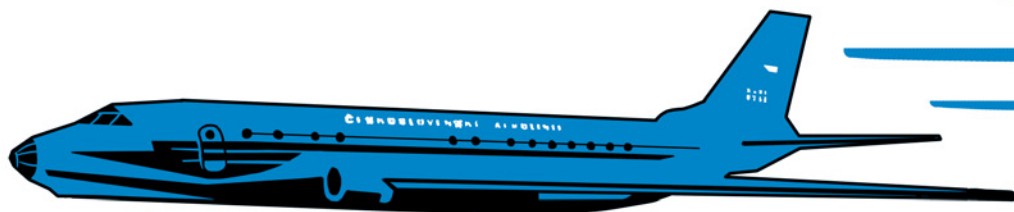
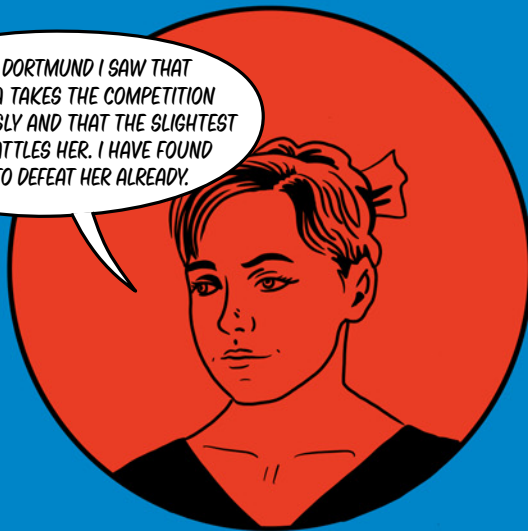
SHE HAD TO QUIT, THE POOR KID. SO, ARE YOU BUYING ANOTHER SOUVENIR MEDAL?

NO! YOU GO TO MEXICO FOR THE GOLD, RIGHT? LIKE THE CONQUISTADORS!

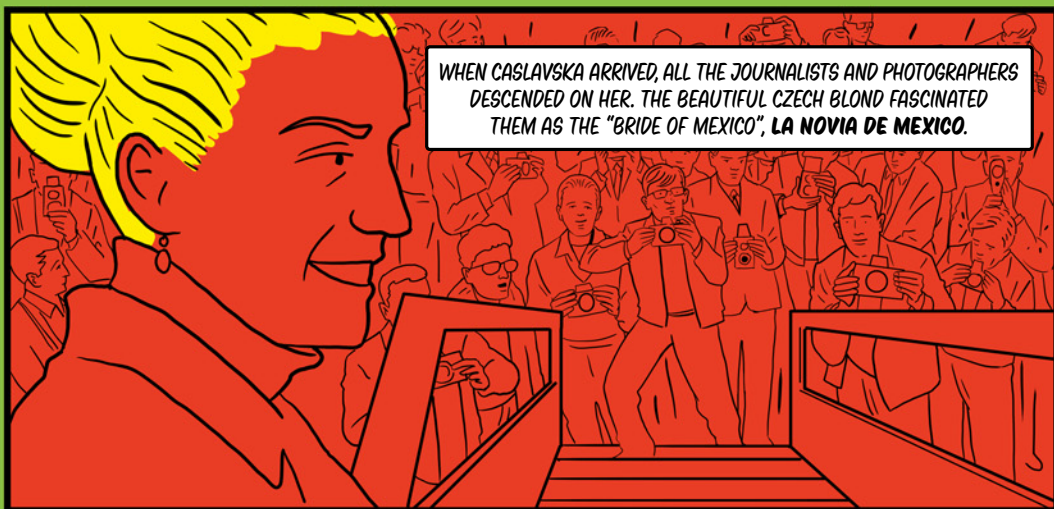


THE MEXICAN PUBLIC ADORED KUCHINSKAYA. THERE WASN'T A NEWSPAPER OR A MAGAZINE IN THE COUNTRY WHICH HADN'T PRINTED HER PORTRAIT.

