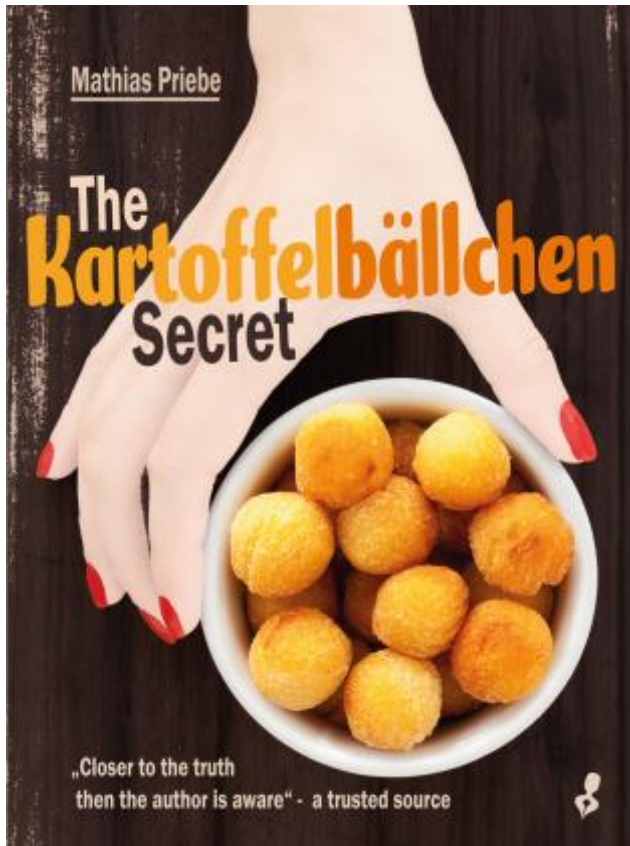


- 1 Mathias Priebe
- 2 **The Kartoffelbällchen Secret**
- 3 **-Preview-**
- 4



5

1 **“Closer to the truth than the author is aware.”** - a trusted
2 source.

3

4 **“If it was true, which we neither confirm nor deny, it**
5 **certainly would have been the other way around.”** - a U.S. State
6 Department official, unofficially.

7

8 **“No comment.”** - She.

1 **The Kartoffelbällchen Secret**

2 3 **Chapter 1**

4
5 "How is She?", Lee N. asked his old enemy but somehow friend.
6 He had not met Andrew for years.

7 "She's fine but most important she's Head of good old Germany
8 now. Mrs. Chancellor! How does that sound? Poor Helmut Kohl
9 got an Ossie as successor. I don't know whether our Eastern girl
10 wonders how she could make it that far, but obviously, she's
11 comfortable with her awarded power. Haha! Cheers!"

12 "You could have hair dressed her before." Lee N. had no reason
13 to celebrate. "You had twenty plus years to give her a hairdo!"

14 "Aw, come on! To make her sexy never was the deal. Lee! We
15 made her Chancelor. We made history, didn't we?"

16 A smoke. A sip of Bourbon. "I don't give a shit on it."
17

18 The conversion was a kind of object lesson for all the little
19 differences in language, behavior and taste between English and
20 American manners. Andrew smiled, clicked his glass of Scotch on
21 the one with oversea load.

22
23 "You will. You will give a lorry full of it. A truckload - got
24 that?"

25 "I do understand English."

26 "How about transferring 1.2 Million in British Pounds, my
27 dear Lee? How much is it in your beloved Dollars? Three and a
28 half?"

1 “I don’t care about exchange rates between Her Majesty’s and
2 our currency.” Lee N. saw something mediaeval in Andrew’s
3 United Kingdom. His colleagues at MI6 sometimes referred
4 themselves as servants for the Crown and this made him feel like
5 being in the middle of a Shakespear play or at least a Bond movie.
6 Discussing certain issues with British agents had always been a
7 cultural challenge.

8 Andrew had his prejudices about Americans as well but
9 managed not to tell.

10 “We did it! She’s in the office right over there!” said Andrew
11 and directed vaguely West where Brandenburg Gate, Reichstag
12 and Chancellor’s Office – the ‘Bundeskanzleramt’ were located.
13

14 Andrew’s triumph was written on his face and he knew that
15 this plot would be worth ten Million in film rights if someone ever
16 found out what they had done – what he had done. Even a totally
17 fiction novel about this plot, written by a Mr. Grisham or his
18 personally more favored Sir Follet, would become a world best
19 seller worth minimum the same. 1.2 Million British Pounds
20 seemed to be a bargain compared.

