

POW

DECEMBER 2025



I had been captured only after a few weeks of war in Venezuela. We were prepared for a different kind of war but guerrilla tactics in the deep Venezuelan forests were the worst for us, just like Vietnam, the old officers said. This would be a bloodbath. So I counted myself lucky when I got captured unharmed. A few months in an old prison and then I'd be sent home. At least, that's what I told myself.

After a few weeks, however, nothing had happened. Now the question was, what would happen to me? The answer came indirectly.

They scrubbed the dirt of the jungle and the oil from my weapon from my skin, washed and styled my hair, applied a hint of makeup.



I noticed how weeks of forced lack of exercise and a diet based on salads had broken down my muscles and given me a very feminine physique. I wondered if they had added something else to my drinks because my lack of upper body strength was worrisome.

They dressed me before I managed to ask why. My combat uniform was replaced with a simple, elegant black and silver outfit that felt weird against my skin. I felt exposed, ridiculous, humiliated.

Why did they doll me up like that? I was fearing the worse, like being sold into prostitution or being given to enemy soldiers as a war prize, when they took me to a fancy mansion in the mountains.



When she entered the fancy living room, I didn't recognize her at first. Captain Elise Bennett. Or what remained of her. My old superior in the army? Why did she look like a bimbo?

She had been MIA, presumed dead after a patrol vanished near the Colombian border six months ago. Now she wore a leopard print outfit. Her natural Brunette hair had been bleached blonde. Her face was... plastic. Plump lips, high cheekbones. Nothing like the fierce natural beauty she used to be. I noticed how her body shape had changed too, her muscles replaced by a soft curvy body. God, what did they do to her? And what would happen to me now?



"I'll have to guide you through this," she said quietly.

Not apologetic, almost tender.

Guide me through *what*?

She moved closer, heels clicking softly against the marble floor, and for a moment I caught the faintest scent of perfume, expensive, floral. "You're thinking this is the worst" she continued, as if reading my mind. "A show meant to scare you. Humiliate you."

She smiled faintly. "It could be worse. You should see what happened to some of our male soldiers... At least we're already female." I understood what she meant and shivered.



“They broke you,” I said, turning back to her in rage. “Didn’t they?”

For a moment, I thought she might slap me.

Instead, she smiled faintly. “Let’s not make this weird,” she said.

I nodded. I was a prisoner, after all. She was... what? A collaborator? A survivor?

I stared at her closely. Her posture was different: softer, yes, but also... finished. As if whatever fight had once lived in her spine had been folded away and sealed.

She smiled at me and addressed me with a condescending tone.



"You were always adaptable," she went on. "Command noticed that about you. Psychological resilience. Identity flexibility. You survived where others didn't."

She reached up and adjusted the tiara on my head. I froze.

"You'll be fine," Elise said. The kind of words you use on a nervous animal before a show. I swallowed. My throat felt scraped raw, like I'd been screaming without sound.

"What are you going to do to me?"

Elise didn't answer right away.

"What are you going to do to me?" My voice was a dry crackle, the first real sentence I'd dared.



She brought me to a salon. The air was thick with the smell of peroxide and fake jasmine, a sweetness that clung to the back of the throat. I searched Elise's face for an anchor.

"We're changing your look," she said.

My hair was short, blonde. Elise's hands were already in it, sectioning, assessing. Then she mixed a paste the color of wet earth. "I've become somewhat of a hairdresser lately, you know?". She went on and gave me long wavy extensions and dyed all of it brown.

"I don't know, I don't like where this is going!" - I said. Elise's hands rested on the headrest. "You'll adapt." Her tone said it wasn't a hope, but a forecast.



Then she took me to a tanning bed. At the end, came a nurse with a syringe. "What is it?" - I asked. "It helps" - she said, in her poor English.

They came each morning. Injection. Observation. For a few days, nothing. Then a heat bloomed under my skin, a constant flush without a fever. After a week, I noticed a change in my skin color. Even the pale skin of my inner forearm, the skin that had never tanned evenly, was gone. In its place was a uniform, olive tone.

I didn't look just tanned, I looked... different. Like, Italian or something. Barely myself.

