

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

Episode 05: “Being right and alone”

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CHARACTERS:

Scene 1:

- **ZEINA** (24 YEARS OLD, ECONOMIST, FRIEND OF BAKI AND BEN'S)
- **BEN** (AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER, 29 YEARS OLD)
- **HADARI** (48 YEARS OLD, HEAD OF RURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT)

Scene 2:

- **BAKI** (26 YEARS OLD, SOCIOLOGIST, FRIEND OF ZEINA AND BEN'S)
- **NANA** (22 YEARS OLD, PRESIDENT OF YOUTH ASSOCIATION)
- **HADIA** (45 ANS, NANA'S MOTHER)

Scene 3:

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

Intro:

Welcome to *Learning by Ear* for the fifth episode of our series about urban exodus called "Against the Current". Ben, Baki and Zeina, three unemployed graduates, faced with the lack of job prospects in the city have decided to get out of it. They want to set up an agricultural cooperative in their village. Their return has given rise to curiosity among the villagers.

At the same time, Zeina and her boyfriend Baki are full of doubts: Baki wants to try his luck in the United States, whereas Zeina pictures them having a common future in their village.

In this fifth episode, you'll find out that the establishment of the cooperative provokes totally unexpected reactions. Listen in!

Scene 1: Village bar**ZEINA, HADARI, BEN**

- 1. ATMO** **VILLAGE BAR. CONVERSATIONS, LAUGHTER, DANCE
MUSIC IN THE BACKGROUND.**
- 2. ZEINA** Mr Hadari?
- 3. HADARI** Yes, that's me. Can I invite you to dance?
- 4. ZEINA** No, thank you... Good evening. My name is Zeina, I'm an
economist.

5. **BEN** I'm Ben. I'm an agronomist. We would like to have a chat with you if possible.
6. **HADARI** Oh I see. People haven't stopped talking about your cooperative for two weeks now and you haven't even tried to meet me. I don't understand! I'm the head of rural development services here. I represent the state!
7. **ZEINA** Of course, sir. We came to your office three times to see you.
8. **BEN** You weren't there.
9. **HADARI** I was in the field. You could have written to me. That's what administration is about.
10. **BEN** We thought it would make more sense to meet you before writing to you.
11. **HADARI** This is neither the place nor the time. When I come here, it's to relax. Not to work.
12. **BEN** You're right. But we just wanted to have an informal discussion.
13. **ZEINA** We were hoping you would have a drink with us. Just so we can get to know each other.
14. **HADARI** Hmm... Well, why not. That's a very good idea. Hey there! Can you give us a drink, beer... my friends are paying.
15. **SFX** **THREE CHAIRS BEING PULLED OUT AND ADJUSTED**

- 16. HADARI** So, what can I do for you?
- 17. BEN** A lot! We're trying to set up an agricultural cooperative which will give villagers technical support to boost production and commercialization.
- 18. HADARI** So you want to do my work?
- 19. BEN** In a way, yes... But we don't work with the same logic.
- 20. ZEINA** We want to increase the volume and diversity of agricultural production for the benefit of the farmers.
- 21. HADARI** Who's behind all this?
- 22. BEN** Excuse me?
- 23. HADARI** Who's financing your NGO?
- 24. BEN** It's a cooperative...
- 25. HADARI** ... which does not have public support and therefore it's non-governmental.
- 26. ZEINA** That's true.
- 27. HADARI** If the state isn't funding you, then who is?
- 28. BEN** We're funding ourselves.
- 29. HADARI** You don't have any external funding?
- 30. BEN** No!
- 31. HADARI** Really? Definitely not?

- 32. ZEINA** We've decided to take a social economic approach that promotes solidarity. It relies on the commitment of individuals and their desire to realize common goals together – these shared values are our main resource.
- 33. SFX** **BOTTLES AND GLASSES BEING PUT ON A TABLE. LIQUID BEING POURED INTO THE GLASSES**
- 34. HADARI** Here are the drinks at last. I hope the beer is cold at least! Cheers!
- 35. SFX** **GLASSES BEING CLINKED, HADARI DRINKS LOUDLY AND PUTS HIS GLASS ON THE TABLE**
- 36. HADARI** **(satisfied)** Ah! It's cold! And what do you want from me then?
- 37. BEN** Well, you represent the regulating authority and we know that your experience in the field will be very helpful to us.
- 38. HADARI** Usually, people just turn up here with their four-wheel drives. They think they can act without getting my department involved. I watch them tire themselves out until they realize that nobody can bypass my department.
- 39. BEN** Exactly. That's why we need your help.
- 40. HADARI** No problem. We're a public department which means we're at the service of all our users. Our resources are limited but nobody can bypass us! You know... I've seen a lot... Without me....

----- MUSIC -----

Scene 2: Nana's home. Early evening.

HADIA, BAKI AND NANA.

- 41. ATMO** **NANA'S HOME. EARLY EVENING. CRICKETS, KITCHEN NOISES**
- 42. BAKI** OK, Aunt Hadia, thanks for everything. I now have to do what all strangers have to do and leave...
- 43. HADIA** You're not a stranger here, Baki.
- 44. BAKI** Of course I'm not. My tongue got twisted, aunt!
- 45. NANA** Mom, we'll be off now. We've still got two more people to see.
- 46. HADIA** Go ahead my girl! Good luck! I'll carry on talking to my friends about the project. You can count on me. Especially if you stay together. You're so cute together!
- 47. NANA** What are you talking about, mom?
- 48. HADIA** I might be old but I'm not blind!
- 49. NANA** **(sighing)** Mum, you'll never change!
- 50. HADIA** That's true! When I was little, they always called me the "matchmaker". I always matched people and got people back together who had grown apart.

