



TRANSCRIPCIÓN ORIGINAL DE STUDIO OCHENTA

MIJA ON THE MIKE - JACQUELINE PEREDA

00:08 JACQUELINE

So I had a quinceañera when I was 15 and we had a full court, right? So I had to get like 14 boys and 14 girls. So of course we have like my cousins, extended family, family friends that are like, you know, the absolute like they knew what a quinceañera was and I danced in theirs.

So they were like, of course, will be in the chain, like will be a chain for man or chain for me, whatever they were called. And then I had to explain to my American friends what it was and one of my friends, Jared, I asked him if he wanted to be in my quinceañera and I told him what it was and he was like: "okay, no problem". Then he comes back to the next day to school and he's like: "Hey, I asked my mom if I could be in her quinceañera and she wants to know if it's like something I have to audition for" and if it's run by the high school, like he thought I was a play.

01:04 JACQUELINE

So that was just so, that was just the perfect like encapsulation of both worlds and I just remember like laughing so hard and then, you know, having some of my friends that go to have quinceañera practice and then like, you know, going to school, coming home and then like having practices with my friends and then having like my family flew around the world to share this experience but then also having like my American friends to share with me. So that was one of like my fondest memories, like that party, the coming of age at that time, but then also like that moment when he's like, hey, I'd love to be a part of this but like: "is this like through the school?" Like: "Do I have to sign a promise to be in your play?"

01:45 JACQUELINE

I'm like: "It's not a play". And people are like, "is this a wedding?" And I'm like: no. It's like, "this sounds like bridesmaids". I'm like: "no, you don't understand". So far, this is, you know, this is like a coming of age like almost like being of ceremony and I would say: "it's like my bar mitzva, bar mitzva fun". You'd be like, oh, I get it. I know it now. That's probably my fondest memory I have to say.

02:13 LORY

Bienvenidos and welcome to "Mija on the Mike" were me, Mija, interviews daughters of immigrants who are making moves in their industries around the world today, I'm so excited to invite writer, director, actress and comedian. I think that's as many as I know that you have Jacqueline Pereda.

02:30 LORY

Jacque is an incredibly talented Cuban American writer, editor and producer her show for HBO Latino: "Generation Por Qué". Made me laugh so hard that I had to jump into her DMs and set up a meeting to work with her somehow. She taught me so much as a writer and I'm so excited to share her story with you. Thank you so much for joining us, Jacque.

02:48 JACQUELINE

Oh, Lory. So good to see you again. Hi, everyone.

02:53 LORY

It's been so long since we first met at the TikTok diner, right?

02:56 JACQUELINE

Yes, yes. In Midtown Manhattan, right by the station.

02:59 LORY

Yeah, it was a very New York moment. Oh, two Latinas writers meeting.

I remember when we first talked that I felt like immediately that you understood the experience and the mixed experience of Mija very well. So I want to share with our listeners, you know, tell me about how you grew up with Cuban culture.

03:16 JACQUELINE

My parents immigrated from Cuba in the 60s and 70s and they had me in Northern New Jersey. In Harrison, New Jersey. And I always like to tell people that like I, even though I was in the US, I immigrated when I was six years old until I was six. I went to catholic school and all of my peers were Latino and Portuguese and everyone came from very working class families, you know, a lot of the children of immigrants. And then my parents moved me to like an upper middle class caucasian jewish neighborhood in Central Jersey.

03:51 JACQUELINE

So I always tell people like I immigrated. So I went from, you know, being around my peers, children of immigrants to being the only daughter of immigrants in my grade. But yeah, it's my first language language in Spanish. I learned English in school. And until I was six and I moved out of that community, I didn't know there were other people that didn't speak Spanish or weren't Cuban or had Latino parents. So it was super interesting just how much your parents kind of inculcated you. How they really are your real world. Even though we were born, I was born in the US. My whole world was just my Cuban identity and my parents and extended family.

04:30 JACQUELINE

I mean, we grew up. It was really fun. I remember one year and like the fourth grade in our teacher. It was around Thanksgiving and she had an exercise and she was like, all right, everyone, what do you eat at Thanksgiving? Like what are some traditional foods? And I like raised my hand and I was like, Yuka, black beans and rice. And she was like, yes, okay. Well, Jackie eats that and all the kids were like, what is that? Like you don't have turkey. You don't have stuffing.

