

Learning by Ear 2010 “Against the Current”– Urban Exodus

Episode 03: “The daily bread”

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CHARACTERS:

Scene 1:

- **TINGO** (32 YEARS OLD, MODERN FARMER, VERY SELF-SATISFIED)
- **BAKI** (26 YEARS OLD, SOCIOLOGIST, ZEINA AND BEN'S FRIEND)
- **ZEINA** (24 YEARS OLD, ECONOMIST, BAKI AND BEN'S FRIEND)

Scene 2:

- **BEN** (AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER, 29 YEARS OLD)
- **KABO** (FARMER, BEN'S UNCLE, 57 YEARS OLD)

Scene 3:

- **BEN** (AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER, 29 YEARS OLD)
- **KABO** (FARMER, BEN'S UNCLE, 57 YEARS OLD)
- **BAKI** (26 YEARS OLD, SOCIOLOGIST, ZEINA AND BEN'S FRIEND)
- **ZEINA** (24 YEARS OLD, ECONOMIST, BAKI AND BEN'S FRIEND)

Intro:

Welcome to this new episode of our Learning by Ear series about urban exodus, called "Against the Current". This is a little known phenomenon. But it could help people to escape the lack of job prospects in the big cities.

We're following the adventures of Ben, Baki and Zeina – three unemployed young graduates who want to set up an agricultural cooperative in their village.

In this third episode, you'll see that the return of these young city dwellers is met with a lot of prejudice in their village. Join them there as they meet Tingo, a modern farmer for the first time...

Scene 1: In the village. Tingo's farm.**TINGO, BAKI AND ZEINA.**

1. **ATMO** **FARM SOUNDS. NOISE OF A TRACTOR GOING AWAY**
2. **ATMO** **MEN SING WHILE THEY WORK TO THE RYTHMIC
SOUND OF THE SWEEPING MACHETE**
3. **TINGO** So, what do you think of my farm?
4. **BAKI** Impressive!
5. **ZEINA** I could never have imagined this in my own village!

- 6. TINGO** Things aren't only happening in the capital!
- 7. BAKI** I'm really amazed. When I left the village, this farm was just a pile of rubble and rust.
- 8. TINGO** This farm was built in the euphoria of independence. But you know this country. Everything collapses after about 10 years. When I took over the farm six years ago, everybody thought I was crazy!
- 9. BAKI** Did you do all this in six years?
- 10. TINGO** Six years. I had two full-time workers at first and now I've got 30. And in the high season I employ up to 250 temporary workers. I've got two tractors and an automatic system for filling bags, weighing them and labeling them.
- 11. ZEINA** You've done a good job!
- 12. BAKI** You have! Congratulations!
- 13. TINGO** Thank you. But let me tell you, it wasn't easy!
- 14. ZEINA** Why?
- 15. TINGO** The rain is unpredictable. Luckily the water table is not very deep around here. I got a big loan to overhaul the well and the irrigation system.
- 16. BAKI** But I've heard that banks don't support agricultural investment.

- 17. TINGO** The banks have nothing against any sector. You just have to convince them that your project is profitable.
- 18. BAKI** Do you only produce peanuts?
- 19. TINGO** Yes. It means a lot of work but it's profitable. Well, at the moment the prices keep falling. But thank god I'm coping. I made more than 20.000 € volume of sales last year.
- 20. BAKI** Where do you sell your nuts?
- 21. TINGO** In Europe. At the beginning of the season, we make a deal on the volume and then I make my deliveries after the harvest and get a check on my account. I don't even know them but they're stable partners.
- 22. ZEINA** Your farm could feed the whole village alone!
- 23. TINGO** Even more!
- 24. BAKI** So why don't you produce food crops, fruit, vegetables, cereals?
- 25. TINGO** Those who buy and pay don't eat millet or sorghum.
- 26. ZEINA** But if we don't have strong food crop production, we'll never overcome food shortages in this country.
- 27. TINGO** That's true and it's terrible. But it's because of the situation and that is not my problem.

- 28. BAKI** I'm not a specialist, but we can see that this soil here is degraded. Don't you think that's a result of overexploitation and mono-cultural crop production?
- 29. TINGO** It's a big problem... but you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.
- 30. ZEINA** At this rate, you won't be able to plant anything in 10 years!
- 31. TINGO** What's important is to make lots of money NOW. Then it won't be difficult to buy more land. With the general misery it's not as if there's a shortage of sellers.
- 32. ZEINA** With your means, you could improve the situation significantly and on a long-term basis!
- 33. TINGO** (**sharply**) Lots of people want to do everything. And they also want to do the work of others. That's a mistake. I'm a businessman. It's my responsibility to make money, not go into politics. Apparently, you're university graduates.
- 34. BAKI** Yes and we've decided to come back to the village.
- 35. TINGO** That's brave! Generally, people think that graduates like you don't want to leave the capital. And yet, we need your skills, even here!
- 36. ZEINA** That's what we think.
- 37. TINGO** There's work here. Lots of it! I need highly-qualified people like you. Have you got your papers?

