

**Song Exploder**  
**Chet Faker - Gold**  
**Episode 54**

Hrishikesh: You're listening to Song Exploder, where musicians take apart their songs and piece by piece tell the story of how they were made. My name is Hrishikesh Hirway.

*("Gold" by CHET FAKER)*

Hrishikesh: Chet Faker is the stage name of Australian singer and songwriter Nick Murphy. His debut album, *Built on Glass*, won five ARIA Awards, Australia's version of the Grammys, including Best Male Artist, Producer of the Year, and Best Independent Album. In this episode, Nick breaks down the song "Gold," and traces the journey it took from a dream, to a cover, to a love song.

*("Gold" by CHET FAKER)*

Nick: This is Nick Murphy. I write, record, and produce under the name Chet Faker.

*(Music fades)*

Nick: The first thing I had for this song was that opening line [sings bassline].

*(Bass)*

Nick: And I dreamt it. I woke up with it in my head, in the middle of the night. And I have a voice memo of me, like, I mean, my girlfriend was asleep in the bed next to me, so I was mumbling, really quiet. It's, like, almost indecipherable.

*(Voice memo)*

Chet: I'm always recording ideas and stuff. So it wasn't like, "Ah okay, that's going to be a song." That was just a piece that got, like, put aside into my palette. And then after a few days, I was in the studio trying to cover David Essex, "Rock On."

*("Rock On" by DAVID ESSEX)*

Chet: He was this, like, heartthrob peanut boy from the 70s who had this, like, album. It was pretty soft, but there's a song in there, "Rock On." Ah, it's awesome!

*("Rock On" by DAVID ESSEX)*

*(Music fades)*

Chet: So I went to the studio like I normally do, and I was just messing around. I tracked the [sings bassline]. And I knew that I could sing the David Essex part over the top of it, the vocals. Like, [sings David Essex vocals]. Yeah, so it kind of fit. And I was like, "Yeah, that's cool, this can go with my "Rock On" cover.

*(Wurlitzer)*

Chet: But it started to sound really good, and I was like, "Nah, I'm not doing this as a cover, you know? I want to write my own song." So yeah, that's how I got to this part.

*(Wurlitzer)*

Chet: It was the bassline, but it ended up on the track being the Wurlitzer. I obviously tried to play it on bass first and realized I couldn't, because I'd just bought a bass, you know, I didn't know what I was doing. And I couldn't play, like a lot of it's really me just playing a section, and copy and pasting it. I can play it now, but I played literally one note for the whole song.

*(Bass)*

Chet: And then, I put drums.

*(Claps)*

Chet: These claps were done in my home studio in my mom's garage. I was living with my girlfriend at the time, and I would drive each day to the studio, which is where I first started recording, which was like, had like a tin roof so I couldn't record when it was raining, or if there was wind because the trees would brush on the roof.

*(Beat)*

Chet: I think I spent the most time on drum sounds than anything else. I spent hours looking for a hi-hat sound,

*(Beat ends)*

Chet: because the thing with drum sounds is, it needs to sound like it's in one cohesive space. You can't have, like, a hat that's like really close sounding, and then a kick that has distance, or it just puts people off and it loses that groove, the pocket's got to come from sounding like it's a real player. A lot of people put me in that electronic area, but a lot of that's because I don't have the real instruments, or the capacity to play them, or record them how I want. So I always envisioned, kind of, realer drums, and I think my drum samples are getting more and more like that.

*(Beat)*

*(Beat ends)*

Chet: I was in love. And you only fall in love a couple times in your life, like depending how lucky you are. And I have this, like, inbuilt like distaste for anything that's so cheesy in a way, but I kind of had to sing that, you know? I had to sing that.

*(Vocals: "You gotta know, I'm feeling love / Made of gold, I never loved a / 'Nother one, another you / It's gotta be love, I said it / You gotta know, I'm feeling love")*

Chet: When you're so in love, you don't care what anyone thinks. And you actually just want everyone to know that you're in love, you know, and you're annoying. I was kind of channeling that guy, or that part of me that wanted to, like, stand on a mountain and shout it out, you know? And in a way that attitude allowed me to do things in this song, that I would say would err on the cheesier side of things that I usually wouldn't do, because it was playing on that lovesick kind of vibe. I think this song is the highest I've sung in a recording ever. [sung] "Feeling love," it's like way up there, you know? I was playing off that, like, weak, fragile voice, but then harmonizing in the chorus with, like, big, brash masculine backing vocals, you know? Harmonizing "I'm feeling love," you know? That was the shout off the mountaintop kind of thing. Like I was literally shouting it.

*(Vocals: "You gotta know, I'm feeling love / Made of gold, I'll never love a / 'Nother one, another you / It's gotta be love, I said it")*

Chet: The identity of a song, which is often the hook or the chorus, that's the hardest. Every other aspect of a song you can work away at and improve. You can't work and work and work and get a good chorus. You either have it or you don't.

*(Vocals: "A heart will swell before it's hardened / With the flick of the hair, it can make you old")*

Chet: "Flick of the hair can make you old." That's like, you're so attracted to someone, this person can just do the smallest thing, and it can just make you feel like, you know, like you're done. In this case, it was just like how this girl would, like, flick her hair, and you'd just be like [sighs]. For me, it's like a punch in the gut. It's not always a good thing, love, it's kind of punishment because you just want to be with them all the time.

*(Guitar)*

*(Guitar ends)*

Chet: Well the guitar falls in again to that cheesy. I mean the line is like [sings guitar line].

*(Guitar)*

*(Guitar ends)*

Chet: Like that is just the cheesiest, you know what I mean [laughter]? It's like, dude with the window down, driving like, you know, down the highway with the shades on. It was okay, because I was kind of, I was in that zone.

*(Beat with loop)*

Chet: The outro, it's like a beat with a loop. And I really liked the vibe of that to get out of the ridiculous territory that this song took itself. It's, this song is so, like, grand, it's so ridiculous, I couldn't wait for another song, the next track, to bring it back.

*(Music fades)*

Chet: I had to reset it before the audio stopped, you know, an audio version of just being like, "No, just relax. Let's come back to reality, you know?" [laughter]

Hrishikesh: And now, here is "Gold," by Chet Faker, in its entirety.

*("Gold" by CHET FAKER)*

Hrishikesh: Visit [songexploder.net](http://songexploder.net) for more information about Chet Faker. I've posted the music video and a link to buy the track.

You can find all the past and future episodes of Song Exploder at [songexploder.net](http://songexploder.net) or on iTunes, Stitcher, or wherever you download podcasts. Find this show on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @SongExploder.

*("Put a Flower in Your Pocket" by THE ARCS)*

Hrishikesh: Next time on Song Exploder, The Arcs. It's the new project from Dan Auerbach of The Black Keys. Special thanks, this episode, to Christian Koons and Mickey Carter. Song Exploder is a proud member of Radiotopia, from PRX, a curated network of extraordinary story-driven shows. Learn more at [radiotopia.fm](http://radiotopia.fm). My name is Hrishikesh Hirway, thanks for listening.

*("Put a Flower in Your Pocket" by THE ARCS)*

*(Music fades)*