

Learning by Ear 2010

Series: 'Shall I tell you something? African Fables for a culture of peace'

Episode: 05 Kassi and Kaloo

Author: Ibrahima Ndiaye

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SHALL I TELL YOU SOMETHING? AFRICAN FABLES FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE

EPISODE 05: „KASSI AND KALOO“

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CHARACTERS:

1. NARRATOR (female, 40 years old at least)
2. KING KATONGO (male, 30 years old at least)
3. WEAVER BIRD (female, about 20 years old)
4. KASSI THE HORSE (male, about 20 years old)
5. KALOO THE HORSE (male, about 20 years old)
6. Two or three GUARDS (male, age irrelevant)

INTRO / PRESENTER:

Hello and a warm welcome to the 5th Episode of the Learning by Ear series "Shall I tell you something? African fables for a culture of peace". Well, I guess you've already been in the situation when someone has tried to convince you to do something that you consider to be wrong. And if this person is your boss or someone you really like, it is especially difficult to say no. But sometimes it really has to be done, as you will hear. Listen in now to our tale „Kassi and Kaloo" and find out how brotherly love triumphs over the blind rage of a warrior.

1. MUSIC (play as background for the entire script)

2. NARRATOR:

On that day it was very hot, but a light breeze was caressing the African earth like a fan.

3. SFX: Light breeze blows

4. NARRATOR:

In the wooded savannah, the sun rose and coloured the beautiful landscapes around Babakadi, a powerful kingdom ruled over by a feared King, Katongo Bisso na Bisso. His name, Bisso na Bisso, meant 'he who likes to make others work'. The King had the reputation of being ruthless towards his people and never missed an opportunity to prove it.

As soon as he came to power he surrounded himself with an army, which was dreaded even beyond the borders of Babakadi.

Katongo had a passion though: he loved horses.

5. SFX: Neighing horses

6. NARRATOR:

He only had eyes for them. He loved watching these fascinating creatures galloping and, above all, he loved collecting them. He was willing to go to the ends of the earth in search of rare specimens. One day, he heard about the kingdom of Ndjambour whose King Baye Fall oversaw every year the birth of horses of unrivalled beauty. One year, two foals with coats of a particular excellence, were born there. One was as black as pepper. His name was Kassi. The other was as white as salt. He was called Kaloo. They had grown up together and had even become known as 'the inseparable'.

Once he had heard about the two horses, King Katongo couldn't sleep anymore. One day, he called for his guards and told them:

7. King KATONGO:

"Guards, saddle my horse. I have to talk to Baye Fall immediately. I want these pearls of beauty to be mine. Baye Fall must give them to me! Hurry!"

8. 2-3 Guards:

"Yes, Your Majesty!"

9. SFX: Sentinels run away (*played by actors*)

10. NARRATOR:

And the faithful guards ran away to carry out their mission. But King Baye Fall was very reluctant to part with his two precious animals. After long and difficult negotiations though, he accepted, not without great regret and at a high price, to sell King Katongo one of the coveted horses, the white Kaloo.

However, even after he had acquired the white horse, King Katongo continued to desire the black one, Kassi. But Baye Fall was obstinate about keeping him. This angered King Katongo, whose pride was injured. And so he declared war on Baye Fall.

11. SFX: Neighing horses, Kassi & Kaloo

12. NARRATOR:

King Katongo carefully prepared his opening attack. Kaloo, now his favourite war horse, was richly harnessed and Katongo was flanked by his dreaded warriors. King Baye Fall, in turn, was mounted on Kassi, his favourite horse, and they faced the attacking forces. And then the opposing sides confronted each other on a plain of sparse grass.

13. SFX: War sounds: whistling arrows, gunshots, horses neighing loudly, men shouting

14. SFX: KASSI & KALOO: Neighing horses

15. NARRATOR:

It was a merciless battle. King Katongo, mounted on Kaloo, was surrounded by his cavalry. They attacked his opponent's forces who were spearheaded by Baye Fall, riding Kassi. Katongo's and Baye Fall's firearms thundered all around, the two armies continuously shot arrows, tipped with mystical poisons. Gunshots, horses neighing loudly, men shouting - the noise of the pitched battle was deafening. The fighting continued for ages in spite of the many deaths on both sides.

After several days of combat, King Katongo, still riding Kaloo, addressed his enemy sitting on Kassi's back:

16. KATONGO:

"Baye Fall, if you don't let me take your horse, I will take your life. How dare you defy me, the King of Babakadi?"

