

Learning by Ear 2010 – "Against the Current" – Urban Exodus

Episode 04: "Every woman's dream"

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CHARACTERS:

Scene 1:

- **ZEINA** (24 YEARS OLD, ECONOMIST, FRIEND OF BAKI AND BEN'S)
- **HADIA** (45 YEARS OLD, NANA'S MOTHER)

Scene 2:

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

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*. Today is the fourth episode of our series on urban exodus: "Against the Current".

We are following the adventures of Ben, Baki and Zeina – three young unemployed graduates who have escaped the lack of prospects in town and want to set up an agricultural cooperative in their village.

In this fourth episode, the return of these city dwellers provokes some unexpected and disturbing reactions among the rural population. Will our young heroes know how to convince the villagers? Listen carefully to find out!

Scene 1: A village road.**ZEINA, HADIA.**

1. **ATMO** **VILLAGE ROAD. POUNDING, CONVERSATION AND TRAVELLING SALESMEN SHOUTING, MOOING IN THE DISTANCE, CARS**
2. **ZEINA** Aunt Hadia! How are you?
3. **HADIA** Oh Zeina! If you're really interested, come to my home and find out. **(ironically)** Do you remember the way at least? Listen, I hope you finished your studies.
4. **ZEINA** Yes, I did. Three years ago already. But there's no work.

5. **HADIA** Hang in there! With all your qualifications and your determination, if I remember rightly, you'll get a good job. How about marriage? Are you thinking about that?
6. **ZEINA** Yes, of course!
7. **HADIA** Careful, time flies. There's a time for everything.... That's what I say to your cousin Nana all the time.
8. **ZEINA** Is Nana here? How is she?
9. **HADIA** She's been hanging around here for a year. I don't know what she wants here. She's not going to find a man and have children here. There's nothing in this village – just old men and miserable sods who can barely feed themselves.
10. **ZEINA** It's not much better in town. Unemployment and misery, same as here. Is Nana working?
11. **HADIA** She's always at the youth association office but that's not work. It's voluntary. She's the president. When big shots come through the village, she's always there. I hope she'll meet a husband that way one day...
12. **ZEINA** But maybe she's not really interested in that.
13. **HADIA** That's what I'm worried about. Last month, she refused another marriage proposal. Do you know who from? Tingo, that businessman. The only man who's capable of anything in this village. He's rich and powerful. And he's single, never married. And Nana rejected him, of course!

14. **ZEINA** **(a bit absent-mindedly)** You know, auntie, it's really hard to realize oneself as a person and not only as a wife...
15. **HADIA** **(hesitatingly)** Hmm.... Er... Can I ask you a big favor?
16. **ZEINA** Of course you can, auntie.
17. **HADIA** Go and see her please and ask her to come back to town with you. In town you've got real chances. Will you do that for me, please?
18. **ZEINA** Oh... You're putting me in a very uncomfortable position... I came back to the village to settle down here because it's all gone wrong in town.
19. **HADIA** It's not easy anywhere. I know. But here it's impossible! Go back to town with your cousin. Here you are!
20. **SFX** **TAKING SOME MONEY OUT**
21. **ZEINA** What's that?
22. **HADIA** A bit of money. It will pay for your trip – for both of you. Take it and go and see her! Take it!
23. **ZEINA** Aunt Hadia.... **(sighing)** How can I explain it more clearly? I've had enough of hanging out in the streets of the capital. I want to live and work here.
24. **HADIA** In this village?
25. **ZEINA** It's my home, isn't it?

26. **HADIA** (clucking her tongue) Really!... University gives you knowledge and takes away your intelligence. There's nothing happening here. No-one can live here...
27. **ZEINA** That's why ...
28. **HADIA** (angrily) Nonsense! Really!
29. **SFX** **STEPS GOING AWAY FAST (HADIA, on village road)**
30. **ZEINA** (shouting) Aunt Hadia! ... Wait! Let me explain. Aunt!

----- MUSIC -----

Scene 2: Nana's office.

