

## **LEARNING BY EAR**

### **"DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE – THE HIGH THAT BRINGS YOU LOW"**

#### **EPISODE 1: "The Joint"**

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**List of characters by scene:**

#### **SCENE ONE : AT LIMBI HIGH SCHOOL**

- Jabali (m, 18)
- Zula (m, 18)
- Okosho (m, 18)
- Mrs. Chacha (f, 45)

#### **SCENE TWO : BAMJU'S ARREST BY INSPECTOR TINO**

- Bamju (m, 40)
- Inspector Tino (m, 40)

#### **SCENE THREE: AT MRS. CHACHA'S OFFICE**

- Jabali (m, 18)
- Zula (m, 18)
- Okosho (m, 18)
- Mrs. Chacha (f, 45)

**SCENE FOUR: AT CHUNGA SANA POLICE STATION**

- **Inspector Tino (m, 40)**
- **Beri (f, 45)**
- **Bamju (m, 40)**
- **2-4 prisoners (m, 16-60)**

**Narrator (m/f)**

**INTRO:**

Greetings, dear listeners, and a warm welcome to our new series of Learning by Ear. A time when we meet on the radio - to listen, learn, and be entertained. Africa is developing, and more countries are embracing democracy and craving a Western-inspired urban lifestyle. With all that going on, a new challenge has arisen, one that Africa prefers not to see - just like the proverbial ostrich that buries its head in the sand. Africa as a continent is increasingly struggling with illegal drugs and substance abuse. Stick with us for the next ten episodes as we bring you this radio drama about drugs and substance abuse in Africa, called "**The High that Brings You Low**". We kick off by introducing you to our three lead characters: Jabali, Okosho and Zula, three friends who come from a slum neighbourhood. They've finished their final exams and have gone to their school to pick up their results. There to meet them is Mrs. Chacha, their principal. This is the first episode, called "**The Joint**".

**SCENE ONE : AT LIMBI HIGH SCHOOL**

**1. SFX: HIGH SCHOOL AMBIENCE (INSIDE)**

**(OKOSHO SINGING A POPULAR SONG, ZULA JOINS IN THE SONG)**

**2. JABALI:** Hey! Okosho, Zula, stop singing! Show some respect please. We're outside the principal's office.

**3. OKOSHO:** Respect, my foot! Mrs. Chacha is no longer my principal. I am now officially an adult. Do you know what that means? Eh, Jabali?

**4. JABALI:** Of course I know what it means. Respect and responsibility. That's what the ethics teacher taught us about adulthood.

**5. ZULA:** **(faking Jamaican accent)** Dat was in school, man, in school. Now we no more students. Respect only for Jah, man! Rastaman Zula boy no gonna bow down to any man, woman, or child, for dat matter.

**6. OKOSHO:** Zula! How many times have I told you to stop talking in that silly fake Jamaican accent? You're not one of them. Period!

**7. SFX: DOOR OPENS. TYPEWRITER SOUNDS IN BACKGROUND**

**8. MRS. CHACHA:** (loudly) Next!

**9. OKOSHO:** Who will go first?...Hmm... You, Jabali?

**10. JABALI:** Why me? Zula, you go in first, you're the Jamaican rude boy.

**11. NARRATOR:** As Jabali, Okosho and Zula, decide who should go in first to pick up their exam results from Mrs. Chacha's office, something is going on in their densely populated and dangerous slum neighbourhood, popularly known as "Chunga Sana", which in English means "to stay alert". Police are rounding up several suspects. One of them is a man called Bamju. Let's join in the action.

## **SCENE TWO : BAMJU'S HIDEOUT IN CHUNGA SANA SLUMS**

**12. SFX: HIP-HOP MUSIC PLAYING FROM A PLAYER**

**13. BAMJU:** There's nothing as cool as relaxing in your home, listening to some good music, and smoking a good joint.

**14. SFX: MATCHSTICK BEING LIT. SUBSTANCE INHALED AND SMOKED (STUDIO)**

**15. BAMJU:** Hmm... now, that is strong!

**16.SFX: MOBILE PHONE RINGING**

**17.BAMJU:** (answers phone) Bamju here. Oh, Boss! Nice of you to call me. When? Aha. Okay, I'll be there. No problem, you can count on me.

**18.SFX: DOOR BANGED HARD**

**19.BAMJU:** Just a minute, boss, there's someone at the door.

**20.INSP. TINO:** Police! Open up this door! Bamju, I know you're in there! Open up before I break it down!

**21.BAMJU:** (in total panic) Oh no... what do I do? I don't want to go to jail again. Have to hide this joint somewhere. Oh no - actually, I'll throw it outside.

**22.SFX: WINDOW QUICKLY OPENED AND THEN CLOSED**

**23.INSP.TINO:** All right! You leave me no choice but to break this door down. Bamju, I will count only to three. One! Two! Three!

**24.SFX: WOODEN DOOR BEING HIT SEVERAL TIMES**

**25.BAMJU:** (loudly) Inspector Tino, people normally count to ten; don't you watch boxing and wrestling matches?

**26.SFX: DOOR SWINGS WIDE OPEN WITH A CRASH**

**27.INSP. TINO:** Cut the crap. Where is it? Eh? You know I can smell it, and so can you. So where is it, Bamju?

**28.BAMJU:** **(with pride)** Inspector, tell me something, am I not entitled even to enjoy my own place? Where's what? What do you smell? I don't smell a thing; do you smell anything?

**29.INSP. TINO:** You've been smoking marijuana. It's illegal in this country, and you know it. So I'm arresting you. Put out your hands.

**30.BAMJU:** On what charges are you arresting me this time, Inspector?

**31.INSP. TINO:** For smoking an illegal substance - cannabis sativa, bhang, marijuana, boza, whatever you thugs choose to call it.