17. NARRATOR:

At that moment, the horses Kassi and Kaloo came face to face. They glared at each other, their eyes filled with hatred. They didn't remember being born in the same stall, or growing up together. They were driven by the stubbornness of their kings, and didn't think at all for themselves. They confronted each other, then their nostrils dilated and they lathered with rage. They circled each other and then, suddenly, they began to fight like the worst possible enemies.

18. KASSI & KALOO: Fight between two horses

19. NARRATOR:

Their hooves flew in all directions. Neither king was able to keep balance and they were both thrown by their mounts onto the muddy battlefield, deadly injured. But Kassi and Kaloo continued to fight. They were bleeding everywhere but neither of them wanted to give in. Exhausted, they stopped fighting for a moment from time to time to catch their breath but then resumed their fierce struggle with renewed energy.

If only they could have remembered their childhood together in the same stable and their joy of escaping with one another into the country!

But no, nothing could stop them. Blinded with rage and hatred they fought so hard, that eventually they collapsed on the ground like two baobab trees felled with an axe. Suddenly, there they were, lying on top of each other, completely exhausted.

20. KASSI & KALOO: Horses neighing exhaustedly

21. NARRATOR:

There they laid, motionless, sleeping exhaustedly as if they had only ever known wars and battles.

At dawn, while they were still asleep, a weaver bird happened to be passing by. She climbed up into a baobab tree to see more clearly, what, from afar, had filled it her with terror.

The corpses of men and animals were scattered across the field, and the ground covered in arrows, gunpowder and blood. The flies had arrived already, soon to be followed by the hyenas who were drawn to the stench of mutilated bodies. A few egrets hurried to the scene, followed by ibises, to devour the insects and catch the flies clustering on the horses' gaping wounds.

The weaver bird wanted to find out what had caused this carnage so she decided to try and wake up our two exhausted horses.

22. WEAVER BIRD chirping

23. WEAVER BIRD

"Well, horses, it's time to wake up now. Tell me, what happened at this bloody place? Why all this carnage?"

24. KASSI beginning & KALOO finishing the sentence

"Our masters waged war on each other... and we fought alongside them."

25. WEAVER BIRD

"Wait a second! Why does a war between humans concern you? Let them fight amongst themselves alone, if they are so stupid not to make the most out of life! Don't you have anything better to do than hurt each other?"

26. KALOO

"What you say is true. But we only carry out our masters' orders! What we think is never taken into account."

27. WEAVER BIRD

"What foolishness! You are all the same! Would you jump into a lake full of crocodiles just because your masters told you to? Don't you have brains of your own? Even if they are your masters, that doesn't mean that you should carry out their orders blindly! It's such a shame because you are so beautiful and because you could have been friends."

28. NARRATOR:

At these words, the two horses looked at each other and lowered their heads, ashamed of the harm they had caused each other. Then, after staring at each other for a long time, Kassi, with his eyes full of pain and regret, said to the white horse:

29. KASSI:

"Is your name not Kaloo?"

30. KALOO (in tears):

"And you? Are you not Kassi?"

31. NARRATOR:

Finally, they had recognized each other again! Tormented, they rubbed their heads together. Seeing them like this, it was easy to imagine their pain. They had not seen each other for such a long time! The weaver bird was relieved too and said to herself:

32. WEAVER BIRD

(Talking to herself in a low voice)

"Ah, it worked! Well, it did not take much effort! Maybe I should work as a professional eye-opener from now on. Creatures seem to find it difficult to see the truth even if it staring them in the face. It could be a great job. And probably much better paid than selling worms at the market..."

(Aloud to the horses)

So you knew each other already! I must go now. My work is waiting. I wish you a long and happy life."

33. WEAVER BIRD chirps and flies away

34. NARRATOR

After the weaver bird had flown away, Kassi was the first one to speak:

35. KASSI

"Kaloo, we have been so blind! We should have never got involved in this conflict. There is nothing worse than war. Look at the state we are in now!"

36. KALOO

"Kassi, you are right. Let's go. From now on, we will always stay together."

37. SFX: Horses trotting

38. NARRATOR:

And so Kassi and Kaloo trotted off together side by side, and remained "the inseparable" for the rest of their lives. And they are still living, even today!

Thus our fable goes to sea, and he who will smell its perfume first, will go to heaven.

39. Music

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OUTRO:

Maybe you have also been in the situation where you have carried out orders blindly and did things you would normally never do. Have you? If so, then hey, don't keep your stories to yourself. Talk about them! Tell them to your friends or write them down and send them to us via e-mail at lbe@dw-world.de.

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