

LEG OF LAM

**By
Steve Fogelman**

LEG OF LAM

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LEG OF LAM

The weathered log hunting cabin is a rustic one-room interior with gabled roof. There is a kitchenette with a small table and two chairs, a seating area of plaid sofa and dated coffee table and other assorted furniture. A few animal trophy heads adorn the walls. The fourth wall is the fireplace marked with poking irons and stacks of cut wood and newspapers downstage left and a 'window' to the right.

At rise, little daylight comes through the drawn drapes as snow swirls in the howling wind outside. Lit by firelight, LAMAR DELGADO sits shirtless and barefoot on the sofa, missing his left leg below the knee. Beside him is a small leather sack, a plastic CVS bag filled with a few items, while crutches lean against the sofa at his side.

LAMAR. *(In a focused impatient frenzy) ...and may my life be lived full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. Amen. (he genuflects) Dear Jesus, teach me to be patient, when all day long my heart aches by troublesome crosses. Teach me to be gentle in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. May my life be lived full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. Amen. (he genuflects) Dear Jesus, teach me to be patient, when all day long my heart aches by troublesome crosses. Teach me to be gentle in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. May my life be lived full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. Amen. (He genuflects) Dear Jesus, teach me to be patient, when all day long my heart aches by troublesome crosses. Teach me to be gentle in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied. May my life be lived full of power for good, and strong in its purpose of sanctity. Amen. (he genuflects) Dear Jesus, teach me to be patient, when all day long my heart aches by troublesome crosses. Teach me to be gentle in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied- (The front door bursts open and OSCAR DELGADO enters in a frenzy all bundled up for the cold, carrying a paper bag.) Papi! (Lamar jumps up and hobbles to greet him with a hug and we see he is NOT an amputee as his bent leg is tied behind)*

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OSCAR. Holy shit, Lamar! I made it. Oh, thank God, I'm so sorry-

LAMAR. I've been waiting over an hour.

OSCAR. Could hardly see coming over route 30, and when I got to the hairpin turn by Long Trail Road, I spun out. Wasn't even going that fast. Made a complete 360. I kid you not. Thought I was going over the edge of the mountain, my whole life flashed before my eyes. But got traction in the shoulder and stopped with a jolt. Heard some PVC fall off the truck, the God damn 6" ones. Didn't even stop to pick it up. Just wanted to go. Couldn't go more than 10 miles an hour the rest of the way. I can't believe I made it here alive. Risked my life getting here for you. Don't tell Mami. Okay? Don't want her to worry. But she may be on to us. You know her 20 questions- that's why I couldn't leave right at noon.

LAMAR. What'd she ask?

OSCAR. Told her I was going out on an emergency clog call, like you said, and she starts in, "Is this really an emergency? There's a storm brewing."

LAMAR. What'd you say?

OSCAR. "A clog in someone's drain is an emergency to them."

LAMAR. Papi...

OSCAR. Don't worry, she bought it hook, line and sinker.

LAMAR. Really?

OSCAR. I swear. But you know how she worries. "Why can't I get Jose to fill in?" These non-stop questions. I really had to think fast- make up a story where he was. I hate lying to her, she can always tell. Been telling stories all day. When I finally left, I first stopped at St. Catherine's to light a candle, by the time I got on the highway, traffic was crawling. I'd've called but when was there ever cell reception here? *(holds out cell phone)* Look- not even one bar. It seemed to take forever, coming up for this. Taking off your leg. I couldn't even listen to the radio. I prayed the whole way. I mean, I thought about turning around but I knew you were here, and didn't know-

LAMAR. Okay, okay, I'm glad you came.

OSCAR. I'm still not sure I did the right thing.

LAMAR. You did.

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OSCAR. I'm a little on edge, y'know?

LAMAR. How you think I feel? Been waiting- not knowing if or when you were even coming.

OSCAR. If you're scared half as shitless as I am, then-

LAMAR. I didn't say I was scared. Why'd you even say that?

