



“Esos Huesos”



By: Roze Livar

The year was 2011. I was home alone and decided to do some light tree trimming. I stood on a 10 foot ladder trimming my palm trees, preparing for a fiesta on my property. Suddenly, the ladder gave way! I grasped the tree with both my legs and my arms. Looking down, 10 feet didn't seem so far down. I made the decision to jump. I landed squarely on both legs, crushing my left tibia into my knee and completely shattering my right ankle. I lay outside, alone, about an hour, unable to get up. My dog, Rufus, came to my side, looking at me with empathy in his eyes. He apologized (telepathically) for not being able to speak and for not having opposing thumbs, to go inside and grab my phone. My husband arrived and promptly called an ambulance. By then, both my legs, were swollen and I was in excruciating pain. The technicians asked for permission to administer morphine to me, as we had to drive from Von Army, (southwest of San Antonio) to BAMC, the Military trauma Hospital. (northeast of town). Each bump on the road would cause me to scream out in pain. (¿un poquito más de Morphine, por favor?)



By the time I got to the hospital, I was delirious with drugs and pain. I remember a doctor coming in and lifting my left leg. He said “I promise you, you will hate me for the rest of your life, but I have to reset this broken bone, now! With that “Crunch,” I felt an explosion of pain and passed out. I was drifting in and out of consciousness. My sister and my daughter came to my bedside to stay with me, as my husband spoke with the doctors. Looking at my hands, since I had been gardening, they began to clean them wondering when my last manicure was (I live on a farm...I don't get manicures). Meanwhile, I remember being in a very dark place, literally. I couldn't see a thing. I felt myself floating in a fetal position. The temperature around me felt wonderful—like floating in a bathtub, when you get the water just right. Not too hot, not too cold. “¡Aye, que suave!”

I remember thinking: “This feels wonderful! I could stay here and rest forever.” Suddenly, (my family told me) all kinds of buzzers began to go off. Everyone rushed into the room and ushered my family out. “CODE BLUE, CODE BLUE!” was all they heard as they stood outside the room, llorando y rezando. I began to hear someone calling my name very far away. “Roze, Roze.” I didn't want to be bothered. I could stay here forever. It was wonderful!

“Roze, Roze...” I thought,

“Quit bothering me!” I'll pretend I don't hear them. Ahhh... peaceful...darkness...“ ROZE!!” As I finally decided to answer, with, “What?” I was slapped so hard, it felt like someone slapped

my face clear off of my cabeza! ¡Hijo-le! ¡Como si me quitaron la máscara!

My face flew all the way to the right. I opened my eyes and saw Doctors, Nurses, and Soldiers in fatigues around my bed. Soldiers? WHAT THE HELL... Where was I? I felt like I was in “Twilight Zone”.

The nurse next to me, who had told me, earlier, that her name was Kathy, happened to look like my friend, Juanito's sister, who is also named, Rose.

She kept shaking my shoulders and asking, “Remember me? What's my name, what's my name?” (pos, I suck at names, even sober and without Morphine.) So, I said, “Rose?” to which she shook me again and said, “NO, YOU ARE ROZE, YOU ARE ROZE! WHO AM I???”

Again I answered, “Rose?”

Then the Doctor took over, “M'am, who is the president of the United States?” “Oh my God!” I thought, “¿Quién es él presidente?”(Todo Manchurian Candidate)

“And why are these soldiers here?” I panicked and said “Jimmy Carter?” to which I saw some younger soldiers snicker and I thought to myself, “Oh no, es aquel, Ronald Reagan.” As they were trying to bring me out of my morphine induced coma. I finally screamed at them and asked, “where am I? Where is my family? I need my Familia!” They then called in, my husband, Bob. As he came in, I asked him, “What's going on? What's happening?”

“Babe,” he said, “You broke your legs. Don't you remember?” At that moment, porque me quitaron el Morphine, the pain went from 0 to 1000. I screamed out in pain, “Oh yeah, I remember now!”

I don't know what they gave me, but know it wasn't morphine. I remained in BAMC for a whole month, followed by four months at home, in a hospital bed, that was set up in my dining room. I couldn't put any weight on my legs for four months. My doctor said that had this accident happened 10 years before, they would have had to amputate both legs. I was able to keep hope alive by continually telling myself, “This is only temporary,” y también looking at all the other young veterans in the hospital, suffering from burns and missing limbs. I promised myself that I would not complain, especially por una pendejada que fue mi culpa. Today, I'm able to walk, dance, ride my bike, perform on stage, pretty much everything, pero poco a poquito—Gracias a Dios y a la Virgen de Guadalupe, mi familia, los doctores y todos en BAMC. (Especially the orderlies who had to bath me and change me like a big ol' giant Bebita) The biggest lesson I learned?

“Just because you CAN, doesn't mean you SHOULD.” Palabra.