

Learning by Ear 2010

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

Episode: 03 Lipua-Lipua

Author: Ibrahima Ndiaye

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

EPISODE 03: „LIPUA LIPUA“

AUTHOR: IBRAHIMA NDIAYE

**EDITORS: YANN DURAND, STEFANIE DUCKSTEIN,
NAÏMA GUIRA**

TRANSLATION: NATALIE GLANVILLE-WALLIS

PROOFREADING: TONY DUNHAM

CHARACTERS:

1. NARRATOR (male, about 40 years old)
2. LIPUA, THE LITTLE PIGEON (female, 15-20 years old)
3. OTHER BIRDS (3 or 4 fem. voices, can also be spoken by narrator)
4. NINKI NANKA THE SNAKE (female, about 20 years old)
5. SIMBA THE LION (male, about 30 years old)
6. KARAMBA THE KING (male, about 40 years old)
7. 2 GUARDS (male, age irrelevant)

INTRO/ PRESENTER:

Hello and welcome to Episode 3 in our Learning by Ear series ‘Shall I tell you something? African Fables for a culture of peace’. Fables are traditional stories, often featuring animals, containing a moral truth. These stories have always fascinated the young and old alike, and are good ways of explaining how humans tick. This series takes a particular interest in conflicts and how peace can be achieved. And, if you listen carefully you may find a grain of truth that might help you now or later in your personal life. For example: how a small creature can become a big hero - how the weak can become strong. Stay tuned and follow us into the life of the courageous little pigeon “Lipua-Lipua.”

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

2. NARRATOR:

Long, long time ago lived Karamba, a greedy and wicked King. He was so selfish that he shamelessly robbed the peasants of all their crops. He did not even leave them a single grain. It was so bad that the birds began to die of hunger. A general assembly was called. The birds were so desperate they decided to go and complain to the King. But who would have the courage to do so?

3. SFX : Birds chirping

4. NARRATOR:

Nobody?!

5. LIPUA THE PIGEON (after a while, in a small voice):

“Yet, me! I’ll do it!”

6. NARRATOR:

... exclaimed Lipua, the little pigeon, in a very small voice and moved to the centre of the gathering.

7. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“I will go.”

8. NARRATOR:

All the other birds looked at her, dumbfounded.

9. SFX: Nervous fluttering of bird’s wings

10. OTHER BIRDS:

“You are mad! Karamba will gobble you up in one bite!”

11. NARRATOR:

... they all said to her. But since no one else wanted to do it, they let her go. Early the next morning, she set off.

12. SFX: Fluttering of bird’s wings

13. NARRATOR:

Her heart was pounding. Everyone had warned her she could not stand up to Karamba the King.

14. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“But someone must challenge this tyrant and save the birds from starvation.”

15. NARRATOR:

...Lipua repeated to herself.

16. SFX: Fast fluttering of bird's wings

17. LIPUA THE PIGEON: panting

18. NARRATOR:

As she landed on a branch of a baobab tree to catch her breath, Lipua heard in the bushes beneath her the clear voice of the little poisonous snake, Ninki Nanka.

19. NINKI NANKA THE SNAKE: hissing

20. NINKI NANKA THE SNAKE:

“Why are you panting so hard, small Lipua? Where are you flying to, so fast and at such an early hour?”

21. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“Oh! I am going to confront the great King Karamba.”

22. NARRATOR:

In despair, she told the whole story to the snake. Ninki Nanka listened carefully and promptly made a decision:

23. NINKI NANKA THE SNAKE:

“You know what? I am going to come with you and help you. This tyrant has killed so many of us, and has used their skins for clothes and as talismans. Maybe we can defeat him together.”

24. NARRATOR:

Delighted, Lipua asked her new friend to hide under her wings and she then set off again. Lipua struggled to fly because of the weight of the snake and decided to take another rest just before reaching the palace. No sooner had she landed on an anthill, than Simba, the Lion, who was roaming around, called out in his deep voice:

25. SIMBA THE LION roars

26. SIMBA THE LION:

“Lipua, why are you so breathless? Are you being chased by evil spirits?”

27. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“Oh no! I am on a mission! I have the difficult task to speak to King Karamba.”

28. NARRATOR:

She related the whole story to Simba, and when she had finished, the lion said to her:

29. SIMBA THE LION:

“I also bear a grudge against King Karamba. He has already killed many of my brothers and has decorated the walls of his palace with their skulls. Climb onto my back, both of you, and I’ll take you to the palace.”

