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Qase 3:25-cv-01356-DMS-VET

Petitioner K.M.G. petitions this Court for a writ of habeas corpus under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 to remedy Respondents' detaining her unlawfully, and states as follows:

INTRODUCTION

- 1. K.M.G. is a thirty-year-old Somali woman detained at the Otay Mesa Detention Center. She submits this habeas petition under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 for a judicial check on Respondents' administrative decisions to detain her under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), and then initiate expedited removal proceedings against her under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A), INA § 235(b)(1)(A), despite lacking such authority because K.M.G. was—and still is—in pending removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, INA § 240, and K.M.G. does not satisfy either threshold inadmissibility ground for expedited removal proceedings. And because the government purports to hold her under § 1225(b)(1), it has not provided her an individualized bond hearing to challenge her detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA § 236(a), contravening her rights under the Immigration and Nationality Act and the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause.
- 2. In background, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers apprehended K.M.G. near Tecate, California, in April 2024, after she had already effected an entry into the United States. She then claimed a fear of persecution rather than apply for admission, and the CBP officers placed her in removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229(a), INA § 240. Nearly a year later, in February 2025, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers arrested and detained K.M.G., purportedly under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1); issued her two putative expedited removal orders; and then moved an immigration judge at the Immigration Court in Fort Snelling, Minnesota, to dismiss K.M.G.'s pending removal proceedings, asserting she was amenable to expedited removal. An IJ then granted ICE's motion to dismiss the proceedings, and ICE then served K.M.G. with a third putative expedited removal order.

- 3. But ICE detained K.M.G. and then issued her two Forms I-860, Notices and Orders of Expedited Removal, on February 20, 2025 (detention) and February 21, 2025 (Forms I-860), more than two weeks before it even moved the IJ to dismiss the pending proceedings. And K.M.G. timely appealed the IJ's later order granting that motion, meaning the IJ's order was—and is—not final, and those proceedings remained—and are still—pending. Thus, ICE had no authority to detain her under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), and proceed with expedited removal. K.M.G. also lacks the threshold inadmissibility necessary for expedited removal, which is available only for those inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(6)(C) or (a)(7), INA §§ 212(a)(6)(C), (a)(7).
- 4. Absent review in this Court, no other neutral adjudicator will examine K.M.G.'s plight: Respondents will continue—unchecked—to detain her until they remove her to Somalia under authorities they do not have. She thus urges this Court to review the lawfulness of her detention and subjection to expedited removal; declare that her detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), is unlawful; order either her immediate release or that Respondents provide her a bond hearing complying with the procedural requirements in *Singh v. Holder*, 638 F.3d 1196 (9th Cir. 2011); and, at a minimum, order the government to terminate expedited removal proceedings against her.

CUSTODY

5. K.M.G. is currently in Respondents' legal and physical custody. They are detaining her at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego, California. She is under Respondents' and their agents' direct control.

PARTIES

6. Petitioner K.M.G. is a citizen of Somalia. She fled that country because she suffered past persecution and fears future persecution there, and she arrived in the United States on April 3, 2024, to seek asylum. Respondents have detained her since February 20, 2025.

- 7. K.M.G. is currently in Respondents' legal and physical custody at the Otay Mesa Detention Center in San Diego, California. CoreCivic, Inc., a Maryland corporation, operates that facility.
- 8. Respondent Christopher J. LaRose is the Senior Warden at the Otay Mesa Detention Center, where K.M.G. is being held. Respondent Larose is K.M.G.'s immediate custodian. K.M.G. sues him in his official capacity.
- 9. Respondent Joseph Freden is the Acting Director of ICE's San Diego Field Office for Enforcement and Removal Operations. That office determines whether K.M.G. will be detained in ICE custody or released. Respondent Freden has custodial authority over K.M.G., who names him in his official capacity.
- 10. Respondent Todd M. Lyons is the Acting Director of ICE. ICE is a component of the DHS, 6 U.S.C. § 271, and an "agency" within the meaning of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. § 701(b)(1). It is the agency responsible for enforcing immigration laws, and it is detaining K.M.G. Respondent Lyons has custodial authority over K.M.G., who names him in his official capacity.
- 11. Respondent Kristi Noem is the Secretary of the DHS. DHS is the federal agency responsible for enforcing immigration laws and granting immigration benefits. *See* 8 U.S.C. § 1103(a); 8 C.F.R. § 2.1. Respondent Noem has ultimate custodial authority over K.M.G., who names her in her official capacity.
- 12. Respondent Pam Bondi is the Attorney General of the United States. She is responsible for the Immigration and Nationality Act's implementation and enforcement (see 8 U.S.C. §§ 1103(a)(1), (g)), and oversees the Executive Office for Immigration Review, the office that entered an order dismissing removal proceedings against her. K.M.G. names her in her official capacity.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

