

LEARNING BY EAR

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

EPISODE ONE: "Trees and rainfall"

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List of characters EPISODE ONE:

Narrator

SCENE 1 Isingoma (Isi) (m, 18)

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

SCENE 3 Chika (f, 18)

SCENE 4 Talib (m, 20) Boys/Men Group Mulogo (m, 22) Isi (m, 18) Akiki (f, 7)

SCENE 5 Talib (m, 20) Chika (f, 18)

SCENE 6 Isi (m, 18) Akiki (f, 7)

INTRO:

Welcome to *Learning By Ear*, and our new drama series in 10 parts, “If a tree falls...”.

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.

Africa is the second fastest loser of forests in the world, with an estimated 90 percent of its population using fuelwood for cooking.

This adds to global warming which is killing our food crops, our cattle and our livelihoods.

Our drama “If a tree falls...” explores issues such as alternative energy and farming practices aimed at restoring our forests and resolving conflict.

Young Isingoma has survived the war with his mother and stays with her in Dovani Camp. But where is the rest of his family? Join us now as he describes the personal tragedy of losing his twin brother Kato.

Episode One: “Trees and Rainfall.”

1. MUSIC UP

Scene 1

1a. SFX: Outside: evening noises. Crickets, cows

2. ISI NARRATOR: My name is Isingoma. People call me Isi for short. I am 18. I have an elder brother, Jamal and an identical twin brother, Kato. He and I were always like two sides of one person- night and day, sun and moon. But since war broke out we have lost each other...

3.SFX: War/gunshots, distant screams/shouting/running through bushes.

... I called out, 'Father, Kato, Jamal? Where are you?' But I heard nothing but gunshots and screams. Later I found out that most of the men and boys had been captured and forced to join the rebels. My mother and I were lucky to escape. My father is Chief of our district, Banega. My mother misses him a lot – we all do- He was...is... head of our community. But I cry for my brother Kato. He and I were so close. I don't feel whole without him. I want to be where he is. But where is he?

Scene 2

3a. SFX Evening ambience outside

4. Isi hums a sad song while he looks after the cows

5.AKIKI: (softly) Isi? It's getting dark. Don't you want to bring the cows back home now?

6.ISI: Oh, hello Akiki! The cows are still eating.

7.AKIKI: (sighing) You are lucky! There is still enough grass near the camp for the cows. I have walked half a day

looking for wood. Look! This little bundle is all I could gather.

8.ISI: How long have we been here in Dovani Camp, Akiki? Six months? And in that time we have lost so much of the forest and grasslands. It's happening everywhere!

9.AKIKI: (stammers over long words) Your mother is on the forest com...comm..itt...ee. They talk about what to do.

10.ISI: She is your mother too now Akiki. My little sister!

11.AKIKI: Yes. I hear her crying at night. Do you?

12.ISI: I do, but her forest work helps to keep her mind off my father and brothers. And your family? Your older sister Sesi? Let's hope they all found a hiding place.

13.AKIKI: Sesi and mother ran away. I think the rebel soldiers stole my father.

14.ISI: And mine. And Kato. **(Sighs)** I wonder where he is. I always knew where he was, what he was thinking. But now I can't feel him. It's as if a part of me were dead. You know what they say about twins?

15.AKIKI: No! What?

16.ISI: That we are a double –edged sword with the power to hurt those who displease us. Let's hope Kato can make those rebels lose the war and bring us peace.

17.AKIKI: Amen to that! Come- let's go back to the camp. Our ma needs this wood to cook with.

18.MUSIC UP

Scene 3

18a. SFX Early morning ambience outside: birdsongs, cattle

19. CHIKA NARRATOR: My name is Chika. Today's my eighteenth birthday. Talib and I are *Help Africa* youth leaders. Our organization sent us to work here in Dovani Refugee Camp. I'm from the northern hills and Talib's from the drier western regions. We are in charge of youth projects which include educating young people on how to look after our environment better and make a good living from farming and forestry. We have seen how the land is drying up at an alarming rate. Desertification – it's a huge problem. **(GIVES A BIG SIGH)**
Hah! Dovani is really a well-built refugee camp. We have even created a basket ball pitch. From up here I can see the thatched roofs of the houses. **(SHORT PAUSE)** Oh my goodness! The time! I must get ready. I am working with the women's group. We formed it so that women would get more involved and have a greater say in food management for the camp. After all they do the cooking! So this morning we are going to plant soybeans. Oh! And there's Talib. It's discussion time for the men's group.

Scene 4

19a. SFX OUTSIDE / HAND BELL

21. TALIB: (OFF MIC) Come along! The men's youth meeting is taking place now! Please assemble under the Agba tree. Bring your pens and paper.

22. Background voices of boys and men

23.TALIB: Good morning everyone! Nice to see so many of you! Please find a place in the shade.

24.BOYS/MEN: Good morning Talib.

25. Low chatter as they sit down

26.TALIB: So. I hope you have talked to each other and to your elders and read the literature that we have at our office library. Your task was to find out how rain is formed.

27. MURMUR OF YES

28.TALIB: So ! Let's focus on this diagram. It shows a weather cycle: Here on the right you see how the rivers flow into lakes and finally into the sea. On the left are mountains with forests and above are clouds in the sky. And there up on the right, the rain falls back into the rivers and oceans. OK? Now! Who can explain this cycle to me? How is rain formed?

29. BOYS GROAN AND GIGGLE

30.MULOGO: There's the sun and it is heating the water in the seas, lakes and rivers. The heat causes the water to evaporate. It turns into steam.

31.TALIB: Right. Thank you Mulogo! There you see the water vapour. It then mixes with the air...and? Yes Isi?

