



STUDIO OCHENTA ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

MIJA (ESPAÑOL) – 07: CHACHO

[00:04] - Mija

Hi I'm Mija. Mija means my daughter in Spanish, and this podcast is about my family: Those alive, those long gone, and those still dreaming. Now here's what you need to know about Chacho. He's the quiet type. He's kindhearted and often drops by when you least expect it. And he'll be there for you always. Chacho is my cousin.

[00:30] - Mija

If this is your first episode with Mija go ahead and check out episodes 1 to 6 before jumping into this one. Oh and if you like the show. Be sure to leave us five stars on Apple podcasts. It helps people find us. So here goes, ten minutes to tell his story.

[00:52] - Mija

There's a young man playing a keyboard piano in his bedroom. His back is to us. Above him. Model airplanes and books on the art of flying. This is Chacho, Tatika's nephew Yita and Titi's grandson and my cousin. Chacho and his sister, Sarita are his first grandchildren.

[01:18] - Mija

They live in the mountainous city of Bogota. Growing up, Chacho was always with his mother Melita. Like Mano, Chacho, was a bit of a pollo choto. He went everywhere with her: to work, to the market, to the laundromat, and so on.

[01:39] - Mija

Once when he was about 6 years old. He told Melita that he'd made a new friend: Jesus. At the pre-school, there was no one by that name. She immediately thought that it was either a stranger or the Holy Ghost himself talking to her kid. Until one day, she asked him: Where are you seeing Jesus?

[2:03] - Mija

And he replied: "at work." Jesus is with you at work.

[02:07] - Mija

She didn't understand until he pointed him out. Jesus was the name of one of her co-workers. That day there weren't any ghosts. But they would appear to members of Left media sooner rather than later.

[02:30] - Mija

Now Chacho has a lot of cacumen. The first of his talents: Music. Like Tatika, he listened to old love ballads all the time. He hummed along while he did his homework. He spent all of his free time playing the guitar or his keyboard piano. One summer, Mano and I left the noise and traffic of Queens, New York to go to Bogota to spend time with la familia. Picture the three of us.

[02:51] - Mija

I'm eight, Mano is five and Chacho was 16. He's babysitting us. He takes us to the Plaza Simon Bolivar to sightsee and scare a few pigeons off. All of a sudden, it starts to rain.

[03:06] - Mija

In Bogota, when it rains, it pours. That day was one of the biggest rainstorms Bogota had ever seen. We run home and we're soaking wet. Mano and me, we're scared of the thunder and lightning. So Chacho decides to cheer us up with a song. As the wind and thunder howl outside, he begins.

[03:46] - Mija

His second talent: flight.

He became obsessed with airplanes from a very young age when he was 4 years old. He made his first paper airplane.

[03:54] - Mija

Threw it from the second-floor window of La Casa and watched it fly, smiling ear to ear. At 10 years old he started making model planes.

[04:08] - Mija

When Tatika left for America. He gave her one as a parting gift. She put it next to a certain little yellow radio in her apartment on urgent the street in my dark.

[04:23] - Mija

After Chacho graduated from high school, he enrolled in the Colombian Air Force. His first time in the sky was an indescribable feeling.

[04:31] - Mija

When Mano and I asked him what it was like. He paused and said: "Let me show you" and picked us up in the air flying us around the front yard of La Casa.

[04:42] - Mija

Mano admired him. He wanted to grow up to be just like Chacho. When we went home to New York, Mano would talk about him nonstop.

[04:51] - Mija

He started learning the music. He'd seen Chacho play and began thinking about following in his footsteps. Chacho left this world on a plane. On one of Tatika's nightly phone calls to La Casa, as Mano and I watched cartoons, unaware.

[05:12] - Mija

Tatika received the news. She broke into tears and wished she could transport through the phone to be by her sister's side, but she couldn't. She was in Nueva York and couldn't afford to take time off to go back. So, we all mourned from a distance.

[05:30] - Mija

But his story doesn't end there. Because Chacho stuck around and in the years that followed, he would appear to more than one member of the family. Surely thanks to his new wings. In fact, after he passed Chacho became something of a guardian angel for us.

[05:54] - Mija

Whenever anyone in the family was in danger, he was there. He continues to fly around the world protecting la familia. In Spain. His sister Sarita was studying abroad. She was coming home late one night from the library.

[06:08] - Mija

And some men were following her. She was afraid. But then.

[06:13] - Mija

She saw Chacho. He was a glimmer of light in the dark. And then the men turned away as if they'd suddenly forgotten that she was there.

[06:26] - Mija

In California. One day during basic training, Mano had to climb a mountain. It was raining and the ground was slippery with mud. At one point, Manuel lost his grip.

[06:39] - Mija

He held on with one arm and thought he would fall. But Chacho appeared before him.

[06:46] - Mija

And told him to hold on. Mano didn't fall that day.

[06:56] - Mija

In Nueva York. When Mano and I left home as adults. Tatika was sad. She fell asleep and left the kettle on in the kitchen curtains caught on fire. Chacho you appeared to her in a dream and told her to wake up. She was able to put it out before it spread.

[07:20] - Mija

In Colombia, Melita, his mother, dreams with him once a month around the date of his passing. In the dreams, he appears before her as he was a happy young man and they have breakfast like they always had in La Casa: Arepas con chocolate caliente. She tells him about the family and how they are. And he listens.

[07:45] - Mija

Now I'd like to end my 10 minutes with this: In Spanish, the word for first cousin is primo tomorrow or cousin and brother. In Latin culture, cousins are meant to be the closest thing you have to a sibling.

[08:17] - Mija

Mano and I grew up far away from almost all our primos hermanos y hermanas.

[08:24] - Mija

A lot of the time we can't see each other. Visas are hard to get. Flights are too costly. We can't take off time from work. But we try our best to keep the bonds that distance have made harder to keep.

[08:43] - Mija

And if we can't fly.

We can still dream.

[08:55] - Mija

This episode was produced by Studio Ochenta. Our executive producer is Lory Martinez.

[09:00] - Mija

Our associate producers are Laura Ubaté and Rebecca Seidel. Our theme music is by Gabriel Dalmasso. Our art is by Tiffany Delune. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @mijapodcast. That's M I J A podcast, if you like the show tell a friend about it and maybe leave a comment on Apple podcast while you're at it. Until next time, sending you much love and good ol' American recuerdos.

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