

## Zach Bryan on Becoming Famous While Still in the Navy

The Joe Rogan experience I don't know about your twenties I don't know what you did in your twenties but my twenties have been like this crazy roller coaster They have just like it hasn't stopped And I'm like holy shit this is what they meant by the twenties I mean you're just over being 1010 17 years ago and you think you know everything when you're 22 and 23 it's so scary Of course decisions and shit you make it's crazy You got into you got into making music Well I say you were successful making music while you were still in the military right How old were you 22 when I started I started putting videos on Twitter and it was psychotic It was crazy because I did it for like I get all these messages all the time from people who are like hey man I was around when you release heading south I've been here from the beginning and I'm like wow really the very beginning you know and um I started putting videos on Twitter back in like 2017 and then I just kept doing it and doing it and doing it because I was in the Navy I had a lot of shit going on I had like I didn't believe in therapy because that's crazy in the Navy you know And uh I started just making music and I started posting on Twitter and people I'd get like five or six likes and I didn't care It was nice It was nice to go home It was nice to go home and feel the way I did and write and put music on Twitter I don't know It was kind of my validation in the world of I can write a song at least And then man one I was in I was training in Florida and one day I put like four or five videos up and they just went like crazy viral and I was like cool neat And then my life just kept going up and up and up and I was like at that time did you have any what were your your aspirations about recording No I didn't even know what it was That's why I'm like beginning records are shitty You never thought shitty But see when I recorded this when I recorded this I was about to like go inside I was like whatever I'll just throw this on the internet and it was like the iphone and it was like the number one voted Reddit video in the entire world I think I don't know But I was like getting calls from people I'm like what the hell's going on Everyone at work is like you're going viral I was like what And we're like literally like learning how to load missiles and shit I'm like cool sick man And uh it's it's been crazy and I never I never in my life envisioned being a musician Ever Period No I thought I was gonna my my old man was in the Navy for 25 years He was a master chief My mom was in the navy My grandpa was in the navy Both Yeah just that that like whatever And I was like I'm gonna be in the Navy till the day I die probably until I retire at least

And that was it That was gonna be my life And I was thinking about it yesterday how crazy my reality is now like coming back to Oklahoma and being around people and people like coming to get me in diners and be like take a picture of me I'm like what is going on man There's like 700 people hate me online I'm like bro I didn't fucking mean to do this I don't I'm sorry It's crazy I just kept going It's crazy It's absolutely crazy Yeah this is a crazy story right It is Yeah And being in the Navy for like nine years beforehand is even crazy because no one ever talks about that I'm like bro I busted my ass man I was I was like in Africa and fucking uh Bahrain and stuff And I was like what did you do in Africa In Bahrain I was uh this is a this is a crazy story in itself but I won't tell the whole thing Tell the whole thing shit So I'm opening a second Bud Light Let's go Like I said about my dad he was in the Navy for like 25 years So I was uh hey man look at you Hey mud Uh do bro I've always loved dress blues though That is sick Uh You ever heard that song Dress Blues by Isabel No you gotta it's beautiful It's beautiful But um my dad was in the Navy for like 25 years and my mom was in the Navy like I said earlier my grandpa was in the Navy And so growing up when I was like 14 years old I was like man I'm gonna be in the Navy That's all I wanna do I wanna like die for this country man's best country in the world I want to be in it I wanna experience that whole like Empire State Building thing where you like you're devoted to something And so I turned 17 and my dad was a recruiter in Oklahoma and I was like ok cool So he like helped me get recruited and I was supposed to go in the Navy as a diver But shit fell through my dad was like it'll be fine You'll get to boot camp and they'll ask you if you want to be a diver and then you could just say yes and it'll be fine So like ok sick So I get on a fucking bus and I'm like let's do this And I was nervous I was scared man I was terrified because I was like a kid You don't really know what to expect in the military And um I like end up at boot camp which is crazy and I was terrified and then I realized it was all just kind of routine and stuff like that And I got out of boot camp actually No that's not the whole story I was trying to be a diver and and uh one day they were like hey you're gonna get to you're gonna get to recla what you're doing And they gave me like two options and it was like be a master at arms which is like a cop in the military or be a aviation ordinance man which is like the dudes who like load the bombs and things on planes And I was pissed at my dad I was like what the hell man I thought you said I was gonna get to be a diver I called him I'm like dude you suck man And so my buddies were all a Os which in the Navy they're all fucking made fun of because they're all like big

