

Learning by Ear Literacy**“A GIRL FINISHING SCHOOL”****Episode 03:** “*Elinam's Letter*”**Author:** Frédéric GAKPARA**Editor:** Yann Durand**Translator:** Anne Thomas

Characters: **Latifa** (*15 years old, Papa Wali and Mamoua’s daughter. In her ninth year of school. Very intelligent, has never had to retake a year. However, she has to face her parents’ decision to make her drop out of school just as she is preparing for her exams.*)

Zakia (*20 years old, a very emancipated girl, Latifa's friend, has just found a job in a tourist agency thanks to her technical qualifications. She travels a lot and meets lots of people in her job.*)

Papa Wali (*52-year-old father of three – his eldest son is Elinam, then comes his daughter Latifa, and another son Souleyman. He runs a metal workshop but he is illiterate and his business is doing less and less well because he cannot adapt to new technologies and is faced with new competition.*)

Epiphane (*18-year-old boy, employed by Papa Wali. Very intelligent but illiterate because he never had the chance to go to school. The more problems his handicap causes him, the stronger his desire to learn.*)

Mamoua (*39 years old, Papa Wali’s wife and the mother of his children. She is expecting a fourth child. She is an illiterate housewife and runs a small maize porridge business in front of her house.*)

Teacher (36-year-old man, teacher at Latifa's school, very attached to her because of her intelligence and good results)

INTRO

Hello and welcome to Learning by Ear for the third episode in our series "A Girl Finishing School" about illiteracy and education.

*Young Latifa has been at home for almost two weeks now. She has been doing housework and selling porridge since being sent home from school because her fees had not been paid. Her father sends her to the post office where she hopes a letter from her big brother Elinam will be waiting. The letter is there and that's all there is. Although she is tempted to open it and very curious about the contents, she goes to see her friend Zakia at work before bringing the letter to her father. So, let's listen now to the third episode entitled: **Elinam's Letter**.*

Scene 1, IN ZAKIA'S OFFICE

Zakia and Latifa

1. SFX ATMO: OFFICE SOUNDS. SOUND OF STEPS AND KNOCKING

2. Zakia: Yes, come in!

3. SFX: **THE DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES**

4. Zakia: Hey Latifa! What a surprise! What's up? Are you all right?

- 5. Latifa:** (**Excited**) Hello Zakia! Dad sent me... to the post office... and guess what...!!!
- 6. Zakia:** (**Spontaneously**) Elinam's letter!!
- 7. Latifa:** Yes, but we can't open it.
- 8. Zakia:** But we can guess... Um, let's see... (**Changes voice**) *Dear Dad, as I told you on the phone, I do not agree to my dear sister Latifa having to leave school. Who knows? She could be the key to the whole family's happiness? I think she could even have a career as a politician one day!*
- 9. Latifa:** (**Laughter**) Oh really? A politician no less! (**becoming serious again**) Zakia, I'm scared. Maybe my whole future depends on this letter. Can you imagine?
- 10. Zakia:** Yes. You know what?
- 11. SFX:** **TELEPHONE RINGS**
- 12. Zakia:** Excuse me a second, Latifa... (**Picks up**) Hello! (...) Hello, Sir! (...) Yes, they've just arrived. (...) In a quarter of an hour, Sir! (...) Yes, we're going to the museum. After lunch, we'll go to a traditional souvenir market. (...) Yes, yes! Today is shopping day! Tomorrow we'll go visit the historical sites. (...) Yes, Sir! (...) Thank you, Sir.

13. SFX: TELEPHONE BEING HUNG UP

14. Zakia: That was my boss, the managing director. I have to accompany the tourists. I'll be gone all day and probably all next week.

15. Latifa: Sounds like fun. I'd love to come with you.

16. Zakia: I'm afraid you're not allowed to come on the bus without insurance. But let's talk about this letter... you know what?

17. Latifa: What?

18. Zakia: Since you're the one who reads his letters to him, try to read it to yourself silently to begin with.

19. Latifa: Yes, I will...

20. Zakia: Take my money, like we said, and then you can tell your dad that the post office gave it to you and that Elinam sent it.

21. Latifa: Yes, OK.

22. Zakia: Make sure the letter doesn't say something else that could contradict your story. Although I can't imagine that Elinam went back on his word and wrote something else.

