



## TRANSCRIPCIÓN ORIGINAL DE STUDIO OCHENTA

### MIJA ON THE MIKE - MI AMIGA MONA

00:17 MIJA

Hi, I'm Miha and this is Mija on the Mike, solo.

00:21 MIJA

If you've been listening to the show for a while, you might remember that on the very last episode of season one of Miha, I'm on a train in some unnamed city reading whatsapp messages... Missing my familia.

00:34 MIJA

We want something like this and there are these voice messages asking me how I am, how's work and sending me love.

00:42 MESSAGE

Buenos días, esta mañana Dios nos hizo un hermoso regalo: la vida.

00:52 MIJA

Well, that was only kind of fiction.

00:55 MIJA

The truth is I do live very far from my family.

00:58 MIJA

Like my Tatika, I made a choice to start a new life somewhere else. Somewhere beautiful

01:12 MIJA

Like her I leave excitedly one summer morning, the entirety of my belongings crammed into a single suitcase. I have at a bus for breakfast and nervously drink my hot chocolate.

01:23 MIJA

And then Rocky, Mano and Tatika drive me to the airport. As I board the plane, I feel my heart race as I see the city lights of New York fade into the distance.

01:35 MIJA

I closed my eyes and I shed a tear only after we're in the air. I'm really leaving.

01:45 MIJA

I close my eyes again and awaken in Paris, France.

01:57 MIJA

For this solo Mija episode.

01:58 MIJA

I want to talk about my new home a little bit because this show is about leaving home and finding beauty and joy wherever you are in the world.

02:06 MIJA

So here goes 10 minutes to tell a real story of Mija in Paris.

02:15 MIJA

Rituals are important, important like putting sugar in your coffee, like making sure your lipstick is just right. Like your mom doing the sign of the cross on you before you step out the door.

02:32 MIJA

Today is my first day in Paris and I'm going to start my own ritual. It's morning and I pull the curtains open and open the windows wide.

02:43 MIJA

I'm living in a converted maid's room on the sixth floor. Walk up via the service entrance of a Haussmann building. It's small, but it's got a great address right by the Jardin du Luxembourg.

02:57 MIJA

And I begin my new ritual. After class I will walk through the park and look at all the people and try to pick up on some expressions from the Children playing in the park.

03:07 MIJA

I walk taking it all in. I walk to Saint Michel and look at the beautiful statues and walk along the Seine and look at the sparkling stones and watch the boats go down the river. I walk all the way to Pont Alexandre III and I do this all in silence.

03:31 MIJA

It's a sunny day and the statues are really sparkling in the sunlight and I am amazed.

03:39 MIJA

I am here.

03:49 MIJA

Paris by the way. Doesn't sound like La vie en Rose.

03:52 MIJA

It sounds a lot like a city birds chirping people chatting in the streets, loud police sirens and very loud garbage trucks.

04:01 MIJA

I see all this and breathe in and out meditating as I walk about how I came to be here, how it got from Queens to here. And then I walk back, I think about Tatika and what she said before I left.

04:24 MIJA

“¿Estás segura?” Are you sure she said?

04:27 MIJA

And then under her breath, I wish I could start over and put you in my belly again.

04:34 MIJA

I miss her.

04:36 MIJA

So as I walk, I call her on whatsapp, I tell her all the things I've been seeing and I'm talking a mile a minute.

04:44 MIJA

She's so excited for me too.

04:48 MIJA

I promise her that one day I will save up and bring her here so she can have croissants and drink coffee and try escargot for the first time too.

04:58 MIJA

I promise her with my whole heart that she can be here with me one day because I feel all this beauty around me. But my family isn't here and it makes it all bittersweet.

05:17 MIJA

But I'm in Paris so I can't be sad. Especially because I have a very special friend here.

05:29 MIJA

She works in a famous Paris museum and she's quiet, a little shy, always thinking and very serene and she's very popular. It's Ma copine Mona, my friend Mona, I make a beeline to see her that first day.

05:47 MIJA

Of course. Everyone does. The girl that has it all figured out. The one with the smile, the smirk.

05:57 MIJA

She makes me think. Maybe one day I will have that smile too.

06:05 MIJA

“Hola Mona” I say breathless in the crowd of tourists around me. She's very busy today.

06:12 MIJA

You should know that The Louvre is free for students. And so it became my favorite place to visit.

06:19 MIJA

On my second visit. I say hello again to Mona and then go to a new wing. I stand beneath the Greek statues. I feel small, but in a good way.

06:36 MIJA

I'm transported back to New York for a brief moment. I'm six years old at the Met Museum in New York holding Mami's hand.

06:44 MIJA

It has a gallery just like this. Mami and I stare at the Greek statues and she tells me that some of them are based on Greek myths and others are biblical characters like David and Goliath, the small but worthy man fighting against a giant.

07:03

Many years later, when I find myself in front of a David and Goliath painting in the Louvre, I ask myself which one *I am, am I David or Goliath?*

07:14 MIJA

Funnily enough. It's two sided. So you walk around to see David and then Goliath and then David and then Goliath and then David again, I walk around it so many times I get dizzy. No answer yet.

07:32 MIJA

The next time I go to the museum, I've been to see my friend Mona, so many times, that the security guard by the door knows my name. And I go through a secret entrance to enter the museum each time.

07:43 MIJA

But even though it's magical, it's become sort of routine. So when I come back again with a friend in my class who hasn't seen her yet, I stand to the side behind the crowds.

07:54 MIJA

I know already. I asked myself, did I lose the magic?

08:04 MIJA

I stopped going for a while until my boyfriend asked me if I've ever been to the Louvre. And I reply: "just a few times that day", I drag them from gallery to gallery to see my favorite paintings and share every detail I researched as I came to see them again and again, I show him where I used to sit and stare at the statues and write in my journal and I'm excited.

08:34

I'm witnessing this beauty again as if for the first time because his hand is in mine. It's magic.

08:49 MIJA

Many years later, I come to the Louvre with Mami, finally. It's my gift to her to fly her out to Paris for the first time. She is here for my wedding and will visit El Famoso Louvre with my brother.

9:04 MIJA

We get up early and she's asking me what she can wear for the picture with Mona. She's giddy like a school girl on the train. She's asking if this is the next stop. I say no, she asked again. Is this the next up? And I say no again.

9:22 MIJA

When the train conductor says next stop : "Palais du Louvre" in 7 languages She says. "Qué increíble, ¿no mami?" And I say yes, we link arms and I walk her through the pyramid.

9:39 MIJA

It's a beautiful sunny day, when Mona meets mami, she has the same look pensive but smiling. She says she looks like she has everything figured out just like her daughter now.

9:54 MIJA

Now every time she comes to visit me in Paris, Mami and I link arms and we go see our Amiga Mona.

10:20 MIJA

Thanks for listening. This is Mija on the mike, a season 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.

10:32 MIJA

Follow us on Instagram at @Mijapodcasts and leave us a note if you like this story tune in every Wednesday for a new story.

10:41 MIJA

This is a production of Studio Ochenta, a Latina-owned multi-lingual podcast studio dedicated to raising voices across cultures. For more from Studio Ocenta, follow us at @ochentapodcast. That's Ochenta Podcasts with an S at the end on Instagram.

10:56 MIJA

And don't forget this season is also about you! if you have a story you'd like to share, I invite you to reach out on instagram @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.

11:09 MIJA

Thanks for listening. Ciao.