old dumb idiots And then I became an A O and I went to a school to be an A O and it was amazing man I met some of those beautiful people I've ever met I've learned more than I've ever learned But while I I got stationed in Nebraska and and I hate I hate this I'm not gonna I'm not gonna oversell this because I don't want to sound tough but I trained to be a seal for like two years with this guy named senior Chief Lundquist at uh Omaha Nebraska And uh I trained really really hard I took a bunch of these PST S and I would call my mom like every day she would ask me how far I ran how far I swam how how many like how much I lifted and shit And then uh I don't take it lightly either I never I'm not tough It never happened But I wanted to go to buds really bad because like I said I wanted to do something that was greater than myself And then the day the day my package came back for the seal the buds thing My mom had died and I was like well fuck man This sucks This is crazy And all the while I was in A O and I hated it I hated it I was like oh shit Now I gotta be an ordinance man And um when she passed away I was like man I don't want to do that I don't wanna I don't really want to pursue that So I bitched out for sure And I wish I wouldn't have sometimes But like life is crazy And my chief my chief who's like high ranking he looked at me and he was like man you want to go out there and die or something Why do you want to do this so bad And I was like I guess you're right And it's one of those stories in my life where I kinda I look back and I'm like man if things would have been different what would have happened But uh she passed away and then I moved to Washington to be an ordinance man And then as soon as I fucking landed in Washington they sent me they sent me to the desert this Bahraini desert to like learn how to like build missiles and load missiles It's crazy and it was sick man It was beautiful So I and I was you had to build missiles as in like load them or as in like disassemble and reassemble or and this is this is different from EOD there's explosive ordinance disposal and then there's a OS which A OS are kind of just like the the little tiny baby cousin of not even they're not even connected EOD there's some bad ass guys A Os are just the dudes who build load arm and D on the bombs that are on the planes that are taken off just but just build bombs No big deal Yeah it's cool man It's neat And uh but fucking it's crazy So I was in the desert man I was fucking like 19 years old like oh shit ok I'm here and uh I was a I was a sand sailor for sure I never I never like uh was on a ship and so that was my first deployment and I fell in love with it I wanted to do it Like always I was like this is amazing I had this really great gunner Gunner is like your your officer above you And he just inspired me so much to be the

best that I could be like every day So I'd go into work and be dude I was a fucking kiss ass like in the navy everyone hated me because I was like let's do it let's go to war man let's go And we were just doing simple shit like eating dinner you know and uh but I I fell in love with it and I wanted to do it forever And so we would like launch planes out and like do the keys and shit to arm the missiles that took off and things like that And uh I forgot what your name question was I'm so sorry Like at the very beginning I don't remember what the exact question was either Oh Yeah just being in the Navy in general And uh what were we talking about We were talking about something in specific story Exactly And then I said I didn't want to tell the whole story And then I was like God damn it Oh I was just saying that I was in for like nine I was in for like nine years and no one ever talks about that shit now And I was like but and then I went to Djibouti Africa which was crazy That's why I asked you about Africa and I asked you about Bahrain That's that's what started it And then uh I was in Africa for like dude I've been in Africa for like a year of my life I was deployed there twice and it's like I loved every second of it because I'd wake up at 5 a.m. five AM every morning and like go eat breakfast go like load your plane go eat lunch What part of Africa were you in Djibouti And where's that The horn It's like right on the edge either top or I'm gonna sound like an idiot Was there a lot of wildlife No we were stuck on the base the whole time You can't even go off the base It's crazy It's camp lo here Yeah And it's but it's cool though because there's like eight gyms man and like food That's all you do And you're as happy as you're as happy as fuck because it's so simple And you you go to breakfast workout go do your job work out That's what it looks like there No way Yeah A little shitty where we were man It's cool And so you're just on the base and that's it Yeah And then every every m like whether there's like cluster bombs or whatever you'd like go you'd go assemble them or load them and shit And it was it was really crazy Yeah And then like I said one day I just like ended up like it was overnight one day I just went to fucking Jacksonville Florida and was playing my guitar on Twitter and it like blew up And then my chief was like hey man this is crazy You gotta fucking this is a this is a conflict of interest man I was like I think they were scared that I would show up to work and just be like fuck you guys man I don't need this You know it never happened I would never do that because I was so devoted to being in the Navy But they thought you they were losing all power over it Exactly Which is crazy to think about man And I I had this fucking my uh my gunner one day comes up to me and he's like hey man this is getting

