



## STUDIO OCHENTA ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

### MIJA (ENGLISH) – 208: La Maison

[00:04]

Hi, I'm Mija. Mija means my daughter in Spanish, and this part guesses about my family, those alive, those long gone and those still dreaming. If this is your first episode with Mija, stop right now and listen to the whole season before listening to this one. This is the last episode of Season two, and you'll need to know all about the family to enjoy it. If you've been listening from the beginning. Thank you. Thank you for sharing these 10 minutes with us every two weeks.

[00:33]

Here's what you need to know about "La Maison."

[00:36]

It is in France, China, Vietnam. It is in the language we speak, in the dishes we share and the songs we sing. "La maison," is not a country or a city. It's the laughter shared together and, in our voices, when we talk on the phone. "La maison" means home in French.

[00:54]

So here we go. Ten minutes on La Maison.

[01:07]

We are near Canton in the Chinese countryside. Nong can't sit still. He's been up since dawn. He's so excited for the day ahead. He jumps out of bed and sees his brothers and sisters are also awake. Yesterday, Pao Kong announced a surprise for today. The children wonder what it could be: *Maybe we will be allowed to ride the horses! No way! But what could it be?! I don't know, but I can't wait!* A few hours later, the family hits the road.

[01:48]

Pao Kong leads the little convoy riding his horse and smiling from ear to ear. Sao Yeng is settled in the cariole with all ten children.

[02:01]

Suddenly, the convoy stops, Pao Kong yells out happily: We are here! The 10 children step down from the cariole one by one, and each time their feet touch the ground, they gasp in amazement. Whoa!

[02:20]

They are all on the small beach. In front of them, a blue expanse as far as the eye can see: the ocean.

[02:44]

Nong is amazed! The water never stops, Pao Kong gets off the horse and walks with him towards the sea. Nong and his brothers and sisters spend the day playing in the sand.

[02:57]

Watching the waves come and go. Sao Yeng takes a nap on the beach and Pao Kong even lets the children ride his beloved horse.

[03:17]

Years later, in France, Nong is sitting in the sand, he smiles. This is the first time he has seen the sea since he left China and this time two children are playing next to him: Julien, and me, Mija.

[03:33]

We are in Normandy, and this is our first vacation at the sea.

[03:45]

Nong feels the breeze on his face and thinks about his first trip to the sea. And even though he's thousands of miles away from his home country, the sea air here tastes the same. He watches his children play, then his eyes are drawn elsewhere. In the distance, he sees a merry go round, complete with beautiful golden horses. He gets up and tells us "Hey, kids, let's go for a horse ride!"

[04:25]

We are near Hanoi, Vietnam. Hien is in her room at home, sitting on her bed. She's combing through a book she found at the library. She doesn't understand the writing, so she looks at the pictures. There are three men fighting with swords. Hien is inspired. She gets up and runs to look for her sisters. As she runs through the garden, she picks up a few branches. She gives one to each and they start a new game...

[05:01]

Years later. Hien comes across a poster in the Paris metro. In the picture, she sees three men fighting with swords. This time she can read the words below the image, *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, the Three Musketeers, and below, the name of the theater where the play is being performed.

[05:30]

As the parisians continue on with their days around her, she stares at the picture for a while, thinking about her childhood games back home.

[05:40]

She sighs, then picks up her phone and calls her sisters. Would you girls like to go to the theater?

[05:57]

We are in Shanghai, China.

[06:04]

Julien is at home getting his two daughters ready for bed. Every Friday night is blanket fort night. The three of them sneak inside the fort. His eldest daughter lights a small lamp. His youngest daughter curls up on his lap.

[06:21]

They're going to read a story, but not just any story.

[06:26]

Julien continued drawing manga and even published a few of his stories for the world to see.

[06:36]

He opens the book on the first page, and even though they know the story by heart, he announces the title as if it were the first time.

[06:45]

*Tonight, I will tell you the incredible story of your great great grandfather, Duke, and the great fire.* Julien reads the story to them in Chinese, then in French, then in Chinese, then in French until they fall asleep.