23. Latifa: (**Evasive**) I hope he didn't...

24. Zakia: Come on! Be positive!

25. SFX: OPENING DRAWER + NOTES BEING COUNTED

26. Zakia: Here you are. You'll be able to pay your school fees and for the exams.

27. Latifa: Zakia...

28. Zakia: What? I have to hurry. My tourists are waiting for me!

29. SFX: COMPUTER BEING TURNED OFF

30. Latifa: Many many thanks! God will pay you back!

31. Zakia: Give God a rest! Let's go!

32. SFX ATMO: CHAIR + ARMCHAIR + DOOR BEING OPENED AND CLOSED + KEYS + SOFT BACKGROUND NOISE OF TOURISTS IN THE CORRIDOR

33. Zakia: (Kisses Latifa good bye) Good luck, sweetie.

34. Latifa: Thanks, Zak... Have a good trip!

35. Zakia: Thanks! Bye! (Talking to the tourists in the corridor)
Everyone on the bus, ladies and gentlemen, we'll be leaving soon.

36. SFX ATMO: SOUND OF STEPS AND VOICES

MUSIC

NARRATOR: *Papa Wali is dozing inside his workshop. His employee Epiphane is working away at an iron bar while humming. Latifa arrives, more anxious to open the letter and read it to herself than to her dad.*

Scene 2, IN PAPA WALI'S WORKSHOP

Papa Wali, Latifa and Epiphane

37. Epiphane: (Humming)

38. SFX ATMO: METAL SAW + HAMMER

39. Epiphane: Hey! Latifa, welcome!

40. Latifa: Thank you! Hello, Epiphane!

41. Epiphane: How are you?

42. Latifa: I'm fine! Is Dad here?

43. Epiphane: Yes, he's inside.

44. Latifa: Thank you! (**She starts off**)

45. Epiphane: Oh, are you in such a hurry?

46. Latifa: (From afar) Yes, I'm in a hurry.

47. SFX ATMO: METAL SAW + HAMMER

48. Papa Wali: (Snoring)

49. Latifa: Hello, Dad! (No answer) Dad!

50. Papa Wali: (He wakes up with a start) What? What?

51. Latifa: Sorry! Hello!

52. Papa Wali: (Sounding sleepy) Yes... Hello... What's going on?

53. Latifa: You sent me to the post office. There was a letter from Elinam for you so I came by to give it to you.

54. Papa Wali: (Yawning loudly and stretching out) Give it to me!

55. SFX: ENVELOPE BEING OPENED + LETTER BEING UNFOLDED

56. Papa Wali: (He gives her the letter) Read it to me! You can sit there.

57. SFX: **CHAIR BEING PULLED OUT**

58. Latifa: **(Reading the letter)** *Hello Dad. I hope you, Mum, Latifa and Souleyman are well. Dad, I don't want you to worry about me. I am giving some classes and can afford to pay my rent. So I want Latifa **(Reading more slowly)** to go back to school.*
(Silence).

59. Papa Wali: Is that all?

60. Latifa: No, Dad. Let me carry on with the letter. **(Carrying on)** *I know that you have got some financial problems at the moment. That's why I am sending this money to cover all her fees this year...*

61. SFX: **ENVELOPE BEING CREASED**

62. Papa Wali: **(Looking in the ripped envelope)** Where's the money?

63. Latifa: Here it is.

64. Papa Wali: **(Taking it)** Why did you keep it?

65. Latifa: The post office gave me the money separately.

66. Papa Wali: How much is it?

67. Latifa: Sixty *euros*.

- 68. Papa Wali:** Are you sure that that's all the money he sent?
- 69. Latifa:** You can call Elinam to ask him, Dad!
- 70. Papa Wali:** Continue reading the letter.
- 71. Latifa:** Yes dad. Elinam writes: (**Starts reading again and insists on each word**) *That's why I am sending this money to cover all her fees this year. Think about all the money that you have already invested and give her a chance to continue. She has to take the exams and she needs all of us to support her. She may have already fallen behind because of the days she's spent at home. Give her some time to catch up. And don't force her to make porridge early in the morning.*
- 72. Papa Wali:** *Don't force her to make porridge in the morning?* Elinam dares say that to me! (**Raising his voice**) Tell him it's because of that porridge that we're surviving at the moment. He dares to write such things because of 60 euros! He just went off to university. We spoilt you children! Here's the money. Take it! It's for you. Otherwise you'll say I'm paying off my debts with your money. You can go!
- 73. Latifa:** But Dad, I haven't finished reading the letter.

