

LEARNING BY EAR

“Africa’s physically challenged people”

EPISODE 1: "It could happen to anyone"

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List of characters / Episode one:

Narrator

SCENE ONE: OLUANDA AND HIS THREE FRIENDS AFTER SCHOOL

- Oluanda (m,18)
- Karemi (m,18)
- Magoto (m,18)
- Chitoto (m,19)
- Tofa (f, 40)

SCENE TWO: AT KAREMI’S HOMESTEAD

- Karemi (m,18)
- Zabibu (f, 15)
- Theresa (f, 65)

SCENE THREE: AT THE GREAT BAOBAB TREE

- Chitoto (m, 19)
- Oluanda (m, 18)

SCENE FOUR: NIGHT AT CHITOTO’S HOMESTEAD

- Fagilio (m, 42)
- Tofa (f, 40)
- Chitoto (m, 19)

INTRO:

Greetings to you and welcome once again to Learning by Ear. Stay with us, for the next ten episodes of this new radio drama about Africa’s physically challenged people. People rarely noticed, people rarely heard. With this radio drama we would like to create awareness about the plight of people with disabilities. Our story takes us to Maganye, a remote and arid land in Africa. There is nothing special about this place, except for one big yearly event: The world rally championship passes through it. That year, the event was going to totally change the life of one teenage boy, Oluanda. We start off as Oluanda and his three friends, Karemi, Chitoto and Magoto are planning how to go and see the racing cars. Stay tuned for our first episode, entitled “**It could happen to anyone**”.

SCENE ONE: OLUANDA AND HIS THREE FRIENDS AFTER SCHOOL

1. ATMO: Outside ambience, birds, cars from a distance

2. THE FOUR BOYS: (laugh heartily)

3. CHITOTO: Karemi, you are so funny! Can you believe that?
Eh? Oluanda and Magoto? Karemi has never talked
to a girl before. **(laughs out even louder)**

4. MAGOTO: **(surprised)** No way! Then we have to introduce
him to someone.

5. OLUANDA: But count me out. As soon as my mother finds out about something like this, it will mean the end of our friendship.

6. CHITOTO: **(still laughing)** What sort of boys are you? One is a “softy”, the other a mama’s boy. I am beginning to think I am in the wrong company.

7. KAREMI: Chitoto, don’t call me a softy! **(annoyed)**

8. OLUANDA: And I am not a mama’s boy either!

9. CHITOTO: Well then, both of you need to prove yourselves, by action not just by mere words. Tonight, the world rally will be driving through Maganye. I have never missed that adrenaline packed sight since I was six. And for the best view, I always climb the great baobab tree. If you two mean what you have said, then let’s meet under the baobab tree tonight at 8 pm. Be there or be square!

10. NARRATOR: But what will giving in to peer pressure cost them?

Oluanda and Karemi just accepted Chitoto’s challenge to prove that they were indeed brave by sneaking from home and going to view the dusty, fast and dangerous world rally at night. Later that evening at Oluanda’s home.

11. ATMO: EVENING AMBIENCE AND POULTRY SOUNDS

12. **TOFA:** Oluanda! Oluanda! Why are the chickens still outside?
13. **OLUANDA:** I am sorry mama, I forgot. Let me bring them in.
14. **TOFA:** You forgot! You forget about the chickens, but remember the eggs in the morning. **(angry voice)** What were you thinking? Mmh...you just turned 18 recently and you are already forgetting about small things. What will happen when you are 60, 70 or 80 years old? You probably won’t even remember your own name!
15. **OLUANDA:** I’m sorry. Oh! I have remembered something!
16. **TOFA:** Well, for once. **(sarcastic)** What is it?
17. **SFX:** **DOOR BOLT OPENED AND THEN LOCKED WITH POULTRY BACKGROUND NOISES**
18. **OLUANDA:** I forgot to get my history book back from Chitoto. He was copying my notes today at school. Can I run to his hut and pick it up? I will not be gone for long.
19. **TOFA:** How many times have I told you not to associate yourself with that boy? He is a mannerless, arrogant and undisciplined kid! Every parent in Maganye believes so. Except his father Fagilio of course. Okay, I will spit on the ground...and...

- 20. OLUANDA:** Before the saliva dries up, I should be back. Mama you have been telling me this since I was five. I know the rules. **(off mic)** I will be back shortly.
- 21. NARRATOR:** After telling his first lie, Oluanda left his mother’s hut and stepped into the graying golden sky of Maganye. He walked quickly past Karemi’s house, Magoto’s house, and stopped for a second at Kangwa’s house. Kangwa was the girl in Maganye, whom every boy dreamt of marrying. But Oluanda knew this was a fantasy. Finally he could see the enormous branches of the great baobab tree spread out like huge hands begging for something. And from afar, he could make out Chitoto’s figure. But first, let’s sneak into Karemi’s house, and get to know his sister Zabibu and their grandmother Theresa.

SCENE TWO: AT KAREMI’S HOMESTEAD

- 22. ATMO:** **FIRE BURNING IN FIREPLACE**
- 23. ZABIBU:** Grandmother, when will the porridge be ready? I am hungry.
- 24. THERESA:** In a minute, my dear child. But don’t come near the light or the fire. You know that it’s not good for your eyesight and your skin. Stay in the dark. That’s where people with white skin like yours need to stay. Otherwise...