04:56 JACQUELINE

And I was so confused because we didn't, I mean, we had turkey, but that was it. But we didn't have stuffing. We didn't have the corn, the avocado, or whatever. So it's stuff like that. It was when I moved to like a different neighborhood and it had more, I would say white peers, that I really, that my identity and my language and what I grew up with was just like really a parrot and it was like different than everyone else's.

05:20 LORY

Oh my gosh. The same thing happened when I went to college because in my... Because I grew up in Queens. So everyone else was daughter of immigrant, son of immigrant. Everyone was kind of from everywhere else. And I didn't see that as being strange at all. And I was very much proud of my roots and had, you know, Spanish and English blended and it was fine.

05:41 LORY

But then going into college, I was one of the only, sometimes, you know, the only latina in class or, yeah, the only person that wasn't, you know, white American. And I was alert for the first time in college. Like I really were distinctly remember being in a classroom and being like, there's eight of us here and I'm not, I'm the only one that isn't. I'm different in the, in a way that I wasn't, you know, exposed to before.

06:06 LORY

And I guess like the reason I love hearing these stories is that of course it's, you know, universal to feel kind of other than any case, whenever you're going to, to a new community and all of that. And so I wonder what feels like the most home to you in that sense because you have these two experiences. And of course you found yourself in both your whole life, but where's home?

06:28 JACQUELINE

I feel like the word, like other gets such a bad rep. And for me, I'm so proud of being both, you know what I mean? Like I hold both of them so closely to my heart and especially like being, and I know you know this to their parents. Like they're my heart and my soul. Like you can put me anywhere in the world. And I would still be so proud of being American and of being of Cuban descent.

06:52 LORY

But like you said, it's not a bad thing to be othered. It's also a place where you can kind of feel unique. But then it still kind of makes you question like, what is home in this case? Like where can you find home?

07:03 JACQUELINE

That's all I write about, Lory.

07:05 LORY

I know.

07:06 JACQUELINE

Like literally one time a teacher told me like my acting teacher, he was like, you're, he was everything. Your point of view in your work is always what is home? Where do you find home? And I find that you find on my comedy anything I do, that's just always the undercurrent underneath. Like where do we find home? What is home? Like, of course we have our origin story. But like what do we have to sacrifice from our origin story to become the people who were meant to be? That's what I always write about. And it's not even, and I'm not trying to, but it's just something in my life because I think you're always kind of searching and you kind of have to make your own home.

07:43 JACQUELINE

I remember Lin Manuel Miranda said this and felt he encapsulated it, so clearly. How he was like, if you want to create a writer, let them grow up never being comfortable. So he grew up in Washington Heights, but then he went to a lot of like private schools. And so he had a lot of white peers. And then he would spend the summers in Puerto Rico and his like Spanish was kind of like not good. So they'd make fun of him there. And then his friends in school would make fun of him from like being Puerto Rican or whatever. And it was like that's so true because you're kind of always between two worlds. And I can jump so easily.

08:15 JACQUELINE

And especially with the Spanish thing, when "Generation Por qué" came out so many, when I did press for it, when people asked her like, you're the Spanish seems so natural to you. Like what's your secret? Like what do you do? The only answer I had was it just feels right in my heart, the characters and when they speak. And that's all I had for them. And I think they really wanted me to give them a Spanish lesson and be like, oh, the first five words and they switch, but it's no, because it's like I grew up the same way.

08:41 LORY

Yeah, like the formula doesn't exist. It's just however you kind of forgot that the word, if you don't know the word for parking, you say "el" parking, it's not the word.

08:51 JACQUELINE

And just... it's funny. I think the Spanish... I did realize when there's a lot of emotion, when my parents speak with a lot of emotion, they always only speak in Spanish to express themselves. I think a very strong emotion. Any character, it's like they always kind of jump to Spanish, especially if it's like their native language.

09:06 LORY

There's this thing. I think I once read, it was about what is the language that of love for you, which is your administrative language and like which is your, you know, your creative language. If you speak more than two languages and so a lot of people, if you speak two languages, there's always going to be the, you know, the mother tongue or like the love language. And then they add men language, which for us is English.

09:30 JACQUELINE

I grew up with both of my dad, especially like it's Spanish for me. And any time I hear people speaking out, Spanish somewhere, I always get, I always smile. And again, it's so subconscious. I'm just like, oh, like that's home. Those are my parents. But I think that's our

job as humans is to make home wherever we are and whatever circumstances we are. I just think when you're the child of immigrants, you just have to make it since you're younger. I have to say like you have to be kind of more self-aware and you have to kind of use those tools for me anyway I thought that.

