

Learning by Ear

“Unce upon a time... in Africa”

Episode 10: “APARTHEID”

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CHARACTERS:

Intro/Outro (female/male)

Scene 1:

- June (13, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)
- Mum (38, female)

Scene 2:

- Mrs. Makuani (35, female)
- Girls (13, females)
- June (13, female)

Scene 3:

- Mum (38, female)
- June (13, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)

Scene 4:

- June (13, female)

- Linda (13, female)
- Passenger (35, male)
- Bus driver/Dad (40, male)

Scene 5:

- Dad (40, male)
- Grandpa (77, male)
- June (13, female)
- Mum (38, female)

Intro:

Hello and welcome to the final episode of “Once upon a time... in Africa”, the “Learning by Ear” series about African History! In this last program, June is listening to a very famous song which reminds Grandpa Peter of the difficult times the population of South Africa were passing through when that song was first released. Stay with us to find out more about a regime and system of government that lasted until a very short time ago: Apartheid...

Music 1 (“Pata Pata”, Miriam Makeba), then fade in SFX

First Scene: At home late afternoon.

SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire), June singing along to “Pata Pata”, playing on the radio, footsteps approaching. In the background: chicken, goats, birds, then fade under

1. Grandpa: (singing, too, approaching) Hello June...
Do you know who used to sing that song?

2. June: (singing, then stops) Hi, Grandpa! No. Who was that?

3. Grandpa: Miriam Makeba, a very famous South African singer who died in 2008.

4. June: (not interested, singing) Ah! I love this song! I always get in a dancing mood when I hear it, don't you, too, Grandpa? (singing again)

5. Grandpa: Well, I don't actually know what the lyrics are about. You're right though, it sounds very happy! But the life of Miriam Makeba wasn't always that happy...

6. June: (starting to get interested) No? Why is that, Grandpa?

- 7. Grandpa:** Because Miriam Makeba grew up during Apartheid.
- 8. June:** **(meditative)** Oh... yes... Apartheid! I've heard about it! It was when people were separated by race, right, Grandpa? **(Grandpa: Hmhm!, like saying "Yes")** It wasn't that long time ago, was it?
- 9. Grandpa:** No, it wasn't... It was officially abolished only in 1990. But by the time this song came out, Miriam Makeba was living outside South Africa, in exile. She had been one of many artists who opposed Apartheid and struggled for a worldwide boycott of the South African regime.
- 10. June:** Who were responsible for that, Grandpa?
- 11. Mum:** **(from a distance)** June, don't even think you're going to stay there talking! There's much too much to do! Come on!
- 12. June:** **(speaking loudly)** Oh, Mum! Let Grandpa explain just that!
- 13. Mum:** **(from a distance)** TWO minutes!

14. Grandpa: **(serious)** The organization that was mainly responsible for Apartheid lasting so long was the National Party of the Boers. It had been in power since 1948. **(pause)** Well, before 1948 some laws institutionalizing racial segregation had already been in place. But from 1948 on those laws were consolidated.

15. June: And who were those Boers?

16. Grandpa: The Boers, my Daughter, are part of the white population of South Africa. They originally came from the Netherlands but also from France and Germany and settled and formed colonies around the Cape of Good Hope. They've been living there for a long time now.

17. June: But what did they want to achieve with Apartheid?

18. Grandpa: They wanted to maintain the power in South Africa. And they believed that white people were better than black people. So only if you were white, were you lucky.

19. June: **(meditative)** They must have been crazy!

20. Grandpa: They even misinterpreted some passages from the Bible to support their foolish ideas! Can you imagine that? Education, for instance, wasn't only very strict, it was also very religious.

21. June: **(curious)** Grandpa, how would it have been for me to go to school in South Africa during Apartheid?

Flashback music

Second Scene: At a school in South Africa during Apartheid.

(NOTE: The students are around 13 years old!)

SFX: School bell, then footsteps from many people approaching on cement ground in a synchronized pace and entering a building. In the background: birds, then fade under

22. Mrs. Makuani: **(serious, from a distance)** Good morning, girls!

23. Girls: Good morning, Mrs Makuani!

24. Mrs. Makuani: **(serious)** Before we start our prayers, I want you to show me your hands! I don't want any dirty girls in my class! Come on, raise your arms! Come on!

SFX: Footsteps from one person slowly approaching, then fade under

25. Mrs. Makuani: **(speaking while walking)** Very well!
Humm... yes! Very nice hands, Linda! Very pretty, all of my girls! **(pause)** Ha? Why are you hiding your hands, June?

26. June: **(softly)** Oh, no reason, Mrs. Makuani!

27. Mrs. Makuani: **(serious)** Show me your hands immediately, June!

28. June: **(softly)** Hmmm... yes, Mam!

29. Mrs. Makuani: **(pause, then shocked)** Hah! How... how dare you...?

SFX: Someone hitting on someone's hands with a ruler

30. June: **(shouting, weeping)** Ai!!!! Aaaaaiiii! I just wanted to have my nails polished once, Mrs. Makuani...

33. Mrs. Makuani: **(shocked)** You wanted to have your nails polished?! Do your parents know about that?

34. June: **(softly)** No, Mam, they don't.

35. Mrs. Makuani: **(serious)** Oh they don't? They will now! Because I'm writing a letter that you'll bring back SIGNED by them tomorrow! And after school you will stay behind in detention! Do you understand, June?