[07:01]

Dreaming of ancestor superheroes saving China.

[07:08]

We are in Paris, in France. All we see is red and gold decorations for a special celebration. It's been one month since the new baby joined our family, my daughter, Mei-Ling.

[07:21]

And that means she needs to meet everyone. The whole family has come to see her: Those alive, those long gone and those still dreaming. Each one finds a spot at one of the 20 tables decorated with red eggs in jars with fresh ginger: symbols of happiness and life.

[07:55]

Hien is the first to arrive.

[07:57]

She boasts that she spent the night making 1000 Bahn Cuon for the whole family to enjoy. Rui isn't far behind, helping her with the bags. When Nong arrives, Mei-Ling laughs. He says excitedly, *What a voice she'll be able to sing Dalida songs in the taxi with us soon enough.*

[08:19]

( Grandma ) Uyen can't wait to see her. She waits impatiently behind Nong so she can take the baby's face in her hand and count: to five, two, three, four, five. *What a beautiful baby.*

[08:32]

Duke amuses his great grandchildren with his strength as he puts up the final decorations. My husband's French family quickly blends into the crowd as my aunts excitedly explain what everything means in our culture. Soon the room fills up: An ocean of smiling faces from near and far past and present are here, for her.

[09:05]

Then the ceremony begins. One by one, they come closer. Take her hand, make a wish for her future, and tie a blessed bracelet around her wrist. Each gives us a red envelope and a warm look. Some give gifts. Pao Kong slips something into my hand: Mei Ling's first toy, a little wooden horse.

[09:31]

Uyen, Hien and Julien go up together. They present a little red pouch. Inside: Rui's medallion.

[09:42]

Hien puts it around Mei Ling's neck.

The room is filled with silent happiness until... ( Baby laugh)

[09:57]

One night before Marilyn was born, I dreamt of this gathering. The truth is that reunion is only possible in dreams. The truth is, my family is scattered across cities and continents. When Mei-Ling was born, there was a lockdown. And flying was impossible. So instead, I installed the computer on the dining room table.

[10:17]

My husband put out a cake made just for the occasion, and I took Mei Ling in my arms and suddenly we went alone in Paris anymore.

[family skype call in Chinese, French and Vietnamese]

[10:39]

Thousands of kilometers away from each other, we were all here for her in La Maison.

[10:51]

I like to end my 10 minutes with this: Now you know, the story of my family, of our journey from Asia to France. It is the story of an immigrant family, like many others in the world, with our joys and sorrows, our hopes and dreams. It is a story of people who left their country and rebuilt everything elsewhere; people who founded their families in a culture that was not their own and who adapted and passed on their culture to their children.

[11:21]

Around them, they are sometimes asked where they come from, to explain where home is.

But home is here in France, but sometimes also in China, in Vietnam

And wherever it is, it is **ours**.

[11:43]

**This episode was produced by Studio Ochenta. Our executive producer is Lory Martinez, she is the voice of Mija in Spanish. Our senior producer is Melanie Hong. She wrote this season of Mija and is the voice of Mija in French and English. This podcast is fictional, but was inspired by her own family's immigration experience in Paris. Our translator and voice in Chinese is Lu Yan .Gabriel Dalmasso is based in Paris and created the music for Mija. Our illustrations and logo were designed by the London-based Belgian Congolese artist Tiffanie Delune. Many thanks to all the members of the familia who lent their voices throughout the season. Follow us on twitter & instagram @mijapodcast, m-i-j-a podcast to follow our latest news, bonus content and info on the future of our series.**

[12:28]

**Welcome to Mija Shorts! Psst. It's Lory Martinez, creator and executive producer of Mija Podcast. I have some news! It's not over yet.** Today is the first day of Latin Heritage Month in the United States. So every week since October 15th, we will be publishing short episodes with

stories from our Latin America in English and Spanish. You'll hear stories from all your Mija favorites: Rocky, Tatika, Mano and More. **Until next time, sending you besos and recuerdos from Mija!**

**FINAL DEL EPISODIO**