

LEARNING BY EAR

“DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE – THE HIGH THAT BRINGS YOU LOW”

EPISODE 10 “Starting Again”

AUTHOR: Chrispin Mwakideu

EDITOR: Ludger Schadomsky, Adrian Kriesch

PROOFREADER: Charlotte Collins

List of characters by scene:

SCENE ONE: BERI'S NEW OFFICE

- Inspector Tino (m, 40)
- Beri (f, 45)

SCENE TWO: JABALI'S PLACE

- Chambo (m, 30)
- Zula (m, 18)
- Jabali (m, 18)

SCENE THREE: LIMBI HIGH SCHOOL

- Mrs. Chacha (f, 45)
- 3-5 Mixed voices (m/f 14-18)

SCENE FOUR: JABALI'S PLACE

- Chambo (m, 30)
- Zula (m, 18)
- Jabali (m, 18)

SCENE FIVE: MUGO'S OFFICE

- Chambo (m, 30)
- Mugo (m, 40)

Narrator (m/f)

INTRO:

Greetings and welcome to Learning by Ear. This is the tenth and last episode of “**The High that Brings You Low**”, a story about drugs and substance abuse in Africa. In the previous episode, the interior minister Kafegi resigned after being linked to the drug trafficking scandal. His colleague, local M.P. Kizito, was arrested. Meanwhile, youth worker Chambo came to work totally drunk, making Jabali wonder whether he’d relapsed. Police officers Beri and Tino were reinstated and promoted to lead the fight against illicit drugs in the police anti-narcotics unit. Keep listening as we wind up the story in today’s episode, called “**Starting Again**”. First let’s join Commissioner Beri and Chief Inspector Tino, who are taking up their duties in their new offices.

SCENE ONE: BERI'S NEW OFFICE

1. **SFX: SWIVEL CHAIR SWINGING FROM SIDE TO SIDE**

2. **INSP. TINO:** Are you still admiring your office, swivelling in your nice new chair?

3. **BERI:** I’m thinking, Tino.

4. **INSP. TINO:** What’s on your mind, Madam Commissioner?

5. **BERI:** There’s a report on my desk, saying that a young boy was found dead by some of his friends. He’d taken an overdose of heroin.

6. **INSP. TINO:** **(annoyed)** This is all Bamju's fault! He's the one who's supplying drugs to teenagers. If you hadn't freed him when I arrested him earlier, this wouldn't...
7. **BERI:** **(firmly)** Don't point the finger at me, Inspector! I was following orders from my superior – I didn't know that Bamju had friends in high places who'd been using their influence to get him out. We have to put together a strategy, Inspector, if we're to get these illicit substances off the streets.
8. **INSP. TINO:** I agree. But Madam Commissioner, we're only targeting illegal drugs and substances. Though it is actually not our task, but what can we do about the legal ones? Like alcohol, khat, tobacco. They're often a gateway to the harder drugs, like heroin.
9. **BERI:** True. People need to know that the more they abuse these drugs, the more resistant their bodies become to their effects.
10. **INSP. TINO:** Do you really think we can win the fight against drug abuse?
11. **BERI:** Yes! But we can't do it alone. We need the help of the government, religious leaders, parents, teachers, and community workers. Everyone must play a role.

12. **INSP. TINO:** There’s this guy, his name is Chambo...
13. **BERI:** Chambo of Youth Watch? The former addict?
14. **INSP. TINO:** That’s him. Maybe the anti-narcotics unit should work closely with him. He knows the addicts, he knows their suppliers, and the suppliers know where the drugs are coming from.
15. **BERI:** Interesting idea. Find me Chambo. We need to arrange a meeting.
16. **NARRATOR:** Beri’s right: the police can’t put a stop to drug abuse on their own. Governments need to ensure that there are strict laws governing all addictive substances - especially where minors are concerned. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to educate young people, by example, and through formal education about the dangers of substance abuse. But now let's head for Jabali’s place, where Chambo is beginning to sober up at last.