**32.BAMJU:** And where is your evidence? Are you planning on bringing the smell as evidence? You've found nothing here.

**33.INSP. TINO:** Oh, very funny. Open your hands, Bamju. What are you hiding there?

**34.BAMJU:** Voila! You have no case, Mr. Policeman. There is nothing in my hands. I wasn't smoking anything. Maybe you are hallucinating, Inspector.

**35.SFX: JINGLING OF HANDCUFFS**

**36.INSP. TINO:** You are under arrest for possession and use of an illegal substance. Anything you say or do can and will be used ...

**37.BAMJU (finishes sentence):** ... Against me? Why does it always have to be against me? Why not against you?

**38.INSP. TINO:** Shut up, Bamju" The courts will deal with you now! You're the one who is guilty, not me! I will find the drug, I know it's here somewhere. This time there's no escape!

**39.BAMJU:** You're making a big mistake, Inspector. A very big mistake. You're playing with the big boys now.



**40.NARRATOR:** Smoking marijuana is illegal in most African countries. Yet statistics show that it's one of the most abused drugs. So will Bamju be convicted of using an illegal substance? We'll soon find out. Meanwhile, at Limbi High School Zula and Okosho have already received their results from their principal, Mrs. Chacha. Both of them have failed terribly. The last one to go in is Jabali, and Mrs. Chacha at last has a reason to smile.

### **SCENE THREE: AT MRS. CHACHA'S OFFICE**

**41.MRS. CHACHA:** Jabali, we're all delighted with your performance. On behalf of the entire staff of Limbi High, I wish you the very best for the future.

**42.JABALI:** **(happy)** Thank you, madam.

**43.MRS. CHACHA:** Now go out there and become whatever you want to be... Do not let anything or anyone distract you from your goals.

**44.JABALI:** **(cheerful)** I won't. I'm so grateful for everything I learned in this school. Now I'll be able to go on to a good college. There's no way I could repay you. Goodbye, Mrs. Chacha.

**45.SFX: DOOR CLOSSES. FAINT TYPEWRITER IN BACKGROUND FADES**

**46.OKOSHO:** And? Jabali, did you pass the exam?

**47.JABALI:** **(celebrating)** Yeeeeeah!!!!

**48.ZULA:** Cool, man. Me and Okosho flopped terribly. At least one of us got some brains in da head, man.

**49.OKOSHO:** **(unhappy)** Who needs this sheet of paper, anyway?

**50.SFX: PAPER BEING RIPPED TO PIECES (studio)**

**51.ZULA:** There go twelve wasted years of our lives. Now is when de real life starts, man! Tell him, Okosho! Tell him!

**52.JABALI:** **(shocked)** Did you just tear apart your result slips?

**53.OKOSHO:** Never mind, Jabali, there's a party tonight for all the school leavers. I'm told all the beauties of Chunga Sana will be there - good music, good food. You know, just to relax our minds after this terrible exam. Want to come?

**54.JABALI:** Sure, I'd love to. Where is it?

**55.ZULA:** Club 2000. From ten till dawn, man!

**56.JABALI:** What? At Club 2000? But guys, we don't even have identity cards - and what about the money?

**57.OKOSHO:** Don't worry about that. Just be ready by 9 pm. We'll all meet at the bus stop. This will be the best night of your life!

**58.NARRATOR:** Jabali has just made plans to go to a nightclub, even though he, Okosho and Zula all have no I.D. cards, meaning they're not allowed in. What will happen next? The plot is just starting to thicken. Meanwhile, at the police station, Inspector Tino is at odds with his commanding officer, Madam Beri, about his recent arrest of Bamju. Let's join them there to find out why.

**SCENE FOUR: AT CHUNGA SANA POLICE STATION (Heated argument between Insp. Tino and his commanding officer, Beri)**

**59.INSP. TINO:** **(takes deep breath)** Excuse me, Madam, are you telling me that...

**60.BERI:** **(authoritative)** I'm not telling you, Inspector Tino. **(loudly)** I'm ordering you! I got a call from a senior official telling me to release Bamju immediately.

**61.INSP. TINO:** I caught him in the act, for goodness sake! This man is a criminal! I know it, you know it. The whole town of Chunga Sana knows it.

**62.BERI:** (calmly) I am simply following orders, and if you love your job you'd better do the same. And one more thing: after you've released him, you have to apologize to him.

**63.INSP. TINO:** Apolo... *What?* No way!

**64.BERI:** Inspector Tino! I might be a woman, but I am still in charge here! Do I make myself clear? Release Bamju, and apologize to him. I don't want to hear any more about this.

**65.SFX: Footsteps leaving**

**66.SFX: BUNCH OF KEYS JINGLING. METAL DOOR OPENING**

**67.PRISONERS: MURMURING COMPLAINTS**

**68.INSP. TINO** (calls out): Bamju! ...You're free to go. (hushed tone) I... I... apolo... Oh, just get out!

**69.BAMJU:** (proudly): I told you, Inspector. Didn't I? I warned you that you were playing with the big boys now.

**OUTRO:**

It seems that Bamju has friends in high places – someone has obviously used their influence to get him freed. How is it in your country, dear listener? Is it easy for drug offenders to get away with breaking the law there too? What price will the neighbourhood of Chunga Sana have to pay for this? And what will happen to our three friends tonight at the party in Club 2000? This and much more awaits you in the next episode of this radio novella on drug and substance abuse. Remember, if you wish to listen to this episode again, or to send in your opinions, comments and suggestions, just log on to [d world dot d e slash I b e](http://dworld.de/ibe). Until next time - stay clean and sober.