

**Song Exploder**  
**The Marías - No One Noticed**  
**Episode 308**

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. I'm Hrishikesh Hirway.

The Marías is a band from Los Angeles, made up of María Zardoya, Josh Conway, Jesse Perlman, and Edward James. They released their first EPs in 2017 and 2018, and their first album in 2021. But then, as you'll hear, there was a period of a lot of uncertainty around the band's future. Eventually, their second album, *Submarine*, came out in 2024, and it was incredibly successful. Stereogum called it one of the best albums of the year, and the band was nominated for a Grammy for Best New Artist. But all of that almost didn't happen. I talked to María about the making of their hit song "No One Noticed." The story's beginning, middle, and end all took place during different eras of the band's existence. In the middle section, when maybe they weren't going to even be a band anymore, María enlisted the help of Grammy-nominated producer Gianluca Buccellati. And I spoke to Luca for this episode, as well.

*("No One Noticed" by THE MARÍAS)*

*(Vocals: "Maybe I / Lost my mind / No one noticed / No one noticed")*

María: My name is María and I'm in a band called The Marías.

Hrishikesh: Do you remember what was happening on the first day that you started thinking about this song?

María: Yeah. It was 2020. Peak pandemic. So we were just in our apartment, writing songs.

Hrishikesh: And when you say "we," who's that?

María: Josh and I. Josh and I lived together at the time. Josh is also the drummer of The Marías. And so we would just wake up and write songs, go to bed, write songs. You know, we couldn't do much else except for write songs, and then just kind of spend time in nature and go on long walks.

And so, there was one morning I woke up, and I just... it was just a beautiful morning. I had all the windows open. And I just grabbed my guitar. And there's a chord progression that I just always find myself gravitating towards.

Hrishikesh: Hmm. What's that chord progression?

María: I'll play it for you. (laughs) I can write a hundred songs with this chord progression. And I think I, I have. This is just kind of what I jam to. But,

*(playing chord progression loop)*

I think the first complete song that I ever wrote on guitar was a similar progression, so I think it's just something about it that speaks to me. (chuckles)

So, yeah, that morning I was in my bed and I was playing the chords and then the melody...

*(voice memo of chords and singing)*

Just kinda came out. And I was like, oh, there's something here. And so I just hit record on my phone.

*(cont. voice memo)*

Hrishikesh: Had you and Josh been making music together for a long time before this moment?

María: Mm-hmm. Yeah. So we started making music together in, like, 2015. And we were working on our debut album at this point. And he was teaching me production at the time. I really wanted to learn how to, like, make my own demos. And so we had two workstations set up in my living room, so it was like his workstation with, like, a giant desk and that's where we would record most of our things.

And then, in the corner of the room was, like, my little desk, and like a little keyboard, and my little laptop. And so after kind of jamming on the guitar and having kind of a structure for the song, I was like, "Okay, like I think I'm ready to like, make my demo. Will you help me kind of put some of the foundational pieces together?"

*(first demo loop)*

So that's the loop that Josh made when he was teaching me production.

The genius of Josh is like, finding the right groove. And we call him, like, the heartbeat of The Marías. Because he's the drummer, but he's the producer as well, and he put that together so quickly, in, like, 20 minutes.

I had a lot of the words written. And then when he passed me this track, then

more started coming out.

And so I came up with the pre chorus, "I'd kinda like it if you'd call me."

*(Vocals: "(I'd kinda like it if you'd call me) / ('cause I'm so over being lonely) / May have lost it (I need a virtual connection) / I have lost it (be my video obsession)")*

Hrishikesh: I just wanna go back to the fact that this was during COVID times; do you think that what you were feeling around that was playing into what you were writing?

María: Definitely. I think, I mean, you can hear it in the lyrics: "Please be my virtual connection," you know, because we were connecting virtually with everyone. "I'm so over being lonely. I'd kind of like it if you'd call me." It's like, we're, we're together, feeling so connected in like, the virtual ways that we can connect. Everybody was Zooming, everybody was doing their Instagram Lives. You know, ways of connecting, but still feeling separate and still feeling alone.

And that same day, I was just kind of feeling like, well, I just made this little demo that I really like. I'm just gonna put it out.

So I just like, put it to a scene of *Paris, Texas*; I had just seen that movie, like, the night before. And there was a scene of, like, the woman crying, like, behind the booth.

*(clip of dialogue from Paris, Texas: "I hear your voice all the time. (sighs) Every man has your voice.")*

It was like she was feeling lonely, but still together, because there was a wall between them. And that's kind of how I felt during the pandemic.

So yeah, so I put the demo to that scene, and then I put it out on Instagram and that was it, until it wasn't.

*(demo instrumental fades out)*

With "No One Noticed," it was kind of a more melancholic, kind of sleeper song. And at the time, we were getting a lot of pressure from our label to write more uptempo. They were like tempo, tempo, tempo. We wanna hear María's bangers. (laughs) So I think that's why this demo was kind of ignored for so long.