SCENE TWO: JABALI'S PLACE

17. SFX: SOMEONE TAKING A SHOWER

18. JABALI: (calls out) Hey Zula, get out of the bathroom! You've been in there for over an hour.

19. ZULA: What did you expect? I haven't taken a shower in weeks! How's Chambo?

20. JABALI: He seems to be waking up. That's why you need to get out of the bathroom.

21. SFX: SHOWER TURNED OFF; DOOR OPENED

22. JABALI: (surprised) Wow! You look different... Much better... But still not really good.

23. CHAMBO: Hello guys... Why I am here? What happened?

24. JABALI: Chambo, don't you remember us bringing you here?

25. ZULA: How could he? He slept the whole way.

26. CHAMBO: Can I use your bathroom?

27. JABALI: Sure, but we need to talk afterwards.

28. SFX: DOOR CLOSED

29. NARRATOR: Chambo takes a shower, and as he does so scene after scene from the previous day flashes through his mind. What really happened? Chambo’s struggling to remember... Meanwhile, at Limbi High school, Mrs. Chacha has also read about the death of her former student Okosho from a drug overdose. She decides to take immediate action.

SCENE THREE: LIMBI HIGH SCHOOL

30. SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGS

31. MRS. CHACHA: Today is a sad day for Limbi High, as some of you may already know. We have lost a former student in the most tragic way. Okosho was found dead by some of his friends, after injecting himself with a huge overdose of heroin.

32. SFX: SHOCKED EXCLAMATIONS AND SHOCKED REACTIONS FROM STUDENTS (studio)

33. MRS. CHACHA: A few days ago, Zula and Okosho mugged me as I was coming from the bank. I had no idea their addiction had got so bad. My own son is now in rehab. But I know that some of you here are already experimenting with drugs.

34. SFX: CHORUS OF DENIALS AND MURMURS FROM STUDENTS

(studio)

35. MRS. CHACHA: You can keep denying it, or you can choose to start living a clean life. Free of drugs and substance abuse. My staff and I had an emergency meeting this morning. We feel there’s a need for a peer educators club in our school.

36. SFX: APPLAUSE FROM STUDENTS (studio)

37. MRS. CHACHA: This club will be working closely with Chambo and will be there to help and counsel any of you who are already abusing substances. I want to finish by quoting what Chambo said to you all before: Please, stop before you get hooked! All right - you may go to your classes now.

38. NARRATOR: As the students go off to their classes, Chambo has finally remembered how he got so drunk, and why it was that Jabali found him in such a state. The reality is even more shocking than Jabali supposed.

SCENE FOUR: JABALI'S PLACE

39. **JABALI:** **(shocked)** No way! That can't be true! Are you sure, Chambo?

40. **CHAMBO:** Absolutely sure! I was drugged. Somebody mixed drugs into my soft drink at Club 2000. Up until then I remember everything clearly.

41. **ZULA:** **(still with a nervous voice because of his addiction)** You know, I wouldn't be surprised. I've heard that many unsuspecting ladies have found themselves naked in strange beds after being drugged in discotheques and nightclubs.

42. **CHAMBO:** I think they did it to scare me. The bouncer told me that since I started checking the IDs of young people on the door, business there has gone down.

43. **JABALI:** This is unbelievable! Did they steal anything from you?

44. **CHAMBO:** No. Whoever did it just wanted to scare me. Or maybe drive me back to substance abuse.

45. **ZULA:** That's exactly what Jabali and I thought had happened.

46. **CHAMBO:** What? That I'd relapsed? No way. I've done it all, my friend, and I will never go back to that kind of life.
47. **JABALI:** Do you remember Okosho? My other friend?
48. **ZULA:** The one who was thrown out of Club 2000. You know, the one who tried to fight you that night.
49. **CHAMBO:** **(remembering)** Aaah, him. Of course I remember him. He was very high, very aggressive. He reminded me a little of myself, when I was on drugs.
50. **JABALI:** Okosho is dead.
51. **CHAMBO:** **(shocked)** What? When? How? I am so sorry.
52. **JABALI:** Do you remember we saw a crowd beating up a suspected thief...
53. **CHAMBO:** **(more shock)** Don't tell me that was him being beaten. Don't tell me he was killed by the mob.
54. **ZULA:** No, the thief who was being beaten wasn't Okosho. It was me.
55. **CHAMBO:** Wait a minute - I'm getting confused here.

