

## **Learning by Ear – Climate Change**

### **Episode 02**

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**Editing: Johannes Beck**

#### **CHARACTERS:**

##### **Scene 1:**

- LORNA (16)
- MRS KIMAU – SCIENCE TEACHER & LORNA'S MOTHER (45)

##### **Scene 2:**

- ALEX (15)
- MR LANSARD – ALEX'S FATHER AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DHOWVILLE (45)
- MR KAPOOR – MANAGING DIRECTOR AND OWNER OF THE NATIONAL POWER BOARD (60)

**Intro:**

Welcome to Learning by Ear and Part Two of our radio drama about climate change.

Carol and Lorna have found out about plans to built a thermal electrical power station in their home town – it's being billed by the local press as the solution to everyone's power problems. However, the girls suspect that the environmental implications could be disastrous for the town and the region.

Find out more as you listen to Episode Two.

**Scene One: in the kitchen at Lorna's house**

**SFX ATMO:                    KITCHEN SOUNDS – COOKING, RADIO,  
    OPENING CLOSING OF CUPBOARDS**

**1. LORNA:**                    Mum, do you really think we ought to be worried about this proposed power plant we were talking about in class today?

**2. MRS KIMAU:**            Well, I do, yes, if the newspaper article is correct and the plant is going to be the biggest in the region. You know, Africa is one of the most vulnerable places when it comes to climate change.

**3. LORNA:** I keep reading about climate change but I'm not sure if I really understand *how* it affects us here in Africa.

**SFX:** **PUTTING MEAT ON THE GAS TO FRY**

**4. MRS KIMAU:** Well, to put it simply, every continent, and every country, has always had traditional weather patterns or an "average weather" reading.

**5. LORNA:** What would ours be?

**6. MRS KIMAU:** Well, traditionally we've always had two rainy seasons – the long rains from April to May and the short rains in November. Then we've had "summer" from December to March, and winter from July to September when it's dry but cooler.

**7. LORNA:** That's not what happens now though. We're in January and yesterday there was torrential rain.

- 8. MRS KIMAU:** Exactly, Lorna. That's what I mean by traditional weather patterns. When I was younger these seasons were very defined. You could almost predict to the day when the long rains would start – we'd all rush out onto the street shouting for joy, the farmers would celebrate the certain return of the rains.
- 9. LORNA:** So, why isn't it like that anymore?
- 10. MRS KIMAU:** Well, this is the phenomenon scientists call Global Warming – when the earth and the oceans warm up leading to changes in our traditional weather patterns.
- 11. LORNA:** And I suppose that's related to the Greenhouse Effect we learnt about in class today.
- 12. MRS KIMAU:** That's right. There have been several reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change - a group set up by different governments and the United Nations – they were tasked with evaluating how much of climate change really is caused by us humans.

- 13. LORNA:** What did they conclude?
- 14. MRS KIMAU:** The key thing they discovered is that the world *is* warming up and most likely, they say, due to human activity. That could be from building environmentally unfriendly power plants and from driving everywhere in cars. The fuels we use like diesel or gasoline emit carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas.
- 15. LORNA:** So that could be why it's so much hotter and we have to sleep with our fans on. I can't remember sleeping with a fan on when I was little.
- 16. MRS KIMAU:** You didn't have to use a fan then. It *is* hotter these days. We seem to have long periods without rain - droughts. And then we seem to get incredible downpours of rain, especially in the north of the country, and then you get flooding.
- 17. LORNA:** I remember seeing pictures of the flooding on TV. Cars were floating and people had their homes washed away.

**18. MRS KIMAU:** Meteorologists and scientists and even your grandfather, who's always said he knows when the rains are coming, can't seem to predict the weather anymore. So, of course, for people in Africa who rely on the land, sea and the weather for their jobs – things are getting very tough.

**SFX:** **SOUND OF FAT FRYING GETS LOUDER**

**19. LORNA:** Oh Mum, I think you've burnt the fish!

**20. MRS KIMAU:** Damn. I wasn't concentrating. I get really worked up about the environment especially for you youngsters.