10:00 LORY

I know. I want to hear about "Generation por qué" "Generación por qué" whichever you, what you want to say. Tell us about the story. And then I want to go into the parents relationship because I think that it's something that it's a theme that we touch on a lot in Mija because in the series, it's always about this girl and how her parents are making this huge change in their lives.

10:22 LORY

And you know, whether the girl is born in the country or in elsewhere, like there's always going to be this kind of disconnect or connection with the parents culture. So I want to hear about how you put that into your show and how you kind of shape that relationship with the main character's parents.

10:37 JACQUELINE

So 'Generation por qué' it's about a girl named Jackie. Nothing inspired by my life, everyone listening. No, but it was actually this really funny. It was really inspired by my life because I moved to New York. I was the first member of my family to like move out of New Jersey and move to New York and pursue my dream of acting.

10:55 JACQUELINE

And I feel like especially in the West and especially in the US, like that's what you like the parents encourage you to do. Like find your dream individualism. When I told my parents, they were just like: QUÉ?. They're like: WHAT? You know, they're like very, very worried about me.

11:09 JACQUELINE

And my experience of moving to a new place was just very different than again, all of my peers and everything I watched on TV because I loved comedy growing up and like, I would watch like 'Sex in the City' and like, you know, see like carry in bed with Mr. Big. And then I would watch these shows and be like, where are the parents? Like why is it her mom calling?

11:29 JACQUELINE

Right. They were so in my life like I couldn't shape them off. Wasn't the right word, but they were always kind of just like, you know, like on me and just worried. And that's just the way they are a lot of it, right? That's kind of like the stereotype. So I really wanted a show to capture that. And that's really where it came from about a girl who moved to New York. And then she also has a first-gen roommate who just Arab American. And then her kind of like Jackie's struggles to, you know, like assimilate and like be honest with her parents about, you know, her dreams and stuff and kind of, you know, finding her identity in her way.

11:59 JACQUELINE

But it really came from loving all these coming of age comedies that take place in New York. And then the parents weren't there. And I was like, my parents are right here on my shoulder all the time. Like, if they're not physically there emotionally and kind of, you know...

12:12 LORY

Like in your head and like reminding you like: 'What would my mother say?' 'What would my mami do?'

12:17 JACQUELINE

Exactly. And then like, oh my God, you know, getting fired from her job and then instead of being honest with her parents, just being like, you know, I'm going to do this acting thing on the side. And I know a lot of people, you know, they've done that because it's more, it's easier to do that than like deal with the shame and then being honest with their parents and being like, I'm so, you know, grateful for everything you've done with me. But like, I'm going to take this path that you may not be completely supportive or that isn't as secure.

12:41 JACQUELINE

I know that's something one from us. Like they came from countries or situations that weren't as secure and then they come to like this land of opportunity and their daughters like: 'I want to do something different'.

12:52 LORY

I want to do something right'. I don't know if I'll make money at all.

12:56 JACQUELINE

Exactly. And I'm going to do all these crazy, you know, you know, and I'm going to like delay starting a family and stuff like that. So that's the heart of the show. And as much as she tries to outrun her parents and chase her dreams, she realizes how much she needs them and how disvaluable they are to her journey and her life. So that's the kicker, right? You're like, oh, if I run far enough away and it's like, no, you're not. Like they're a part of you. And you need them.

13:22 LORY

I love that you talk about those nuances with comedy because so much of those experiences can be frustrating. They can be strained relationships. There's always a conflict in that kind of experience because the daughters of immigrants will have this burden of knowing the new country better than their parents, right? So you always have this kind of disconnect and I love the way you do it in the show because you really get the sense that, you know, she's struggling with it and she just, you know, reacts in her own way, but she does it with such respect, even if she's, you know, making fun of her parents and, you know, laughing with them or laughing at them. There's so much respect in that relationship, regardless. And she cares about what they think. And I think that's so beautiful.

14:00 LORY

So I had to message you like immediately after I saw I remember sitting in the living room, you know, I don't live in New York anymore. So I was visiting my parents and I was sitting there watching it with my brother. I just come on on HBO Latino and I was like, what is this

show? I have never seen anything like this and I couldn't stop laughing like every single scene. It was like a joke after a joke after a joke. It's like, it's brilliant. It's brilliant. And I want to know like what is your favorite thing about writing comedy?