BACK IN DORTMUND I SAW THAT CASLAVSKA TAKES THE COMPETITION VERY SERIOUSLY AND THAT THE SLIGHTEST MISHAP RATTLES HER. I HAVE FOUND A WAY TO DEFEAT HER ALREADY.



WHEN CASLAVSKA ARRIVED, ALL THE JOURNALISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS DESCENDED ON HER. THE BEAUTIFUL CZECH BLOND FASCINATED THEM AS THE "BRIDE OF MEXICO", LA NOVIA DE MEXICO.



AUDITORIO NACIONAL, OCTOBER 1968

BEFORE THE GAMES STARTED, CASLAVSKA AND KUCHINSKAYA ALONG WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE TEAMS HELD ONE PUBLIC PRACTICE TOGETHER.

VERA VERA RA RA RA!

VERA VERA RA RA RA!

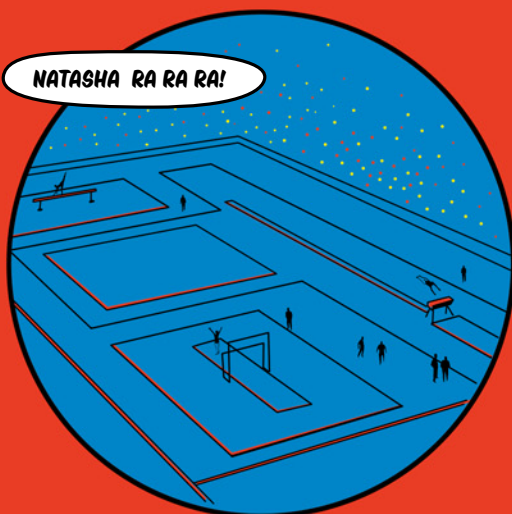
VERA VERA RA RA RA!

NATASHA RA RA RA!

NATASHA RA RA RA!

NATASHA RA RA RA!

NATASHA RA RA RA!





DID YOU SEE THAT?
KUCHINSKAYA'S NOT ONLY DOING MY
"ULTRA C", SHE'S DOING THE TWIST FROM
THE TOP BAR TOO! WHY IS SHE
COPYING ME?



AND ON THE BUS, SHE SAT
RIGHT BEHIND ME AND KEPT TALKING
AND LAUGHING INCREDIBLY LOUD. I WANTED
TO TURN AROUND AND SLAP HER.

BUT VERA, DON'T YOU
GET IT? KUCHINSKAYA IS
SCARED OF YOU!



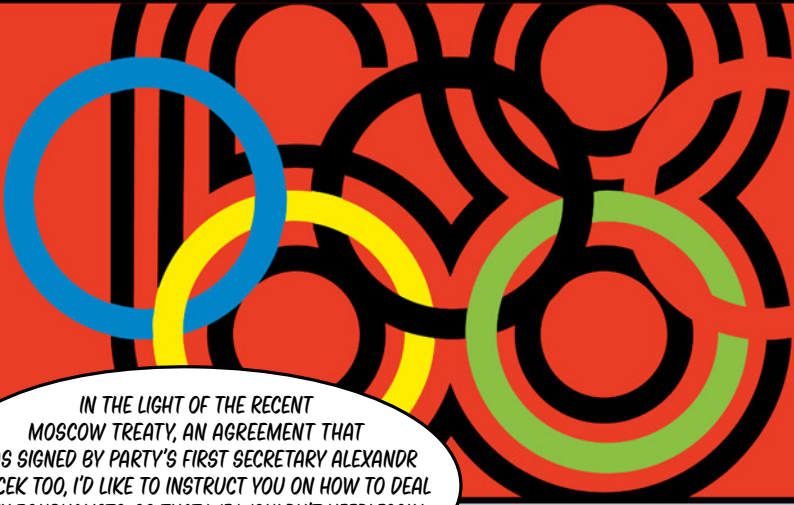
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING, VERA?

