

You are a 27-year-old woman from Ukraine. You and your husband have a two-year-old daughter who has Down's syndrome. Ukraine has very few options for children with disabilities, who are not generally welcomed in mainstream kindergartens or schools. Many babies with disabilities are abandoned by parents who are overwhelmed by the lack of support in caring for their children, but you and your husband are committed to raising your daughter. You want to move to the United States, a country which is far ahead of Ukraine in caring for people with disabilities. You think your husband could find work as an electrician there and your daughter would have the opportunity to get an education, access special assistance, and live a more normal life.

**1 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 49-year-old man from Canada. You have never married, despite the protests and attempts of your aging parents. However, you have made an enormous annual salary for the past ten years as a regulator of hedge funds. You now desire to enter the private sector and have decided to invest in a cutting-edge industrial project in the United States. To do so most effectively, you have decided to immigrate there. You will be bringing with you over \$10 million in assets and plan to hire at least 20 workers to work for you. Though you know it is difficult and insensitive to leave your parents at this point in their lives, you are confident that this new business venture will provide enough money for them to live comfortably in Canada for the rest of their lives – or even to join you in the United States someday, if they are up for it.

**3 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 68-year-old woman from Congo. Your son moved to the United States with his wife and four children – your grandchildren – 15 years ago to go to school to be a businessman. Unfortunately, his visa expired, and despite being unable to renew it and retain legal status, the family stayed. The children (who are U.S. citizens) were deeply attached to their life in the United States and could not bear the thought of returning to the violence wracking Congo. You now wish to join them. You feel yourself aging, are concerned over growing violence in your country, and want to be among your only remaining family. You are unsure of how to get a visa since your son's status is illegal, and afraid of exposing him to deportation if you try. Nonetheless, you are determined to join your family in North Carolina, where they have resettled.

**2 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 20-year-old man from Mexico. You graduated from high school and have spent the past two years working in a factory in Mexico in terrible conditions for minimal wages. You live alone, in a small apartment five hours from your family, attempting to make enough money to eventually go to college. However, you have been unable to get promoted to a higher-paying job no matter how hard you work, and you are beginning to believe that your situation is hopeless. Every day you pass by a television shop showing images of life in the United States, and you have decided to try and immigrate. You don't speak any English, but you have seen advertisements for assistance getting to the United States. Though you fear unscrupulous coyotes, you think the risk might be worth it in order to have help navigating the complicated legal system and obtaining a visa.

**4 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 44-year-old man from Mexico. You are married, have three children, and work as a subsistence farmer. You live in a small town near the U.S. border which has recently become a hotspot for drug trafficking. Violence has increased, and you are afraid for the safety of your children. In addition, the school in your hometown only goes through eighth grade, and your children want to go to high school. The nearest high school is an hour away on dangerous roads used frequently by drug traffickers and gang members, and you refuse to let them take the risk. Books left behind by American short-term mission teams have only whetted their appetite, and you know that attending school in the U.S. will provide your children with opportunities you never had. Your job in Mexico pays wages too low to give your family the life you dream of, and America seems like the Promised Land.

**5 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 21-year-old woman from India, born into the Kshatriya caste. You fell in love with a man from the Shudra caste, which is far below your own. The two of you eloped at a local temple a few weeks ago. Since then, your families have been furious. Your parents had been planning an arranged marriage with a more "suitable" man, and they feel their honor has been destroyed. Your father has threatened your husband's family and filed a complaint with the police, but you and your new husband are staying in a court-ordered shelter. You desperately want to move to the United States, where your husband will be safe from murder and you can live your married lives without the confines of police protection. You plan to look for a place where your husband can farm upon arrival in the U.S., because with only a high school education, you both fear that finding other employment is unlikely.

**7 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 23-year-old woman from Romania. You recently graduated from a Romanian university with a teaching degree, but the economy and job market are so poor in Romania, and the country's educational system so corrupt, that you have decided to join many of your peers and look for work abroad. Many Romanians travel to Italy or Spain because of the linguistic similarities, but you speak fluent English and have always dreamed of moving to the United States. Your aunt and uncle moved there when you were 10 and are now U.S. citizens, and the pictures and presents they sent back have always made you long to experience the U.S. yourself. In addition, economic hardship in Italy and Spain has made it much more difficult to find a job there. You hope that you can join your aunt and uncle in the United States and make a life for yourself there.