14:25 JACQUELINE

With comedy, you can talk about really tough things and not preach to the audience. I know like being preached to like it with comedy just allows like you see people living their life and then you can laugh and you trust them and you can like open your heart more easily. And also in comedy sometimes they're in on the joke with you. Usually kind of like the main character kind of a little bit since you're kind of walking in their shoes. So that's my favorite thing that I love about comedy. Aside from like making people laugh.

14:55 LORY

Definitely recommend watching it. So Mija is all about family and how our family's influenced so much of who we are. So I have to ask who is the person in your family that inspired you writing the most?

15:08 JACQUELINE

I'll just say my dad is the funniest person. I know. He is comedic timing and just his quick wit and how he just like observes the world and like he says the observation out loud and he just cuts to the BS. I think comedy wise my dad is like my biggest influence for sure. I always tell him like: 'Papi, I'm like you would be like world famous if you wanted to be.' And then with my mom, my mom's a huge... believer or not. Like my mom's favorite films to Godfather. So she really loves like American cinema and like really good film and really good actors. So yeah, it's funny. They both really kind of influenced me.

15:46 LORY

So since you had that kind of education in terms of media and comedy that you were growing up, who was your favorite...? I would say comedian or favorite actor, writer, anyone who kind of inspired you that you'd seen maybe recommended by your parents?

16:01 JACQUELINE

My mom loved 'In Living Color'. So I love that. Remember 'In Living Color', the sketch comedy. So with Keenan Ivory Wayans and Jamie Foxx was discovered there. Jim Carrey. Jennifer Lopez was a backup dancer.

16:12 JACQUELINE

Like I specifically remember watching that and loving it and then also Saturday Night Live. SNL and then my mom to love 'the King is a comedy'. So a lot of like the Steve Harvey's the Bernie Maxx, like she would watch those because she also really liked comedy. So literally the comedy grates now and the people that left a mark on the culture. She was watching them early on in their careers.

16:32 LORY

She was into the OG.

16:33 JACQUELINE

Yeah, and we loved, you know, and then of course like full house like all these really great sitcoms.

16:39 LORY

I think the 90s was a really good era for TV generally. It was also where I was inspired by a lot of different shows like Diana. Do you remember that?

It was a Nickelodeon comedy about this Puerto Rican Indigenous girl living in New York. And yeah, and she was like going to the fame high school and it was like all about how she wanted to follow her dreams and her family didn't approve of it. And I was like that storyline, but in the 90s and like so many things like that, you know, the Garcia brothers, the George Lopez show, like there was a lot of really cool multicultural stuff coming out at that time.

17:12 LORY

And I think growing up with that, I was very much inspired to kind of emulate that but with our shows. Speaking of which... we have to talk about it. We have to talk about LCT.

17:24 JACQUELINE

Oh, yeah. Oh my God. Speaking of spanglish.

17:28 LORY

Speaking of Spanish and 90s TV and 90s audio.

17:31 JACQUELINE

Oh, that was a beautiful segue.

17:35 LORY

So for those of you who don't know, I created La Cabina Telefonica, a sitcom podcast novella for Spotify. It tells the story of Matty Cardona, a Colombian immigrant who runs a Cabina Telefonica in Jackson Heights Queens with her Americanized daughter, Rossi. Together, they host clients from the neighborhood who come in to make phone calls. Each episode is one phone call, one story from El Barrio. And in total, we worked on 50 episodes of this show with Jackie. And it was nominated for the 2023 Webby's. You can binge it, all on Spotify now.

18:05 LORY

So Jackie, you are our story editor on the show and the voice of reason when we were blocked on scripts. Please tell us about your approach to these characters and which characters you connected with the most.

18:15 JACQUELINE

It was just so much fun. Just to make everyone just like the stakes higher, to make them funnier, more ridiculous. By more ridiculous, it's not making fun, it's just making the stakes higher. And it's like, what would be Mati's horror right now? What would just send her over the edge if this happened? Like, in this moment. And what would she say?

18:35 JACQUELINE

That's really my thing. It's just like, thinking about the characters, who they are, their point of view, and then just kind of torture them with conflict, right? Torture them with conflict. And

then be like, how would they react? And what would they say? You know, how would this be even funnier, even more tender or more heartwarming?

