

I, Elona _____, being duly sworn, depose and say:

1. I was born on August 30, _____, in the city of Vladikavkaz, which is in the northern part of Ossetia, which is part of the Republic of Georgia.

2. I came to the United States with my mother, Larissa _____, in the winter of _____. Within 5 years my mother won a green card lottery and, thereafter, both of us obtained permanent resident status. My alien registration number is A_____.

3. I currently reside in the United States at _____ 85th St., Apt. ____, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11214. My telephone number is 718/____-_____.

4. I am making this affidavit in support of the application for permanent resident status of my friend Svetlana _____.

5. I first met Svetlana on June 1, _____, at a birthday party celebrating her _____th birthday. The party was held in Svetlana's apartment in Flushing, Queens, New York City. We were introduced by a mutual friend, Isak _____, who was my boyfriend at that time. Svetlana's name at the time was Svetlana _____ (her maiden name); everybody called her Sveta for short, and that is how I will refer to her in the rest of this affidavit. Sveta and I have similar personalities — we like conversation and we easily associate with people — and so we quickly established a good friendship between us. In spite of the fact that, at this time, Sveta was living in Queens while I lived in Brooklyn, we saw each other often (two or three times a week) and spent hours every day chatting on the telephone.

6. At the end of July _____, about two months after Sveta and I started our friendship, she told me that she had met this great guy while she and another girl friend, Luda (whose last name neither I nor Sveta can recall), had gone to a nightclub in Manhattan. It turned out that Luda, whom Sveta had known for a short while, had introduced Sveta to a friend of Luda's, Jerry _____, who later became Sveta's husband. After this, I did not see Sveta as often, because she spent most of her time with Jerry. Finally, in the middle of September, _____, Sveta introduced me to Jerry. Jerry could be charming, at least on first impression, and he treated Sveta well at that time, as a gentleman would treat a lady, so I believed him to be a nice person. It looked like Jerry and Sveta were in love, so I was happy for her. Sveta spoke about Jerry all the time, telling me how happy she was that she had met this special person and therefore did not feel so lonely anymore in this new country. At this time there was just one problem in the friendship between all of us: Jerry did not like it that Sveta and I spoke Russian most of the time and he never made any efforts to learn even a couple of

words of Russian. We had no idea then of the much greater problems that would develop later.

7. Jerry and Sveta got married in October of ____; in December of that year they moved into a new apartment, on Avenue U in Brooklyn, N.Y. Within a couple of months of their living together in this new apartment, I noticed that Jerry started to change for the worse. For example, he would often change plans that and Sveta had made with other people, thereby disappointing everyone who relied on him. By February of ____, it was evident that Jerry was addicted to drugs. He smoked pot regularly, and once he even sniffed a powdery substance right in front of me. Emotionally, Jerry would go to extremes: sometimes he would be energetic, even hyperactive, while at other times he would be sluggish and seem very depressed. All too often he was angry, sometimes violently so. He had a quick, bad temper: he frequently slapped Sveta in her face or head, or kicked her. Sveta told me that there were times when she would run into the bathroom just to get away from him, and would sit in the bathroom for hours, afraid to come out. In fact, I personally witnessed the beginning of one such incident; when I tried to intervene, Jerry just yelled at me for interfering and told me to leave.

8. This kind of violence by Jerry against Sveta happened on a regular basis. As a result, I resented everybody involved, even myself. I was angry with Jerry, for being so aggressive and even violent with Sveta. I was frustrated with Sveta, for feeling sorry for Jerry instead of throwing him out of her life (she would say things like “He is the only family I have, he is going to change and then everything will be all right.”) And I was disappointed with myself, for being so helpless, unable to convince Sveta to leave this crazy man and get this “family madness” out of her life. In addition to the unhappiness I experienced when seeing Jerry take out his problems on Sveta, I also experienced the discomfort of being the direct object of Jerry’s anger: since I would always try to protect Sveta as much as I could, Jerry would often curse me out too, telling me to go home and mind my own business.

9. Since I was always counseling Sveta to get help, prior to the time that she finally realized that she needed it, we would argue about this situation. As a result, there was a period of time when our friendship deteriorated. I could no longer witness Jerry’s verbal and physical abuse of Sveta, and so, by early November of ____, I completely stopped going over to their apartment. Even so, Sveta needed a friend and kept calling me, mostly after she and Jerry had had a fight. She would sound upset, depressed and angry with herself, crying, yet still not ready to give up on Jerry. I kept telling Sveta the same thing, that it was in her power to end this abnormal situation and that she even had a kind of responsibility, to herself and to her friends who still cared about her, to end it. No one could stop this madness, I told her, but herself. By this time, Jerry had become really crazy: if he so much as heard my voice, which would happen if he picked up the phone when I was trying to reach Sveta, he would lose it

completely. After a while, out of sheer frustration, I gave up on trying to convince Sveta to leave him, and would just listen to her latest story and try to give her some emotional support.

10. Little by little, Sveta stopped calling me; we lost touch by March of _____. However, in October of _____ Sveta called me and gave me the great news that she and Jerry were no longer together. Of course, Sveta and I met soon after that conversation, and she then told me of the most recent events in her life (including her pregnancy and abortion, and including the fact that she had received an order of protection with respect to Jerry). In November of _____, Sveta moved into a new apartment with another friend of hers, and she is much happier now. Since her new apartment is right in my neighborhood, we see each other often. Our friendship is as strong as ever: it is as strong as it was before Jerry _____ came into her life, and it may even be stronger due to her increased understanding of the true meaning of friendship.

Elona _____

Sworn to before me this
day of April, 2003

Notary Public