74. Papa Wali: You want to force me to listen to this. This is mutiny! You've been conspiring the whole time. Go on, I'm listening!

75. Latifa: Ok, I continue: *Papa, I am counting on you to persuade Mom that this is for the greater good. Thank you for everything you have done until now. For your love, your attention, your presence and especially your sense of humor. Take care! See you soon. Love to all of you, Elinam.*

76. Papa Wali: Is it finished?

77. Latifa: Yes, Dad!

78. Papa Wali: So there's no money for me. Just thank you, thank you. Everything he said "*love*" and all the rest, just gets a "*thank you*" (**He sighs**) Papa Wali's children!! (**Shouting**) I do everything I can to pay your rent and when you get a bit of money all you think of is your sister's education? Not even (**changes his voice**) "*Dad, take this euro to buy yourself a beer*" Oh! (**In a soft voice to Latifa**) Latifa!

79. Latifa: Dad?

80. Papa Wali: Go straight to school to pay your fees before going home. You're going back to school tomorrow.

81. Latifa: Thank you, Dad!

82. Papa Wali: (**Grumbling**) That's it, thank you Dad! Can I eat these thank yous? (**Very firmly**) Keep the rest of the money! I won't be paying for any textbook photocopies anymore.

83. Latifa: Yes, Dad.

84. Papa Wali: I'll talk to your mother tonight. I hope God will help her understand!

85. SFX: **STEPS GOING AWAY**

86. Papa Wali: (**Alone**) Oh, Wali! Well, that's one problem less for you...

87. SFX ATMO: WELDING MACHINE

MUSIC

NARRATOR: *While a very happy Latifa goes to school to pay her fees, her teacher pays a visit to her mother, Mamoua. She is outside at her porridge stand, and is a bit tired.*

Scene 3, AT PAPA WALI'S HOME

Mamoua and the teacher

88. SFX ATMO: **HENS INSIDE + LITTLE TRAFFIC + PASSERSBY
AND CHILDREN PLAYING**

89. Teacher: Hello, Madam!

90. Mamoua: **(Exhausted)** Hello, Sir! **(Yawning)** How much would
you like?

91. Teacher: None, thank you auntie. I am looking for Latifa's house.

92. Mamoua: This is it.

93. Teacher: Is she here?

94. Mamoua: No. Is there a problem?

95. Professor: I'm her main teacher. She hasn't come to school for
almost two weeks. I came to see how she was.

96. Mamoua: Oh! Her teacher! She was sent home because her fees
hadn't been paid.

97. Teacher: Are you her mother?

98. Mamoua: Yes, Sir!

- 99. Teacher:** But the others who were sent home have come back. Didn't you go and work things out for her?
- 100. Mamoua:** (**Very embarrassed and hesitant**) Er...Her dad doesn't want her to carry on going to school.
- 101. Teacher:** What? But why?
- 102. Mamoua:** It was her dad's decision.
- 103. Teacher:** But Latifa is an excellent student. She shouldn't be forced to leave school. It's a bad decision, auntie.
- 104. Mamoua:** It wasn't my decision, Sir.
- 105. Teacher:** But then someone has to talk to her father. You risk ruining your daughter's future. I'll speak to the headmaster. I'm off now, auntie. Tell Latifa that her maths teacher came by.
- 106. Mamoua:** I will. Good bye, Sir.
- 107. Teacher:** Good bye, madam.

Music

OUTRO:

Little by little, the situation seems to be turning in Latifa's favor. She will go back to school. But will she be able to hold her own against her parents who are still looking for solutions to their financial problems? To find out, tune in to the next episode of "A Girl Finishing School", a series about illiteracy and education.

To listen again to any of the Learning by Ear episodes that have already been broadcast by Deutsche Welle, visit our website dw-world.de/lbe. If you want to write to us, just send an email to:

lbe@dw-world.de. Thanks for listening and all the best till next time!

END OF 3rd EPISODE