21 But there was no single page to turn, not yet nor in the future.
22 It was their secret. A secret they kept secret for more than twenty
23 years now even in front of their supervisors.
24

25 On the other hand, the truth was unbelievable enough that no
26 journalist would ever write about it. And there was nothing in
27 writing. No file, no diary, nothing but the memories of those two
28 men in the corner with the only table without Berlin panorama
29 view.

1 She was the work of two lifelong underestimated spies who
2 left no trace nor files because it wasn't a secret but a totally private
3 matter. And most of the honor belonged to the British. Obviously,
4 he had done what he had promised, what he had – to be exact –
5 bet on twenty years ago.

6
7 “We actually did it! We made Her chancellor”, Andrew
8 repeated already with a further cheer on his lips.

9
10 “You did not. You've lost, old pal!”

11
12 “I've lost? What did you take this morning? She's been in the
13 news long before the elections and you always knew that She
14 never would have come that far without my little tricks. Besides,
15 she already makes us sick in London, at least folks in Number Ten
16 – every time she folds her hands the style She was taught. She's
17 made it! Or should I say, she was made to make it? You've been
18 always in the picture. Don't fool me. It's payday, Lee! Where's the
19 attaché case? Where's the money?”

20
21 Lee N. had known the day would come and for the first time in
22 his lousy career he was prepared for a meeting. The reason for his
23 unusual diligence was simple. He could not effort nearly two
24 Million US Dollars for a lost bet. Now it was time to begin his
25 prepared speech:

26 “She might be the daughter of a Protestant priest but She's
27 certainly not from Mecklenburg as you promised back then.”

28 “I remember the words.”

1 "I - you - can make a pastor's daughter from a Mecklenburg
2 village chancellor of Germany. That's exactly what you bet on, Mr.
3 Bond!" Lee N. grinned.

4 "That's exactly what we did."

5 "No! You unlucky bastards have picked a girl from Uckermark.
6 This swath of land in the Soviet Zone might be just as dead as
7 Mecklenburg and nearby but it's certainly not the same."

8 Andrew, who already stood to sing "God Save The Queen", sat
9 down.

10 Both still referred to German districts, even Bavaria, as
11 occupation zones, as if they had not lost theirs as well as the
12 Soviets did. Somehow the Americans had managed to stay in the
13 barracks. But that was another conversation.

14

15 Millennium party and 9/11 were nearly a decade ago and
16 minor events in their lives. They were affected by irreversible anti-
17 communist fear and had fought their war furiously. They had not
18 really won but suddenly lost their enemy and that was their
19 dilemma. The reason for fighting, the grounds of their duty
20 abroad simply had vanished after a handful of East-Germans had
21 climbed the garden fence of a minor priority Embassy in Prague
22 and some tumult-less riot in the streets of Leipzig. If they were
23 honest, they had nothing to do with it. Their governances had
24 wished to play a role in the end of Communism and that's why
25 they composed so many bogues cables in 1989.

26

27 But finally, they had changed history anyway and that was
28 kind of revenge, because both were not been promoted after
29 Germany's reunification. Mrs. Thatcher disliked the idea openly
30 and the White House needed more than ten years to find a new

1 global enemy. Fortunately, they were too old for a displacement
2 to Afghanistan.

3

4 They were the reason for Her – at least one of them. The first
5 woman in office in Germany, the first from the East as well and
6 this chairlift from Langley argued about locations that were less
7 than 20 Miles apart.

8

9 "Oh, my goodness! How did you find out?" Andrew already
10 lost any facial expression that might indicate triumph. "How did
11 you find out?", he mumbled a couple of times shaking his head in
12 disbelief.

13

14 "We have our sources, you know? There is absolutely bullet-
15 proof evidence that She's from Uckermark and that Uckermark is
16 not Mecklenburg."

17 "Will you show me satellite images? They don't count."

18 Lee N. now presented his best American teeth: "Ucker-mark is
19 not Meck-len-burg and you bet on Mecklenburg not Uckermark!"
20 He had childish fun repeating Uckermark and Mecklenburg.