OSCAR. I said I'm scared shitless. We understand what the doctors've been saying for years. That there's something in your brain makes you feel that way. That the leg isn't yours, but all the same-

LAMAR. Okay! I'm not scared. This is a great day. I'm exhilarated. That's how I feel. Like the opposite of scared.

OSCAR. Mea culpa! I'm going to be in confession for a week with all that's been going on today.

LAMAR. You're right, I'm sorry.

OSCAR. How'd you get here? Your pick-up's not out front.

LAMAR. Hitched. Might not be able to drive for a while after.

OSCAR. Might not've gotten a ride.

LAMAR. People always stop for a man on one leg.

OSCAR. And your brother knows you came?

LAMAR. Relax, Papi, I come up here all the time.

OSCAR. I don't think Eddie'd like you staying to cut off your leg.

LAMAR. We tried it here three years ago before I deployed.

OSCAR. Can't believe you never told me.

LAMAR. You never want to hear about those things.

OSCAR. Good news, bad news, I like to know what my boys are up to.

LAMAR. So now you know.

OSCAR. Why didn't you do it then?

LAMAR. What?

OSCAR. You said you didn't go through with it three years ago.

LAMAR. Doesn't matter.

OSCAR. Sure it does.

LAMAR. No, Papi, (*re: left leg*) We're here to get rid of this thing today.

OSCAR. Just tell me.

LAMAR. I'm not talking about it with you. That's not what we're about.

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OSCAR. We can be about that.

LAMAR. I don't feel comfortable.

OSCAR. You called me to come help cut off your leg.

LAMAR. We are who we are, Papi, and that's not going to change today.

OSCAR. Mijo, when you called yesterday, I was so happy to hear from you, we don't talk much these days, just at Sunday dinner. I worry.

LAMAR. I'm busy at the bakery. They made me night production manager.

OSCAR. Congratulations. You tell Mami? She would've told me.

LAMAR. It's no big deal. Was planning to tell everyone Sunday.

OSCAR. Since you've been back from Afghanistan you don't even talk much to Mami.

LAMAR. I talk to her plenty.

OSCAR. Wish we could spend more time together.

LAMAR. You're here now.

OSCAR. Sure, sure, of course I'd come for my little Lam, but look at this storm and I got the truck. Might not be able to get us out.

LAMAR. Papi...

OSCAR. Y'know?

LAMAR. Everything'll be fine, trust me. Let's do this.

OSCAR. Maybe next week? The forecast looks-

LAMAR. No! It's happening today before sunset. Today. The 25th day of the 9th lunar month.

OSCAR. The 25th what?

LAMAR. From the Old Testament. The 25th day of this month, the stars and planets align so miracles are possible, like heaven on earth. Today.

OSCAR. Today's the 11th.

LAMAR. On the lunar calendar, Papi. Today is the 25th day of the 9th lunar month.

OSCAR. You thought of this yourself?

LAMAR. No.

OSCAR. Who told you it had to be done today?

LAMAR. One of my friends-

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OSCAR. Who would call themselves a friend and tell you to cut off your leg?

LAMAR. On the internet.

OSCAR. Oh, mijo, I hear all kinds of stories about people on the internet.

LAMAR. These are not 'people,' they're the De Milos.

OSCAR. The what?

LAMAR. Oh, Papi, that web page: DeMilo.com. After Venus De Milo. The Greek statue without limbs? The guy who runs the site, he's somewhere in France- Nyon, Lyon or something- and says Jewish scholars believe miracles can happen on this day.

OSCAR. We're catholic.

LAMAR. Catholic, Jewish, Muslim- it doesn't matter in the heavens.

OSCAR. Ay, Dio mio. These people you don't even know, and you listen to them about such a big thing?

LAMAR. I know them, because they know me, what I'm going through.

OSCAR. What's right for them may not be right for you.

LAMAR. Being whole is what we all want.

OSCAR. There're many ways to get the same thing. Your life is at stake, mijo!

LAMAR. No, Papi, my happiness is what's at stake.

OSCAR. Happiness is like beauty- in the eye of the beholder.

LAMAR. What kind of bullshit is that?

