

## **LEARNING BY EAR**

### **Africa’s physically challenged people**

#### **EPISODE 5: "Poorest of the poor"**

**AUTHOR: Chrispin Mwakideu**

**EDITORS: Andrea Schmidt, Susanne Fuchs**

#### **List of characters / Episode 5:**

##### **Narrator**

#### **SCENE ONE: TALK AFTER LUNCH IN THERESA’S HOUSE**

- Theresa (f, 65)
- Tofa (f, 40)
- Zabibu(f,15)

#### **SCENE TWO : LAST LESSON IN SCHOOL**

- Chitoto (m, 18)
- Magoto (m, 18)
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#### **SCENE THREE: AT KAREMI’S DOORSTEP**

- Theresa (f, 65)
- Tofa (f, 40)
- Oluanda (m, 18)
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#### **SCENE FOUR: AT CHITOTO’S HOME BACKYARD**

- Fagilio (m, 42)
- Chitoto (m, 18)

#### **SCENE FIVE: EVENING AT OLUANDA’S HOME**

- Oluanda (m, 18)
- Tofa (f, 40)

#### **INTRO:**

I greet and welcome you, once again to another episode of Learning by Ear. This is the fifth episode in our continuing radio drama concerning the plight of citizens who are quite often forgotten by society, entitled “**Africa’s physically challenged people**”. As we have seen in the last episode, Oluanda, whose leg had to be amputated after an accident, is slowly being pushed away socially and intellectually. That is unfortunately true for a lot of disabled people in Africa. Will he give up, or fight on? Let us find out in today’s episode entitled, “**Poorest of the poor**”. First though, listen in to the conversation between Tofa - Oluanda’s mother - and Grandmother Theresa as the two women are doing the dishes after lunch.

## **SCENE ONE: TALK AFTER LUNCH IN THERESA’S HOUSE**

- 1. ATMO:** **CUTLERY BEING WASHED**
- 2. TOFA:** **(Surprised)** I cannot believe my ears! Theresa, are you saying that your husband was blind? And your father had the same skin color as Zabibu? He too was an albino?! How did you cope with that?
- 3. THERESA:** That’s right. So I understand what you are going through, Tofa. You see, after living with these two men, who were so important in my life, both having to face a lot of physical challenges, I have learnt one thing. Even refugees from neighbouring countries are treated much better than our country’s men and women who face physical challenges.
- 4. TOFA:** That is so true, so true. You know I have never thought of that. I mean, look at your granddaughter Zabibu, a daughter of this very land, but is treated like an alien and cannot even enjoy the freedom of moving around.
- 5. THERESA:** But that is nothing! The most terrible thing is that these people, some of whom are very capable of giving so much to our society, are made to believe that they are social misfits, and can do nothing better than sit in a street corner and beg!

**(emphatic)** That is sooo wrong.

**6. SFX:** **KNOCKING ON DOOR**

**7. ZABIBU:** **(Excited)** It’s fine grandmother, I will see who is at the door.

**8. SFX :** **DOOR BEING OPENED**

**9. ZABIBU:** It is Oluanda!

**10. NARRATOR:** Oluanda had left school immediately after the talk with his head teacher, Mrs. Nina. He didn’t want to explain what had happened to anyone except his mother. But school being as it is, someone told someone, and that other someone told another someone. By the time the last lesson was coming to an end the whole school was bustling with the new gossip. And Oluanda’s former friends were some of those in the mix.

## **SCENE TWO: LAST LESSON IN SCHOOL**

**11. ATMO:** **School bell rings, students chattering while leaving class**

**12. CHITOTO:** **(Excited)** Guys, hey guys! Have you heard the news?

**13. KAREMI:** Chitoto, this has now gone too far! Oluanda’s life is on the line here. You must come clean;

apologize to Oluanda and his mother.

**14. MAGOTO:** Yes, we could live with the fact that you had something to do with his accident. But Oluanda is now out of school! No, that is just unfair.

**15. CHITOTO:** Wait... wait hold right there! First, I am not in any way responsible for Oluanda’s accident. He came to me by himself, climbed the baobab tree by himself, and fell down by himself, and... secondly, I had nothing to do with him being kicked out of school. So tell me guys, what crime did I commit, huh?

**16. KAREMI:** You left him all alone and badly injured down there Chitoto! That was a cowardly act!

**17. SFX:** **HARD SLAP ON FACE**

**18. CHITOTO:** Shut up Karemi! Nobody calls me a coward. Do you hear me? Nobody!

**19. NARRATOR:** Such was the treatment Chitoto’s friends had come to expect, but will they shut up and watch their friend being oppressed and marginalized? Or will they find the courage to speak up? In the meantime, at Karemi’s homestead...

**SCENE THREE: AT KAREMI’S DOORSTEP**

- 20. ATMO:**                    **Outside ambience**
- 21. TOFA:**                    **(Worried)** Oluanda, my son, are you alright?  
Why are you back so early? Doesn’t your class...
- 22. OLUANDA:**                They don’t want me in school mama.
- 23. TOFA:**                    What do you mean? Who? Why?
- 24. THERESA:**                Tofa, why can’t you sit down again? You know  
that standing will chase away guests. Let me  
make some tea...
- 25. ZABIBU:**                **(sarcastic)** We rarely have guests anyway in this  
house grandmother.
- 26. TOFA:**                    No, Theresa. I don’t think we will wait for the tea.  
I want to get to the bottom of this right now.  
Oluanda, what happened?
- 27. OLUANDA:**                That is just the thing, nothing happened. But the  
head teacher called me in and told me that she  
and other teachers feel it is in my interest as well  
as theirs, that I stop attending class with the  
normal students.
- 28. ZABIBU:**                Welcome to the club!