NANA AND BAKI

31. **ATMO** **SOUNDS OF SMALL OFFICE**
32. **SFX** **KNOCK AT THE DOOR (OFFICE)**
33. **NANA** Come in!
34. **SFX** **DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES (OFFICE), FOOTSTEPS**
35. **BAKI** Hello Nana, how are you?
36. **NANA** (Joking) Ah! There you are, Baki. I was beginning to think you were going to go back to the capital without coming to see me.

37. **BAKI** **(laughing)** If I had tried to go without asking you the way, I'd never have got to my destination!
38. **NANA** Just call me a witch, why don't you?
39. **BAKI** **(still laughing)** You've got great powers, Nana! Nothing can be done in this village without your blessing. Can I sit down?
40. **NANA** Please do.
41. **SFX** **NOISE OF A CHAIR BEING MOVED (OFFICE)**
42. **NANA** Is this cooperative story serious?
43. **BAKI** Very serious!
44. **NANA** Tell me all about it, in detail.
45. **BAKI** Nana, I know you already know everything.
46. **NANA** There are so many rumors in this village. I would rather hear the official version.
47. **BAKI** We'll come and present you the official version when the time has come, don't worry.
48. **NANA** **(offended)** Oh I see, when you've finished doing the round of the important people?
49. **BAKI** Don't be like that!
50. **NANA** And how should I be?

- 51. BAKI** We'll come and present the project to you and then ask you to get involved.
- 52. NANA** (**angry**) I'm going to be straight with you, Baki. You're creating a hateful atmosphere in this village with all sorts of conspiracy theories and rumors. Wouldn't it be easier and more transparent to just gather everyone on the village square and tell everyone about your project at the same time?
- 53. BAKI** We thought we would talk to people face to face before calling a public meeting.
- 54. NANA** Well, when you're finished with explaining your project to the influential people, I hope you'll think about me!
- 55. BAKI** Of course! I just told you we would... We're setting up an agricultural cooperative to coordinate all the potential and skills in the village. We want to create jobs, increase production and boost the villagers' revenues as well as improve food security.
- 56. NANA** Who do you think you are, the government?
- 57. BAKI** No.
- 58. NANA** Our youth association is totally neutral politically.
- 59. BAKI** We're not a political party. We haven't got any ties with any influential groupings.
- 60. NANA** Hmmm!

- 61. BAKI** It's Ben's idea. He got Zeina and myself involved. But we need a lot of people for it to work out. Good people... like you.
- 62. NANA** When did you become such a flatterer?
- 63. BAKI** Listen Nana. You're the president of the village youth association. You can get information to the biggest amount of people. If you get involved, all the youths will be with us.
- 64. NANA** And what post are you offering me?
- 65. BAKI** We're not a business looking for employees. We're looking for people who will get involved with the cooperative, which will generate income and jobs for everybody. We're going to change this village's life. Completely.
- 66. NANA** Ah ha, it sounds like a revolution!
- 67. BAKI** We want people in this village to have enough to eat. We want young people not to be condemned to unemployment and exile. We want everybody to be dignified and proud of being from this village. We aren't expecting anything from ANYBODY.
- 68. NANA** This all sounds very interesting and promising. Here, young people have a choice between going to the city, taking to drugs or becoming the slave of the all-powerful Tingo. Our association is trying to promote another vision, to react against him, but believe me it's not easy!

- 69. BAKI** But it's not hopeless?
- 70. NANA** I don't know... In any case, it's hard to get people to change their minds, it's hard to change the mentality here. People live as if they haven't got a choice, as if the situation cannot change.
- 71. BAKI** And what is your association doing to fight against this resignation?
- 72. NANA** Information and awareness raising meetings. But each time, people ask the same question. WHAT CAN BE DONE? And I don't have an answer because I don't have the means to act and therefore I keep my mouth shut...
- 73. BAKI** Well, we're going to suggest something else and find the necessary means.
- 74. NANA** **(sighing)** That would be great!
- 75. SFX** **NOISE OF A CHAIR AS SOMEBODY GETS UP - STEPS MOVING AWAY SLOWLY (BAKI, OFFICE)**
- 76. BAKI** Listen, Nana: Ben, Zeina and I will come together to present the project to you. Officially and in detail.
- 77. SFX** **DOOR OPENS (OFFICE)**
- 78. NANA** Give me some advance warning so I can tell the association members to come.
- 79. BAKI** OK, you're on! See you Nana, see you soon.