OSCAR. No, it's true. With Jesus deep in your heart you can find happiness in any situation. You can be happy just by choosing to be happy. No matter what.

LAMAR. Where'd you hear that?

OSCAR. Oh, um, in Mami's *Oprah Magazine*.

LAMAR. Well...even so...I don't care.

OSCAR. You don't care what Oprah has to say?

LAMAR. I know what I need to do to be happy.

OSCAR. But just seeing the positive side of everything-

LAMAR. Everyone's going through with it today.

OSCAR. Everyone?

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LAMAR. My De Milo friends- in the chat room. Wannabes around the world making their dream come true.

OSCAR. What kind of dream is that?

LAMAR. You judge our dream?

OSCAR. No, of course not, I mean-

LAMAR. Didn't you ever have a dream? Of who you wanted to be? That was different than who you were?

OSCAR. I don't know what you're talking about.

LAMAR. Well, you didn't grow up dreaming of being a plumber, for crissake.

OSCAR. It's a good profession.

LAMAR. Sure, but was it your dream?

OSCAR. What's it matter?

LAMAR. I'm trying to make a point.

OSCAR. No, as a kid I used to make these skyscrapers out of cardboard. Thought maybe I'd be an architect.

LAMAR. Really?

OSCAR. Yeah.

LAMAR. So why didn't you?

OSCAR. Well, your abuelo always said that would never happen. "Noone'd ever want a Mexican designing buildings. Outside Mexico, anyway. Stick with a trade."

LAMAR. Sorry.

OSCAR. Nah, what's to be sorry? I'm around all kinds of new construction. Even make some design suggestions- in the kitchens and bathrooms anyway.

LAMAR. What if I told you, it was possible to make your dream come true? Tonight, you could be the architect you always wanted. "Meet world renowned architect Oscar Delgado!"

OSCAR. Oh, stop.

LAMAR. No really.

OSCAR. I don't know.

LAMAR. Is that dream dead?

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OSCAR. Back in the day I'd've given an arm and a- That's what I wanted to be. But I didn't know anyone who could help. Who to ask for what. And no one thought it was worth looking for. It wasn't something that ever seemed possible. So now I sometimes wonder 'what if?'

LAMAR. So tonight, you have a chance to be the man you always thought you were- but the price is your leg. How badly do you want it?

OSCAR. Well...

LAMAR. To be the man of your dreams: All it costs is your leg.

OSCAR. My leg?

LAMAR. Small price to pay to make your dreams come true.

OSCAR. But I like walking on two legs.

LAMAR. You're a fucking plumber on two legs. You could be a world-renowned architect on one. How badly do you want it? Need it?

OSCAR. I don't know.

LAMAR. De Milos want it bad. We'll give arms and legs to make a dream come true. Today. Over a hundred across America alone. Five here in Colorado. Today.

OSCAR. So why didn't you ask one of them?

LAMAR. It's not a circle jerk, Papi. It's a serious personal event.

OSCAR. Just the same...

LAMAR. I'll tell you why. They're all mopey Van Goghs, just wanting to cut off a finger or hand or ear. Stuff you can do in your sleep with a scissors. I'm cutting off a leg, Papi- through the femur- the thickest bone in the body.

OSCAR. Oh, mijo-

LAMAR. It's big. Gonna be all over the news when they put the pieces together.

OSCAR. You don't have to go through with it!

LAMAR. The De Milos are counting on me, Papi. These wannabes all look up to me. I have to go through with it. I want to do it. I've been a pretender for way too long. Let's do this.

OSCAR. You might need medical attention so why involve me? Your brother's the paramedic. If your sink backs up or pipes freeze, I'm the guy to call.

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LAMAR. Look. I begged Eddie to help again but he and Patti had more important things to do with the kids.

OSCAR. Yeah, they're supposed to get a 12-foot Christmas tree, but you must know someone with some medical background.

LAMAR. Papi, I called a buddy from my platoon, my old social worker Janine -even Cousin Pedro- and no one wanted to help.

OSCAR. No one?

LAMAR. No one.

OSCAR. I'm so sorry-

LAMAR. Don't pity me.