- 29. THERESA:** Zabibu! Can you stop that, I am sorry. This girl is just too... too cheeky. Now go and prepare for your evening lessons.
- 30. TOFA:** Did I hear you right Oluanda? Did you say “normal students”? Are you sure those are the words that she used?
- 31. OLUANDA:** Yes, mum. That’s what Mrs. Nina said. Can we now go home please? I need to finish mending some of your shoes.
- 32. TOFA:** **(Raving mad)** Theresa, can you believe that? My son is now considered abnormal! Nooo... I will not have that! Come Oluanda, give me your bag, let’s go home. Thanks for the talk Theresa, see you.
- 33. THERESA:** You are welcome, Tofa, you hang in there. After the storm, there is always the rainbow.
- 34. SFX:** **DOOR CLOSES.**
- 35. NARRATOR:** After the talk with Theresa, Tofa and her son Oluanda slowly headed back to their home, silently contemplating to themselves. Not so far away Fagilio was about to discover a secret concerning Chitoto, that he was not yet aware of.

**SCENE FOUR: AT CHITOTO’S HOME, IN BACKYARD**

36. **ATMO + SFX:**      **YARD AMBIENCE; OPENING OF BEER  
BOTTLE FOLLOWED BY GULPS**
37. **CHITOTO:**      **(Enjoying)** Mmmm... this is the life! One beer  
after class. I just hope my father never...
38. **SFX:**              **SUDDEN FOOTSTEPS RUSHING IN**
39. **FAGILIO:**        Chitoto there you are! I have been looking for...
40. **SFX:**              **BOTTLE SUDDENLY DROPPED ON GROUND**
41. **FAGILIO:**        What is this? Eh Chitoto, tell me what were you  
doing with that beer bottle you just dropped?
42. **CHITOTO:**        Nothing Dad... actually we are doing a school  
experiment about...
43. **FAGILIO:**        **(cutting him short, annoyed)** School  
experiment my foot! Come closer! Come on!
44. **SFX:**              **SNIFFING IN AIR FOR BEER SMELL**
45. **FAGILIO:**        **(Sarcastic)** So does that school experiment also  
include you drinking alcohol? Is that what  
chemistry is about nowadays? How long have  
you been doing this?
- (Silence)**



**46. FAGILIO:**           **(with emphasis)** I asked you a question Chitoto, and I will do this only one more time. How long have you been drinking my beer?

**47. NARRATOR:**       There is a saying in Africa that goes, the young one of a snake, is obviously a snake. But in this case, Fagilio could not come to terms with the fact that his young teenage boy had already followed in his alcoholic footsteps. How will he deal with it? What will be the price to pay? At the same time Oluanda, who had been kicked out of school, was repairing shoes at home. And for the first time after the accident, he opened up to his dear mother Tofa when she came to see what he was doing with the shoes.

#### **SCENE FIVE: EVENING AT OLUANDA’S HOME**

**48. SFX:**               **POLISHING OF SHOES**

**49. TOFA:**           Wow! Those shoes look almost as good as new! Oluanda, you have done a wonderful job here.

**50. OLUANDA:**       I hope you mean that mum, and you are not just saying it to make me feel better.

**51. TOFA:**           No, and I have realized that I don’t need to. You look completely fine to me.

- 52. OLUANDA:** Really? Because mum I do feel fine. Here, all your repaired shoes. I have put them in this plastic bag.
- 53. SFX:** **PLASTIC BAG CRUMPLING WHEN LIFTED**
- 54. TOFA:** Thank you, son. Oluanda, why... why are you doing this? Is it really for the reason you gave me earlier? Because you will not have the privilege to wear a pair of shoes again? **(sad tone)**
- 55. OLUANDA:** **(Takes a deep breath then chuckles lightly)**  
Well, it is true isn't it? For the rest of my life I need just one shoe, not a pair. But that wasn't the reason. I did this because I... I... **(hesitates)**
- 56. TOFA:** Because you what son? Tell me. I am your mother.
- 57. OLUANDA:** I am scared mum. I have looked at all those like me, who face disabilities here in Maganye, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the lame and others. And realized that they had one thing in common. They are the poorest of the poor. I don't want to end up like that.
- 58. TOFA:** Oluanda, my son. You have me. Why do you worry about such matters now?

- 59. OLUANDA:** Because I am one of them mum. Yes, I have you, and I thank God for that. But what happens after you... I don't want to even say it. I will be left alone. No friends, no family, no education, no future. I really understand what they must be going through.
- 60. TOFA:** Oluanda, so you think that repairing and polishing shoes is the only option for you now?
- 61. OLUANDA:** For money, repairing and polishing shoes for money. I will not beg! That is what I am scared of.
- 62. TOFA:** **(Stressing)** What happened to your dreams of becoming an engineer, constructing the first tarmac road in Maganye? What happened to that dream?
- 63. OLUANDA:** Mama that dream died the day I fell from that baobab tree. Let's be honest mum, have you ever seen an engineer on crutches before?
- 64. TOFA:** You are right son, I have never seen anything like that before. But that is good, because you have a chance to be the first engineer in Maganye walking on crutches.

**OUTRO:**

A challenge given by a mother to her son who is witnessing the doors of opportunity being shut in front of him due to his disability. Will Oluanda take it up? Or will he fall back and settle for less? Does Chitoto have any intention of making amends for what he did? Still a lot more to come next time in this series entitled "**Africa's physically challenged people**". If you wish to listen to this episode again, or previous ones, please log on to [www.dw-world.de/lbe](http://www.dw-world.de/lbe). And while there, feel free to leave us a comment concerning the program.

Until next time, goodbye and take care.