

LEARNING BY EAR

"If a tree falls... - Deforestation in Africa"

EPISODE FIVE: "Timber and Conservation"

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List of characters EPISODE FIVE:

Narrator

SCENE 1 Akiki (f, 7)

SCENE 2 Akiki (f, 7) Chika (f, 18) Isi (m, 18)

SCENE 3 Chika (f, 18) Isi (m, 18)

SCENE 4 Mulogo (m, 22) Chika (f, 18) Isi (m, 18)

SCENE 5 Chief (m, 40)

SCENE 6 Chief (m, 40) Mother (f, 36)

SCENE 7 Akiki (f, 7)

INTRO

Welcome to *Learning By Ear* and episode five of our new drama series about deforestation.

Set within the dramatic backdrop of civil war, this story reveals how deforestation- the loss of trees and grasslands- has destroyed rural life and created conflict between two farming communities. Now, thrown together as refugees in Dovani Camp these people are beginning to find common solutions for the future.

In today's episode, Dovani Camp leaders, Talib and Chika, are working with the communities to solve their problems of dwindling wood and water resources. Meanwhile, Mulogo is more determined than ever to get close to Chika. Join us now as Chika decides to draw on Mulogo and Isingoma's leadership skills for forest conservation.

Episode FIVE: "Timber and Conservation."

1.MUSIC UP

Scene 1

2.AKIKI NARRATOR: Isi and I have hardly spoken a word today. We are both so sad that no one from our families was there on the truck last night. I was so hoping to see my mother, my dad or my elder sister, Sesi. And Isi really believed Kato would be on the truck. But he wasn't. No one was on that truck that we knew. It's heart breaking.

Scene 2

3. SFX Footsteps approaching. FADE IN Daytime ambience outside

4.AKIKI: Here comes Chika. I think she wants to cheer us up.

5.CHIKA: (gently) Hallo Akiki. You're looking so sad.

6.AKIKI: (softly) Hmmm. Hallo Chika.

7.CHIKA: Hi Isi. I wanted to thank you for helping out with the registration of the new arrivals last night.

8.ISI: (depressed and quiet) It's OK.

9.CHIKA: Listen! I'm going on a walk with Mulogo. Would you like to join us, Isi? I think he is very interested in exchanging ideas and it would be good if you came too.

10.ISI: What about Akiki?

11.CHIKA: Akiki, would you mind if we leave you for a couple of hours?

12.AKIKI: No, not at all. I'm happy to look after the cattle. Go Isi. I'll be fine.

13.ISI: (softly) OK. See you later.

Scene 3

14. SFX Forest sounds. Footsteps through leaves

15.ISI: Wouldn't you rather be alone Chika? I know Mulogo would prefer NOT to see me. He has his heart set on you!

16.CHIKA: Oh, you noticed!

17.ISI: Only a blind person wouldn't!

18.CHIKA: No, please stay Isi. I want to work seriously. You and Mulogo will be very important in your communities. This is about leadership! You must take part.

19.ISI: I'm very happy to. Let's hope Mulogo is!

20.CHIKA: Just to fill you in: We've been having an interesting debate about a few things: climate change, and whether we should be encouraging people to leave the forest and woods in order to live in the cities, whether we could develop faster if we cut down trees and built more urban areas. Things like that.

21.ISI: I think Mulogo is mixed up. He has no answers to climate change. He just wants to go on as if nothing was happening in the world. Our biggest African lakes are drying up and he talks about building a hydroelectric plant. I don't think he's thinking straight.

22.CHIKA: (gently) These are complex problems that demand complex solutions. Don't be too hard on him! He knows a lot!

Scene 4

23. SFX Forest ambience

24.MULOGO: (approaching OFF MIC) Hallo Chika. (Surprised) Oh!
Hallo Isi.

(ON MIC whispering) So Chika you decided not to go into the woods
alone with me!

25.CHIKA: (Whispering) No! That would not be appropriate. The
three of us can have an interesting talk as we
walk.

26.MULOGO: (grumpy) Hmmmm.

27.CHIKA: (Normal voice) OK. Let's start over here. See these walnut
and mahogany trees. Look up at their height, the
smoothness of their wood, the canopy.

28.ISI: They are beautiful.

29.MULOGO: And they are highly valuable. And that's my point.
We Africans need money to develop our
economies. The Europeans are prepared to pay a
high price for these hard woods.

30.CHIKA: OK, so we cut them down. Then what? How long
will it take to grow more if we are to keep
supplying the market?

31.MULOGO: We can keep replanting. I think one tree takes ten
years. Am I right?

32.CHIKA: About that, yes. So you would want a controlled
timber area, right? To fell and then regenerate
the forest.

33.MULOGO: Right.

34.CHIKA: Well, we already have what are called 'reserve
forests'- areas where felling is carried out in

accordance with the plans of the Forestry Department.

35.ISI: I believe they have a 5-year felling period and then 5 years rest. But I heard a forest needs a hundred years to regenerate fully.

36.CHIKA: Yes...that's true, because cutting down trees changes the very climate in which those trees grew best. That's why they need so long...they have to adapt to different conditions.

37.ISI: Trees are in harmony with their environment which is why you find certain types of trees in certain areas and not in others. So readjusting to a new climate takes a whole lot of time- a few generations.

38.MULOGO: But we have thousands of square miles of trees. We can afford to lose some of those forests.

39.CHIKA: We have already lost forests! Mulogo, for heaven's sake, **(Slowly and clearly)** Africa is the second fastest loser of forests IN THE WORLD. 3.4 million hectares A YEAR. This is more than the size of a small country like Rwanda.

40.MULOGO: OK! OK! Stay cool. **(Whispering)** Isi...do you see that black star in her eye sparkle when she is angry?