----- MUSIC -----

Scene 3: At Ben's. Courtyard - calm.

KABO, BEN, ZEINA AND BAKI.

- 80. ATMO** **CALM COURTYARD. CRICKETS, HENS, HAMMERING IN THE DISTANCE**
- 81. SFX** **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, LOW VOLUME, FROM RADIO**
- 82. KABO** What a day! I haven't stopped talking about the cooperative since this morning, I spoke with the village chief and went to the mosque and to the church. My friends, I can tell you that most of the local dignitaries are in favor.
- 83. ZEINA** Wow, thank you, Kabo! Meanwhile we wasted all our day waiting for the rural development services department head.
- 84. BEN** Well, basically we waited all morning but he never set foot in his office.
- 85. KABO** We've had to put up with him for ten years!
- 86. BAKI** Why don't you ask him to leave?
- 87. KABO** So long as a civil servant doesn't have any quarrels with the villagers or the politicians, he can be incompetent, useless and even corrupt without anybody caring much.

- 88. BAKI** Well, I met Nana, the president of the youth association. She's suspicious. She thinks we want to set up a political party...
- 89. ZEINA** **(accusingly)** Why did you go and see Nana alone?
- 90. BAKI** I was just passing in front of her office. And then I went in to say hello... And then...
- 91. ZEINA** **(angry)** We had agreed to meet people in twos only!
- 92. BAKI** Yes we had! And that's what I told her. She said we should warn her in advance so that she can gather the members of her association.
- 93. BEN** If that works out, we'll save a lot of time.
- 94. ZEINA** Yes, but it's not how we had said we'd go about meeting the opinion leaders of the village.
- 95. BAKI** I'm sorry... I...
- 96. ZEINA** What's the point in taking decisions together, if everybody then does what they want?
- 97. BAKI** I didn't want to... I'm really sorry...
- 98. ZEINA** **(still angry)** You're not getting off that easily!
- 99. BEN** Drop it Zeina! He's said he's sorry.
- 100. KABO** Wise men say that there's only one thing to do with someone on his knees – help him get back to his feet again.

101. **BAKI** Well, her real problem is that I was alone with Nana.
102. **ZEINA** What are you talking about?
103. **BAKI** **(excited)** You're just jealous!
104. **ZEINA** What? Do you really think a girl can be jealous over you?
105. **BAKI** Zeina ...
106. **ZEINA** **(interrupting)** There are obviously girls looking at you, who want to go out with you. But what about you? What are you looking at? Can you see anything apart from your visa and your plane ticket? Do you think even one girl here is dreaming about a man who lives in the US?
107. **BAKI** I was just teasing you...
108. **SFX** **FURIOUS STEPS GOING AWAY (ZEINA, COURTYARD)**
109. **ZEINA** **(shouting from afar)** Well, you succeeded!
110. **BAKI** Zeina ! Zeina ! Wait!
111. **SFX** **STEPS RUNNING AWAY (BAKI, COURTYARD)**
112. **BAKI** **(going away)** Zeina, you didn't understand... I just wanted to see how you would react... I know it wasn't very smart but...
113. **KABO** Are they always like that?
114. **BEN** Yes and it worries me!

115. KABO Why? They love each other. They really love each other! It's beautiful. It's youth!

Outro:

That's how *Learning by Ear* ends today. It was the fourth episode of our series "Against the Current" about urban exodus.

Our heroes continue to mark milestones on their path to setting up a cooperative. Don't miss our next episode to find out about the preparations for the first general assembly.

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 4