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## Script Treatment

1. Title: *The Race*
2. Type and Length: This would be a feature film production with a running length of about an hour and a half.
3. Genre: This production's genre would be fiction with a heavy emphasis on drama and tragedy. This film is a docudrama. Therefore, it is based upon real-life events. However, principle elements will be changed and a coherent message will be added.
4. Target Audience: Sports fans would be the target audience of this film. Hopefully, this film will get fans to question the nature of sports, winning, and the motivations of sports heroes.

We open in the green room for a day time talk show. Vince Legstrong, a 38 year old champion cyclist, single father, and former hero to millions of Americans due to his magnificent performance as winner of multiple Tour de France races. He is one of the most famous athletes of his generation, and perhaps of all time. His entire career has been beset with controversy due to allegations of his use of performance enhancing drugs which he has vehemently denied from the very beginning. Today on one of America's most watched daytime programs, he will reveal that all of his denial has been a lie. He cheated his way to success all the way from amateur races in his youth to the elite echelons of cycling. Most importantly, Vince is an unreliable narrator. As the audience will see through the course of this film, Vince's self-worth is entirely determined by his performance, by his success no matter how much he denies the truth of this. This entire film will be shown from Vince's point of view until the final dramatic turn of the story where the audience sees Vince objectively rather than through the subjective lens of Vince's ego.

Vince sits on a plush couch in the green room with his head in his hands while his agent, Joe, frantically paces back and forth anxiously checking his watch, checking his nails, and generally gnashing his teeth. The opening scene begins as a medium longshot with both characters in the frame. The camera creeps closer and closer to Vince until it is finally a close-up of him. As the camera zooms in on our protagonist, the sound gradually fades in. We can hear Vince's agent nervously making sounds in the green room and, from the direction of the studio we can hear the talk show host loudly introducing the day's program. Once we get to the close-up of Vince, we can hear Joe ask Vince if he's ready, if he's sure he wants to go through with this. Vince stands up and without saying a word, walks into the studio where he is being introduced by the show's host.

The next scene skips ahead to Vince's house after the show. His home is decorated in medals, trophies, pictures of Vince celebrating his various victories, and cycling jerseys. Vince and Joe are watching a recap of Vince's interview on Vince's massive TV. In this interview Vince admits that all of the allegations are true. He has been using performance enhancing drugs from the very beginning of his career all the way to his multiple first place wins in the Tour de France. Joe turns off the TV towards the end of the interview and the two of them begin to talk about what this means for Vince's future. Over the next few scenes various representatives of governing bodies of bicycle races come to claim Vince's trophies, medals, and jerseys from him. Joe leaves Vince telling him that he can no longer represent him. Vince is a liability to his career. All of Vince's endorsement deals dry up before his eyes. Now he effectively has no means of supporting himself. Vince goes into a downward spiral of self-pity. His home is empty, he has no friends, and now he deals with constant shame when in public.

As Vince's life reaches its nadir his children come to his house for their visitation. Vince is the father of two boys of about middle school age. His kids had already lost all respect for him after Vince left their mother for a short-lived relationship with a country music singer but their father's recent

controversy has rocketed the two boys from sullen resentment of Vince to a fully-fledged and openly expressed disgust. During one crucial scene, Vince's older son voices all of these opinions to his father. Vince is now aware of just how much of a failure his children consider him. He then calls up Ted, his father and original trainer. Vince asks for help.

Ted's arrival heralds the end of the prologue of the film and the beginning of the meat of the story. Ted is a firm believer in the idea of sport for the sake of sport rather than for the sake of achievements or accolades. He instills in Vince the motto which is the guiding mantra of his life: "A good race is a race well run." Vince begins to slowly accept this idea as his personal philosophy. Ted helps Vince get clean and then they begin training to enter the amateur circuit. Here we will have a montage of Vince training and then racing in the amateur circuit. Ted tells Vince he's ready to move on to the pros. Initially, Vince is excited to return to the pros, but he cannot find anyone to sponsor him or to ride with him as part of a team. Finally, Ted finds Vince a sponsor in a small dog food company based out of their home state of Texas, but is unable to find him new teammates.