Fast forward, a year later, and Josh and I separated romantically. And I was kind of at a crossroads of, okay, well what do I do now with my life, and what do I do, you know, with music? I thought, like, the band was over. So I was just kind of trying to figure out how I wanted to go about, you know, music. And I

remembered this song.

And I had a friend in the neighborhood who was a producer.

Luca: My name is Gianluca Buccellati.

María: And so I hit him up. I was like, "Hey Luca, I'm really going through it right now, man. Like, I have this song that I kind of wanna work on right now. I need an outlet. I don't know what's gonna happen with the band, but I still wanna make music. Will you work on these songs with me?" And he was like, "Yeah, come over. Like, come over right now."

Luca: So she just came over and we made a few songs. And then one day, she brought in the beginning stages of what became "No One Noticed."

María: So we took the track that Josh had created, with the drum loop and the guitars. And I was like, look, I kind of have a vision for this song, but let's, like, be in the moment and hash it out together.

*(synth bed)*

Luca's superpower is that he's so gentle in his approach. And so, like, you can just spill to him and like, he's just open ears, open arms, open heart. It was very free flowing, in terms of, "Hey Luca, I have this idea." "Oh, let's try it."

*(piano line)*

Yeah, so that was an idea that I had (laughs).

*(cont. piano line)*

And I was just throwing it out. I was like, "Luca, what if we did this line on piano?" Just like it, it feels very kind of, like, fairy-like.

*(add synth layers)*

LUCA: We had these layers. A lot of what I do, like, with producing is these like hidden kind of sounds that, like, fill up the space, but they, you don't really know they're there, but they're doing something.

*(add acoustic guitar)*

María: And so that's Luca playing that acoustic guitar. He really wanted me to record that acoustic guitar part. And I think we tried it, and I think I, like, fought him on it,

and I was like, "Please, you just do it." I'm good enough to write music on instruments, but when it comes to, like, recording them, I'm like, let me leave it to the pros.

And then you hear the acoustic guitar sort of like soloed at the end, and it kind of brings you back to the inception of the song, which is really nice.

Hrishikesh: The story of "No One Noticed" continues after this.

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Hrishikesh: So, how did things change lyrically between the original 2020 version and then, was it, you said it was a year later when you went to-?

María: Yeah, a year later.

Hrishikesh: So did you feel like it was changing at that moment because of where you were in your life from this sort of like, COVID loneliness song, to like a breakup loneliness song?

María: Definitely. "No one tried to read my eyes. No one but you, wish it weren't true." That was new.

*(Vocals: "No one tried / To read my eyes / No one but you / Wish it weren't true")*

And then the bridge was written as like a more yearning, relationship romantic part. I came up with it in a bathroom break. I, like, went to the bathroom and then just started like, "Come on, don't leave me, it can't be that easy, babe." And then I walked outta the bathroom and I was like, "Luca, what about this? I don't know where we should put it, but I kind of like it and I really like the lyrics that I'm singing." And so he was like, "Let's just record it, and then figure out where we wanna put it later."

*(Vocals: "Come on, don't leave me, it can't be that easy, babe / If you believe me, I guess I'll get on a plane / Fly to your city, excited to see your face / Hold me, console me, then I'll leave without a trace")*

And so we recorded it and it ended up being kind of its own little part that worked so seamlessly with the rest of the song.

*(Vocals with instrumental: "Come on, don't leave me, it can't be that easy, babe / If you believe me, I guess I'll get on a plane / Fly to your city, excited to see your face / Hold me, console me, and then I'll leave without a trace")*

Hrishikesh: What was your process for recording your vocals?

María: I just sang into, like, an SM 7B with, like, Luca's special sauce in terms of vocal production. He's worked with Arlo Parks who has a very breathy voice, and Biig Piig who also has this really beautiful, breathy voice. And so he, I think vocally was able to, like, bring out some really special things.

Luca: Just stacking left, right, and center.

*(Vocals: "No one tried / To read my eyes / No one but you")*

María: It was very in-the-moment. Like, if the first take sounded great, he is like, "That sounds great. Let's move on."

Luca: She's just an unbelievable vocalist. Unbelievable voice. Just so pure and nostalgic-sounding.

*(Vocals: "It's not right")*

It's like a one-of-a-kind thing. So I think what resonated with me was just the excitement of working with a voice like that.

*(Vocals: "Take our time")*

*(Add electric guitar)*

María: That's Jesse, Jesse Perlman. We all, Jesse, Josh, Eddie and I, all in the band during this time didn't know if the band was going to exist. So when I asked Jesse to come play on this song, kudos to him for being brave enough to be like, "Well, I don't know what's happening with The Marías. I don't know what this song is gonna be used for, but María really wants me to play guitar on this song, so I'm gonna do it."

So yeah, he came over, and Luca and I just kind of let him do his thing. We let him listen to the song and play whatever spoke to him.

*(electric guitar with Jesse's pedal)*

That's a pedal that he has. I love that sound so much. And that's very quintessential Marías. He uses that pedal a lot, in our songs and in the live

performances as well. It just gives like this really dreamy, kind of underwater quality to the chords, and to what he's playing.