21 Surely the CIA did mention both landscapes less in their billion
22 records of worldwide activities. There is nothing to report from
23 there but Lee N. had a 1.2 Million Pounds reasons for composing
24 a nursery rhyme of it: "Uckermark is not Mecklenburg! Andrew
25 had no clue since so long ago – hoo, hoo, hoo!"

26

27 Beside their different English pronunciation, only fashion was
28 a significant difference between those two men, both in the final
29 days of their state services. Andrew wore Trench Coat and Melon
30 Hat in a way that made Lee N. give his umbrella cautious looks.

1 One never knows! But for this reflection it was necessary to know
2 the profession of both. Every other guest at the Panorama
3 restaurant in the 'Fernsehturm' bowl, seven hundred feet above
4 Alexanderplatz probably saw a fan of "The Avengers", known to
5 Germans as "Mit Schirm, Charme und Melone" what meant
6 "With Umbrella, Charm and Melon Hat". The trivializing title
7 could fit a "Kinderkanal" TV series and proofed that Germans had
8 no respect for British agents. They never feared British agents.
9 They still feared the Stasi and the CIA. That was unfair. But now
10 they had to live with Her!

11
12 Not a single German not even Herself had no clue what this
13 man in his theatre costume had done. He was the only reason for
14 their Mrs. Chancellor and no one else but Lee N. knew. They were
15 sharing the biggest secret in European history as they had shared
16 East-German prostitutes back then.

17
18 "I would have bet another Million you'd never get behind that
19 little geographical mistake our service men had made. It's
20 completely insignificant measured by the result, but you're right."

21
22 A three breathes taking pause. "Yes, she's not from
23 Mecklenburg. Please give me a couple of days for the transfer!"

24
25 Those were the last words, Andrew, the retired spy of Her
26 Majesty ever spoke about their little conspiracy. He stood up,
27 grabbed his equipment, shook the umbrella in Lee N.'s direction
28 with a smile and went off without farewell. An "Avenger" author
29 would have forced the same ending: The elevator framed a man

1 who put on his Melon Hat in synched speed to the closing doors.

2 Good Bye Andrew!

3

4 There was no chance for resumption anymore and She had
5 learned governing by her own, surprisingly.

6

1 **Chapter 2**

2
3 Lee N., who served his last year on 'Desk Row' at CIA
4 headquarter in Langley grinned, giggled into his glass of cheap
5 Blend and enjoyed the echo of himself on ice that came from the
6 bottom. He would not have to steal the money for a bet he entered
7 in 1990 from another department but earn a fortune himself.

8 He was never prepared to pay himself for that silly bet and he
9 felt more relieved by that. He had not realized yet that he would
10 be the one to get the money.

11
12 Anyhow, money in cash would have been difficult to provide
13 in his CIA position. Staff members on 'Desk Row' no longer have
14 any budgets. This useless unit on ground floor, north wing with
15 no daylight, officially was HB201-65R. There were 27 sixty-plus
16 year old agents now.

17 Not even the hundreds of fellows before solved the mystery
18 what the letters and digits in their unit's name really meant.

19 Their less than 15 squarefeet offices were the least phone called
20 and most seldom visited around Langley.

21
22 No one makes any sense of any CIA abbreviation but every
23 officer had a set of familiar ones: RS304-78F for Afghanistan - still
24 running, ML682-01U for German Democratic Republic - tacked
25 and stapled sixty feet below basement but never digitized like
26 UG467-31O which sometimes was targeted by Andrew's
27 colleagues because it contained the Falklands.

28 Surely there was no meaning or math behind naming eight
29 hundred compartments. But the nickname "Desk Row" of his final
30 one sounded like 'Death Row' for an obvious and simple reason.

1 Those CIA men had survived certain wars and were about to
2 die lost in meaninglessness – a maximum penalty for those who
3 did not make a career nor got shot. And their funerals will be
4 without military honors.

5 Desk-Rowers have Chess on their computers, sometimes XXX-
6 files from the internet. Even that wasn't a secret among the yet to
7 become veterans. His last classified matter was five years ago but
8 his best kept secret would never get a file number. There were no
9 files not a single line of electric typewriter nor email about Her.
10 And there was no one to tell.

11
12 Every agent shared forbidden stories with their families and
13 friends but Lee N. lacked both. His beloved divorcee would
14 instantly encourage her second husband to lock Lee N. in a
15 nuthouse, if he would tell her about Her over Thanks Giving
16 Turkey, the only occasion to meet his two adult children.