18:55 JACQUELINE

When I edit or do comedy, she's like very intuitive. It's like really understanding and kind of like respect, like you said, the whole respect thing. It's just like, I respected every single one of those characters, like holding them unconditionally, right? Like not judging them or their reactions or what they would do.

19:12 LORY

Love your characters, like you love your family.

19:14 JACQUELINE

Yeah, you do. And even the ones that you're just like, oh, I would never do that or whatever. With my favorite character, of course I loved Matty. Like she's a star of the show, but I really also loved Gadiel a lot. He was just, his heart was really pure all the time. No matter all his drama, like his core...

19:35 LORY

Was good.

19:36 JACQUELINE

Was very pure. Yeah. And I'm just like, I'm always, because you've met people in your life and their behavior and their actions, it's like you're so pure and you have such a good heart.

19:45 LORY

But you keep messing up.

19:46 JACQUELINE

But like I see your core, like and it's good and it's there. Just you need a little guidance.

19:53 LORY

Oh gosh, I would have thought to be Abogado Perez or somebody like that.

19:57 JACQUELINE

Oh my god. Yeah, well him, yes. Yeah, like, well, yeah, like the ridiculousness of it. But Gadiel, I think his heart, the way we originally conceived him and the character, it was always something really, like the love that was there was so pure.

20:12 LORY

I could tell, I've seen characters like him, I've known people like him. So when we were putting together that character, it was like, yeah, he's a lovable person, no matter what he does. And yeah, I love being able to put characters like that that are complex, but that have this, you know, warm thing about them.

20:31 JACQUELINE

The warmth underneath.

20:33 LORY

Oh gosh, yeah. And my favorite one though for me is Abogado Perez is like, I mean besides Matty, because Matty of course I wrote her and she was, you know, inspired by these two women in my life. That was my mother and this other woman who's her close friend who actually worked in the cabins. And so I gave the name of the character is like Matty for my mom and Cardona, which is the last name of the other woman. So it was like, this is a combination of two people.

20:59 LORY

But besides that, it was like, Abogado Perez gave me the most freedom as a, like, to put in comedy, like actually have fun with something so ridiculous. And I really appreciated your approach because you gave me so much freedom to like think outside the box from what I was like originally conceiving of this character and like going further and like, why not make him write, you know, come in and do ads like for his business and like have like creative little puns all the time. Like why can't he do that?

21:25 JACQUELINE

Because I've seen people like that. And again, like it's very much about like a love letter to this neighborhood of people who are all hustling and like in the most endearing way really trying to get by. And I loved being able to kind of celebrate that with the show. But I definitely had moments when we were writing this and, you know, Jackie, because you were there and you were, you know, on the Zoom calls with us in the writer's room is like the struggle of, you know, being stuck and like not thinking that I can really write this and like feeling like imposter syndrome and like not really being able to, yeah, like no one in my family is a writer like that. So I couldn't even like kind of go for it to someone for advice. And this, I'm writing a novella. This is, I'm not a trained writer in any way, but I, you know, put it, came up with the story, created the storylines. This is my show. I had so many doubts about it. And, you know, I had big dreams as a kid of writing, but I, you know, I had never gotten this opportunity before. So I was freaking out about it.

22:19 LORY

And so I want to know like you supported us so much in this process and supported me and, and I really appreciate it. And I want to know how you felt when you were starting out as a writer and like do you have that imposter syndrome feeling? And what do you do about it and like how have you gotten over it?

22:37 JACQUELINE

It's so funny. Nothing I'm struck. I think you hit the nail right on the head. It's the expectations. It's the, it's you don't want to let people down. When I'm struggling, I told this like when I have writers block or I feel blocked or I feel like I can't do it. It's because I'm putting this pressure on myself. Like when we're kids, I was never like when I was playing with my sister and I was like, okay, I'm the astronaut and like you're, you know, the McDonald's worker. I never was like: "am I the astronaut?" But like am I like: "Oh my god, I like, I'm an imposter". Just like kids play, right? We're just like, I'm going to do this.

23:11 JACQUELINE

And that's where our best work comes from where we just let it go. But it's at its expectations and especially like, oh my god, this may be my only opportunity or like, I feel so lucky.

There's so many people that didn't have this opportunity and you know, everything my parents sacrifice, right?