I CAN'T SLEEP AND I DIDN'T
WANT TO DISTURB YOU, SO I'M
POLISHING MY BEAM ROUTINE.
THAT'S MY BIGGEST WORRY.






ODLOZIL ADVANCED FROM THE QUALIFYING HEAT
AS WELL AS FROM THE SEMIFINALS, BECOMING ONE
OF TWELVE FINALISTS OF THE 1,500 METER RACE.



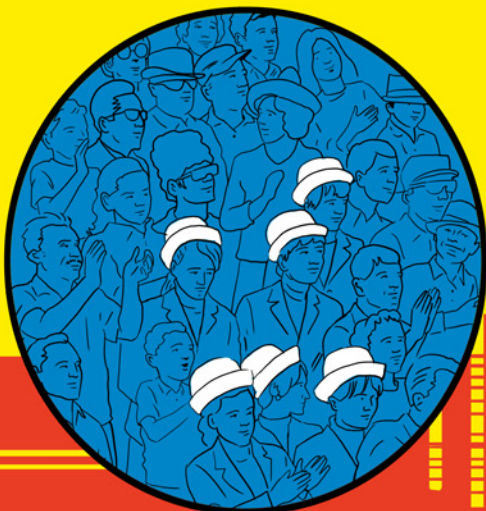
IN THE LIGHT OF THE RECENT
MOSCOW TREATY, AN AGREEMENT THAT
WAS SIGNED BY PARTY'S FIRST SECRETARY ALEXANDR
DUBCEK TOO, I'D LIKE TO INSTRUCT YOU ON HOW TO DEAL
WITH JOURNALISTS, SO THAT WE WOULDN'T NEEDLESSLY
INCITE THE SOVIETS WITH WHOM WE ARE CURRENTLY
NORMALIZING OUR RELATIONS...



FORGIVE ME, BUT THE OCCUPATION
IS AN OCCUPATION. AND WE ARE HERE
TO HELP OUR REPUBLIC.



JUST A MINUTE,
COMRADES!





I LEFT
EVERYTHING
I HAD OUT
THERE.

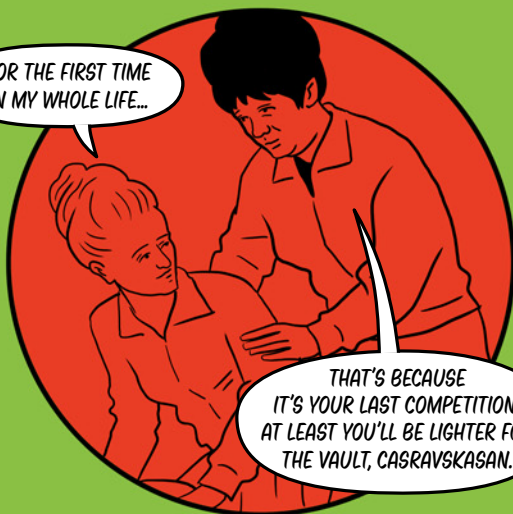
KENYA'S KIP KEINO WON THE 1,500 METER RACE
CONVINCINGLY. JOSEF ODLOZIL FINISHED 8-TH,
FOURTEEN SECONDS BEHIND THE WINNER.

THAT BLACK
GUY WAS LIKE FROM
ANOTHER PLANET.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT
YOU, BUT I'M SATISFIED
WITH WHAT I DID.