17 Anyhow, why should he share the biggest secret of his life with
18 a lady who managed to hide an affair with his own boss for 30
19 years? But it was sad that he could not brag in front of him either.

20
21 Anyhow, he was soon to become a millionaire after all.

22
23 Lee N.'s flight from Tegel was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. – the
24 same hour when he first arrived in 1978 to begin his duty on the
25 Free World's most important outpost. He wondered if he still had
26 bonus miles for Pan Am, the frequent agent shuttle to damned
27 West-Berlin. It had taken him an hour to find out that Pan Am is
28 no longer on the route but booking.CIA.int on their intranet and a
29 Wikipedia article finally helped him understand.
30

1 A sorrowful rest of The Wall, a fresh painted Glienecker Bridge
2 and Checkpoint Charly with students as G.I.s were tourist
3 attractions now. They had referred to the spot as “Checkout
4 Charly”. Andrew and he had crossed it a thousand times for cheap
5 meals and even cheaper Czechoslovakian prostitutes who were
6 directed by Minister Mielke and his Stasi. Occupation in occupied
7 territory really was fun if you managed not to land in a Gulag.
8 Andrew and he were really close sometimes.
9

10 He began making himself ready for take-off. That meant seven
11 or eight further shots to go. He watched the little cars and trams
12 around Alexanderplatz below in silence. Traffic is thicker than
13 then, he thought, but they have thinner Whiskey now for a
14 thousand times more on the bill. How could East-Berlin become
15 that expensive?
16

17 Lee N. checked the menu and looked for Zigeunerschnitzel
18 with Kartoffelbällchen but could not find his favorite meal - a dry
19 grilled slice of pork, one could hardly find under a thick layer of
20 paprika salsa and fried potato balls for 12,80 Mark - East,
21 converted \$ 2,85. But the sweet and sour Letscho had vanished like
22 the inappropriately named “Gypsy Steak” did all over East
23 Germany.

24 'They even banned any red sauce' he thought and decided
25 himself to wait for the tasteless Delta dinner on plastic that was a
26 couple of hours ahead. If he only had known that tourist class was
27 his reward for fighting Communism, he would have found ways
28 to keep Breshnev’s imperium alive.
29

1 It was half way over the Atlantic with an episode Al Bundy on
2 the screen when he realized for the first time what really had
3 happend during his fifteen-minute meet again with 'Sir' Andrew.
4 Someone laughed about an ancient punch line between Peggy and
5 Kelly and he could not stop himself from laughing even louder.
6 Headphones as old as the entertainment program on his ears
7 camouflaged that his reason for laughing out loud was different.
8 He told himself: 'Let them think this old man with his Whiskey
9 flag got crazy!' His next flight to Europe would take him to Zurich
10 Klatten Airport to withdraw 1.2 Million British Pounds from a
11 Swiss bank account whose number he not yet knew.
12 But he was certain that his old friend and sometimes enemy
13 Andrew, a reverse figure of Bond 007, would not screw him. Those
14 Brits keep their promises. 'Stupid as they are' he thought. Even if
15 Making a pastor's daughter from Uckermark or Mecklenburg
16 chancellor. He shook his head in disbelief.
17
18 He wondered whether Andrew did know what he had done to
19 destroy Her? The flight would be long enough to recap all
20 memories of that adventure silently for himself.
21 No one would ever know about a little bet between two Anglo-
22 American spies in early spring after the Wall had come down.
23
24 Even She did not have a clue. Poor thing, poor Mummy
25 Chancelor, Andrew thought.
26

1 **Chapter 3**

2
3 The Berlin Wall had come down quickly. Intelligence back in
4 1989 mostly relied on quoting the news. Lee N. recalled a certain
5 phone conference in November, 1989 in which he yelled: "Watch
6 Tagesschau TV news if you want to know!" But his narratives in
7 front of friends sounded different.

8
9 "Actually we wrote Schabowski's note", Lee N. whispered,
10 watching a Wolga Taxi dashing down the empty after midnight
11 Karl-Marx-Allee with the obligatory but illegal speed of 90
12 Kilometers per hour. Eastern drivers often had made him puke on
13 GI's feet while re-entering Checkpoint Charly a couple of months
14 ago. Now he preferred a Mercedes picking him up at
15 Alexanderplatz for a nonstop silent ride home to Clay-Allee deep
16 in the Grunewald forest. The check points were still there but
17 already useless.

