

Title: Under the Mango Trees

EPISODE 6: A responsible choice

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Sc. 1 Interior

List of characters:

- Children in background
- Endurance (m, 13)
- Desirée (f, 16)
- Bongo (m, 20+)
- Narrator

Scene 2 Interior

List of characters:

- Lorraine (f, 18)
- Alice (f, 40+)
- Eric (m, 18)
- Narrator

Scene 3 Interior

List of characters:

- Lorraine (f, 18)
- Bongo (m, 20+)

- April (f, 39)
- Desirée (f, 16)
- Narrator

INTRO

Hello and welcome to *Learning by Ear* and to the sixth episode of our story called “Under the Mango Trees”, a radio drama series by Romie Singh. It looks at questions of family life and more particularly, family planning and contraception.

In today’s episode Eric is excitedly plotting about how he can get closer to his twin sister’s best friend, Desirée. Her younger brother, Endurance, laughs about the games he and his friends play at school. Join us now as Desirée is about to receive some unexpected news!

SIG.TUNE UP HOLD UNDER AND FADE

NARRATOR: Desirée was still shaking. Bongo, the music agent, had phoned her just a few minutes ago to tell her what he said was good news, but then the phone line went dead. Now she is impatiently waiting for him to call back. Meanwhile, her brother, Endurance, seemed to be in a mood to chat. He seemed to be a lot happier these days.

Sc. 1 Interior

1. **SFX:** children playing in the background

2. ENDURANCE: You know. It's fun when we play with these plastic things in the break. We fill them up with water and throw them at the girls!
3. DESIRÉE: (distant) Plastic things?
4. ENDURANCE: (laughing) Stop checking your phone all the time!
You know what I mean Des.
5. DESIRÉE: No, I don't – balloons or what?
6. ENDURANCE: (giggling) No, stupid! Condoms! We fill condoms with water and chase the girls with them!
But please don't dare tell Granma!
7. DESIRÉE: Of course not. But they are not plastic.
Where do you get condoms from, anyway?
8. ENDURANCE: From the men's toilets in Kentown fastfood shops.
9. DESIRÉE : (laughing) Endurance! Well, I hope you know what they should be used for, apart from making water bombs!

10. ENDURANCE: Of course I do. Mrs. Davies always talks about condoms when she tells us about HIV and Sexually-Transmitted Diseases in our life skills class.
11. DESIRÉE: And you know how to use them properly, I suppose.
12. ENDURANCE: (moaning) Oh Sis, please. Don't embarrass me!
13. DESIRÉE: Ok! Pretend you are Mrs. Davies and I am a pupil. What would you say to me?
14. ENDURANCE: (Mimicking teacher's voice) Well, Desirée, you naughty girl! Sit up straight!
15. DESIRÉE: Come on, Endurance! Be serious! Try and tell me!
16. ENDURANCE: (clears throat) Ok. The best condoms are made of latex. You roll the condom over the boy's um... er... you know what, and then when it is properly in place, it stops the girl from getting pregnant and protects the boy and the girl from getting HIV or STDs, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, that is. Oh yes, and you always use a new

one each time. And you must check its expiry date! And never damage it with your fingernails. Ok? How did I do?

17. DESIRÉE: (clapping) Well, you left out quite a lot, but good!
Seven out of ten!
18. ENDURANCE: Well, I know a lot about it from my friends, especially the older boys. Mrs. Davies always stops just as it begins to get interesting!
19. **SFX** Phone rings
20. DESIRÉE: (excited) Ok, Endurance. This is an important call. It's Bongo phoning back. I recognise his number, so please leave the room and let me talk to him in peace,.
21. ENDURANCE: (cheerfully) Ok. I'll be a good boy! (sticking tongue out). Errrr
22. DESIRÉE: (big sigh, then speaking louder) Hallo? Oh, hi Bongo!
23. BONGO: Sorry we got cut off, earlier. Are you alone? Can we talk?
24. DESIRÉE: Yes. It's fine. I'm listening.

25. BONGO: Ok. Mac is another Granville music agent and a much bigger fish than me. He heard the recordings of your singing and (with emphasis) he... was... blown... away. He says you should go through to the competition, not Lorraine. You have The Voice!
26. DESIRÉE: Me? But that's crazy!
27. BONGO: Well, the Pop Business is crazy! We want you to take part in three week's time... Desirée? Are you still there?
28. DESIRÉE: Bongo. I can't! Lorraine's my best friend. I couldn't do that to her. She is expecting to go through, not me.
29. BONGO: Listen, it's tough about Lorraine but I've been told I can't enter you both. It's either you or her. Or you enter independent of me, without my support.
30. DESIRÉE: You don't understand. I've got five children to look after. There's no one else and I can't just abandon them. Then there's the transport. I can't afford to...