13. This action arises under the United States Constitution and the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101 et seq., INA § 101 et seq., to

challenge K.M.G.'s detention under the INA and any inherent or plenary powers the government may claim to continue holding her.

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- 14. This Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241; Art. I, § 9, cl. 2 of the United States Constitution; and 28 U.S.C. § 1331, as K.M.G. is presently in Respondents' custody under the United States' color of authority, and such custody violates the United States' Constitution, laws, or treaties. Its jurisdiction is not limited by a petitioner's nationality, status as an immigrant, or any other classification. *See Boumediene v. Bush*, 553 U.S. 723, 747 (2008). This Court may grant relief under U.S. Const. art. I, § 9, cl. 2; U.S. Const. amends. V and VIII; 28 U.S.C. §§ 1361 (mandamus), 1651 (All Writs Act), 2241 (habeas corpus).
- Specifically, this Court has jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 to review K.M.G.'s detention and her challenge to her placement in expedited removal proceedings. Federal district courts possess broad authority to issue writs of habeas corpus when a person is held "in custody in violation of the Constitution or laws or treaties of the United States" (28 U.S.C. § 2241(c)(3)), and this authority extends to immigration detention challenges that survived the REAL ID Act's jurisdictional restrictions. Unlike challenges to the outcome of completed expedited removal proceedings, K.M.G.'s claim that she was improperly subjected to expedited removal in the first instance falls within the narrow statutory exception permitting review of whether the noncitizen is eligible for such review. See 8 U.S.C. § 1252(e)(2), INA § 242(e)(2). Because K.M.G. seeks the traditional habeas remedy of release from allegedly unlawful detention rather than additional administrative review of her underlying claims, her petition presents precisely the type of threshold legality-of-detention question that § 2241 was designed to address. See INS v. St. Cyr, 533 U.S. 289, 301 (2001); see also Lopez-Marroquin v. Barr, 955 F.3d 759, 759 (9th Cir. 2020) (citing Singh, 638 F.3d at 1211-12)). And no court has ruled on the legality of K.M.G.'s detention.

16. Venue is proper in this District under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b)(2) and (e)(1) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to this claim have happened here, K.M.G. is detained here, and her custodian resides here. Venue is also proper under 28 U.S.C. § 2243 because K.M.G.'s immediate custodian resides in this District. *See Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, 542 U.S. 426, 451-52 (2004) (Kennedy, J., concurring).

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 17. K.M.G. is a thirty-year-old native and citizen of Somalia, and a member of the Warsangali clan.
- 18. She suffered persecution in Somalia and Kenya. In 1998, when K.M.G. was three years old, members of her clan forced her to undergo female genital mutilation. In 2010, members of Al-Shabaab tortured and stabbed her father for refusing to help them escape government forces, and then returned to burn their farm, forcing the family to flee. And in 2018, after the family returned to Galgala, Al-Shabaab members shot and killed her father. In 2020, when K.M.G. was twenty-five years old and soon after her mother relocated the family to neighboring Kenya, her mother and brother arranged for her to marry a wealthy older man who raped and beat her and then continued abusing her physically, emotionally, and financially. K.M.G. escaped him in 2022 after her brother witnessed one beating, brought her to a hospital, and then forced the man to divorce her culturally. The man later threatened to kill her if he saw her again.
- 19. In February 2024, K.M.G. left Kenya and traveled en route to the United States through Turkey, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico.
- 20. On April 2, 2024, while she was waiting to enter the United States, masked men robbed her at knife and gunpoint, taking everything.
- 21. K.M.G. entered the United States the next day, on April 3, 2024, near Tecate, California.