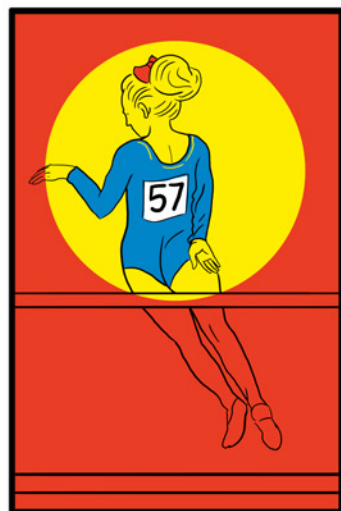
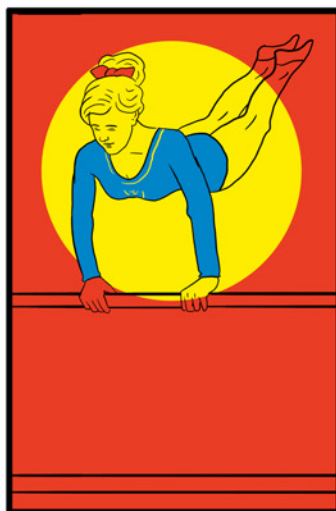
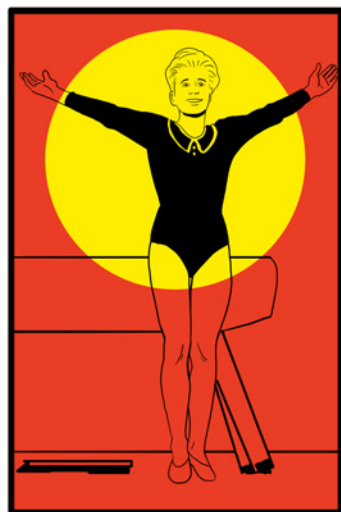
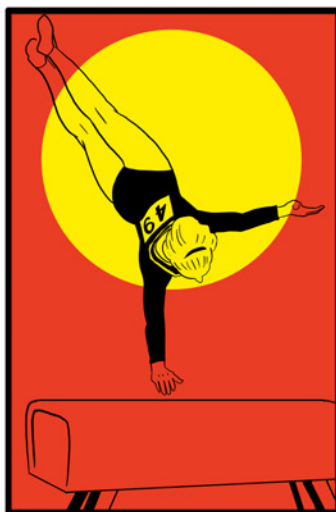
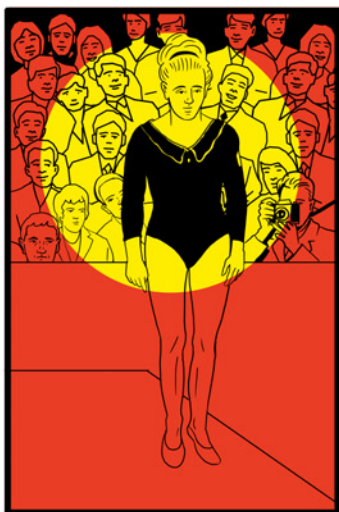