30. NARRATOR:

Relieved, Lipua with the snake under her wings, settled on the lion’s back, and striding in great leaps and bounds they reached in record time the town in which Karamba the King lived. There, Simba threaded his way among the merchants who supplied the palace. Once there, Simba sat in the middle of the market place and frightened all the people there with his noble bearing and loud roar. In the meantime Lipua flew towards the guards posted at the entrance:

31. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“May I see the King? I have to tell him urgently the plain truth.”

32. ALL: Burst of mocking laughter of 2 to 4 people (*played by the actors*)

33. NARRATOR:

The guards laughed and replied:

34. GUARDS (mockingly):

‘You, little bird, you dare to challenge the King!? Have you lost your mind? Rather than listen to you, the King will chop you up and make a soup out of you!’

35. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“Let me through, for time is short.”

36. NARRATOR:

Amused, the guards showed her a path lined with acacia trees leading to the entrance of the royal palace. Lipua took a deep breath and entered the palace. The two guards were so busy making fun of the audacious bird that they didn’t even notice the snake and the lion sneaking inside as well. King Karamba was thoroughly enjoying himself, sitting at a table covered with things to eat. He was about to put a big spoonful of porridge into his mouth, when the little pigeon landed on the side of his plate.

37. LIPUA THE PIGEON: cooing

38. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“May peace be with you, Your Majesty!”

39. NARRATOR:

Surprised, Karamba leaned back and folded his hands on his bulging stomach.

40. LIPUA THE PIGEON:

“Your Majesty, forgive me, but because of you, misery reigns over this country. You live in luxury while your people are dying of hunger.”

41. NARRATOR:

Outraged, the King snapped his fingers.

42. SFX: snapping fingers (*played by actors*)

43. NARRATOR:

Immediately, two guards appeared.

44. KING KARAMBA:

“Arrest this insolent bird! How dare such a vulgar little pigeon taunt me at dinner! Put her in a cage and force-feed her well. Once she is nice and fat, make a spicy soup out of her and serve it to me for dinner.”

45. NARRATOR:

Lipua was immediately locked in a small cage and was force-fed, which was not too difficult since she was starving. Thus, she became chubby and pot-bellied in only three days. One evening, Karamba sent for one of his servants.

46. KING KARAMBA:

“Fetch me the bird. I feel like a nice and tasty pigeon soup.”

47. NARRATOR:

The servant obeyed immediately. However, when he opened the cage and put his hand inside to seize Lipua, Ninki Nanka came out of her hiding place and bit the servant’s thumb. The snake’s venom had an immediate effect and the man dropped dead on the spot. As his first servant didn’t come back immediately, Karamba sent a second one. When the latter approached the pigeon’s cage, he was struck down by Simba the Lion.

48. SOLDIERS cry

49. SIMBA THE LION roars + strikes with his paw

50. NARRATOR:

Karamba who was waiting for his servants to reappear, lost his patience.

51. KING KARAMBA:

“I will show my servants what I am made of. How dare they make me wait!”

52. NARRATOR:

Furious, Karamba leapt up from his throne and sped towards the room where the little pigeon's cage was. In a mad rage, he shouted:

53. KING KARAMBA:

"Now, all those who did not follow my orders are to be..."

54. NARRATOR:

The last words died on his lips when he saw his two servants, so tall and strong, lying on the ground, in front of the little pigeon's open cage.

55. LIPUA THE PIGEON: cooing

56. NARRATOR:

Lipua was swinging back and forth and singing merrily in the cage. She seemed happy.

For Karamba, there was only one possible explanation.

57. KING KARAMBA:

"This is certainly the work of the evil sorcerer."

58. NARRATOR:

... He thought and his blood froze. He looked Lipua in the eyes and thought he recognized those of the sorcerer, full of mystery. Trembling, he urgently packed up his belongings and took to his heels. He was never seen again.

The people called together a general assembly and elected a wise and just man as the new King. The latter's first task was to return to the wronged people all that Karamba had robbed from them. A large feast took place, and everyone sang, danced and laughed until dawn.

59. MUSIC

60. NARRATOR:

Since that day, the animals organize a festival every year in honour of Ninki Nanka, the poisonous snake and Simba, the powerful lion, but most especially to celebrate little pigeon Lipua's courage.

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

OUTRO / PRESENTER:

And that was the end of our fable "Lipua-Lipua". What do you think about the tale? Do you know someone who seemed to be unimposing but from one moment to the next turned out to be a strong force to be reckoned with? Please tell us! We want to know! Send an email to lbe@dw-world.de or leave us your comments on our website at: www.dw-world.de/lbe. There you can also subscribe to our podcasts and listen to this episode or any other Learning by Ear series again.

Thanks for being with us and don't forget to tune in next time!

Until then, good-bye!

END