

The start of my journey in Venezuela

December 10, 1996

Today, Frank and I were headed back home from our business trip in Venezuela. Frank needed a partner to help him bring back goodies from Venezuela. In order to keep our business going back home, we needed more supplies. We walked into the airport with our coats on and walked up to get our boarding passes for the plane. Frank left me with the bags while he went and paid the flight taxes. While I was waiting for him to return, consequently there were two men in all black pointing and staring looking back at me. I was intimidated because I knew they were onto us, they could tell I was hiding something. Frank returned and he could tell there was something wrong by the look on my face. The men proceeded to walk towards us, they asked us to come with them. Then they took us into a dark room at the airport and asked us questions. They then demanded we take off our coats to uncover what we were smuggling back home.

December 11, 1996

The night passed and we missed our flight back home, we were caught. During the interrogation, when our hands pulled apart and separated my heart dropped or disheartened. I was taken into a different room to be interrogated. I was on the other side of the wall from Frank. While I was waiting for the man in the black coat to return, I heard shouting and punching coming from Frank's side of the wall. After a while, it went silent. I didn't even know what to think was going on, on the other side of the wall.

December 12, 1996

I was handcuffed and thrown into the back of a jeep that smelled terrible and waited for a while, in the heat. I heard screaming coming from outside of the jeep, the doors in the back opened up and the guards threw Frank into the van. We were headed to a second location and I was terrified I couldn't speak, but Frank and I just made heavy eye contact with each other. We pulled up to the second location and were separated from you immediately. After being taken to the second location, and was divided from you I was petrified. The guards threw me around until we got to the women's cell in the new prison. I looked into each of the cells to see most of them were empty, except the ones at the end of the hall. There were over ten women in each cell and they were filled up to the max. I was thrown into the cell expecting to be threatened and terrorised by the other women. I was scared of the other women in the cell just for them to look at me and say nothing. I sat down in the back of the cell and another woman started to talk to me about what happens here. They only get fed once a day and they only get shower privileges once every two days. I was worried about what was happening to Frank on the men's side of the prison. I knew he would worry about what I was doing, but I wish there was a way to tell him I was fine.

December 16, 1996

I was in this cell for three days without Frank. But I managed to make more friends over a couple of days. I was very cramped and very hungry, but that was the least of my concerns. I just wanted to leave that prison so much and prayed that we would be released and would go home. During the hottest part of the day, I was sitting about to fall asleep when a guard came to the cell and opened the door and called my name. We were walking out of this prison and I had no clue where we were. But the Jeep we arrived at here was sitting out front, waiting to take me

somewhere else. When I got into the back of the Jeep I saw Frank sitting there alone. When we reconnected with each other, my insides melted with tears of happiness. I could not bear being split apart any longer, but I put on a brave face so you wouldn't worry anymore. The guards then took us to another location where we spent the night.

December 17, 1996

Frank and I spent the night at another prison, but this time we were not separated. This time we were together and everything was okay. A woman dressed in a very fancy dress proceeded to ask us more questions. The same lady tried to get us to sign these papers, but they were all in different languages. We thought it was a good idea to not sign anything. We didn't want to sign anything that would get us into more trouble. The next morning the guards came to wake us up. This was the day we were moving to the San Antonio Jail for good. Frank and I would be split apart, just allowed to see each other once a month. Inside the back of the Jeep again we prepared to be transferred again. The look in your eyes stopped my beating heart, the minute we started to drive to San Antonio jail. Separating our belongings, preparing to be split apart. Walking up at the entrance of San Antonio broke my heart completely. Saying our goodbyes as if it was our last time ever seeing each other. In two steps, behind huge steel doors, you were gone.

December 21, 1996

My first day of the new prison was a struggle, moving into a cell with other women that I didn't know. When I first walked in they didn't say anything to me but as the days past the more social they became. I became friends with one lady who showed me what it is like to live in this prison. I got used to a daily schedule that we had to follow every day. I even met a lady whose husband was also in the men's part of the jail. She told me that they have visitation when you can see your significant other. When I heard those words come out of her mouth, I have never been more thrilled. Although I haven't seen Frank in a couple of days, I was worried that he would have already changed.

January 18, 1997

I was following my basic routine as usual one morning when all the sudden, everyone in the woman jail got down onto the floor. We heard a mass shooting and lots of screaming coming from the male's side of the jail. After about fifteen seconds and a loud alarm went off over the whole person. My heart dropped in fear that Frank was hurt. I started to worry, but after a while, I couldn't worry any longer. I decided the best thing to do was hope for the best because it was almost visitation day.

February 12, 1997

Today was the first day from when I was able to see Frank, from when we both enrolled in this prison. It was finally a visitation day. I walked into a large room that was all white with metal tables all around. I looked into the centre of the room, to meet eyes with Frank. In the blink of an eye, I rushed over so quickly. We immediately started to talk about what was going on since the last time we saw each other. Frank was sharing stories about his time in the new prison. He seemed off like a couple of weeks already changed him. Frank was not himself, it was like someone else had taken over his body. I was so excited to see him. It didn't phase me at the time he was a changed person.

July 9, 1997

After so many months past, I meant so many other people in the same situation as Frank and I. Ever since we came to the San Antonio Jail, Frank became someone else. We always would meet every month in the visitor's room. With each of the other prisoners with significant others in jail. I noticed a change that was more and more noticeable every time we meet up in jail. We tried our hardest to not say what was bothering us each time, but it made me miserable. I decided then that you weren't the Frank I knew anymore. I didn't want to think about seeing a new you, every time we saw each other. It was time to end it all. Although I knew that you would be the person I loved forever, this wasn't you, I used to know.