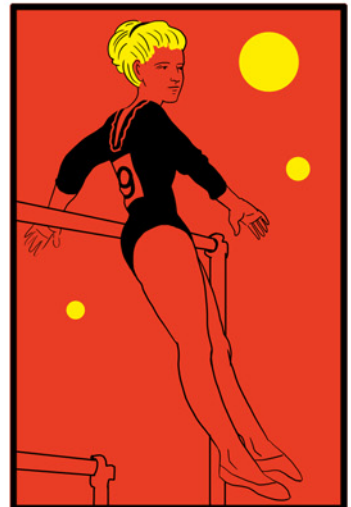
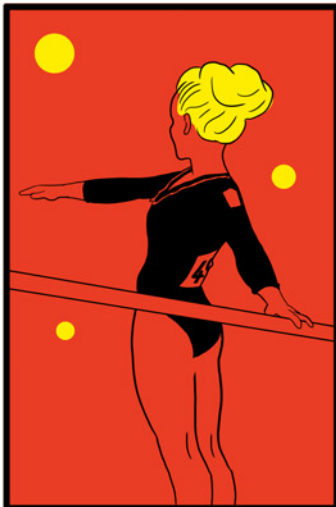
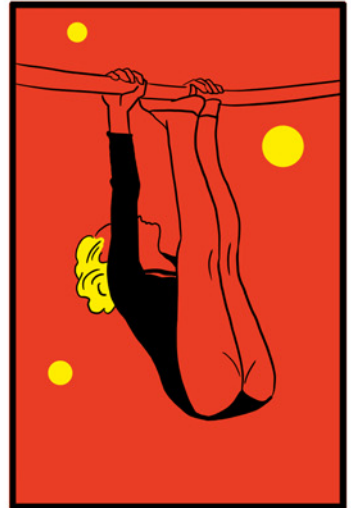
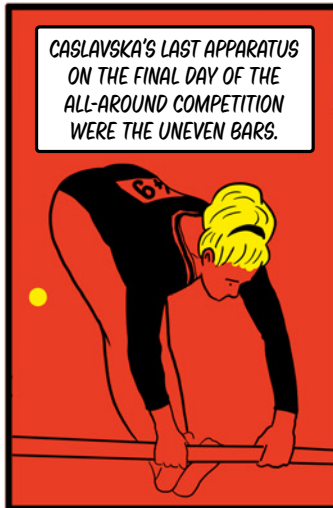
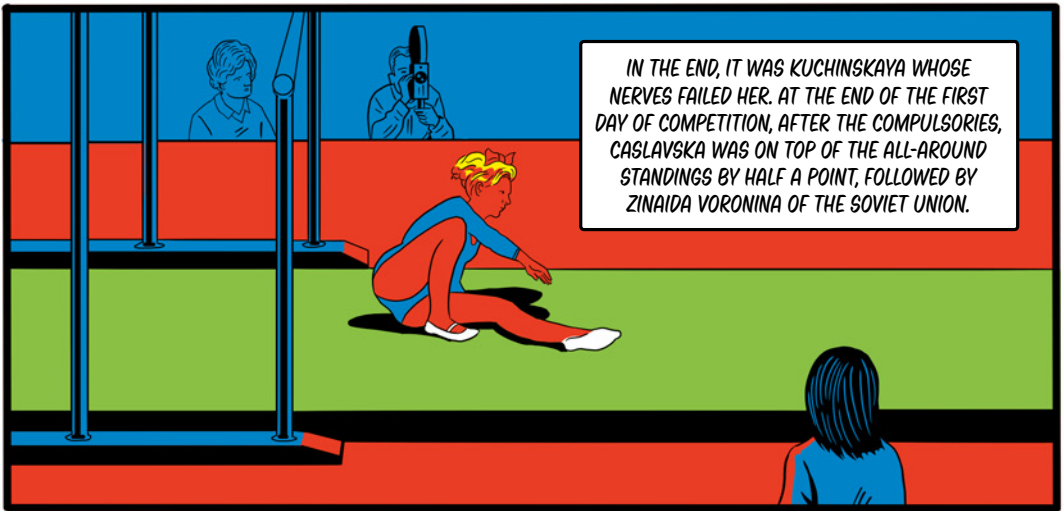
FOR THE FIRST TIME
IN MY WHOLE LIFE...



THAT'S BECAUSE
IT'S YOUR LAST COMPETITION!
AT LEAST YOU'LL BE LIGHTER FOR
THE VAULT, CASRAVSKASAN.



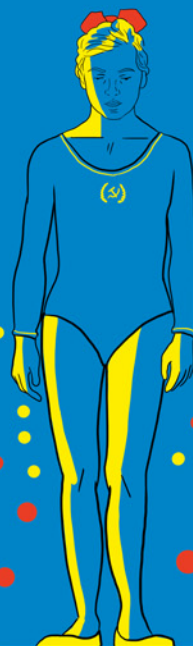
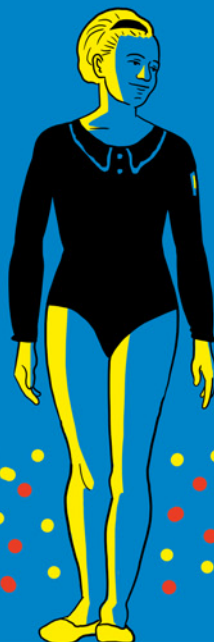




