

# Brand new world

APRIL 2025



In a future closer than we might imagine, Europe is torn apart. Most of the East, along with Scandinavia, folds into the Russian sphere, absorbed piece by piece into the new Russian empire's cultural tapestry.

Most of the West drifts under American control, in a blur of slogans, surgically enhanced influencers, and fast-food patriotism. China and Japan get their slices of the cake too while the Iberian Peninsula falls under Saudi influence. Again. The Balkans take a different route.

Compliance becomes law.

Speak their language. Forget your holidays. Burn your history books. In the West they call it integration. In the East, they prefer re-education. Some are Russified. Others Americanized.

None of them get to stay who they were.

Young Scandinavian women are the first to go. Names altered. Traditions banned. Identity dismantled and reconstructed.

BRAND NEW WORLD - RUSSIAN SCANDINAVIA

---





Slavification is a slow process, culminating in a ceremony crowning years of cultural re-education and neurological rewiring.

Here we see Vilde Johansen, from the coastal Norwegian city of Kristiansand, now reborn in the heart of empire. After successfully completing her re-education, she was given the name Ekaterina Petrova in a formal ceremony held in a gilded hall in St. Petersburg.

The ritual had a double meaning – secular allegiance and spiritual submission. She surrenders her invalid Norwegian passport in exchange for a Russian one and renounces Protestantism in favor of the Orthodox Church, kneeling beneath the cold gaze of the Patriarch of Moscow. Her rebirth is a spectacle. Flanked by oligarchs with wolfish smiles the ceremonial kokoshnik weigh heavy on her brow, its jewels cold against her skin. Now, she floats through St. Petersburg's glittering salons, a trophy of conquest. Her accent—a stubborn fleck of Nordic flavor—draws their fascination. "So exotic," they purr, tracing the vowels she dare not voice. Moscow's elite already call them "our little Vikings". Scandinavian-turned Russian women are often secretly coveted by influential men in Russia but Ekaterina is already taken.



Once a proud, nationalistic girl, convinced of her country's greatness, of her own superiority, she's been broken down piece by piece and turned into a good Russian woman. She has learned how Slavic people had long inhabited her lands, and how she could no longer lie to herself and deny her Slavic heritage. Scandinavian special characters leave space to the Cyrillic alphabet. Norwegian culture is banned and entirely replaced with Russian one. Fiskesuppe disappears from menus, replaced by beef and beet borscht. The national day is moved to Victory day. Inside the treatment rooms, electrodes target specific regions of the brain. Some stimulate speech centers. Others rewire emotional triggers.

Vilde was once introverted, quiet. Now, as Ekaterina, she can't stop talking. Her voice fills every room before anyone else can enter it. She's also happier now. But she doesn't show it. Smiling, she's been taught, is for naïve girls. For Westerners.

It hasn't always been easy for her though. After her family's wealth was seized, she was forced to abandon her economics degree and reassigned to a year of mandatory civil service—as an au pair maid in rural Russia.



She scrubbed bathtubs, folded lingerie, and learned to make pelmeni and borscht. "Your man will love these," the wife told her, with a knowing smile. She cared for the children while the couple went out for dinner. She learned how to sing lullabies in Russian. When the newborn wouldn't take formula, they didn't ask politely. "You're young. Healthy. She'll latch." - they simply said, as if it was a natural choice. And so she breastfed their child. It felt weird at first but then turned into something mechanical. Her breasts swelled, fuller and warmer, her figure shifting without her consent.

One gray afternoon, the house was empty except for her and the stable boy. He was lean, tanned. His hands were calloused, his jaw unshaven and he smelled like hay. Still, she fancied him. She wasn't supposed to notice people like him. Not back when she was still a girl of means. But now, as a poor au pair girl with rough hands and accented Russian? She couldn't exactly hold out for a politburo heir.

She watched the way his forearms flexed when he closed the gate. She swallowed her pride. Stepped closer and took his hand. "Ты милый," she whispered. You're cute. He blinked. Smiled. And for the first time in months, she didn't feel foreign.