OSCAR. No no no I don't pity you, mijo.

LAMAR. I don't need anyone's pity. I don't feel sorry for myself. This isn't something just any friend can deal with.

OSCAR. Of course not, was only saying-

LAMAR. So, if I can't turn to my own father in a time of great need, who can I?

OSCAR. Te amo, Lam, I'm glad you called, but I'm not sure about this.

LAMAR. Then why'd you say 'yes?'

OSCAR. *(pause)* I... you know-

LAMAR. Please don't fuck this up for me, Papi.

OSCAR. Of course not.

LAMAR. Well, look at you.

OSCAR. What?

LAMAR. Something in your eyes.

OSCAR. What?

LAMAR. Maybe I made a mistake asking you.

OSCAR. I'm just...I mean- next weekend would be-

LAMAR. It's going down today, Papi!

OSCAR. That's why I came! Didn't know if you might've done it already, if I would even find you here alive. If something happens to you, I couldn't forgive myself. Mami would never forgive me.

LAMAR. Nothing's going to happen, Papi, 'cept I'm gonna be the man I always thought I was.

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OSCAR. All right all right...what would I have to do?

LAMAR. Like I said on the phone, It's all planned out to the last detail. You just have to be here for me. Can you do that?

OSCAR. I think so.

LAMAR. I need you to be certain.

OSCAR. I'm here, aren't I?

LAMAR. Yeah, but are you here for me, or for you?

OSCAR. Mijo, I'm here for you.

LAMAR. So, no arguments, okay? This should be a joyous moment.

OSCAR. You the boss. I'm here for you.

LAMAR. Okay then. So, take off your coat and, y'know, let's do this.

OSCAR. Feels kinda cold.

LAMAR. Throw another log on.

OSCAR. Aren't you cold? How can you sit without a shirt? Maybe put a shirt on. You got a sweatshirt there?

LAMAR. I'm fine.

OSCAR. Okay, so what's the plan? Jumping off the roof?

LAMAR. That was kid stuff. Today we're shooting off the leg...

OSCAR. What?

LAMAR. (*pointing above the knee*) Right from here. A fella in Alabama did it. Posted the whole set up online.

OSCAR. And that's gonna work?

LAMAR. Worked for him.

OSCAR. He used a cannon?

LAMAR. (*gets the small leather bag.*) No, did it with a shotgun, but mira... (*He opens bag and pulls out a gun.*) Smith and Wesson 500. Enough power to shoot through a metal door. Goes through bone like butter. (*He opens the chamber and takes out a bullet.*) It's all in the bullet. See the tip? When it hits flesh, it tears apart thrashing through skin and all.

OSCAR. Cop Killers. You mean business.

LAMAR. Sure do.

OSCAR. Where'd you get it?

LAMAR. Arty Santos.

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OSCAR. That Miguel Santos' kid?

LAMAR. Yeah.

OSCAR. Ay, what a criminal. The whole Santos family. I don't like you mixing with those people.

LAMAR. He's an acquaintance who knows where to get guns. That's all I care about.

OSCAR. How much?

LAMAR. Gave him 300- for the gun and bullets- and said keep the change.

OSCAR. (*handing gun back to LAMAR*) Hmm. Mami never liked you boys with guns. That's how her brother was killed as a teenager. Your Uncle Abe, he was trouble.

LAMAR. She doesn't mind us hunting.

OSCAR. Well, that's a.-that's a sport- rifles. We butcher and eat the deer. This is a handgun... handguns are dangerous.

LAMAR. The automatic weapons I shot in Afghanistan were dangerous, killing thousands of innocents. This has a joyful purpose, to make me whole. I'm so ready.

OSCAR. Hmm. You shoot it?

LAMAR. What?

OSCAR. Does it work?

LAMAR. I guess.

OSCAR. You guess?

LAMAR. Who would sell a gun that doesn't work?

OSCAR. The kind of guy sells to Arty.

LAMAR. I'm sure it works.

OSCAR. You didn't take the gun to a shooting range and check it out?

LAMAR. No.

