



She wants to self-deport. But this pregnant mom is stuck in a strange subplot of Trump's immigration enforcement crackdown

New York —

Her 3-year-old in tow, Franyelis stepped out of the repurposed budget hotel, its blue awning faded where the "Days Inn" logo once was.

Heading out of the shelter to pick up the family's oldest son from school, toddler Emmanuel - Emma, for short - ran circles around his mom, seven months pregnant with her third child.

"Es un varón," she said in Spanish, smiling shyly. *It's a boy.*

Emma was oblivious to the cars, the don't-walk signs, even the cold on this windy, 34-degree afternoon. Nor did the toddler seem to sense his mom's anxiety.

Franyelis, 28, had never expected to get pregnant again when she got to the United States.

None of it was supposed to happen like this.

The American dream had belonged to her partner, her sons' dad. He was the one who'd spurred their move two years ago from Venezuela, bolstered by a new, smoother path to requesting asylum under the Biden administration.

"Let's go there. We'll be fine," he'd told her, echoing the hopes his sister and other stateside relatives had stoked: "Come! You can get a better future for the boys here."

A supportive, hardworking partner, Franyelis had gone along. But since then, President Donald Trump had changed not only the immigration rules of her new country but the political landscape of her native one, snagging Franyelis in a strange subplot of the US immigration enforcement [crackdown](#).

As her due date neared, Franyelis kept coming back to the same thought: "I want to leave."

She shook her head. Tears swelled. "I need to leave."



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