## BRAND NEW WORLD

---



Most of Sweden is also Russified, following a similar path to the one Ekaterina went through. Some are even relocated to Siberia, since they can cope well with that climate.

In Swedish Lapland, however, the Sami reclaim their dominion with quiet ferocity, after centuries of humiliations, on behalf of the Russian authorities.

Here, we see Malin, from the Northern Swedish city of Umeå, who after having been successfully re-educated in Sami culture and language, took the name Rávdná. Her thesis on pediatric oncology became kindling; her mother's heirloom silver, melted into reindeer bells. Her dresses are replaced by a few traditional Sami gákti.

Reluctantly, she agrees, knowing she has no choice.

After a while, she loses interest in her medicine studies and settles for a simpler life as a reindeer shepard. They drape her in gákti of cobalt and tin. The tundra's breath carves her anew—chapped hands, sinew forged by blizzards. Survival, she learned, was a series of surrenders.

## BRAND NEW WORLD

---



Eventually, she becomes eligible to turn her permanent residency into full citizenship. She's confused, as she is in fact a local. But they tell her only true Sami people can be granted full citizenship rights. She signs some papers in a language she is still trying to master but she gets the idea.

The procedure takes place in a sterile clinic. Needles hum, dyeing her light irises to peat-black, artfully stitching epicanthic folds, lowering her nose bridge and altering her cheekbones. Her pale skintone takes on a darker hue. Her hair will now from naturally black. When the bandages fall, a part of her is relieved. At least, she thinks, I will no longer be bullied for my looks. She looks almost indigenous, the elders nodded.

Her mother weeps at the sight, fingers trembling against Rávdná's altered face. "Lille min, you look so..." "Please mum, don't make this harder than it has to be. I am one of them now." Rávdná interrupts, in a mix of Russian and Sami syllables. She gestures to the reindeer herd outside, their breath fogging the twilight. "This is what upper class looks like now."

## BRAND NEW WORLD

---



When the Americans take over Greenland, an agreement is reached with the locals. Denmark, Denmark—once the colonizer, now the colonized, officially a buffer state between the American and the Russian areas, is gifted to the Greenlandic people as a *gesture of goodwill*. Greenlandic, or Kalaallisuut pours into schoolchildren's skulls via cognitive purges, Danish memories excised like tumors, replaced by throaty glottal stops. The Greenlandic national dresses, the Kalaallisuut, become the only outfits permissible in public.

Hannah, now named Pilunnguaq, is less receptive to the changes than the average Danish girl. She joins the resistance, hoards Danish children's books under her mattress, dresses differently. Foolish, this pantomime of defiance. The algorithms find her. Always does.

They take her to the gene-editing spire, courtesy of Russia's main ally: China. Technicians in fur-lined lab coats greet her with smiles. "*An honor,*" they murmur as the restraints click into place. "*You're becoming part of something greater.*" Viral vectors rewrote her DNA and features: altered zygomatic arches, wider nostrils, melanin blooming like oil spill across her skin and hair follicles.



When the mirrors slide forward, the face staring back is a stranger's.

"Kiinaga!" Pilunnguaq screams, fingers clawing at the stranger's Inuit angles. "My cheekbones! My nose! I look like an Inuit woman! What have you done to me?" she asks, mourning the loss of her innocent features.

She is released into the new world, her body a masterpiece of ethnic reassignment.

She can now hope for a better life, looking like the silent minority dominating Danish society, but her accented Kalaallisut betrays her. The *real* Greenlanders sniff it out immediately.

"Say *qimmeq*," they taunt. "Go on, *Daneface*, say it!". She stumbles over the *q*, and they howl with laughter.

Eventually, something clicks. She adapts to her new role and culture. They eventually promote her to "Cultural Liaison." She tours the re-education centers, a living exhibit of progress. In a school in Copenhagen, she cups the face of a sobbing Danish girl. "*Shh. I screamed too. Look at me now.*"