OSCAR. That's what you do with a new gun.

LAMAR. I'm only planning on shooting it once- twice, maybe, if it doesn't cut clean.

OSCAR. All the better to know if it works.

LAMAR. Only have the six bullets.

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OSCAR. You really need to know.

LAMAR. I'm not wasting expensive bullets.

OSCAR. Can we try one?

LAMAR. I dunno...

OSCAR. You don't try it out, may blow up in your face.

LAMAR. So could a test shot.

OSCAR. But we can take precautions.

LAMAR. Like what?

OSCAR. Just keep the gun far from the face. Like this. *(He gestures with the gun extended, turning his face away.)*

LAMAR. Well...

OSCAR. One should do the trick.

LAMAR. All right.

OSCAR. Really?

LAMAR. Yeah, if you think it best.

OSCAR. All right. *(He heads towards the door.)*

LAMAR. Where you going?

OSCAR. To shoot the gun.

LAMAR. So, shoot it.

OSCAR. I need a target or something.

LAMAR. Shoot out the window.

OSCAR. Just let me shoot it up at the sky.

LAMAR. I'll come.

OSCAR. You're not even dressed.

LAMAR. I wanna watch.

OSCAR. It might not be safe.

LAMAR. Hmmm?

OSCAR. If it misfires you don't need to be nearby.

LAMAR. Well...

OSCAR. Two seconds, I'll be back.

LAMAR. You're gonna go out?

OSCAR. Yeah. I'm gonna step outside.

LAMAR. One shot.

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OSCAR. Of course. One shot.

LAMAR. Okay. (*Oscar steps outside and fires the gun with a loud bang that echoes into the distance.*)

OSCAR (O.S.) Ah, holy shit!

LAMAR. What?

OSCAR. (*reentering*) Wow. That's got some kick.

LAMAR. Told you.

OSCAR. (*rubbing his shoulder*) Gonna feel that tomorrow. Think I hit a cardinal's nest or something. Wasn't even aiming for a tree but seems red feathers came down with the snow. (*picking a red feather off his coat*)
Mira. (*He puts the gun down on the table.*)

LAMAR. (*picking up gun*) Maybe I should take a practice. Get the feel.

OSCAR. It's freezing out there.

LAMAR. I think I should shoot it.

OSCAR. You're wasting precious ammo.

LAMAR. One shot.

OSCAR. I was- we don't want neighbors calling.

LAMAR. People come here to hunt.

OSCAR. Don't we have to get this done?

LAMAR. Look at you, getting into the spirit of things.

OSCAR. Yeah, sure, I'm here for you, Lamito.

LAMAR. The gun works, told you. Let's set this up by the sofa.

OSCAR. You eat today?

LAMAR. Had some leftover doughnuts from the bakery.

OSCAR. How many doughnuts you eat?

LAMAR. Like half a glazed and half sugar-coated.

OSCAR. When?

LAMAR. For breakfast.

OSCAR. Oh, Lamito, you must be so hungry.

LAMAR. Not really.

OSCAR. (*re: paper bag*) Mira, Mami's carne asada and tacos al lengua. Your favorite.

LAMAR. It's not Sunday.

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OSCAR. What? Yeah. No, she wasn't going to grill it until...she just started this morning boiling the tongue, peeling off the skin- OH! They were for me. She packed them for me- to take on the call- case I get hungry, when I told her I was going out, she grilled some special- for me...Thought you might like-

LAMAR. Thanks. No time for this right now.

OSCAR. Que rico.

LAMAR. Not really hungry.

OSCAR. One bite.

LAMAR. Food's the last thing on my mind.

OSCAR. Smell that. Mmm...Not one minute to spare? *(pause)* One bite you gotta eat the whole thing, right?

LAMAR. I dunno.

OSCAR. Brought six.

LAMAR. Six tacos?

OSCAR. Seen you eat a dozen.

LAMAR. I dunno...

OSCAR. Con queso fresco!

LAMAR. Ay, Papi...

OSCAR. There are never leftover tacos al lengua at the Delgado house. Huh?