23:25 JACQUELINE

It's like, you do this whole thing rather just being like, oh, this is going to be fun, like assignment and I'm going to have fun with these characters and let's see what happens. Like, you know, more loose and fluid, like instead of making it a play day, it's like, we have to get this right. We have to get done. It's just you don't want to do a bad job and you want people to love it as much as you do versus being like, just trust it. Like they will. And that's the thing like loving and that's why when you said how you said earlier about like, I could tell you hold these characters and especially in your show, like the parents of the respect. Like I love that because that means I did the right thing because when I was writing it, I held them that way too, like with that tenderness.

24:04 LORY

Yeah.

24:05 JACQUELINE

We don't work in an industry where people are just like gainfully employed, you know, like you're the opportunities come and go. So I think it's the pressure we put on ourselves. And then just the other writers black to sometimes, it's because I want to write something and I don't have the guts to say it. That's like the other subconscious that really happens.

24:22 LORY

Yeah. Oh my gosh. I'm also had moments of just kind of being able to accept the process and like be like, you know, rewrite, rewrite, rewrite as much as you need to kind of thing.

24:34 JACQUELINE

Yeah. And you're great at that. You're like, that's your, you just go for it because so many people, they just, they don't want to go there. Because writing is rewriting and you have to edit it a lot and then talk to people. It's like a like sculpting, you know, sculpture. You know what I mean? It's like you caught her like cutting a piece of meat. Like you caught all like the fat away, like the meat's there. But then like to make it like the right cut, you have to keep going and manipulating it.

25:00 LORY

And then you get it to the perfect thing. Gosh. All right. Coming to kind of what we're working on now, what we're most proud of, I would love to hear what you're like most excited about that you're doing now.

25:14 JACQUELINE

So I've been doing a stand up comedy. So all of my truth bombs and my crazy ideas I used to hide behind characters are now coming out that my mouth that I have to own. And then also I'm working on like another film. I'm so excited to say this before like to run into the process of these because again, like when you have success or people are excited to read your work, that pressure, you know, mounts, but I'm excited to just like let it go and continuing and like writing really truthful, like funny things.

25:48 LORY

Yeah. I always think like, okay, calm, calmate, like drink a tea, calm, yeah. This is everything you dreamed. What are you to? Don't be upset.

25:59 JACQUELINE

Yeah.

26:02 LORY

So we're coming to the end now. So I want to ask you some quick questions. And this is like a speed round, right? And answer as fast as you can without thinking, all right?

26:11 JACQUELINE

Oh, my God. Oh, Lord. Okay.

26:14 LORY

Queen's or Manhattan?

26:15 JACQUELINE

Queen's.

26:16 LORY

Bagel or empanada?

26:17 JACQUELINE

Empanada. Oh, my God.

26:19 LORY

And rupa vieja or arroz con gandules y plátano?

26:23 JACQUELINE

Oh, my God. My my heart is like Cuba, Rupa Vieja, but like I love Arroz in Platanos con Gandules. So I'm going to say that and oh, my God. Sorry, mommy and papi for listening. Oh, my God. We're going to kick me out of like culture.

26:43 LORY

You're going to lose your Cuban card. Call or text?

26:47 JACQUELINE

Oh, calling all the time.

26:49 LORY

If you could like write and work on any reboot from the 90s, which would you write?

26:55 JACQUELINE

Can I say "In Living color" or no?

26:57 LORY

Yeah. You can say anything.

26:59 JACQUELINE

Living color. Yes. Obsessed because I love sketch comedy.

27:02 LORY

All right. What was your last Google search that you were comfortable sharing?

27:06 JACQUELINE

Oh, my no. This is, yeah, I'm comfortable sharing, but like I need a life. So I'm obsessed with chopped on the food network. And I've been like cooking a lot. And last night, I was like, maybe I can go to culinary school and like looked up the CIA. Okay. Because I'm me because this is what because this is what you do as a writer. You're like, why I can't write? I can't write today. I need to find out the curriculum requirements to get like a culinary art certificate. So I can't write my pages today. That'll be tomorrow. I need to figure this out consciously and then I can move on.

27:42 LORY

Not that. The culinary institute of America, guys. For those of you who don't know, the CIA's also that.

27:49 JACQUELINE

Yes, exactly.

27:50 LORY

Right. If you could hang out with any character from La Cabina Telefonica, who would it be? And why?

27:56 JACQUELINE

Oh, can I say Isamar, like for shure. But then also the brothers, what was the...

28:05 LORY

Who's the Martinez brothers, the Panaderos?