**21. LORNA:** I can see that.

**22. MRS KIMAU:** One thing though, Lorna. There are many sceptics who think rising temperatures and sea levels and the changes in the weather are just part of the natural order of things and it's cyclical. And, of course, even scientists can't be one hundred percent sure.

**23. LORNA:** Alex in the class is like that. At least he was until today – but I think that must be partly to do with his dad. He's a politician and apparently he has something to do with this power plant.

**24. MRS KIMAU:** Really? Well, you must help him understand. It might be worth lobbying his dad. Find out who's behind the plant and get them to give some direct answers – find out whether they're taking environmental considerations seriously.

**25. LORNA:** That's an idea! Maybe we could even form some kind of group to stop the power plant? But Mum, can we eat now, I'm starving!

**26. MRS KIMAU:** Me too.

**SFX:** **SOUND OF PLATES, CUTLERY CLINKING**

## **Scene Two: Proposed site for thermal power station**

**SFX ATMO:**

**SEA SOUNDS, WAVES**

**27. MR LANSARD:** So, Alex, here we are, this is the site of the proposed thermal power station you've been going on about. Nothing much has happening yet, but in a few months time, once they've got the final go ahead, you can expect to see a lot of activity here.

**28. ALEX:** But Dad, it's one of the most beautiful spots along the coast. We always come to play football just down there on the beach.

**29. MR LANSARD:** Alex, but there's plenty more beach to the south. And besides, don't you think it's a bit more important to have electricity than a beach to play on?

**30. ALEX:** And what about all the waste from the power plant? Bunker fuel generates a lot of toxic waste. Wouldn't it all seep into the sea? Wouldn't we all have to breathe in the fumes?

**SFX:**

**FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING ON THE GRAVEL**



- 31. MR KAPOOR:** Good afternoon, Gentlemen. Mr Lansard, how are you? Good to see you're checking out the site. Who's this young man?
- 32. Mr LANSARD:** Ah, good afternoon Mr Kapoor. This is my young son, Alex. He's very interested in helping me get publicity for your power plant so I'm just giving him a guided tour of the site.
- 33. MR KAPOOR:** Very good, that's splendid. Isn't it exciting to think this time next year we could all be having twenty-four hour electricity. No more blackouts – TV whenever you like, light for your homework. Endless possibilities...
- 36. ALEX:** Yes Sir. But people in my class at school are a bit worried it's going to ruin the environment. I mean, we've been studying about climate change and ...
- 37. MR LANSARD:** ...and that's all very interesting, Alex, but Mr Kapoor is a very busy man and doesn't have time to hear about your studies. **(now talking to Mr Kapoor)** Sorry about my son. You know how they are when they're young.

**40. ALEX:** I'm not saying there shouldn't be a plant, Sir. I am just suggesting there could be cleaner, more environmentally friendly ways of powering a plant, instead of diesel or bunker fuel. What about water power or even wind energy? So much wind comes off the sea here.

**43. MR KAPOOR:** Mr Lansard, perhaps your son isn't the best person to help us publicise this plant. I think you should be using your position as Dhowville's member of parliament to exert a bit of pressure on people, help push through this power plant. There's a lot of money at stake. And of course if it all goes through, there'd be a cut for you.

**48. MR LANSARD:** I don't envisage there being any problems, Mr Kapoor.

**49. MR KAPOOR:** Good, that's what I want to hear. Now I must get to my meeting with the board of investors.

**SFX:** **CAR STARTING AND DRIVING OFF ON GRAVEL**

**51. MR LANSARD:** Alex, how dare you speak to such an important person like that?

**52. ALEX:** I'm sorry Dad, but I think he's lying about the environmental damage. Don't *you* care about our environment?

**53. MR LANSARD:** That's enough, Alex. I'm grounding you for a month. Get in the car, we're going home.

**SFX:** **OPENING, CLOSING CAR DOOR AND DRIVING OFF**

**END OF EPISODE TWO**

**Outro:**

And that's all from Learning by Ear for today.

This series about climate change is written by Victoria Averill.

Join us next time when Joshua sees first hand how climate change is ruining his dad's livelihood. And discover if Joshua is going to join his school colleagues.

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Goodbye for now and thanks for listening!