LAMAR. All right. For a minute. *(He hobbles to the table while Oscar sets out food.)*

OSCAR. Sure beats stale doughnuts. You sit here. And I'll get you a plate *(He takes two plates from the cupboard.)* And join you for one...okay... *(serving food from the bag)* There's one taco al lengua...and one carne asada.

LAMAR. Thanks.

OSCAR. Need something to drink?

LAMAR. I didn't bring anything. There's probably water and beer in the fridge.

OSCAR. Does he have any whiskey...or...?

LAMAR. Please don't, Papi. Have a water. I'll take a water.

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OSCAR. *(Ignoring Lamar and looking for the stash)* It'll be all right.

LAMAR. No, you don't need a drink.

OSCAR. I nearly died on the ride up.

LAMAR. I need you sober.

OSCAR. It's here somewhere...

LAMAR. Please, Papi, did you hear what I said?

OSCAR. I'm here for you, but I need something to get me through this.

LAMAR. We can light a candle.

OSCAR. Sometimes whiskey works faster. *(re: bottle)* Found it!

LAMAR. No, Papi...

OSCAR. One shot. To cut the edge. *(He fixes himself a shot.)*

LAMAR. Papi, please. You can't stop yourself.

OSCAR. There's only half a bottle.

LAMAR. Enough to get you drunk.

OSCAR. When I was your age, I could drink a whole bottle and not feel a thing. *(He takes a shot.)*

LAMAR. I know, and I don't want you drinking any more.

OSCAR. Oh, stop. I had one. There. That's it.

LAMAR. Gimme the bottle.

OSCAR. What? I'm feeling better.

LAMAR. Just making sure.

OSCAR. In fact, you should do a shot.

LAMAR. You sound crazy.

OSCAR. Yeah, look at you all tense.

LAMAR. I'm not tense. I just wanna get this over with.

OSCAR. But this calls for a toast.

LAMAR. No more, Papi.

OSCAR. You said this is a happy joyous occasion, is it, or isn't it?

LAMAR. It is.

OSCAR. And what do our people do to celebrate a great event? *(Lamar is silent.)* What?

LAMAR. A toast.

OSCAR. Then let's be happy.

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LAMAR. But you just did a shot.

OSCAR. I'm not really feeling anything-

LAMAR. You just said you were feeling better.

OSCAR. Better, but not great- and we'll both need one to toast.

LAMAR. I don't want you getting drunk.

OSCAR. One more... (*pours two shots*) Here you go, Lamito.

LAMAR. One shot.

OSCAR. That's all.

LAMAR. Just to toast.

OSCAR. Just to toast: To my first-born son finding the peace and happiness he so dearly deserves. Nastrovia! (*They toast and down the shots in one gulp*) Okay. Let's eat. (*He sits and takes a bite*) Mmm, mmm, mmm. I can taste Montezuma in every bite. Your Mami has a gift in the kitchen. Her Chiles Rellenos are really my favorite. You've seen me eat a whole pan. Why you think I'm so fat? I'll eat anything she puts in front of me. For the past 40 years. Eat, eat.

LAMAR. I can't. Let's take care of business-

OSCAR. You're already sitting at the table. Let's finish these tacos.

LAMAR. It's not digesting right...

OSCAR. You didn't eat much all day-

LAMAR. Stop it!

OSCAR. What?

LAMAR. I see what you're doing, Papi.

OSCAR. What/

LAMAR. "Have a bite to eat." "Let's make a toast."

OSCAR. What?

LAMAR. You're stalling.

OSCAR. That's ridiculous, mijo.

LAMAR. Is it?

OSCAR. A father can't want his son to eat a nice meal?

LAMAR. You think I'll forget why we're here? Change my mind?

OSCAR. No, Lam-

LAMAR. We only have 'til sunset. That's less than two hours.

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OSCAR. Um, sure, okay.

LAMAR. Really?

OSCAR. Yeah, sure.

LAMAR. All right then-

OSCAR. But-

LAMAR. But what?

OSCAR. What if something goes wrong?