- 56. JABALI:** I know. I will explain, but right now we have work to do. I have some very good news to give you as well, about some people who want to help with your work at the rehab centre.
- 57. CHAMBO:** Wow, that’s indeed good news.
- 58. ZULA:** Before we go, I just want to say this. I’ve lost a friend, I myself almost died, and I can see how drugs have ruined me. Still I find it difficult not to think about this stuff. I’m ready to go into rehab. For sure it won’t be easy, but I’m ready to start again.
- 59. JABALI:** Zula – I’m so proud of you, my friend.
- 60. CHAMBO:** Zula, you’ve made a very wise decision. So - what do you think, Jabali? Where should we start today?
- 61. ZULA:** Club 2000? **(They all laugh heartily)**
- 62. NARRATOR:** Zula has taken the first and most important step. One of the most difficult things for drug users to do is admit that they do need help. Many don’t believe their addiction is dangerous, until for some, like Okosho, it’s too late. But for those who choose to start again, a whole new life is possible. That same day, after taking Zula to the rehab centre, Chambo sends Jabali off to do some of his work while he goes to Mugo's office to give an exclusive interview to the newspaper.

SCENE FIVE: MUGO'S OFFICE

63. **MUGO:** Welcome to “The Voice”, Mr. Chambo. I am a smoker. Is that drug abuse?
64. **CHAMBO:** Mr. Mugo, I don't mind if you smoke. The problem is if you can't control your urge to smoke.
65. **MUGO:** Hmm... Interesting. Let me get ready and then we'll start.
66. **SFX: PAPER FLIPPING; PEN SCRIBBLING ON PAPER (studio)**
67. **CHAMBO:** Can I ask you a question, Mr. Mugo?
68. **MUGO:** I thought I was the one asking the questions.
(laughs) Just kidding. Go ahead, ask me.
69. **CHAMBO:** How much do you value your life?
70. **MUGO:** I value my life above everything else.
71. **CHAMBO:** Can you read, Mr. Mugo?
72. **MUGO:** **(bewildered)** Huh? Of course. I'm a journalist!
73. **CHAMBO:** Good! Then read what's written on this packet of cigarettes.

74. **MUGO:** (sighs) You don't think you're going to make me quit smoking by scaring me, do you?
75. **CHAMBO:** Just read it, and we'll take it from there.
76. **MUGO:** (takes a deep breath, then reads in a bored voice)
Cigarette smoking seriously damages your health.
Okay - so what?
77. **CHAMBO:** So what? What part of that sentence did you not understand? Mr. Mugo, did you know that cigarette smoke contains almost 4,000 different chemicals? Apart from nicotine, which is the drug that makes you want to keep smoking, there's also carbon monoxide, methanol, and plenty of others.
78. **MUGO:** Hm. Now you *are* beginning to scare me. I didn't know that. (Pause) 4,000 chemicals? Really?
79. **CHAMBO:** Yes, really. But we'll get to that in a minute. Shall we start the interview?

OUTRO:

Chambo explains to Mr. Mugo the different chemicals in each substance, and the effects they have on our bodies, from tobacco to the shoe glue sniffed by street kids. He also talks about his work, and his mission to see the next generation in Chunga Sana grow up free of drugs. He mentions Jabali, Zula, and the death of Okosho. The fight against drug and substance abuse is gathering strength. The corrupt politicians are going to jail, and since the scandal hit the headlines and cut off his drug supply, Bamju seems to have disappeared. With Commissioner Beri, Inspector Tino, Chambo, Mrs. Chacha, Jabali and all the others working together to stop the spread of drugs, they're sure to make an impact.

And that brings us to the end of our radio novella on drugs and substance abuse. We hope you enjoyed it. Our author was Chrispin Mwakideu. If you'd like to listen to any of the episodes again, you'll find the whole series under [d world dot d e slash I b e](http://dworld.de/ibe). Until we meet again for another exciting story – goodbye for now, and remember: stay away from drugs!