**6 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 26-year-old woman from Saudi Arabia. You and your husband both have college educations and are moderate Muslims. You are frustrated by the extreme Islamists and Saudi Arabian cultural impediments that keep you from being able to freely pursue a career in law, as you want to do. You are banned even from driving in Saudi Arabia, and together with your husband have decided to try to immigrate to the United States, where freedom of religion will enable you to live less restricted lives.

**8 CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 13-year-old girl from Honduras. You were spending a month with your grandparents in the mountains when a terrible hurricane hit Honduras. Though you were safe, you could not contact your mother. When you returned home, you heard from neighbors that she had left for the United States in an attempt to receive temporary protected status, and that once there she would send for you and your grandparents. Three months later, you still have not heard from her, and your life feels like it is in ruins. You have decided to leave for the U.S. to find her, knowing only a few clues about where she might have gone.

9

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 61-year-old woman from Spain. You are married and have two adult children, both of whom are married, and four grandchildren. Your husband is a dentist and you are an English teacher, on the verge of retirement. You traveled to the United States as a college student and have always wanted to return, and with Spain's recent economic collapse, you have little desire to retire there. Your older son and daughter-in-law and their three children moved to the U.S. five years ago so that your son could pursue a PhD from Harvard. They are legal permanent residents and plan to stay in the United States, and you would like to join them.

11

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 47-year-old Palestinian man from Israel. Violence, political rancor, and hostilities between Arabs and Jews in Israel have increased throughout your lifetime, and you are tired of the discrimination. You have to pass through two security checkpoints on your way to your construction job each morning, and the scorn and abuse of the security guards has recently escalated. Your only remaining extended family lives in Jordan and Canada, but you are interested in immigrating to the United States. You speak English well and have always wanted to see New York City. You believe that life in America will provide you with freedom and equality which you cannot find here in your homeland.

10

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 39-year-old man from the Netherlands. You made a fortune in the world of online publishing and information, and are looking for a place to start up a new entrepreneurial effort. You have chosen the United States on the request of your 15-year-old daughter, who has a love for American movies and music – as well as for the market potential. You plan to invest at least \$3 million into your new business venture in the United States, and will be hiring at least 15-20 American employees at the start. Due to strong unions in the Netherlands, minimum wage there is almost three times the rate of the U.S., so you are looking forward to keeping your costs lower and turning a greater profit.

12

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 24-year-old woman from Mexico. You were raised in southern California by Mexican parents who had entered the U.S. illegally to find work picking grapes. As a child, you were brought back and forth across the border many times, usually illegally. At 14, after one especially traumatic trip across the border, you decided to stay in Mexico with your aunt and uncle in order to finish high school and regain a sense of stability. Your parents are still living and working in the United States without documents, but you have stayed in close contact. Your mom has recently been diagnosed with cancer, and your parents have decided to stay in the U.S. The hospital system is better there, though much more expensive, and your mom is not healthy enough to travel. You have decided to move to the United States to live with them and care for your mother, as well as eventually seek a college education.

13

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 24-year-old woman from North Korea. You fled the country with your sister and mother a year ago, half-starved and fearing for your life because of the oppressive government regime. Your father was killed two years ago for political dissidence; since then, your mother has been beaten and tortured repeatedly. You were afraid she would die too, either from the grueling journey to escape or from hunger if you stayed. Upon arrival in China, you have been hiding with relatives and acquaintances from an underground church there, but that has not stopped your mother and sister from being captured by Chinese police and repatriated back to North Korea. Thankfully, both times they have eventually escaped or been let go due to generous bribes paid by your relatives in China. However, your life in China is unstable, so you have appealed to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to be resettled in the U.S.

14

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 14-year-old girl from Nicaragua. You just finished eighth grade with perfect marks; you long to attend high school and college to eventually become an obstetrician. However, the only high school near your small village is a 45-minute-walk away, and your family cannot afford the school and supply fees. Instead, you are needed to work in a garment factory to help support your parents, aging grandparents, and six siblings. Your older brother, age 17, has been talking about moving to America to find a job and go to school, then returning to Nicaragua with enough money to let your younger siblings attend high school as well. You desperately want to go with him – he is your best friend, and you are scared to let him go alone. Together you begin planning a trip north, hoping that you will be allowed in.

