

## **Podcast Script**

**Mariana Montufar**

**Podcast Title: Latina Stories**

**Episode Title: Karen**

### **INTRO (0:00 - 1:06)**

HOST:

"Hello hello welcome back to another episode of this podcast of this series I'm doing with Latina women that I admire so much.

Today I have Karen Robles, who was one of my roommates, lifelong friend, even before we knew each other, our mothers knew each other and knew of each other. So it's funny how the universe just brought us together and kept us together. And now we are here close to graduating and just celebrating being women, strong, educated Latina women. And without further ado, I have Karen Robles. Hey, Karen."

GUEST:

"Hi. I'm so happy to be here. and that you picked me to be your Latina mami."

HOST:

"You really are. I love it.

This is just like a two girls chismeando. Like, don't even get, don't even worry about it. Don't trip chocolate chip. It's all good."

### **SEGMENT 1: [Heritage and Language] (1:06 - 5:48)**

HOST:

"I want to ask, so as I mentioned, you are one of the Latinas that I love and I admire and without further ado, I want to ask, what does being Latina mean to you?"

GUEST:

"It means embracing my culture in deeper ways than just saying, oh, I'm a Latina. It means acknowledging my ancestors and everyone who's gotten up to the point to where I began to exist so this is like my grandparents, my grandparents' grandparents. It's just acknowledging that there's a long lineage that came before me and that made me Latina. And also, um you're going to have to cut this shit out."

HOST:

"Okay."

GUEST:

"But shit I'm blanking."

HOST:

"You mentioned how you celebrate your heritage and your culture. Do you think that that celebration pairs with being a Latina and the reason I'm asking this is because of this common popularized trope label that has come into fruition called the *No Sabo Kid*. Do you believe that people who don't speak Spanish or who've had to or who like hide their Latin heritage are less Latino?"

GUEST:

"I don't think they're less Latino. I think that they're kind of repressing their roots and who they are just because the language is so connected to our beings, our personalities as being Latinos, you know? Like, most of our, I want to say, like, language and personalities and jokes and humor, like, no one can understand it because it's such a Latino thing, you know? Even other people have spoken Spanish, like, let's say from Spain, like, there's things that they just couldn't get because it's..

HOST:

"It's a cultural divide."

GUEST:

"Exactly.

Yeah. And I think that the *no sabo* kids, like you said, I feel like they should kind of try to tap into their roots and get to know about it a little bit. And I know that there's some people who say like, oh, just because I'm Mexican and I don't speak Spanish doesn't mean I'm any less Mexican and yes, I agree. But then there's other ways to explore your heritage without using the language.

That's true.

GUEST:

"But I think that there is a strong connection between the language and being a Latino."

HOST:

"I agree with you. I definitely, I believe that language is definitely the communication of our heritage. I do now sympathize with those quote unquote *no sabo kids* because some of them were taught that by their parents as a survival method."

GUEST:

"Yes."

HOST:

"But I think it's so important to continue to practice our heritage, to continue it on, because like assimilation, I personally feel is a genocide to culture because if we assimilate to American culture, then we're just gonna like disregard our actual heritage. And I mean, America used to be the melting pot of the world. And it used to be celebrated to be different, but to each their own."

GUEST:

"No, and it's so true. Like the assimilation thing, because like, where does it end, you know? Right. Like, when do we stop being when do we stop seeing less and less people speak in their culture? And then it'll become the norm.

So I have this tia and she's been here for like, I want to say over 20 years. She does not speak a drop of English."

HOST:

"Really?"

GUEST:

"Even say thank you. She will ignore you."

HOST:

"Wow."

GUEST:

"And I see it. It's a little bit, yes, let's say, okay, you need to learn some English, you know, for survival. But she's got it past that. And I see it as such a protest to like assimilation, you know, and like grounding herself and her roots into who she is."

HOST:

"Is your tia in California?"

GUEST:

"Yeah, she's in San Jose."

HOST:

"That's amazing because if you think, well, honestly, like, even California, you can survive without knowing English here."

GUEST:

"Yeah."

HOST:

"Especially in San Jose.. It's beautiful."

## **SEGMENT 2: [The Educated Latina] (5:48 -8:20)**

HOST:

Let me get back to the questions. What has your experience been like... I'm going to shift gears here, because, as you know, we're both college students, we're on the verge of graduating.

What has your experience been like navigating college as a first generation graduate?

GUEST:

"It's been treacherous."

HOST:

"Treacherous? In what way?"

GUEST:

"Cuz, I just feel like there's so many things that I still don't know about, and, like, looking for help and, like, even seeking a counselor. Like, I remember when I was in community college, I didn't seek out a counselor until it was my time to graduate. Yeah, and even now, I barely even go see a counselor. And when I do, it's like, they don't provide me with anything, you know? I feel like there's some kind of hidden knowledge that I should know about. Like, I don't know about these opportunities open to me, and maybe it's me being so busy all the time, you know, not really hanging out, like around school. Like most college kids do when they're, when they're not first generation, you know?"

HOST:

"Do you think that stems from also being Mexican American and we're notorious for not asking for help?"