- 22. After she entered, a CBP officer briefly detained her. And a supervisory officer placed her into removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, INA § 240, by issuing her a Notice to Appear charging her with inadmissibility under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), INA § 212(a)(6)(A)(i), as an alien present in the United States who had not been admitted or paroled. The NTA directed her to appear for an initial hearing at the Immigration Court in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 9, 2027. Another officer then served the NTA on K.M.G. the next day, April 4, 2024.
 - 23. The CBP officers then released K.M.G. on her own recognizance.
- 24. K.M.G. moved to New Brighton, Minnesota, where she resided with a family friend and his two daughters—all United States citizens. There, she applied and was waitlisted for Mounds View Public School enrollment to study English and earn a General Educational Development certificate.
- 25. In July 2024, an IJ at the Immigration Court in Atlanta, Georgia, granted K.M.G.'s motion to change venue to the Immigration Court in Fort Snelling, Minnesota.
- 26. During this time, K.M.G. voluntarily assisted the Federal Bureau of Investigation in an active investigation. She met with FBI agents no less than four times and offered information regarding her maternal cousin, whom the FBI suspected of having ties to Al-Shabaab. K.M.G. relayed that she had never met this cousin but had recently heard rumors of his involvement. She offered all the information she had. On information and belief, the FBI agents repeatedly apprised K.M.G. that she was not under investigation and was not a person of interest. They went so far as to state that they would assist her in possibly pursuing an S visa or aid in the positive resolution of her asylum case.
- 27. On August 22, 2024, K.M.G. filed a Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, in the removal proceedings.

- 28. On February 20, 2025, ICE arrested and detained K.M.G. The next day, on February 21, 2025, ICE officers issued K.M.G. two Forms I-860, Notices and Orders of Expedited Removal. The first alleged that she was subject to removal under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), INA § 212(a)(6)(A)(i). The second alleged that she was inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(7)(A)(i)(I), INA § 212(a)(7)(A)(i).
- 29. On March 6, 2025, DHS then moved the IJ at the Fort Snelling Immigration Court to dismiss the removal proceedings against K.M.G. In its motion, DHS asserted that K.M.G. was "amenable to expedited removal" because she had entered the United States "less than one year ago."
- 30. On March 10, 2025, the IJ deemed the government's motion unopposed and granted DHS's motion without giving K.M.G. the requisite ten days to respond.
- 31. One day later, on March 11, 2025, K.M.G. moved the IJ to reconsider his decision. But the IJ denied her motion that same day. Explaining his prior conclusion that the motion was unopposed, he stated he had construed the government's description of K.M.G. as "amenable" to expedited removal as meaning that she did not oppose it. Then, recognizing her opposition, the IJ denied her motion to reconsider, concluding that K.M.G. had no right to remain in the removal proceedings.
- 32. On March 12, 2025, ICE then issued K.M.G. a third Form I-860, Notice and Order of Expedited Removal, alleging that she was inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(7)(A)(i)(I), INA § 212(a)(7)(A)(i); was not a citizen or national of the United States; was a native of Somalia and a citizen of Somalia; entered the United States at or near Tecate, California, on or about April 3, 2024; did not then possess or present a valid immigrant visa, reentry permit, border crossing identification card, or other valid entry document; and was not then admitted or paroled after inspection by an immigration officer.

- 33. Three days later, on March 14, 2025, K.M.G. filed a notice of appeal in the Board of Immigration Appeals.
- 34. The government then transferred K.M.G. to the Otay Mesa Detention Center.
- 35. On April 8, 2025, K.M.G. filed a motion for custody redetermination, asking an IJ at the Otay Mesa Immigration Court to grant her bond. Therein, she explained that her timely notice of appeal rendered the IJ's order nonfinal; the discretionary detention authority at 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA § 236(a), continued to govern her detention; and that the IJ thus retained jurisdiction to redetermine the government's custody decision. And she explained how she did not present a danger to persons or property, is not a threat to national security, and did not pose a risk of flight under the factors in *Matter of Guerra*, 24 I. & N. Dec. 37, 38 (BIA 2006).
- 36. On April 24, 2025, an IJ at the Otay Mesa Immigration Court denied K.M.G.'s custody redetermination motion. She determined she lacked jurisdiction to grant K.M.G. bond because the government issued her an expedited removal order on March 12, 2025, and those in expedited removal proceedings are subject to mandatory detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(B)(iii)(IV), INA § 235(b)(1)(B)(iii)(IV).