15

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 33-year-old man from Brazil. You were brought to the United States illegally by your parents at the age of five. You graduated from high school with honors and attended one year of college before you decided that the cost of such instability and fear from being undocumented was too much for you to bear. You returned to Brazil at the age of 20, leaving your parents and siblings behind. Your parents are undocumented; your American-born siblings are U.S. citizens. Upon exiting the U.S. you were prohibited from applying for re-entry for ten years, but that decade has passed. You earned a college degree in Brazil, learned Portuguese, and got married — though, unfortunately, your parents were not able to attend the wedding because they would have been unable to return to the U.S. Now you and your wife would like to move to the United States to reunite with your family.

16

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 36-year-old woman from South Korea. You are a prominent nuclear physicist, known internationally as a candidate for the Nobel Prize. Though you love your work in Korea and have a comfortable life there, you have been granted a special research position at MIT and are eager to begin work in the United States; now you must obtain a visa.

17

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 17-year-old male from Nicaragua, the youngest of five children. Your father left for the United States when you were three in order to make enough money to support your family; his previous job in Nicaragua had been extremely dangerous and paid wages too low to survive on. He is there without documentation, working on grape farms in southern California. He has sent monthly packages back to your family ever since you can remember, but you long to see him in person. Your older siblings have left home to raise their own families and your mother just passed away. You dropped out of high school at 15 to work and help provide for your ailing mother, but with her death you feel alone in the world. You want desperately to join your father, who you know can provide for you, and hope to immigrate legally to the United States.

18

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 45-year-old woman from Sri Lanka. You lived through the brutal civil war between the government and the Liberation Tigers who sought an independent homeland for the Tamil people of Sri Lanka, and during that war you witnessed many atrocities, including the killing of your husband. Without other family members in the country to lean on, you are incredibly lonely and feel unable to remain in a place with so many past grievances always below the surface. You are a trained nurse and have heard that the hospital system in the United States is one of the best in the world, so you would like to work there. In addition, your best friend was resettled during the war as a refugee in the U.S. and is now an American citizen. Though she left eight years ago, you have stayed in touch, and you would like to join her in Oklahoma if you can get an immigration visa.

19

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 25-year-old man from South Africa. You have been working as a lab technician for a cancer research facility for ten years, but you feel frustrated by the lack of possible mobility in your position. You have always wanted to travel and live in other parts of the world; English is your first language, so you decided to move to the United States. You figure that your education (2 years of college) and job experience will land you a job in the United States, and you can't wait to taste American pizza. You also have a fondness for jazz and have always wanted to visit New Orleans, so that is where you plan to move. Though your parents and siblings still live in South Africa, you are not particularly close, so you are not afraid of going alone.

20

#### CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 42-year-old Karen man from Burma. You have been living with your wife and two children in a refugee camp across the border in Thailand for almost 20 years. You and other Karen people have been fleeing the military rulers of Burma, which has been named one of the most brutal regimes in the world. After escaping through the jungle from your home village, you arrived in the safety – and squalor – of a Thai refugee camp, which has been the only home your children have ever known. Your hope is to move to the United States, where you know that some of your cousins have been resettled as refugees. You are afraid of moving so far away and of possibly losing your culture, but know that your children will have opportunities and safety in the U.S. that they would never have here.

**21** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 27-year-old man from Guatemala. Your brother and his wife live in the United States as legal permanent residents, working minimum-wage jobs at a factory in Florida. Your brother has said that the factory is hiring and that they might have a position for you, and you are excited about the prospect of joining him. You have completed your high school education and would like to attend community college, but there are none near where you live with classes that accommodate your full-time work schedule as a street cleaner. You hope that you might be able to attend night classes like your brother is doing once you arrive in the U.S., and eventually pursue a different career.

**23** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 32-year-old man from Iraq. Violence in your home country has continued for many years, despite the presence of American troops. Your wife and four children are constantly terrified, and you can hardly bear to see the sorrow on their faces. Last month, a neighbor was killed in a senseless attack while on a trip to the capital for a doctor's appointment. During the last few weeks you have seen unfamiliar faces in your own small city – faces which make you nervous, for you fear the violence will soon enter your own neighborhood. You have been saving money for the last seven years, hoping to put together enough for the visa fees to immigrate with your family to the United States, where you hope to be safe and accepted. You are a talented carpenter and are sure you could make a living in the U.S., if they will accept you.

