

I, Sherri ....., being duly sworn, depose and say:

1. I am making this affidavit in support of the Petition for Alien Fiancée that I am filing on behalf of my fiancée, Lester ....., with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

2. I first met Lester in 1974. We worked together at Guyana Fisheries, a business on Water Street in Georgetown, Guyana, and we became friends. I left the Fisheries in 1975 and got married in 1976 to Roger ..... I first met Roger ..... one Sunday afternoon in June, 1976. At that time, he was attending teacher's training college. Right after I married Roger, he started being physically and emotionally abusive towards me: we got married on December 29, 1976, and on the very next day we had a misunderstanding and Roger punched me in the face.

3. In 1977, Roger and I went to teach in the Interlard in Guyana at ..... Primer School. In 1982, we were transferred to Kamarang Primer School (in the same District, Interlard, just a different town, and I met Lester again at Kamarang. He was a police officer at the time. Our friendship continued where we had left off, by which I mean that we continued to be good friends, but not more than that. By contrast, Roger cheated on me with a lot of women; to add injury to insult, he would beat me constantly. I would go to the police station and report the more severe of the beatings. Since Lester was a police officer he would go talk to Roger for me, to try to get Roger to treat me respectfully, but the talking did not help. As to why Lester did not just arrest Roger, the unfortunate truth is that, in those days, men in Guyana were never arrested for beating their wives: in Guyana men always beat their wives and their wives are trained to think that it is good for their husbands to beat them. Also, at that time Roger was the headmaster of the school at Kamarang and it would have looked terrible for the headmaster to be arrested. Under these circumstances, where my husband was violently abusive to me and continued to mistreat me, while Lester treated me kindly and was very good to me, Lester and I became more than just friends.

4. In 1982, I left Roger and began living with Lester for the next 5 years. During that time, I got pregnant with Lester's child but then had a

miscarriage and lost our baby. In 1987, Lester and I separated because I was very jealous of Lester and he was away a lot because of his job. I went back to live with my mother at ....., in the Campbellville District, in Georgetown, Guyana. There, my husband came back and asked me to take him back and I did, but he never changed his abusive ways. I would still see Lester on and off.

5. In 1989, I came with Roger to the United States, and began living with him in New York City. I did not see or talk to Lester for the next 10 years, between 1989 and 1999. In January of 1999, I decided I was not going to take the abuse from Roger any more. There were days I could not even go to work because of the beatings I had received from Roger; on other days, even when I was able to get to work, I would be crying in the office. This situation was threatening my ability to keep the excellent job I had with the ..... Fortunately, my boss at that time, Rene Klopping, knew what was happening to me and kindly told me that I absolutely needed to talk to someone about Roger and his abuse towards me; she told me to begin by talking with someone at the Employee Assistance Program of ..... That Program referred me to an organization called Woman Safe Start, where I would go every Wednesday for counseling.

6. One day, in April 1999, I got a call from my cousin, Michelle ....., who lives in Guyana. Michelle and I had not been talking for about nine or ten years because of some misunderstanding. After we put our misunderstanding aside, Michelle told me that Lester was always asking for me and that he had given her his phone number so that I would call him. He told her that whenever I came back to Guyana for a visit, I should look him up. I told her to give him my work number so that he could call me, and he did call. We started talking on the phone at work frequently. I was still with Roger at this time but my marriage was about to end.

7. On June 10, 2000, I moved into a shelter because of the abuse from Roger that I could no longer tolerate. I was there for eight months and lost contact with Lester. In February 2001, I moved out of the shelter into an apartment at ..... After moving into the apartment, I found out that my landlady, Wendy ....., is from Linden District, in Guyana. It just so happened that Lester works in Linden. In June, 2002, Wendy's mother-in-law, who had been living in Linden, died, and Wendy had to go to Guyana for the funeral, so I asked her to look for Lester. I gave her a postcard to give to Lester, in which I told him that I was planning to come to Guyana on

August 8, 2002, and that would love it if he would come and meet me at the airport. Wendy found Lester and he called me and we started talking again. He told me he would pick me up at the airport. On August 8th, I arrived in Guyana. Lester was there at the airport waiting for me and it was the best day in my life because I was finally together again with the man I had been in love with for most of my life. We spent the entire 18 days of my vacation together and we decided that we wanted to be together after he got his divorce.

8. I came back to New York on August 25, 2002, and from then on Lester and I began corresponding. I would send him a card every week and we would talk on the phone a lot. Attached to this affidavit as Exhibits 1 and 2 and made a part hereof are copies of two pieces of correspondence that I received this year from Lester. Exhibit 1 is an ordinary letter, dated February 5, 2003; I did not save the envelope in which this letter came. Exhibit 2 is an undated Valentine's Day card, for which I did save the dated envelope (February 6, 2003). Also attached to this affidavit and made a part hereof, as Exhibits 3 and 4, are two months of my long distance telephone bills, showing frequent communications between Lester and me. Exhibit 3 is for the time period April 10 to May 9, 2003 and Exhibit 4 is for the time period May 10 to June 9, 2003. Lester and I have been in love with each other for a very long time and we would like to get married as soon as Lester can get a visa to come to New York.

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Sherri .....

Sworn to before me this  
18th day of August 2003

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Notary Public