18
19 "You?", Andrew blurted out loud: "You have opened the wall?
20 A whole day drunk Langley agent opened the wall? Ha ha. If that's
21 true we'll make a Pastor's daughter from Mecklenburg chancelor
22 of the glorious reunited German Reich! Cheers!"

23 "They aren't reunited yet and it's not likely they will ever be if
24 it's after the will of your puffy Lady in Number Ten", Lee N.
25 replied.

26
27 A waitress on high heels, probably Czech origin, slowly did her
28 job of serving extra Kartoffelbällchen. He was sure they brought
29 only six of those fried potato balls in a round to have more chances
30 for listening but they both no longer cared.

1 There were free elections in a week and Mielke, the Stasi-chief
2 was long gone. They had risked their asses during the race after
3 his files and had lost against the Russians but did not cable their
4 failure back home.

5 They were spies with nothing else to spy on. If their sweet little
6 waitress still was on duty, who cared? They would screw their
7 penisses simultaneously in her openings soon as always and
8 that's what they came for. Their only concern about the changes in
9 East-Germany was that these business trips might end.

10

11 “Will the Russians withdraw?”, Andrew asked?

12 “Don't you have your people in Gorbachevs Kremlin? Ask
13 them! Our last man in Moskow still licks Siberian iced soil in a
14 Gulag”, Lee N. replied.

15 “Did you ever realize that Lee N. sounds like a pussy?”

16 “Do you want me to practice my aim on you with my Beretta?
17 – Tanja! Five more Kartoffel-ball-kin!”

18 “My name is Veronika now and it's pronounced 'bell-shenn'
19 my dear!”, the answer came from two feet behind and they
20 wondered how she managed to creep along without notice.

21 “Really?”

22 “Yes, Kartoffel-bell-shenn.”

23 “I mean, really Veronika? Is that in your passport?”, Lee N.
24 wanted to know.

25 “Do you check our passports nowadays before fucking us?”,
26 she mocked – one hand on Lee N's shoulder and her low neckline
27 almost touched Andrew's ear.

28 “No. Not really. How much?”

29 “Two hundred fifty Deutschmarks.”

1 “Hell Jesus! You increased by a thousand percent since Mielke
2 skipped your procuring”. Lee N. pulled a staple of 500 DM notes
3 from the back pocket of his Levi’s and put one on the table: “For
4 me and my friend.”

5 “You forgot about the Zigeunerschnitzel with Kartoffelbällchen
6 and some dessert from Bushmill’s!” Veronika – or Tanja –
7 presented the bill and rubbed her right leg on Andrew’s left knee.

8 Lee N. dragged another 500.

9 “Room 1250 as ever but no ass fucking tonight!”

10 “Aw, come on! You got cameras behind the mirror and I’m sure
11 your officer on duty will enjoy.”

12 “There’s no one on duty anymore. Forgot?”

13

14 The snow was already lined in three portions when they
15 entered the room. The cocaine always worked unusual on
16 Andrew and as often he fell asleep pants half down and his thing
17 half up, soon to shrink sorrowfully. ‘What a faithful husband. His
18 wife can be proud’, Lee N. thought and started his business on
19 Veronika or Tanja or whoever she was.

20

21 The ancient Wolga felt more pleasant on Stadtautobahn West
22 above all with exactly respected speed limit of 80 km/h.

23 The long familiar driver told the reason without being asked:
24 “They’ll charge me my Deutschmark-Tips of half a year with their
25 Siemens radar. Sorry guys, we might have daylight already
26 around the barracks when we arrive, not my fault.”

27 Andrew’s grunting snore was the only reply. Lee N. winded
28 down his window because Zigeuner-Sauce wasn’t that tasty when
29 half digested, mixed with the odem of a British survivor of a fight
30 night behind front line.

1

2 “Did you know that the Stasi got a carbon copy of every receipt
3 I ever handed you in Friedrichstraße before you changed sides at
4 Charly? I’m wondering what BND does with it now. Why do you
5 always make me fill in your names on it at the end of the tour? Is
6 it for tax matters? How much do you deduct from it on your tax
7 return? Aren’t you afraid they’ll find out which is your business?
8 Mielke always knew.”