**22** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 24-year-old woman from El Salvador. Your brother moved to the United States last year after receiving a temporary student visa to study at an American college and plans to return home after getting his degree. You would also like to go to school in the U.S., but you want to move there permanently. You are angered by the way that politicians have used their power in past years and cannot bear the thought of staying in El Salvador, where you live with your parents and work at a local restaurant; you want to live in the United States. In addition, a friend from high school moved to the United States four years ago to marry an American man, and you miss her dearly. You hope that perhaps your parents will join you in the U.S. and that your brother will decide to apply for permanent residency there, but regardless, you have decided to try and immigrate on your own.

**24** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 34-year-old man from Syria. You were involved in the original opposition to the government, but backed off when threats began against your family's safety. Violence from the government has escalated over the past few months, and you and your family – wife, grandfather, and six young children – have fled across the border to a refugee camp in Jordan. Conditions there are terrible, however, and the Jordanian government is unwilling to accept refugees for long periods of time. However, in media reports of the bombings in the capital city, where you lived, you have glimpsed the destroyed wreckage of your former home, and you know there is nothing to return to. You have appealed to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, asking to be resettled in the United States, a country you have always admired for its commitment to freedom and equality.

25

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 16-year-old boy from Honduras. Your parents work at a banana plantation where they make very little money and are often exposed to pesticides and other chemicals that make them sick. You are the oldest of five children; your youngest sister is only three. Because both of your parents work, your younger siblings have to spend the day with your grandparents while you sell food from the side of the road to earn extra money to feed your family. Your grandparents are not kind to your siblings, who sometimes come home with unexplained bruises. Though you long to protect them, your family will not survive without the extra money you make. You are determined to provide for your family and have heard many times of the jobs available in the U.S. for those willing to work. You decide to risk the dangerous journey north in hopes of obtaining a legal work visa to the U.S. and getting a job that will support your siblings.

27

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 22-year-old male from Russia. Your parents moved to the United States three years ago in order to offer a better life to you and your younger siblings, but you stayed behind to complete your education as a radio technician. Your parents became U.S. citizens last year. Now you want to rejoin your family in the United States and make a life there.

26

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 39-year-old man from Papua New Guinea. You attended medical school in the United States on a temporary visa and then returned home to Papua New Guinea three years ago. While in school in the U.S., you met and fell in love with an American woman. She remained behind in the United States, but the two of you have stayed close; she has even visited you twice. You recently became engaged and hope to get married and live in the United States, but you are unsure if that is possible with immigration laws. There is no shortage of doctors in the U.S., though the need for trained doctors is high in Papua New Guinea, particularly in its remote regions. It is a gut-wrenching decision to leave your homeland; nonetheless, you are determined to move to America to marry the woman you love.

28

CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS

You are a 55-year-old man from Venezuela, married with two grown children. You worked for many years as a reporter for a privately-owned newspaper, but in recent years government interference has increased. An investigative report you wrote on corruption in the country's capital has resulted in harassment of you and your family, including travel restrictions, arrests, unwarranted accusations of vilifying the government, and an illegal search of your home. You don't have any proof that this harassment is connected to your article, but you suspect it's the case. Crime is high in the city where you live, and you would rather not risk being killed for your work. You hope to move with your wife to the United States, where freedom of the press is constitutionally guaranteed.

**29** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 31-year-old woman from Sudan. You have an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education; your husband does as well, although six months ago he received a job at the postal service. You stay home with your two young children, ages 8 months and 2 years. Political turmoil and famine across the country have made life incredibly difficult, and you long to move to a more stable country where you hope your children will not face hunger and malnutrition on a daily basis. Thus far, you have been fortunate enough to stay clear from the violence, disease, and displacement which have affected so much of your country's population; however, you fear that your luck will only hold for so long, and you are eager to move to another place. You have heard that the United States is a welcoming country with many Sudanese communities, so you choose to pursue this option.

**31** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 30-year-old woman from Mexico. You are pregnant with your first child and married to an abusive alcoholic. You have stayed in the marriage for six years, seeking counseling and outside help, but now that you have a baby coming, you are afraid for the safety of your child. Your sister lives in Houston, Texas, as a legal permanent resident with her husband and two children, and you visited once in the past. You want to move to the United States and stay with her, where your baby will be safe.

**30** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**

You are a 31-year-old man from Venezuela. You have been oppressed by members of the drug cartel there for years, but recently the risk has escalated. You received death threats a few months ago but ignored them; however, last month an assassination attempt on your life failed but killed two others. You have decided it is time to leave, and you are planning to head to the United States, where the government's famous "War on Drugs" seems to provide hope for stability and safety.

**32** **CHURCH BETWEEN BORDERS**