LAMAR. I've been researching how to remove a leg for years. This procedure for months. I got all the instructions written down, all the supplies. Should go off without a hitch.

OSCAR. Where there's blood there's danger.

LAMAR. It's like a haircut. A long over-due haircut.

OSCAR. I don't bleed when old man Rodriguez cuts my hair, sure sometimes during the shave, but-

LAMAR. It's what I have to do.

OSCAR. I don't want you to die. Please, mijo, listen, Mami would be lost without her first-born.

LAMAR. I'm not going to die, but that's a better option than even another day more like this.

OSCAR. We want you to be happy-

LAMAR. Whole. I want to be whole.

OSCAR. Right. We want you to feel whole. I know that. You say that. That's why we've taken you to all kinds of doctors since we couldn't stop you from jumping off roofs. We spent a fortune. We sacrificed so much for you, Lamito. We never moved into a bigger house or got new furniture or even took vacations because we spent every extra dime trying to get you well. Couldn't buy Mami nice jewelry she deserves- and she never complained. But we'd do it all over again. I never had a nice cabin like this. We're thankful your brother lets us use it too.

LAMAR. I'm grateful for all you've done. That's why I give you and Mami my Christmas bonus.

OSCAR. We give that to The Church.

LAMAR. What?

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OSCAR. We use it to tithe in your name.

LAMAR. I work hard for that money for you and Mami to help yourselves.

OSCAR. We don't need your money, mijo.

LAMAR. I give it to you to spend on yourself.

OSCAR. You can give someone money. You can't tell them how to spend it.

LAMAR. I can't believe it.

OSCAR. I'm sorry. We do what we need to get you well.

LAMAR. After today I'm going to be just fine. So, keep what I give you.

OSCAR. I pray to God that's true. I always pray for you.

LAMAR. Seems a waste of time these days.

OSCAR. No, mijo, you can't give up. Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it."

LAMAR. Name one prayer he answered for you?

OSCAR. Well... I'm beside myself right now and can't think, but I know he has. Matthew 17: "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and nothing will be impossible to you."

LAMAR. I've prayed every night I'll wake up out of this misery, yet the mountain's never moved an inch.

OSCAR. And I pray for you finding all the peace and happiness you want. Our lives are challenges, Lamito, but God guides us.

LAMAR. Jesus left me out in the cold.

OSCAR. He's testing you.

LAMAR. For 30 years?

OSCAR. To keep the faith.

LAMAR. I read the bible and I know he means well. So why does he ignore me?

OSCAR. Maybe you should go to church, light a candle.

LAMAR. A burning candle won't make me whole, Papi. I know what it takes. Father Carlos says "The answers to our prayers aren't always in waiting around for miracles. God truly helps those who help themselves."

LEG OF LAM

OSCAR. He didn't mean it about cutting off your-

LAMAR. He meant it about whatever anyone has to do to bring themselves joy. Happiness doesn't arrive sitting on your hands. So, I'm making my own miracle.

OSCAR. What if a cure for this is around the corner? Another year, maybe two and you could feel happy with both legs.

LAMAR. C'mon, Papi, who's going to find a cure if no one's looking for one? Doc put me on the Medroxy and Fluoxetine cocktail years ago. Did nothing. Prozac nothing. Nobody's doing research into what I have. They can't even decide if it's genetic or emotional. It's up to me to find "a cure." It's always been up to me. And I'm moving the mountain today. You say you're on board, but you keep playing your old stalling tricks, Papi. Now let's do this. Over by the sofa.

OSCAR. Inside?

LAMAR. That's the plan: Cleaning a new gun on my lap, 'accidentally' fires, takes off the leg-

OSCAR. Who would clean a gun inside?

LAMAR. Who would clean a gun in a blizzard?

OSCAR. A little snow-

LAMAR. That's not the plan, Papi!

OSCAR. So, where's the gun oil and rags?

LAMAR. (*re: a package*) Right here.

OSCAR. Okay, um, good. You gonna put down a tarp or something?

LAMAR. A tarp?

OSCAR. With those bullets, blood and bone'll splatter everywhere.