GUEST:

"Yes. Because we're such do it ourselves, you know? Like, oh, this FAFSA thing, I could do it myself, you know? Oh, these scholarships. I could find one myself and then not do the application because nobody is telling me to.

And then there's just so many things that I feel like we're not. We're not making ourselves available to, just because we don't know about these things. Like, no one was there to teach us about it."

HOST:

"I think that just is definitely going to be something that our generation is going to have to change because, again, we're one of the first generations graduating, but I guess for others. Because Mexicans, for example, because we're Mexicans, had the lowest rate of graduation in for so many years. And it's, it's slowly increasing, but I think it's going to be up to us for our future generations to kind of guide them because like you said, that's something that we never

really had. Yeah. I guess it just takes time, unfortunately, and we're the ones who have to suffer through those trials."

GUEST:

"And it's just so difficult being first generation in your own family, but also being first generation in like your extended family and everybody else because it's literally no one you could turn to for help."

### **SEGMENT 3: [Balancing Two Cultures, Protest of Chisme, and Spirit Guides]**

**(8:20 -12:31 )**

HOST:

"With those two cultures that we have, have you ever felt a pressure balancing the cultures between being an American and being Mexican?"

GUEST:

"I do. Even now for the kids that I provide therapy for, some of the families, like, I feel so.. I feel like I'm too whitewashed for them and then for the for the white families, I feel like I'm too Mexican for them. You know? And it's from neither here or there."

But, no, I definitely do feel it. And it's like, it's something that I feel like it's present within them too. Like they acknowledge it. They'd be like, oh, what is this white girl gonna come and do? You know? It's like, who is this?"

HOST:

"I think that's always been tough. And again, that's just something we're creating as a new generation."

GUEST:

"Because there's going to be more of that later. "

HOST:

"Yeah, more challenges."

"Now, let's move to something else that defines us as women, particularly Latina women. Do you consider yourself a feminist?"

GUEST:

"Absolutely."

HOST:

"What does that mean to you?"

GUEST:

"It means advocating for womanhood. I feel like in our culture, we're so repressed."

HOST:

"Like, we're seen as victims of the patriarchy."

GUEST:

"Yeah, we're literally just seen as.. providers.

As women to breed children and then keep our mouths silent. That's why I read in this book.

That's why chisme was invented. You know why?"

HOST:

"No."

GUEST:

"Because women weren't allowed to speak their minds as much as men were. So women created chisme to like, speak about all those things that they were in a lot to speak about. in public, you know, like with other men and like other people present, within their own circles of women that they can trust. And it's so real."

HOST:

"So I feel like chismeando is another form of protest."

GUEST:

"It is."

HOST:

"That is so cool!"

HOST:

"What advice would you give younger Latinas who may not be in tune with their heritage?"

GUEST:

"I think I would say explore it if you're open to it. There's so many, like, cool things that you can learn about. I'd say about let's say Mexican-American history about like all the wars that went on about um how people used to live in Mexico, and about kind of just asking questions to your family members about what's say, your grandparents, let's say how, what did they do?"

HOST:

"What made them leave the country because that's probably the hardest thing that you could do is leave your home. Especially because our family loves Mexico, loves the land that they were born, born into and everything. And our culture is so rich, so can you imagine just leaving that? how hard that was?"

GUEST:

"And the culture is so rich. Like our ancestors knew so much. And it's it's so sad that when we're never going to get to like physically know it."

HOST:

"I guess like, especially like, if you have your, I like, you have your grandma. I feel like just reach out to your elders and learn as much as you can while they're still here. Like record their stories or because I don't have my grandparents and I wish I did because I would love to learn more. Learn their stories because they become our like, I feel like they become our guides when we pass on."

GUEST:

"They do. And I feel like my great grandmother, she's one of my guides, and I was in a Reiki session and they told me they were like, oh yeah, you have like three spirit babies that are just waiting to come in. And I was like one of them might be my great grandmother because she deserved a better life, you know? Yeah. And also within this community, because you said like, oh, look, record their stories a lot of my family, I don't think they would be comfortable sharing because of all the repressed trauma that they never spoken about, you know?"

HOST:

"That's true. That's true. I mean, only if they're comfortable.."

### **CLOSING REMARKS (12:31 - 13:37)**

HOST:

"Now, to wrap up this chismeando session, what is something that you're proud of, that your younger self would never imagine be possible?"

GUEST:

"Um, I guess moving out. Moving away from my family. Like, it's something I always wanted to do, you know, be independent and see life through my own lens because I feel like my parents really coddled me and try to protect me from this world. Like, yes, there's evil, but there's so much good. And like, so much that we're we don't get to experience because we close ourselves to it and I feel like the Latino culture; we're kind of close-minded in the aspect of our parents. Like they just fear everything. And I don't know why. It's just especially my parents. And I just feel like Little Me would be so proud of everything that I've accomplished for myself."

HOST:

"Well, I'm proud of you."

GUEST:

"I'm proud of you, too."

HOST:

"I'm proud of you. And I love you and I thank you for your time."

GUEST:

"I love you too. Thank you."

**END OF EPISODE**