And then, I had this melody. I came up with it as a synth line, when Luca and I were working. (sings melody)

*(solo synth line)*

And then when Jesse came in, we were like, let's see what this line would sound like on guitar instead of synth.

*(line on distorted guitar instead)*

And the tone was just so beautiful that we looked at each other and we were like, yes, this line has to be on this guitar. It, like, jumped out at you and really tugged at your heartstrings. I feel like the emotion that it gives is longing.

And then I was like, "Okay, well, what do we do now with this song?" But, then the Mariás did not break up. (laughs)

*(instrumental swells)*

Hrishikesh: Well, can we pause for one second?

María: Yeah.

*(instrumental cuts out)*

Hrishikesh: So, how did you go from not knowing what the future of the band was gonna be, to deciding that you were gonna keep going?

María: (laughs) Um, the label sent us to band therapy. I'm giving you so much information. The four of us went to band therapy, and then Josh and I went to therapy together, and then we all did individual therapy. And yeah, I think that, honestly, is what helped us the most. And then coming to the conclusion that we all love each other and respect each other and have such a strong foundation and such a strong friendship, but also this music that we've created together is really special. And we're not gonna let something come in the way of the music, which is so much bigger than a relationship or a romance or a breakup. I think we have something special, like, let's, let's keep it. Let's work to keep it. And we worked really, really hard to get to that place.

You know, Josh and I came back together, and started working past the romantic relationship and into a really beautiful friendship. And we were working through

some songs and we were working through this song in particular. Josh still had ideas, like, post-Luca and I's session in terms of like arrangement. He's like, "Let's cut this part out here. It's a little bit too long. Let's go straight into this part." So he had his producer hat on at the beginning, and then at the end as well.

And then after Josh made his final touches on the production, I had shared it with the label, along with a couple of other slower songs that we were working on. And you know, they kind of were like, these are nice, but let's see what else you got that's a little bit more tempo.

And I remember kind of just having, like, a sour feeling about it. 'Cause I'm like: "This song, like, I like this song. I love this song." And I'm also very impatient when it comes to writing and releasing. I mean, the day that I wrote the demo, I put it out on Instagram. So I was like, okay, well, if the label's not gonna let us put it out, I'm just gonna leak it on my own. And so I put it up on our website, led our fans to the site, and they downloaded it, put it up on YouTube, and then it started sort of circulating on TikTok and it started really making its rounds and people were really gravitating towards the song. And then that's why we decided to put it on *Submarine*.

Hrishikesh: You kind of forced the label's hand.

María: We did. (laughs) Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And, and it's kind of amazing how this is our biggest song on *Submarine*, and it's not your typical uptempo, sort of, banger.

And so that made me really happy, because we know the vision of our band, and we know the vision of our music and what we wanna put out, and what music we want to represent us. And so, at the end of the day, let's just try to do our thing, even if we have to fight for it.

Luca: I just remember them telling me, oh, we, uh, we're thinking of uh, putting this song on the album. I was like "Oh, yeah. Great. Awesome." And then, "Ah, yeah, we, we think we're gonna make it a single." "Oh yeah. Cool. Yeah. That's exciting."

And then I'd just periodically get texts from María being like, "Uh, Luca, it's streaming, you know, a million times a day." "Oh!"

And then they started playing it live, and I'd just occasionally just be getting videos from her of thousands of people screaming the lyrics to this song. (laughs)

Hrishikesh: I'm wondering, how the four of you feel about this song, given how it kind of went

through,

María: Mm.

Hrishikesh: These different stages of your relationship, really.

María: Mm-hmm.

Hrishikesh: Different kinds of relationships and, you know, way of music making, way of living together. And then all that stuff. This song kind of has existed through all those stages.

María: Yeah. Yeah, it did go through the process of Marías, and then not Marías, and then Marías, which was the process that we went through as a band.

Luca: It wasn't an easy time for them. And any record that I've made that actually means something, the person that I'm working with is usually going through something tremendous.

María: I mean, it kind of warms my heart in like thinking about that because we did break up as a band, and as romantic partners, but then we came back together as a band stronger than ever.

And you know, so I think this song is an honest reflection of that process. And so, it being the biggest song, I'm like, wait, (laughs) that's really beautiful and kind of poetic.

Hrishikesh: And now, here's "No One Noticed," by The Marías, in its entirety.

*("No One Noticed" by THE MARÍAS)*

To learn more, visit [songexploder.net](http://songexploder.net). You'll find links to buy or stream "No One Noticed," and you can watch the music video.

This episode was produced by me, Craig Eley, Mary Dolan, and Kathleen Smith, with production assistance from Tiger Biskup. The episode artwork is by Carlos Lerma, and I made the show's theme music and logo.

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creative process in general. You can find a link to the newsletter on the Song Exploder website. You can also get a Song Exploder shirt at [songexploder.net/shirt](http://songexploder.net/shirt).

I'm Hrishikesh Hirway. Thanks for listening.

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