31. BONGO: (strictly) Do you want to be a singer or don't you.
Don't waste my time, Des, or your talent.
This is a once in a lifetime chance.
32. DESIRÉE: But I can't. It's... it's out of the question.
33. BONGO: Is that your final answer?
34. DESIRÉE: (long pause) Yes, Bongo.
35. BONGO: (Frustrated sigh) Oh, man! This is crazy. Look if
you want to talk again, about anything, just
call me and hang up and I'll call you right
back. You can't let this chance go, Des.
Now, like I said, don't tell Lorraine
anything. I'll do the talking. I hope this is
not good-bye, Des.
36. DESIRÉE: breaks into tears.

NARRATOR: Desirée sobbed her heart out! What a bad trick fate had just played on her, bringing her so close to fulfilling her dream of being a singer. Would she ever get the chance again? Twenty kilometres away, Lorraine was also eagerly awaiting a phone call. But when it did ring, it was not for her.

Scene 2 Interior

37. **SFX:** General dinner time noises - plates, cutlery, stirring food etc.
38. **SFX:** Phone ringing
39. LORRAINE: (Scraping chair) (off mic) Hallo? (disappointed)
Oh, yes, I'll call her. (whispering) Mum?
It's for you!
40. ALICE: (off mic; loudly) Hallo? Oh, hallo! Yes... no... yes...
wonderful! Excellent, no that's fine. They
will be so pleased! Right. We'll talk in more
detail tomorrow. Thank you so much for
letting me know. Bye.
41. ERIC: (chewing food) Good news?
42. LORRAINE: Please, the phone! Quick, mum!
43. ALICE: (happy) Yes! Very good news. That was the
regional health officer. At last! The
community clinic is finally coming to
Mtelera! She said it will be ready to open
in two months. And she told me they have
chosen me to manage the clinic!

44. ERIC: Wow! That's wonderful! You'll be moving up from a doctor to a manager, just like Dad.
45. ALICE: (Stirring spoon in pot) Except I will still be very hands on. (tasting food) Hmmm, you've made an excellent sauce, Eric. You know, we've got some land in Mtelera, inherited from my great grandparents, and a house too.
46. ERIC: (Shocked) We have a house? In Mtelera?
47. ALICE: Yes! Your Dad and I have often talked about retiring to the country one day. I could get that house renovated and live in it while I'm working there.
48. ERIC: (forcing himself to sound calm) Right. Good. These potatoes are done now, Ma.

NARRATOR: As soon as he heard about the family house in Mtelera, a plan began to form in Eric's head. But he would have to let it mature slowly. Now was not the time to think clearly. Lorraine was hopping around waiting for Bongo to call with the good news that she was expecting. Finally, the phone rang!

Scene 3 Interior

49. **SFX:** Phone ringing

50. LORRAINE: (very excited) Yes?

51. BONGO: Lorraine?

52. LORRAINE: Yes, Bongo? I've been waiting for your call. Tell me, did Mac love it?

53. BONGO: More than that. He was totally blown away. You're on gal. Can you do it?

54. LORRAINE: Of course! And Des?

55. BONGO: Na! She doesn't have what you've got. You're The Voice, Lorrie!

56. LORRAINE: Oh, wow! But I'm sorry for her. She was so good.

57. BONGO: Yes, well. So, come down to the agency before Friday and sign the contract. I've got great confidence in you!

NARRATOR: So, Lorraine remained blissfully ignorant that Desirée had in fact been chosen over her but had refused. While Lorraine was over the moon, Desirée wondered if she would ever get another chance to put her singing ambitions first.

58. **SFX:** Wind in the trees up, evening ambiance

NARRATOR: Walking in the mango grove Desirée felt the presence of her ancestors, the mothers, fathers and children who has passed away before. She shared her thoughts with them all, as the wind blew softly through the trees. And she could almost hear her mother's voice whispering back.

59. **APRIL:** (with echo) Don't be sad now. You did the right thing.

60. **DESIRÉE:** I did? I feel so sad, Ma. But I am also amazed. They thought I was the best! That has to mean something! Maybe I really could become a singer! If only. Will I ever be able to dedicate myself to singing?

61. **APRIL:** (with echo) The children are too small to live alone, and your brother Endurance also needs you. He's getting stronger with your love and attention. He's growing up well.

62. **DESIRÉE:** I know. And I love him so much, Ma! But he misses Papa. Papa has just disappeared. He's somewhere in Granville but I don't know where. Mama, Eric is kind.

63. APRIL: (echo) Eric is kind.
64. DESIRÉE: He says he will help me to find Papa.
65. APRIL: (with echo) Find Papa. Poor Babu. Go and look for him. Find him. He is your father. Oh, and sing to me my child! You will get your chance again! You are still young. Sing to me now with your beautiful voice.
66. DESIRÉE: Sings signature tune

OUTRO

And that's all from Learning by Ear for today, a programme for young people which highlights how contraception can help improve a family's quality of life and gives women, and also their partners, the ability to decide when to start a family. Please join us next time for Episode Seven when Eric gets more ideas about how to get closer to Desirée and Lorraine's ambitions to become a pop idol begin to look a bit shaky.

Remember, if you want to hear this programme again or tell friends about it, please visit our website at: dwworld.dedeb.com
Good-bye until next time.

END OF EPISODE SIX