



## STUDIO OCHENTA ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

### MIJA (ESPAÑOL) – 08: LA CASA

[00:05] - 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.

[00:20] - Mija

If this is your first episode with Mija, stop right now and listen to the full season before listening to this. This is our grand finale, and you'll need to know all about la familia to make this episode truly special to hear. If you've been listening all along, thank you.

[00:33] - Mija

Thank you for sharing these 10 minutes with us every week. Sending you un beso y abrazo enorme from the entire Mija team.

Now here's what you need to know about La Casa. It's in Nueva York, and in Bogota, and in Cali. It's in music. And in Food. And in the moment before a loved one picks up the phone to say hello. It's home. So here goes. 10 minutes on La Casa ("home" in spanish).

[01:10] - Mija

We're in Cali. There are two kids outside playing with the family dog, Simka. It's pouring rain, but they don't mind. The rain adds drama to the scene they're acting out. In fact, they are pretending to be toreadors. Simka is the bull. Rocky's brother, Martin, plays the announcer. Young Rocky is waving a red t shirt in front of Simka, who plays the role expertly. He even plays dead when Rocky "defeats" hi

[01:43] - Mija

Rocky's older sisters have already started to leave La Casa. Some of them are in America, others are in Mexico or Venezuela. So the house is a bit quieter these days. Ana lets them play

for a bit before calling them back in, Rocky and Martin's games remind her of the days when all the kids were still there. She kisses the two of them on the forehead as they stroll in soaking wet, along with the dog. One day, Rocky and Martin leave La Casa just like the others.

[02:11] - Mija

Many years later. Rocky and Martin are in Nueva York. It's snowing outside.

[02:19] - Mija

Martin comes over to Rocky's house for a drink. They haven't seen each other in years. Martin went to Venezuela, built a life there, but lost everything, and had to start over from zero in America.

[02:29] - Mija

Here in Rocky's cold kitchen. Thousands of miles from la Casa. Two brothers remember a random rainy day in Cali.

[02:50] – Mija

We are in Nueva York. Mano just finished kindergarten and Tatika's throwing a little graduation party. The guests are her neighbors: a Cuban couple, a Costa Rican family, another Colombian family and some of Mano's friends from school.

[03:02] - Mija

Everyone is in their Sunday best. The pernil is in the oven, the beans and rice are cooking, and Tatika passes the plates around. They may not be in la casa, but this living room will do. In this cramped apartment on Ochenta Street in Queens, they dance.

[03:17] - Mija

Tatika dances with Mano. I try teaching Mano's friends basic salsa steps I learned from Rocky. Tatika is happy. She remembers the parties in La Casa, and is proud of herself, for making her own, here in Nueva York. She serves her guests, and as everyone talks around her, she thinks: Que belleza. What a beautiful thing.

[03:58] - Mija

We are in Bogota. It is Christmas. There's 500 of us, all together. Those alive, those long gone, and those still dreaming. Among the guests, some familiar faces: Mano, Tatika, Rocky, Yita & Titi, Chacho, Ana & Fino, Melita, Memo, Martin, Maria, Emilio, all of Rocky's sisters and their children, and their children's children.

[04:23]

There are also aunts and uncles I've never met and great, great, great grandparents and cousins. Generations of la familia. All together in one place. There will be a big feast and then presents. Everyone has brought a little something for everyone. The gifts fill an entire room.

[04:48] - Mija

But such a feast is difficult to plan to say the least. Flights were booked in advance, visas were applied for and even a Bruja was hired to ensure the ancestors would be welcomed well into this world in order to attend.

[05:04] - Mija

Rocky is one of the first to arrive. He sees Ana making sancocho in the kitchen and runs and gives her a big hug. Fino is giving the littlest members of the family dance lessons. Titi and Mano are chatting about matador life. Melita and Chacho are reunited too.

[05:23] - Mija

They've spent the day decorating the biggest christmas tree you've ever seen. Bigger than the one at Rockefeller Center.

[05:30] - Mija

Bigger than the Empire state building. It is as old as la casa. But nothing is perfect, because la familia has never done this before.

[05:36] - Mija

So obviously the table isn't big enough. So Mano and Rocky and Alvaro, our great uncle, take some wood and extend the table. They take bits and pieces from other furniture in the house to make sure everyone has a seat (and a little more, because you never know who might drop by).

[06:05] - Mija

The house itself is made of wood, and so they even take pieces from the walls. At the end of a grueling day of work, Alvaro takes a look at his masterpiece. It extends from the kitchen, through the living room, on through the front door, through the yard and down the street. Yita and Ana, ever wise, say, but where will we dance?

[06:30] - Mija

Alvaro, Mano and Rocky look at each other and start laughing. Mano says, well maybe the cacumen skipped a generation. And so they take it apart and make a big buffet table at the front of the house right under the tree.

[06:47] - Mija

And they dance. Many of them have not seen each other in decades. So much has gone unsaid. Time has changed everyone. Distance has changed everyone. But something hasn't

changed. The music. And in those silences that the years have created, the music brings them together, in this casa.

[07:12] - Mija

You might be asking yourself. But how?

If it were Rocky telling the story, he'd say someone in la familia won the lottery and was able to fund the whole thing. If it were Tatika telling the story, she'd say that that person was me, Mija. If it were Mano, he'd say he saved some famous Colombian like Shakira or Juanes from sure death so they paid for it. But the truth? It's a dream.

[07:36] - Mija

The truth is, I am on train in a city far from Colombia and New York. I am grown up and have built a life somewhere new and I am in a whatsapp group. And there are these voice messages, asking me how I am, how is work, how is my love life?

[07:56] - Mija

And I close my eyes \*family messages in Spanish play\*. And I'm in LA CASA with everyone. I'm home.

[08:25] - Mija

Now I'd like to end my 10 minutes with this: You've met my familia. Listened to their joys and sorrows. Maybe laughed a little, or teared up on the subway or as you walked home one afternoon. This is a familia of immigrants. Of people who dreamed and created new lives in a foreign country. Of people who left their families and communities behind to start over.

[08:45] - Mija

Now, Tatika, Mano and myself had the privilege of going back to La casa, to be present in family life. Rocky wasn't so lucky. His family was split across continents and now there's no house in Cali to go back to.

[09:02] - Mija

In fact, it's easy to forget that many immigrants are unable to go home to their casa. Because they can't afford it, or because there's nobody left to go back to, or because, if they leave, they might never be allowed to come back.

[09:10] - Mija

Many familias are separated by distance and circumstance, but la casa is with us wherever we are.

And nothing will ever change that.

[09:30] - Mija

This podcast was produced by Studio Ochenta. Raising voices across cultures.

[09:35] - Mija

Our executive producer is Lory Martinez, she is the voice of Mija in English, French and Spanish, and hails from Queens, New York. This show was written as an audio love letter to the immigrant experience there and around the world.

[09:42] - Mija

Our Associate producer, Rebecca Seidel, is also from Queens. She recorded all of the New York sounds for the show. Our Associate Producer, Laura Ubaté recorded the sounds in Bogota, Colombia. She recorded family members in the real casa. Gabriel Dalmasso is based in Paris, and created Mija's theme music.

[10:04] - Mija

Our show art and logo were designed by London based artist Tiffanie Delune. Special thanks to the real familia, whose voices you've heard throughout the season, family members who lent their voices and inspired these stories.

[10:23] - Mija

And finally, it isn't over yet. follow us on twitter & instagram @mijapodcast, that's m-i-j-a podcast for updates, bonus content and work we'll be making in between now and season 2. Until next time, sending you much love and good ol'American recuerdos.

**FINAL DEL EPISODIO**