LAMAR. We'll wipe it up.

OSCAR. Right. Where's the Fabuloso?

LAMAR. Papi!

OSCAR. Cleaning supplies go under the sink.

LAMAR. Focus.

OSCAR. You can't expect your brother or Patti to clean up the mess.

LAMAR. We'll worry about that later.

LEG OF LAM

OSCAR. Well, if you put down a tarp you won't have to worry much about cleaning up.

LAMAR. I'll hire a crew.

OSCAR. Just put down a tarp, a garbage bag, you know?

LAMAR. How's it going to look like an accident if I put down a tarp?

OSCAR. Who said it needs to look like an accident?

LAMAR. I don't want the police involved.

OSCAR. Police come any time a gun goes off and hits someone.

LAMAR. I don't want to go to jail or back to some nut house and-

OSCAR. That was no nut house. That was a university psychiatric ward. They were doing research.

LAMAR. You came, you saw, it was like 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest' in there and I was the least crazy one. A year and a half at my prime of life and a lot of good it did. Just made people call me McMurphy. How insulting!

OSCAR. No one's called you that for years.

LAMAR. Feels like yesterday. People see me walking down the street and they whisper and giggle or stare and point and you hate people talking behind our backs.

OSCAR. We don't listen to gossip, mijo.

LAMAR. That's not true!

OSCAR. I said we understand that there's something in your brain makes you feel the leg isn't yours. And you want it gone.

LAMAR. You understand it but the neighbors all called me 'El Loco Saltador.'

OSCAR. It pained us to hear those things about our little Lam. It still pains us to see your struggle, but we've learned not to listen.

LAMAR. You beat up Hector's father for the things he said.

OSCAR. That was over 20 years ago. Lost my temper on a dime then defending the Delgado name.

LAMAR. And now?

OSCAR. And now what?

LAMAR. The Delgado name isn't worth defending?

LEG OF LAM

OSCAR. Of course. We Delgados are proud, brave men.

LAMAR. We're all fucking loco.

OSCAR. No, mijo...

LAMAR. If I'd been born feeling I was a girl inside wanting to cut off my pinga, a whole community would rally to help.

OSCAR. Which one's that?

LAMAR. The gays! Us Wannabes and Pretenders only have the De Milos, and everyone thinks we're crazy. It's okay for a doctor to cut off your cock, but illegal to cut off your leg? What kind of world is this that makes me a freak? I just want the leg gone.

OSCAR. Some things aren't fair-

LAMAR. I've had to live with this injustice.

OSCAR. We all have crosses to bear.

LAMAR. How can I feel good about myself if I'm not allowed to be myself?

OSCAR. We all feel the shame of Adam.

LAMAR. I'm not ashamed.

OSCAR. But Jesus forgives. If you ask in His name, you can start with a clean slate. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature where...all things become new."

LAMAR. Blah blah blah, Papi. A little 'Jesus this' and a little 'Jesus that' and a shameful life disappears?

OSCAR. What are you talking about?

LAMAR. *(pause)* Maybe I am ashamed. But the shame I feel is way out of Jesus' league. The shame I feel is deeper than Adam's. If I didn't give a shit, I'd've put my leg in dry ice for a couple hours. Kills all the flesh, then doctors have to cut it off. Most wannabes go for that with a high rate of success. But I couldn't, and bring shame to our family. I could've laid on the railroad track and wait for the Amtrak to run over the leg. I could've used a rotary saw like that tranny on The Springer Show. Showed you that clip. Cut off both legs- himself. He had the balls to do what he needed to do to be happy. Me, I've been a weak shameful man, Papi.

OSCAR. You're not a weak man. You're a soldier. A brave man. All us Delgados. Back in the 40's when my father first came up to Colorado from

LEG OF LAM

Mexico, Americans weren't friendly to Latinos. He had a hard time here. Even I remember as a kid in the '50's the Woolworth's had a sign out front: 'No Dogs or Mexicans.' Doesn't make you feel good about yourself. Look how far we've come. *(pause)* And he had to overcome diabetes, and gout. That's why they cut off his foot.

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