- 38. BAKI** Well, to be honest, we're not looking for work.
- 39. ZEINA** We want to set up our own agricultural cooperative.
- 40. TINGO** Where? Here, in the village?
- 41. ZEINA** Yes. We want to develop our careers here and help improve agricultural production in this village.
- 42. TINGO** **(sharply)** You're going to quickly change your minds! Believe me! University theory has nothing to do with hard reality. But my offer is open - if you need a well-paid job, you know the way. I was happy to talk to you my friends but I have to get back to work now.

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Scene 2: In the village. Kabo's home.

KABO AND BEN

- 43. ATMO** **VILLAGE SOUNDS. CHILDREN PLAYING – MOTORBIKE NOISE – CONVERSATION IN THE DISTANCE**
- 44. KABO** Ben, there's not one person in this village who doesn't dream of escaping to the city. To get out of this hole. To go somewhere where one is not accompanied only by hunger and shame. And you, you've decided to come back here? Have they put a spell on you?

- 45. BEN** Uncle, listen to me please! Just take a minute to listen to me!
- 46. KABO** OK, I'm listening to you!
- 47. BEN** My two friends and I have decided to come back to the village to set up an agricultural cooperative and to manage it.
- 48. KABO** What does that mean exactly?
- 49. BEN** Uncle, my job involves helping farmers to make their work more efficient and more profitable. We're going to get rid of hunger and shame. We will work for ourselves and for our relatives. That's why we went to school.
- 50. KABO** I don't mind you working on the land. But what land? Our family has lost practically everything. Hasn't your father told you?
- 51. BEN** To be honest, I was never worried about that because I never counted on that land to live on.
- 52. KABO** That was a good thing!
- 53. BEN** No, it wasn't! I abandoned my heritage and my identity. And I resent the fact that school taught me that I could develop and live my life by turning my back on my village. Nobody will come and build up our village if we don't.
- 54. KABO** You and your friends have come up with a generous idea. That's honorable of you. But I can't imagine you elsewhere

than in a big air-conditioned office. That's where you can defend your dignity and ours. You know what they say: you have to have something before you can give something.

- 55. BEN** We didn't come to give. We came to say: Come, let's work together! We have the will and the skills as well as contacts. But what we really need is your support and your involvement.
- 56. KABO** We can learn a lot by talking to you. It's as if it's the first time I've seen you. What a waste!
- 57. BEN** It's my fault, too. I never took the time to talk to you much.
- 58. KABO** It's never too late though. Where are your friends? Do I know them?
- 59. BEN** You'll recognize them. We grew up together before going to the capital to study. Right now Zeina and Baki are looking at Tingo's farm.
- 60. KABO** What are you doing with him?
- 61. BEN** With Tingo? Why? What did he do?
- 62. KABO** That man is the devil. He ruined everyone here. He said he would lend us money but he got hold of almost all the village's fields. He's a real gangster! If you work with him, the whole village will turn against you.
- 63. BEN** We're not working with him. But he's the manager of the

only modern farm here so we thought it would make sense to take a look.

64. KABO I'd like to know what your friends think.

65. BEN Well, come with me to the village square – that's where I'm meeting them.

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Scene 3: At the village square.

KABO, BEN, BAKI AND ZEINA

66. ATMO **SHOUTS AND LAUGHTER FROM CHILDREN PLAYING. WANDERING SALESPEOPLE. COWS MOOING IN THE DISTANCE**

67. BEN Uncle Kabo, these are my friends and partners. This is Zeina.

68. ZEINA Pleased to meet you.

69. BEN And this is Baki!

70. BAKI Hello.

71. KABO Ben has told me a lot about your project. I would like to encourage you and wish you good luck.

72. ZEINA & BAKI Thank you.

73. BEN In the end, I wasn't able to meet the head of the rural

development department.

74. BAKI How come? Did he refuse to meet you?

75. BEN No. He just wasn't there. I'll try again.

76. KABO You shouldn't look for him in his office. His office is the village bar.

77. BEN Oh I see. How about you? Did you meet Tingo?

78. BAKI Zeina, I'll let you tell the story because just thinking about it.... **(having a giggle)**

79. BEN What happened?

80. ZEINA He thought we were begging him to give us a job. And then when he understood that we wanted to encroach on his turf and suggest something else to the villagers, he literally kicked us out!

81. BAKI **(still laughing)** I'm sure it's the first time that people come to see him who aren't on their knees begging him. What a shock!

82. KABO Why did you go to see him?

83. BAKI We just wanted to get an idea of the territory. Find out what's being done and learn from that. That's all.

84. ZEINA We're not getting involved with him. He's just a vulgar

profiteer.

85. KABO You have to be wary of him. He's poison! I've told Ben already. Tingo ruined half the village.

86. BAKI I think it's clear that we have to position the cooperative as an alternative to his desire to get rich on the back of the villagers. And by destroying the environment.

87. KABO If that's the case, the whole village will be with you... I think a lot is going to change here. You can count on me! I'll do my best so that as many people as possible support you and the cooperative. God willing!

Outro:

Learning by Ear is over for today. Thanks for tuning into the third episode of "Against the Current" our series on urban exile.

Don't miss our next meeting when you'll find out if Ben and his team manage to rally the villagers around their cooperative in the making.

If you want to listen to this program again or give us any feedback visit our website www.dw-world.de/lbe or send us an email at lbe@dw-world.de.

Don't forget to tune in next time!

END OF EPISODE 3