- 25. KAREMI:** Otherwise what? Grandma, Zabibu is simply an albino, not a nocturnal bat! Why do you keep on insisting that she doesn’t leave the house? If my parents were alive and here today, I don’t think, they would have accepted that!
- 26. THERESA:** (**Bitter voice**) But they are not! And until you become an adult, I am in charge here. Is that clear?
- 27. ZABIBU:** (**Sadly**) Why am I like this, why was I born like this, why did my parents have to die and leave us?
- 28. THERESA:** (**Comforting her**) HUUUSH my baby, don’t cry. Grandmother Theresa will never leave you. Just go back and sit on your stool, I will bring you the porridge. (**to Karemi**) Well, I hope that you are satisfied now, Karemi. You should be ashamed of yourself.
- 29. SFX:** **PORRIDGE BEING POURED INTO BOWLS**
- 30. Narrator:** Such was the place where Karemi and Zabibu, who was born with a rare genetic condition known as albinism, lived. The two orphans, who had lost their parents in a fatal car accident, were left in the care of their aging and traditional grandmother, Theresa.
Meanwhile at the great baobab tree...

SCENE THREE: AT THE GREAT BAOBAB TREE

- 31. ATMO:** **CHIRPING OF BIRDS, CRICKETS etc. (SAME UNIQUE WHISTLE HEARD FROM OLUANDA)**
- 32. CHITOTO:** **(commanding voice)** Quiet! Where do you come from Oluanda? Don’t you know that whistling at night and especially near the baobab tree can bring you bad luck?
- 33. OLUANDA:** Sorry, I... I had forgo... where is Karemi?
- 34. CHITOTO:** That ‘softy’ didn’t show up as usual. But it’s no surprise, he who can’t talk to a girl, can’t do what we are just about to do. Let him stay at home with that little sister of his who has “borrowed skin”.
- 35. OLUANDA:** “Borrowed skin”? Chitoto, Zabibu has no borrowed skin, she just lacks the skin pigmentation called melanin which makes our skin darker, we just learnt that at school. Anyway when will the cars be driving past?
- 36. CHITOTO:** The racing cars will soon be driving by. Are you ready? Okay I am going to hold the torch for you from down here. You need to climb as high as you possibly can, I promise you, the view will be unforgettable!

37. **OLUANDA:** Hmm, it’s pretty dark up there, and a bit scary. Are you sure you have been doing this for the last what? Eight years?
38. **CHITOTO:** Now mama’s boy! Are you going to climb or not? I don’t want to miss the action.
39. **OLUANDA:** Okay. I can do this. Switch on the torch for me.
40. **SFX:** **TORCH SWITCHED ON, OLUANDA ACTS OUT CLIMBING A TREE, rustling of branches and leaves**
41. **CHITOTO: (in a loud voice)** Higher! Go higher Oluanda!
42. **SFX:** **BREAKING OF BRANCH FOLLOWED BY BODY THUMPING ON GROUND**
43. **OLUANDA:** **(in excessive pain)** Arrrrrrgh!..my leg!..Arrrrrrgh! Chitotoooooo..help meee.
44. **CHITOTO:** Oh no! This is not good. I told him not to whistle here at this time. I can’t be part of this. Sorry Oluanda but I wasn’t here.
45. **SFX:** **FOOSTEPS RUNNING AND FADING AWAY, rallye car noise from a distance, coming closer and closer, passing by**

46. OLUANDA: **(Crying out)** Noo! Chitoto please come back!
Mamaaaaa! Heeeeelp! **(In great fear)** Oh no, the
cars are coming! I have to get out of the
way..uurgh..uurgh **(acts out crawling on ground)**
Please stoooooop! Nooooooo!

47. NARRATOR: Oluanda’s shouts for the driver to stop were swallowed up in the roar of the racing car. The driver, who did not see Oluanda, drove over his left leg, completely crushing it, and kept on racing leaving behind a trail of dust and Oluanda crying out in agony. The pain was so excruciating that Oluanda fell into an unknown darkness and fainted. What happens now? Tofa his mother, was getting worried, for her son had stayed too long at Chitoto’s house, and so she did what every mother would do. She went to Chitoto’s house only to be welcomed by Fagilio, Chitoto’s drunk father.

SCENE FOUR: NIGHT AT CHITOTO’S HOMESTEAD

48. ATMO: **NIGHT AMBIENCE, CRICKETS**

49. SFX: **KNOCKING ON DOOR**

50. FAGILIO: **(Drunken voice)** Who is it? Come in... but only if
you have a glass of alcohol.

51. TOFA: No, I don’t have any alcohol and I didn’t come for
that either Fagilio. I am only here to check on my
son. He left...

52. **FAGILIO:** Your son? Oooh you mean Oluanda. He is not here.
53. **TOFA:** That is impossible! Oluanda left home and told me he was coming for his history book which... where is that son of yours Chitoto?
54. **FAGILIO:** Woman you better watch your mouth while you are in my house! **(Calls out)** Chitoto! Come here!
55. **CHITOTO:** **(With guilt)** Good... good evening Mama.
56. **TOFA:** **(Cuts him short)** Chitoto, where is Oluanda? And don’t lie to me because you know where he is.
57. **FAGILIO:** Tofaaaa... don’t speak to my son in that tone of yours in front of me. He is not Oluanda.
58. **TOFA:** **(Calm but firm)** Okay, Chitoto, where is Oluanda?

OUTRO:

Dumbfounded and with nowhere to escape, Chitoto stood in front of Tofa, Oluanda's mother and Fagilio his own father. Which brings us to the end of our first episode of our continuing story about the plight of Africa's physically challenged people. Will Chitoto tell the truth? How bad is Oluanda's injury, will he ever recover? Will Zabibu, Karemi's albino sister have a normal life like other children? Or will she be a victim of culture and beliefs? For all this and to find out more, don't forget to tune in next time!

To listen to this episode again or any other learning by ear series, visit our website at www.dw-world.de/lbe.

And so it's goodbye from us. Take care, until next time!