After jumping this first hurdle, Vince is ready to enter the pro circuit with his father by his side. He enters races around the world and begins to get some positive recognition for his attempts. He does not make first place in any of these races, but due to his natural proclivity for athletics he does not come in last place. This boosts his ego a little bit. Vince begins to appear in international media interviews and is sometimes portrayed in a positive light. It is at this point that the audience begins to hear of, but not see, the favorite for this year's Tour de France, Francois Marseilles. Despite Vince's apparent personal change, other racers ostracize him and the only human being willing to spend any significant amount of time with him is his father.

Vince is now ready for the Tour de France, but on the bus ride from his most recent race in Italy to the start of the Tour de France in Paris Ted tragically dies in his sleep. Vince vows to run a good

race in memory of the man who helped redeem him. He is now completely alone. No one in the racing world respects him. The most polite racers simply ignore him while others openly mock him. It is at this point that Vince meets Francois Marseilles, racing's new rising star. Marseilles is the most open of Vince's detractors. He despises the fact that Vince opened the racing world to outside scrutiny of the rampant drug use. He believes that Vince is not only a fool who disgraced himself, but a simpleton who exposed all of the dopers in the cycling world without their consent. In short, Francois is representative of all of the corruption and foul play in the sport of cycling. He may be morally corrupt, but the arguments he makes are built upon solid logic, as the audience will see in the upcoming final scene later on in the film.

Until then, the movie follows Vince through each stage of the Tour. He sees his fellow racers doping up with performance enhancers and when he calls them out they simply laugh him off. At some point in the penultimate stage Vince breaks away from the peloton and catches up to Francois, who is drafting off a teammate to gain speed and take first place. Francois looks over to Vince and subtly pushes him off balance. Vince does not finish the stage that day due to falling off of his bike, breaking a collarbone, and causing a massive crash in the peloton. Vince's overtaking of the peloton to catch up with his rival serves as the emotional high point of the film. It can be considered to be the climax of the film with his crash being the literal falling action.

When the Tour de France comes to a close, Francois Marseilles is declared the ultimate victor while Vince comes up in last place. In the very last scene of the film Francois walks up to taunt Vince one last time. It is here that the audience must question what Vince's motivations really are and decide whether or not he is worth considering a hero. The final scene is as follows:

*Vince stands at the mouth of his tent, his suitcase halfway packed in the background of the shot. He looks over the jubilant crowd and sighs before turning around to resume packing his things. Suddenly a voice comes from off-screen.*

**Francois:** Knock, knock. Is there anybody at home?

*Cut to Francois standing at the door of the tent wearing his yellow victor's jersey still holding the bouquet of flowers given to him on the dais.*

**Francois:** May I come in?

*He comes in without waiting for an invitation from Vince. As dialogue ensues the camera cuts between close-ups of their faces and medium shots of them standing together.*

**Vince:** What do you want Francois? Do you want me to congratulate you? Well, then congratulations.

**Francois:** No. I do not need your words of congratulations. The victor does not need to be reminded by the loser of his strength. I only wish to ask you how it feels to fall so far. How does it feel to know you will never win another race as long as you live?

**Vince:** A wise man once said to me "a good race is one well run."

**Francois:** Don't even try to tell me you actually believe that, Vincent. You know why you did this and it wasn't for some misguided "love of the sport" or any other meaningless reason. You did this for you. Your character is so tied to winning that you couldn't live without the sport. No one respects you so you did the one thing that made you okay with your pitiful self, you returned to the sport. A good race is a race won. Sport isn't about participation. It is about winning and you, my friend cannot win.

**Vince:** At least I lost honestly instead of winning the way you did.

**Francois:** Oh, please. This is another fallacy of yours. If you hadn't been caught, you would be where I stand today. You would dope just as I do. You got caught. Don't try to tell me that you changed, that you learned a lesson because you didn't; at least not until right this moment. Allow me to enlighten you. You ran this race clean to prove you were better than us dopers and you failed. You ran this race after losing all respect from your peers, your family, and the public and nothing has changed because no matter what you do your actions will always be overshadowed by your little televised confession. All the while you told yourself you ran this race for the love of the sport when your entire being is so tied to victory in this sport that you don't know who you are. You never did sport for the love of it because, as I have said, sport cannot be done for anything other than winning. You have failed and you refuse to accept it. I hope I do not see you in next year's race or I will be forced to reiterate these points. Good day Vincent.

*Francois leaves the tent and Vince stares out after him dumbstruck and considering the monologue he has just been subjected to. The camera slowly cranes out and up. We move away from Vince, away from the Tour de France and vertically over the French countryside as the screen fades to black.*