And those who weren't my friends were warned! I knew how to patch things up and I knew how to unpatch them too!

51. NANA Come on Baki let's go now!

52. SFX **SOUND OF STEPS GOING AWAY (NANA, BAKI, indoor)–
IRON GATE OPENING AND GRATING**

53. HADIA Be good!

**Scene 3: At Ben's
BEN, ZEINA, BAKI AND KABO.**

54. SFX **AT BEN'S. MURMURING IN THE BACKGROUND**

55. BEN So, we've talked about our goals, our objectives, our strategy and the main activities of the cooperative. However, we also have to agree about the organization and how the cooperative will function. Baki has come up with a proposal. Do you want to present it to us?

56. BAKI Ok. Ben, Zeina, I suggest the following organs for our cooperative: a general assembly, members, a management team, a monitoring commission and operations teams.

57. ZEINA How do you picture the organization of the management team?

58. BAKI The executive office will be made of a chief, a secretary in charge of administration and finances, a secretary in charge of external relations, one for coordination and one...

- 59. BEN** (interrupting) I would suggest replacing the word “secretary” with “director”. It carries more weight.
- 60. BAKI** OK... So the management team will consist of a CEO, a managing director, and three specialist directors. Five members in total. That’s enough, isn’t it?
- 61. ZEINA** Yes, that’s better. If there are too many people it becomes very inefficient.
- 62. BEN** It also corresponds to our reality. All of us around this table make up almost the whole management team – we just need one more person.
- 63. BAKI** Concretely, the management team represents the cooperative. It administers and manages activities, relations and personnel. It plans, organizes and coordinates the cooperative.
- 64. ZEINA** So all we have to do is clarify who does what.
- 65. BAKI** Of course. All members have to accept the allocation of tasks or functions.
- 66. KABO** And how do you picture the tasks and responsibilities being shared out among you?
- 67. BAKI** I would say that Ben should be the managing director. He’s an agronomist and he’s already been a project manager when he worked at the ministry. He’s the one who had the idea to bring us all together and set up the cooperative.

- 68. SFX** **Murmurs of approval (3 people)**
- 69. BEN** Uncle Kabo, would you like to be the CEO, the chief executive officer?
- 70. KABO** What would the post entail?
- 71. BEN** The CEO represents the organization in society. The success of the cooperative depends on how its representatives are received wherever they go. People listen to you and respect you. If you're at the head no one will think that this cooperative is just a game.
- 72. ZEINA** The CEO also makes sure that the organization is unified and cohesive. You have a fatherly role, like you've always had for us. You'll have to continue playing this role so you can manage relations amongst us and also between us and the rest of the village.
- 73. KABO** It's true that I am a little like your uncle too, Zeina. But I'm just a simple farmer. I don't have the same skills as you, nor the money that the cooperative will need.
- 74. BAKI** Our cooperative will be democratic. It doesn't need a CEO that knows everything and can do everything.
- 75. BEN** You'll have to make sure that we don't lose sight of our goals, our objectives and the values on which we have founded the cooperative.

- 76. ZEINA** The CEO does not only have a moral responsibility. He also has a legal responsibility. The CEO is responsible for the group's actions in the eyes of the law.
- 77. KABO** That's not an easy task! Pray for me to be up to it.
- 78. SFX** **CLAPPING AND CRIES OF JOY (3 people)**
- 79. KABO** But who says that the future members will agree?
- 80. BAKI** We'll propose this provisional management team at the first general assembly. In any case, to tell you the truth, people won't have much of a choice.
- 81. BEN** What do you mean?
- 82. BAKI** As founding members, we'll invite people to the constituent assembly. If they come, it will be because they agree with our proposals. We just have to be honest and explain everything to them before and during the assembly.
- 83. ZEINA** If we don't do this, the cooperative could end up being run by people who do not share our ideals.
- 84. BAKI** Those who don't agree with our key decisions will only have one decision to take – not to become members. That's all.
- 85. BAKI** Very good! This is how I see the other responsibilities being shared. Managing director: Ben. Administration: Zeina. Production: me. Coordination: Nana?

- 86. BEN** She's got the right profile. Her communications training and involvement in village life are also advantages...
- 87. KABO** She's a good girl.
- 88. ZEINA** I hope she'll agree. Has anyone asked her?
- 89. BAKI** Not yet.
- 90. BEN** We have to agree on it ourselves before asking her. I agree.
- 91. ZEINA** Me too.
- 92. KABO** Me too. I know that she's been defending the cooperative.
- 93. BAKI** Ben, you have to offer her the post.
- 94. BEN** Wouldn't it be better if Uncle Kabo did it?
- 95. ZEINA** No. Recruitment is one of the managing director's tasks. It's just important that the whole management team takes the decision together.
- 96. BAKI** That's right.
- 97. BEN** OK, I'll do it.
- 98. KABO** I think we're ready. Now we can convene a general assembly. Next week?
- 99. ALL** OK!

Outro:

Learning by Ear is over for today. Thank you for following this fifth episode of “Against the Current” a radio series about urban exodus.

Do you want to find out if the villagers are going to become members of Ben and his team's project? Well, don't forget to tune into the next episode.

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 5