41.CHIKA: (angry) Mulogo please! That is so disrespectful!

42.MULOGO (Shocked) I'm sorry Chika! I was just kidding! Sorry. OK. Back to business! So...why not just take out the hard woods that we can export. We need to move out of poverty.

43.ISI: People can get out of poverty by using good farming and forestry practices. But to go back to your idea....How do you want to take out just the hard woods? You can see how closely they are packed together.

44.CHIKA: And there are thousands of varieties in the forest. Timber companies will tell you that finding the right trees to fell is not so easy.

45.MULOGO: (irritated) Argh! You are both so negative.

46.CHIKA: Well? Do YOU see ONE row of mahogany or ONE area of walnut trees. Uh? No! And why not? Because we have so many different varieties: the Obeche, Agba, Niangon, Iroko, Sapele, Guarea, Opepe, Makore, Edinam and Idigbo. There are 72 valuable species which timber companies would love to get their hands on, but the timber man can only access 20 of them – that's how thick and varied our forests are.

47.ISI: Hmm. It is not as easy as you would like to think, Mulogo; really not.

48.MUSIC UP

Scene 5

49.CHIEF APALOO NARRATOR: In the south east. the Miombo woodlands spread for miles and are home to the most wonderful birds and wild life. But when our neighbours from the Banega community started clearing the forests, those birds disappeared. The elephants too, the zebras and impalas – they have all been driven out.

As Chief of Abanto District I have tried to conserve the forests and find ways to use wood and charcoal more efficiently. So one thing I have been doing is to look for ways to save on the use of firewood. And I discovered "The rocket stove!". To be honest, it is not my invention. But I know how to make it! Talib loved it! So now I have to convince the women!

Scene 6

50. SFX Daytime ambience.

51.CHIEFAPALOO: MaKipko! I am very pleased you had the time to meet me!

52.MOTHER: Chief Apaloo. Welcome to my home. It is my pleasure.

53.CHIEF APALOO: How have you been keeping?

54.MOTHER: Oh...I've been doing fine. I am very happy in our house.

55.CHIEF APALOO: I am so glad to hear that. Any news from your husband, Chief Kipko?

56.MOTHER: No, but thank you for asking. He and my two sons are still missing, Jamal and Isingoma's twin, Kato.

57.CHIEF APALOO: (embarrassed) I am truly sorry. My thoughts are with you. Look, your husband and I did not see eye to eye. I think you know that. There were some bitter words exchanged. But times have changed. I hope he and your sons return safely.

58.MOTHER: That is my biggest prayer. But good is coming out of this war if it brings two warring communities to work peacefully together! We have been in Dovani Camp for over 6 months. Now finally you and I meet!

59.CHIEF APALOO: So is it, with us Africans! There is a right time for everything.

60.MOTHER: Yes. Please allow me to make you some tea.

61.CHIEF APALOO: Ah! That's the moment I have been waiting for. Now I can demonstrate my new stove. Please! You can make tea using this and see for yourself how it works.

62. SFX: Putting stove down

63.MOTHER: Oh! Is that a stove? It looks like a rocket!

64.CHIEF APALOO: And it burns like one – fast but efficient. You will need only 3 sticks and some dried grass. Here let me help you!

65. SFX: Grass, sticks lighting of match

66.MOTHER: That's interesting- there's very little smoke coming out. That means it's good for indoors too. And what's this metal rack for?

67.CHIEF: I place it like this...

68. SFX metal rack pushing on sand... in front of the larger opening. Then I place the larger sticks on top so that I can feed them into the fire through the opening. Not too many- three or four are enough.

69.MOTHER: That's good. I usually need twice that amount of firewood.

70.CHIEF APALOO: Exactly.

71.MOTHER: I think we must definitely invite you to present this stove at the women's meeting tomorrow.

72.CHIEF: Quite honestly MaKipko. I was hoping you would do that. I think you can do it better than me. And the women are more likely to trust you than an old man like me!

73.MOTHER: Chief Apaloo! You are not old!

74.CHIEF APALOO: (Laughing) That's exactly what Talib said. But then he thinks, all we chiefs do is sit on comfy cushions all day!

75.MOTHER: Well I agree. We women do need to gain confidence and explain what we need. OK. I will do it. Oh! My goodness!

76. SFX: Water Boiling

77. MOTHER: The water is boiling already.

78.CHIEF: Now you can break off the sticks, leave them on the rack for next time and the charcoal goes on smouldering inside. Then you have only used half the amount again!

79.MOTHER: Can you make one for every household? Think of the firewood we would save!

80.CHIEF APALOO: (triumphantly) Now that is where Talib and Chika have plans! Ask them! But basically the answer is yes!

81.MUSIC UP

Scene 7

82.SFX evening sounds/cows

83. AKIKI: (talking softly to her cow) Kiroko my long-horned friend. Tell me what I should do. I know something that Isi doesn't know. I saw his twin brother Kato and my sister Sesi disappear into the forest, hours before the rebel soldiers arrived. They often met secretly. I followed them once. They had a hideaway in the trees. I think they were doing it together- you know Kiroko..like men and women do. Should I tell Isi? What good would that do? Uh Kiroko? What good? If they are both dead? It should stay their secret.

84. AKIKI hums the same sad song Isi usually hums

85. MUSIC UP

OUTRO.

And that's all for today from our *Learning By Ear* series "If a tree falls...", written by Romie Singh, which tackles the question of deforestation.

In our next episode, the women learn about planting crops in harmony with the soil and the season. And Akiki has a dream – is it a sign?

Please join us and find out in our sixth

episode, entitled: "Living in Harmony."

Remember, if you want to hear the programme again or tell friends about it, please visit our website at www.dw.de/lbe

Goodbye for now!

END OF EPISODE 5