9 This man obviously already knew the streets of West-Berlin in
10 the sleep after four months of borderless freedom because his eye
11 contact with the passenger seats in the rearview mirror remained
12 fixed over the whole questionnaire.

13

14 “BND sells your autograph with the bills to the KGB, didn’t you
15 know that? The Soviets always reserve a bed in Gulag for deserted
16 Taxi-drivers from East-Berlin.” The timing of Andrew’s snore
17 sounded like a confirmation and that silenced their chauffeur.

18 From now he focussed on the yellow blinking traffic-lights like
19 a driving learner on his first night ride. He even forgot about
20 lighting his eighth Marlboro since Alexanderplatz and it remained
21 cold for the rest of the trip hanging from the corner of his mouth.

22 ‘Mr. Morris will kill you long before the Soviets’, Lee N.
23 thought and lit himself a Karo. He always bought these typical
24 filter-less during his trips to the East. In his money ten packs were
25 cheaper than that solitary Marlboro in the face of a scared Taxi
26 driver. He would never understand how a complete population of
27 Communists voluntarily payed a hundred times more for the
28 same shit. Could neon signs behind a wall have such tremendous
29 influence?

30

- 1 “If you’d smoke Karo you might save some money for a ride on
- 2 one of your Czech Tanjas”, Lee N. provoked.
- 3 “Her name is Veronika.” That silenced him.

1 - **Preview remarks** -

2

3 Do you want to learn more? There are a couple of questions.
4 How did She become Chancellor? Which strings pulled Andrew
5 to make it happen? What tried Lee N. to prevent it? How came the
6 German Soccer team in play? And: Which is the real name of Tanja
7 or Veronika?

8

9 Please visit www.priebshow.com, become part of my writing
10 process and read some other stories while I recap the adventures
11 of our beloved spies. Please, subscribe to the blog/newsletter,
12 kickstart this book with a donation and boost my motivation. I'll
13 keep you posted.

14

15 **Characters so far:**

16

17 **She**

18 Is She Her? Who really knows? Andrew does.

19

20 **Andrew**

21 A part-time, half retired agent of Her Majesty who is on a
22 mission. He made the daughter of a Protestant pastor from
23 Mecklenburg (or Uckermark) Chancellor because of a silly bet
24 with Lee N.

25

26 **Lee N.**

27 A not yet retired CIA loser who wanted to prevent Andrew's
28 mission from being successful because there is something at stake.
29 Exactly 1.2 Mio. British Pounds from the first bet he ever

1 committed in his live. The only secret he really dealt with in his
2 Berlin days was Tanja or Veronika.

3

4 **Tanja or Veronika**

5 An East-German working girl with Czech origin. She serves
6 Zigeunerschnitzel Kartoffelbällchen and more. You'll love her
7 more than Andrew and Lee N. ever did!

8

9 **Taxi Driver**

10 A man who drives a Taxi, obviously. Strange to say why he and
11 his Wolga cab were always on the spot to chauffeur CIA and MI6
12 agents through East-Berlin. Even stranger is why this remains
13 after re-unification and the swap to Mercedes.

14 Besides, I am willing to mention Daimler and Marlboro more
15 often for a product placement deal - or switch to Audi and West.
16 Got a taste? ;-)

17

18 **Dr. Ackermeier**

19 A Stasi officer who manages the rise to State Secretary, Federal
20 Interior Ministry in the post Communism era. Did you read a line
21 of him until now? No? Believe me, he's already present between
22 them. This is how Stasi works - or would you say "worked"? No,
23 it still does.

24

25 **Timelines**

26 We start nowadays, jump back to spring 1990 when Stasi was
27 gone but GDR still alive and Eastern money was not yet converted
28 to Deutschmarks. The journey will take us to certain occasions
29 from 1978 until now. Some of these events where in the news. It
30 ends around 2010.

1 My writing schedule ends with “Fully published” on
2 December, 31th 2017.

3
4 Please cross your fingers that She gets re-elected in September
5 2017. It might boost my sales.

6
7 **About me:**

8 My name is Mathias Priebe. For 30 years now I observed the
9 transfer from Communism to Capitalism in East-Germany where
10 I was born. I am in the book with certain episodes. But I will hide
11 them behind certain imaginary figures. I write this book
12 exclusively in English because I’m afraid She could lose the next
13 election through my trade.

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18 Any feedback is welcome.