28:06 JACQUELINE

Yeah, the swab one from...He's a swab one, right? I want to hang out with him. I want to use all his pickup lines on me. That's what I want.

28:15 LORY

All right. Last question. Now, I want to ask this two ways. So the first way is what is your most embarrassing dream? And you can answer this. However you want to interpret it. And then I'm going to ask you what is your like biggest dream like in life?

28:33 JACQUELINE

My most embarrassing dream, I don't think it's embarrassing. I look back. Well, first of all, I always just want to be a pop star. Like I want to be a Christina Aguilera or Witney Houston. Like that's like that. Still, I don't care. I'll say it. Like I'm only here because I can't sing like Witney Houston. That's number one. That's the only reason.

28:50 LORY

Ok.

28:51 JACQUELINE

So we'll do that. The second one is for a long time, I wanted to be like a White House press reporter. Like I want to be like the White House press secretary. Which is hilarious. Can you imagine me?

29:03 LORY

Yeah. You wanted to be a pop star slash White House correspondent.

29:08 JACQUELINE

Yes. I think it's. And then now I'm like, let me go to Connery's school. Why not?

29:16 LORY

I think I had the same thing where at one point I was like, I want to be a doctor, lawyer, writer, journalist, all of them, like at once.

29:24 JACQUELINE

Yeah.

29:25 LORY

I think it's like all of us, we grow up with this. Like you can do anything kind of thing because our parents couldn't. So they're like, you can do anything.

29:33 JACQUELINE

Yeah. And you're literally like, I'm going to do it all. But it's funny because one day I was like shooting "Generation Por Qué" on the weekends and at night. And then I was teaching Zoom by at night and stuff. And I was like, oh my god, like I'm living my dream. Like I was like literally like, because I want to be like a dancer actress and like shoot movies on the roof. I literally was doing all that. And like I had a day job. I was like, oh wow, I had like a moment.

29:57 LORY

Oh my gosh. Amazing. Thank you so much Jackie. This has been so much fun. I have one last question for you. And it's a question for advice. What advice do you give to Mijas, like ourselves, who are scared to take the leap and start writing their stories in any way that they want to?

30:17 JACQUELINE

Well, first of all, we have like one life and you have to have like, you just have to go for it. And what I, what I always do is like, I think on my gram, my grandmother's and stuff, like everything they sacrificed for and had to go through. And it's like, if you don't want to do it for you, because you're too scared for you, do it for them. Tell your story because they didn't have the opportunity to do so because of their circumstances. So like you have the voice we live in a time where we're allowed to and like we can share stories and like not get kidnapped and go to jail. So that's the path I give myself. When you share your story, so

many people are validated by it because we all go through the same struggles and we all need to talk about like what's going on with us. And we're all very similar. And I love hearing people still like, I love hearing people's stories and backgrounds. I do it through characters. If that's scary, like right, fictional, you know, whatever you're going through, put it in characters in like an imaginary world, which is what literature is and which what film is and TV. So do that. Then if it's hard to just say like this happened to me or like, I feel this way, put it through hide behind people. I love it. And it's more powerful that way sometimes.

31:26 LORY

Amazing advice. Thank you so much, Jackie. Now tell us where we can find you. Tell us where they can catch Generation Por Qué.

31:32 JACQUELINE

In HBO Latino, so if you have a TV and cable HBO and of course it's on HBO Max. And then you can find me: Jacqueline Pereda and any of the social networks.

31:50 LORY

Thanks for listening. This is Mija on the Mike, a season of reflection on our shared experiences as daughters of immigrants. Over the next couple of weeks, I'll be sharing stories like these and inviting guests to share theirs.

31:12 LORY

Follow us on Instagram at @mijapodcast. That's M-I-J-A podcast and leave us a note if you like this story.

32:09 LORY

Tune in every Wednesday for a new episode. This is a production of Studio Ocenta, a Latina-owned multi-lingual podcast studio dedicated to raising voices across cultures. For more from Studio Ocenta, follow us at @ochentapodcasts on Instagram. That's O-C-H-E-N-T-A podcast with an S on Instagram.

32:27 LORY

P.S. Don't forget this season is also about you. If you have a story you'd like to share or if you'd like to be a guest on the show, I invite you to reach out on Instagram at @mijapodcast and leave us a message with a short story or memory of yours that warms your heart. We'll read it out loud on the show. Hasta pronto. Ciao!