LADIES AND GENTLEMEN BY THE RADIOS AT HOME,
CROSS YOUR FINGERS! VERA HAS VAULTED ONTO
THE BARS, ONE OVER THRUST, SECOND OVER
THRUST, VERA IS FLYING BETWEEN THE BARS
TO AND FRO, UP AND DOWN. **OH MY GOD, SHE'S
FALLING, NO, SHE DIDN'T FALL! HURRAY!**
SHE DIDN'T FALL, SHE DIDN'T, MY FRIENDS!



POUR ME A DRINK,
MOTHER. I FELT A STAB
IN MY HEART.





IN THE TEAM COMPETITION, THE CZECHOSLOVAK WOMEN ONLY NARROWLY MISSED DEFENDING THEIR GOLD MEDALS FROM DORTMUND, GAINING THEIR THIRD SILVER MEDAL IN A ROW.

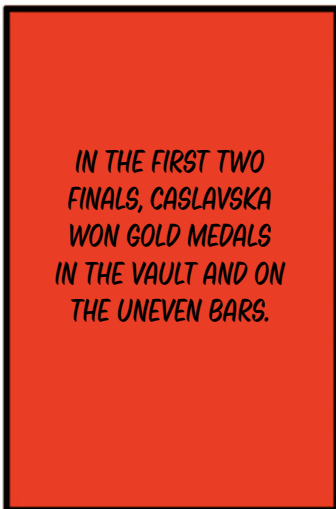
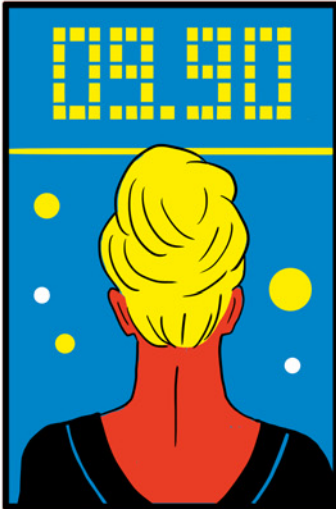




HOW DO YOU FEEL,
LIKE THROWING UP
TOMORROW TOO?

I'D LIKE TO, BUT
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT.





1955

ON BALANCE BEAM, SHE GAINED
"ONLY" A SILVER MEDAL.
THE APPARATUS WAS WON BY
KUCHINSKAYA TO LOUD BOOS
AND HISSING FROM THE AUDIENCE.
OTHERWISE KUCHINSKAYA HAD
TO CONTENT HERSELF WITH
ONLY A PAIR OF BRONZES.



IN FLOOR EXERCISE, CASLAVSKA DANCED
TO THE STRAINS OF THE MEXICAN HAT
DANCE AND WON HER FOURTH GOLD.

СОЮЗ
НЕРУШИМЫЙ



THE REFEREES SUBSEQUENTLY RETROACTIVELY ADJUSTED THE MARKS OF LARISA PETRIK, SO THAT THIS SOVIET WOULD SHARE THE GOLD MEDAL WITH CASLAVSKA. CASLAVSKA SEIZED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PROTEST AGAINST THE SOVIET OCCUPATION PUBLICLY. SHE HAD ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO FLASH A VICTORY SIGN DURING THE CEREMONY, BUT REJECTED THIS GESTURE AFTER TWO BLACK AMERICAN SPRINTERS WERE EXPELLED FROM THE GAMES. TOMMIE SMITH AND JOHN CARLOS RAISED THEIR HANDS IN BLACK GLOVES DURING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM TO PROTEST AGAINST RACISM IN THE USA. CASLAVSKA DID NOT WANT HER GOLD MEDALS TO GO TO SOVIET GYMNASTS BY FORFEIT, SO SHE CHOSE A SILENT PROTEST.