"What are you pumping into me?" I asked Elise.



She didn't hesitate. "Melanotan. It stimulates melanin production." I stared at the arm. "It will help your new skin tone become consistent." she said, her voice devoid of anything but fact. "I... don't want this!" - I replied, scared.

"Come on, you look good like this!" - Elise commented. "Look at you, nobody would guess you're the natural blonde between us!" - she added with a hint of pleasure.

I went back to my room, inspecting my body. My nipples had also turned dark brown, as had my labia. And my hair was starting to grow naturally dark brown.



In fact, my hair roots were now darker than the rest of hair. Combined with my now brown skin, it looked as if I had bleached my hair a shade of brown lighter than my natural color.

Elise immediately corrected that by applying ink black dye to my wavy long hair.

But that wasn't the worst. I had noticed how my breasts had been growing at an alarming rate lately. I was definitely too old for a natural breast growth and my hips were also getting wider. Something was up. I confessed it to Elise, who reassured me telling me it could be a side effect of the taking drug.



Just to be sure, I was sent to undergo a quick medical checkout that turned out to be just an excuse to drag me to a clinic, where they asked me to undress and to breathe in a gas to relax. After a few seconds I was dozing off.

They worked intensively on my body. I got breast implants - much bigger than Elise's, if she had any. I later found out hers were natural, actually. We had been given the same hormones to stimulate breast and hips growth but in my case that was deemed not sufficient. Breast implants would make me look like a good trophy wife.

They also gave me a Brazilian butt job, botox injections and lip fillers.



I woke up with round breast implants, a big butt and a heavily remodeled face. Somehow they had even turned my blue eyes brown. But what shocked me the most were the breast implants.

I didn't have the body of an American soldier anymore.

I had the body of a curvy Latina.

My transformation turned out to be even more shocking than that of Elise.

Even if I were to be freed, I would have a lot of explanations to give to my friends, family and coworkers. I would be all over the news. A wave of shame washed over me. Suddenly, the option of a shameful exile in Venezuela did not sound too bad.



"I'm ruined! I'm fucking ruined!" - I told Elise when I had the chance to talk to her.

"Don't say that loud, you're much better than before. By the way, by now, they expect you to succumb. Play dumb. Let them think you've accepted your role. Confused. Grateful. It keeps you alive. There are worse endings than being a trophy girlfriend. And as long as you're breathing, there's still a chance to escape."

"Is that what you're doing?" I asked. "My God, Elise, I really thought—" - I replied, my voice too high for the surprise.

"Shhh! They're coming!"



A man named Diego asked Elise what the hell was going on.

Elise laughed, light and careless. "Oh—Carito was telling me how happy she is with the size of her *tetas!*" I nodded, looking intimidated.

"Carito?" - he asked.

"Yes," Elise said easily. "She's not much of a *gringa* anymore. I think it suits her better. Carito. Carito Cruz."

Diego rolled the name around in his mouth, then nodded once. "I like that." He scribbled something on the document in front of him.



"By the way, *tetona*," he said, almost amused, "since you like to talk so much, you're going to read this. Out loud. For the camera." I did as I was told. I lowered my eyes, showed fear and gratitude.

"I regret my previous life and I commit my new one to the Socialist Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. From now on, I wish to be called Carito Cruz, to symbolize my new nationality. I have requested and obtained cosmetic surgeries that have rendered me a more pleasing woman and I vow to keep working on that. I will be a good role model for women and..." - I rolled my eyes "and for the soldiers of Venezuela. *Gloria al Bravo Pueblo!*"



“What have I done?” I whispered when the man was gone. Now everyone would think I was a traitor, someone who had willingly crossed over, who had smiled for the cameras to avoid pain. Someone who had *chosen* this. This was the torture.

“What are you going to do to me? What do you mean,” I pressed, “that you don’t need me to be recognizable anymore?”

Elise didn’t answer immediately. When she did, her voice was almost kind.

“Recognizable to who?” She stepped closer, careful, as if approaching something fragile. “To your army? Your country? Who cares? Soon,” she said softly, “you won’t feel shame anymore because you’ll be somebody new.”