EXHAUSTION OF REMEDIES

37. K.M.G. has exhausted all administrative remedies, and no further ones are available.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

38. Respondents have purported to hold K.M.G. under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), since February 20, 2025, despite lacking authority to hold her under § 1225(b)(1), and without giving her an individualized bail hearing before a neutral adjudicator under § 1226(a). That violates K.M.G.'s rights under the INA and the Fifth Amendment's Due Process Clause.

- 39. In April 2024, CBP officers apprehended K.M.G. near Tecate, California, after she had already effected an entry into the United States. She then claimed a fear of persecution rather than apply for admission, and the CBP officers placed her in removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229(a), INA § 240. Nearly a year later, in February 2025, ICE officers arrested and detained K.M.G. under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1); issued her two Forms I-860, Notices and Orders of Expedited Removal; and then moved an IJ at the Immigration Court in Fort Snelling, Minnesota, to dismiss K.M.G.'s pending removal proceedings, asserting she was amenable to expedited removal. An IJ then granted ICE's motion to dismiss the proceedings, and ICE then served K.M.G. with a third Form I-860, Notice and Order of Expedited Removal.
- 40. But ICE had not even moved the IJ for dismissal yet when it first arrested K.M.G. and served her with putative expedited removal orders. And K.M.G. timely appealed the IJ's later order dismissing the removal proceedings, meaning the IJ's order was—and is—not final, and those proceedings remained—and are still—pending. See 8 C.F.R. §§ 1003.6(a), .39. And because K.M.G. was—and is—in pending removal proceedings, ICE lacks authority to detain her under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), and proceed with expedited removal.
- 41. K.M.G. also lacks the threshold of inadmissibility necessary for expedited removal. Expedited removal is available only for those who are inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(6)(C) or (a)(7), INA §§ 212(a)(6)(C), (a)(7). See 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), INA § 235(b)(1)(A)(i).
- 42. The government nowhere claims that § 1182(a)(6)(C) applies to K.M.G. And although she may be an "applicant for admission" under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(a)(1), INA § 235(a)(1), she at no time made the predicate "application for admission" for § 1182(a)(7)(A)(i) to apply to her. *See Matter of Y-N-P-*, 26 I. & N. Dec. 10, 13 (BIA 2012) ("[B]eing an 'applicant for admission' under section

235(a)(1) is distinguishable from 'applying . . . for admission to the United States." (quoting *Poveda v. United States AG*, 692 F.3d 1168 (11th Cir. 2012))).

- 43. Indeed, under the Ninth Circuit's en banc holding in *Torres v. Barr*, 976 F.3d 918 (9th Cir. 2020) (en banc), § 1182(a)(7)(A)(i), which applies "at the time of application for admission"—in contrast to 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(A)(i), INA § 212(a)(6)(A)(i) (applying to those "present in the United States without being admitted or paroled")—cannot apply to K.M.G. because it applies only at "the time when a noncitizen seeks permission to physically enter United States territory." *Id.* at 924. And when K.M.G. encountered the CBP officers, she had already effected an entry by crossing into the territorial limits of the United States, while actually and intentionally evading inspection at the nearest inspection point and free from restraint. *See, e.g., Matter of Pierre*, 14 I. & N. Dec. 467, 468 (BIA 1973) (describing the traditional entry test).
- 44. Nor does *United States v. Gambino-Ruiz*, 91 F.4th 981 (9th Cir. 2024), permit applying § 1182(a)(7)(A)(i) here. K.M.G.'s request for asylum did not constitute an application for admission. *See, e.g., Matter of V-X-*, 26 I&N Dec. 147, 152 (BIA 2013) (holding asylum is not an admission); *id.* at 151 n.3 ("8 CFR § 1208.14(c) contemplates that an inspection for inadmissibility will occur only "[i]f the asylum officer K.M.G.s not grant asylum.").
- 45. Further, ICE itself elsewhere asserts that 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA 236(a)—and not 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b), INA § 235(b)—governs the arrest and detention of noncitizens who entered without inspection and are later apprehended in the interior. In documenting the arrest of such noncitizens, ICE typically records that the person was arrested and detained under § 1226(a) (unless the person has committed an offense subjecting them to § 1226(c) detention).
- 46. And for its part, the BIA just last week published a precedent decision stating its new view that 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), INA § 1225(b)(2)(A)—and

not 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 1225(b)(1)—governs the detention of those whom, like K.M.G., the government encounters shortly after they enter the United States and places in removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, INA § 240, and that such statute controls "until certain proceedings have concluded." *See Matter of Q. LI*, 29 I. & N. Dec. 66, 69 (BIA 2025) (quoting *Jennings v. Rodriguez*, 583 U.S. 281, 298 (2018)). Thus, even under the BIA's new reading of the statute, contrary to the government's contentions to an IJ, K.M.G. cannot lawfully be detained under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1).