crazy You gotta get out of the navy I'm like OK whatever uh do I have to And he's like yeah and I was like I'd rather not And he's like ok too bad And then he was like ok you'll be out of the Navy next week And I'm like that's crazy All right Been doing this for eight years now and then it took eight months to process me out of the navy and it was crazy because every day I would go into work and think like oh this is my last day in the Navy Cool for eight months This is my last day You got to work as hard as you possibly can man Make it count make it count make it count And every day I'd go in and just bust my ass and then dude find like six months and I'm like I'm in the fucking Navy forever man Sounds good Why is that is that just standard for paperwork It's never happened It's never had like I I think don't quote me but like Elvis Presley was the last guy who got like honorably discharged out to my music and I'm not I'm not like being arrogant in that either I think that's true And it just never happens like that There's been a lot of stuff with um like NFL players who are like at the academy the Naval Academy who like are really good at football and getting drafted in the NFL They have to like get transferred out and stuff like that but it's never happened like some Joe shit the rag man A o like me And that's when I knew it When do when my gunner called me that day and he was like pack your bags I was like holy oh this is that serious I called my dad I thought he was going to be disappointed because he was a master chief and stuff and I was supposed to be a master chief My dad had like a bottle of whiskey when I was a kid that said Master Chief Brian on it for me when I made master chief So I thought when I called my dad he'd be disappointed But he was like hey Mike come home do it And I thought it would flop I thought it I thought it'd be nothing in the year You were already successful online Yeah exactly Exactly But I still I still I never like played a show or anything And then we went like I gotta remember your first one It was uh the pageant in Saint Louis Missouri How many people there wasn't the very first one This is unfair to say like my best friends in Washington when I was in the Navy I used to play at this place called uh I used to play like shitty acoustic sets at this place called um Off the Hook where like all the sailors went like on the weekends and shit They had like and my best friends Austin and Kramer they used to come to the bar and watch me These two fucking dudes were looking at me play and every time I'd finish a song they'd clap for me man because they're they're real friends you know And that was like the very first show I ever played But the pageant in Saint Louis I got out of the Navy and um here's what's weird for me because musicians have a I'm talking way too much I apologize No not at

all Musicians have usually a pipeline which drives me crazy I don't know why but they have a pipeline of like oh man I played small bars and then I played bigger small bars and then I played the bigger bigger small bars Then I went to medium venues and then I went to bigger medium venue and they have this like thing where they they're proud of it of course which I would be too that's a journey But when I got out of the Navy I was already like there So I like hopped on a fucking tour bus So like hey you're going to the pageant in Saint Louis play How many people is that I think 4500 which was crazy for me because I never played a show and people blame me a lot for this shit Like they they get mad at me and I'm like bro I didn't fucking do this I didn't mean for this to happen and why are they mad at you I agree And it freaks me out too and I just like I wish I could just uh I wish I could just like talk to people and be like hey man