36. June: **(softly)** Yes, Mam!

37. Mrs. Makuani: **(serious)** Very well! Now we can pray!
(concentrated, murmuring) Our Father, who art in heaven, Holy is Your Name; Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven... **(FADE)**

Flashback music

Third Scene: At home at the end of the afternoon.

SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire). In the background: chicken, goats, birds, then fade under

38. Mum: **(from a distance)** Your two minutes are up long ago, June!

39. June: **(speaking loudly)** I'm coming, Mum! Just a little bit longer! **(talking to Grandpa)** Grandpa, how bad! Was it the same in every school?

40. Grandpa: Extreme discipline was a very important aspect in education. But the conditions strongly differed between the different school types – for white children, for coloured and Asian children and for black children. White children, for instance, had brand-new books, they had lots of sports fields and everything. And this although they definitely were a minority.

41. June: **(surprised)** Huh! So there were different types of schools? **(Grandpa: Hmhm!, like saying “Yes”)?**

- 42. Grandpa:** **(sighing)** Everything was segregated in South Africa, daughter!
- 43. June:** What do you mean with everything being segregated, Grandpa? It can't have been every, every thing...
- 44. Grandpa:** Everything. After all, that's what Apartheid meant: people living apart from each other! Beaches were separate, swimming pools were separate, public libraries were separate... Everything you can imagine! A black person wasn't allowed to enter a cinema in a white zone or go to a restaurant or a hotel unless it was to work.
- 47. June:** Did nobody break the law?
- 48. Grandpa:** **(amused)** The way I know you, I guess you would be one of the radical opponents!
(pause) And do you know what would happen in a simple bus trip? Imagine Dad was the bus driver...

Flashback music

Fourth Scene: In a bus in South Africa during Apartheid.

SFX: Bus arriving at a bus stop, people stepping in/out, then inside the bus, people talking. Background: traffic

49. June: (whispering) Come on, Linda, let's go sit up front! I'm fed up with always sitting at the back!

50. Linda: (whispering) No, June, I'm afraid! They will throw us off the bus!

51. June: (whispering) Oh, forget that, Linda! If nobody makes a protest, we will die under these miserable conditions! Now, come on!

SFX: Footsteps inside the bus, people talking. Background: traffic

52. June: (whispering) You see, it's not that difficult!

53. Linda: (whispering) You were right! It's much nic...

54. Passenger: (speaking loudly) Hey! You two there! Where do you think you are?

55. June: (calmly) Are you talking to us, Sir?

56. Passenger: **(getting angry)** Of course I'm talking to you!
Do you see any more black people sitting
here at the front?

SFX: People murmuring. Background: traffic

59. Linda: **(afraid, whispering)** June, it's better if we go
to the back! Everybody's staring at us...
(murmuring) Ah, why did I agree to come
and sit here?

60. June: **(firmly)** No, Linda! Now I want to see what
this will lead to! **(pause)** Ah!

SFX: Bus suddenly braking, footsteps fastly approaching, people murmuring. Background: traffic

61. Bus driver: **(aggressive)** Then tell me, what do you think
this will lead to?

62. June: **(murmuring)** Oooops!! **(softly)** It won't be far
it seems...

63. Bus driver: **(aggressive)** You have two choices: Either
you go immediately and sit where you're
allowed to or your trip ends here!

64. June: (firmly) You can open the door then! We'll get out here!

SFX: Bus door opening. In the background: people murmuring, traffic

Flashback music

Fifth Scene: At home in the evening.

SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire, kerosene lamp), footsteps approaching. In the background: crickets, then fade under

65. Dad: (amused) So, Father, you think I would do such a thing if I was a bus driver during Apartheid...

66. Grandpa: Oh, hello Charles, I didn't hear you coming!
(laughing) Of course I don't think such a thing of you, my Son! It was only to show that even a black driver would react that aggressively in such a situation!

- 67. Dad:** **(amused)** I see...
- 68. June:** Hi, Dad! Sit down and join us!
- 69. Mum:** **(from a distance)** Charles, tell your daughter to come help me!
- 70. Dad:** **(speaking loudly)** Five minutes, Wife!
- 71. Mum:** **(from a distance, murmuring)** FIVE minutes?! I gave her TWO minutes one hour ago!
- 72. June:** **(impressed)** But, Grandpa, was it possible for a black girl to act like that?
- 73. Grandpa:** **(laughing)** Well, in fact, you're right! It wouldn't have been the most usual behaviour. **(serious)** But there must have been people who protested! The most famous and most successful struggle was that of the ANC, the African National Congress. That's the political party of Nelson Mandela who became South Africa's first black President – and the first one elected in a fully fair and democratic election. And today that party is still in power.

74. June: It must have been one of the happiest days in the lives of the black population in South Africa, hein, Grandpa!

75. Grandpa: **(meditative)** It must have been, Dear! And do you know what the people said while waiting for hours in the endless queues to the election polls when Mandela was elected?

76. June: **(curious)** What, Grandpa?

77. Grandpa: They said that they had been waiting for so many decades that a few hours was nothing but some very happy moments!

Outro:

And this is the end of the final episode of “Once upon a time... in Africa”, the “Learning by Ear” series about African History!

This series was written by Marta Barroso. It was intended to focus not only on African History but also on the unique oral traditions of passing on knowledge, which is so typical for many African societies. It’s like the saying goes: “When an old man dies in Africa, it’s like a library burns down”. Remember, you can listen to this or other “Learning by Ear” episodes again and write your comments about the program by visiting our website at:

www.dw-world.de/ibe

Good-bye and stay healthy!