47. Consequently, this Court should determine that K.M.G.'s detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), is unlawful, and order either her immediate release or that Respondents provide K.M.G. a bond hearing complying with the procedural requirements in *Singh*. And if this Court determines, consistent with the BIA's recent holding in *Matter of Q. LI*, that 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(2)(A), INA § 1225(b)(2)(A), authorizes her detention, it should still order the government to cease processing K.M.G. under the expedited removal authority, as that statute governs detention only for those in removal proceedings.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

Statutory Violation

- 48. K.M.G. re-alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein, the allegations in paragraphs 1-47 above.
- 49. Respondents lack statutory authority to detain K.M.G. under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1), because that statute requires that the individual be an "arriving alien" (8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(i), INA § 235(b)(1)(A)(ii)) or fall within specific designations (8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1)(A)(iii), INA § 235(b)(1)(A)(iii)), and be inadmissible under 8 U.S.C. §§ 1182(a)(6)(C) or 1182(a)(7), INA §§ 212(a)(6)(C), (a)(7).
- 50. As K.M.G. does not meet these criteria, her detention must be governed by 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA § 236(a), which provides discretionary

detention authority and requires ICE to make an individualized custody determination.

- 51. Under § 1226(a), individuals may be detained as a matter of discretion, released on their own recognizance, or released on bond of at least \$1,500.
- 52. Respondents' failure to apply the correct statutory framework violates the INA and exceeds the government's detention authority.
- 53. Thus, K.M.G. respectfully requests that this Court order her release from detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA § 236(a), for the duration of her removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, INA § 240. Alternatively, she requests that this Court order a constitutionally adequate bond hearing complying with the procedural requirements in *Singh*. And at a minimum, K.M.G. requests that this Court order the government to terminate expedited removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1).

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

Due Process Violation

- 54. K.M.G. re-alleges and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth herein, the allegations in paragraphs 1-47 above.
- 55. K.M.G.'s continued detention without any bond hearing violates her right to due process under the Fifth Amendment.
- 56. Thus, K.M.G. respectfully requests that this Court order her release from detention under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), INA § 236(a), for the duration of her removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1229a, INA § 240. Alternatively, she requests that this Court order a constitutionally adequate bond hearing complying with the procedural requirements in *Singh*. And at a minimum, K.M.G. requests that this Court order the government to terminate expedited removal proceedings under 8 U.S.C. § 1225(b)(1), INA § 235(b)(1).

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PRAYER FOR RELIEF

K.M.G. asks this Court to grant the following relief:

- 1. Assume jurisdiction over this matter;
- 2. Issue the writ of habeas corpus and order Respondents to show cause, within three days of K.M.G.'s filing this petition, why the relief she seeks should not be granted; and set a hearing on this matter within five days of Respondents' return on the order to show cause (see 28 U.S.C. § 2243);
- 3. Order K.M.G.'s immediate release; or, in the alternative, order a constitutionally adequate bond hearing complying with the procedural requirements in *Singh*; or, in the alternative, order the government to terminate expedited removal proceedings;
- 4. Award reasonable attorneys' fees and costs under the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d), 5 U.S.C. § 504, or any other applicable law; and
 - 5. Grant any other relief that the Court may deem just and proper.

Dated: May 28, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Joshua A. Altman Joshua A. Altman

By: /s/ Bashir Ghazialam Bashir Ghazialam

Attorneys for Petitioner

VERIFICATION BY SOMEONE ACTING ON PETITIONER'S BEHALF PURSUANT TO 28 U.S.C. § 2242

I, Bashir Ghazialam, do depose and state:

I represent Petitioner K.M.G. in these habeas corpus proceedings. K.M.G. is currently being held in detention at the Otay Mesa Detention Center and is not able to appear in my office to sign this Verification. I have reviewed the record of her detention and discussed this matter with K.M.G. and her supporters. I verify that the information contained in the foregoing petition is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated: May 28, 2025

By: /s/ Bashir Ghazialam Bashir Ghazialam

Attorney for Petitioner