32.ISI: Hot vapour rises into higher layers of air which are cooler, so when it rises the steam cools and then condenses. You can see clouds forming.

33.TALIB: Condenses, - meaning?

- 34.MULOGO:** It turns to water. Like when you breathe on glass, the hot air from your breath hits the cold glass and turns to water.
- 35.TALIB:** Well explained Mulogo! So the water vapour or steam becomes drops of condensation.
- 36.ISI:** And inside the cloud, those tiny droplets gradually become larger and larger as they collect more moisture.
- 37.TALIB:** Excellent Isi. And then?
- 38.BOYS CALLING OUT:** Sir...Me...Sir...I know
- 39.TALIB:** Shhh. Akiki? Are you a boy today?
- 40. BOYS GIGGLE**
- 41.TALIB: (gently)** What are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be with the girls?
- 42.AKIKI:** Please Talib. I want to stay with Isi.
- 43.TALIB: (gently)** No problem! Welcome! And? Do you know the answer? How do we get rain?
- 44.AKIKI: (talking slowly)** The drops become so large.. that they are... very... heavy and fall to the ground... as rain..plop plop..plop..
- 45. LAUGHTER**
- 46.TALIB:** Thank you Akiki. Very good! Water evaporates...condenses and then turns to rain.
- 47.MULOGO:** Then it fills the oceans and heats up, rises et cetera et cetera! That's the cycle!
- 48.TALIB:** Right...But do we always want our water to evaporate? Isingoma.

- 49.ISI:** Not always, no. We also need to preserve rain and collect it for ourselves – for example, in barrels next to our houses.
- 50.MULOGO:** That's not enough! We must clear the forest and build big reservoirs with dams.
- 51. BOYS MURMUR**
- 52.AKIKI:** Talib, we had a pond. It was full of rain and we could take water from it for months because it was shaded by trees. When Chief Kipko cut down the trees, that pond dried up.
- 53.ISI: (embarrassed)** Yes...well... my father was asked to do that by the lumber company. I think our people are sorry the pond disappeared, but...
- 54.MULOGO:** Ponds! As if they are enough. Stop thinking on such a low level.
- 55.TALIB:** Well Mulogo. The important word here is TREES and rainfall.
- 56.ISI:** As I understand it, Talib, the more trees we allow to grow, the more rain we can collect. Locally at least.
- 57.MULOGO: (angry)** Get real Isi. Can't you see how dry the land is? What trees would grow here?
- 58.TALIB:** Mulogo please-remember our ground rules: All ideas are valid. We show respect for each other's viewpoints.
- 59.MULOGO:** Yes. I'm sorry, but we need to think bigger than ponds!
- 60.TALIB:** Let's stay with trees. Who can explain why we need trees?

61.AKIKI: My cow likes to sit in the shade. The tree stops her burning.

62. LAUGHTER

63.TALIB: No! But Akiki is right! Trees protect us and our animals from the strong sun; but also from the strong winds. And there are many more reasons why we should protect our trees. Please sit in your groups and discuss. We'll share your ideas in a minute.

64. BOYS MURMUR IN BACKGROUND

65.TALIB: Mulogo? Can I have a word please?

66.MULOGO: Yes?

67.TALIB: I understand your frustration Mulogo.

68.MULOGO: Do you?

69.TALIB: I think so! Here on this camp we have the chance to share ideas and develop alternatives. It's a unique opportunity.

70.MULOGO: But you are holding us back with this local solution stuff! There's a whole world out there and we are missing out on important opportunities...to develop...to trade...to earn money.

71.TALIB: But there are no quick fix solutions. You see the harm deforestation does. Not everything can be solved with big bucks.

72.MULOGO: Tja! You sound like my old man!

73.TALIB: (Laughing) And I'm younger than you. But it is not about age. It's about finding common solutions. Some day you will return to your villages. You need to be well prepared to rebuild your communities from nothing, using all the latest knowhow that you have learnt here.

74.MUSIC UP

Scene 5

74a. SFX Walking on gravel/sand / Evening sounds

- 75.TALIB:** Phew, Chika! Mulogo is a difficult young man. Chief Apaloo is so open to new ideas but his son thinks like some city slicker. He's full of hot air.
- 76.CHIKA:** Maybe I should invite Mulogo to come with us to see what happens when forests die. He should get more involved. He's a natural leader, like his father.
- 77.TALIB:** Yes, but his dad is a conservationist. He loves the forests and Mulogo fights against all that. Mulogo wants large scale commercial forestry, like Chief Kipko did.
- 78.CHIKA:** Well I know Isi's father caused huge problems letting in the lumber company. The two chiefs were at loggerheads over land and grazing rights.
- 79.TALIB:** Yes. I think Isingoma feels guilty about the way his father behaved and for the environmental damage it caused.
- 80.CHIKA:** Well his mother is great. Ma Kipko is so dedicated to the work the women's forest committee is doing.

81.TALIB: That's good to hear. But hey! Enough talk of work! It's your birthday! There's some sorghum beer in the office waiting for you!

82.CHIKA: (laughing) Yuk! I can't drink that stuff! Give me a glass of cold fresh water! That would be like heaven to me!

83.MUSIC UP

Scene 6

83a. SFX Late evening sounds (quiet ambience with some crickets and animals in background)

84.ISI (humming softly) Hah Kato, my brother. I'm singing our favourite song. Can you hear me? Can you hear me? Send me a sign brother!

85.AKIKI: Teach it to me Isi. Maybe my sister Sesi will hear it too.

86.MUSIC UP

OUTRO.

"If a tree falls..." was written by Romie Singh.

And that's all from *Learning By Ear* for today, our new radio drama series which reminds us of the dangers we face in our communities, and on our planet, if we do not save more trees.

Please join us for **Episode Two** when Mulogo and Isi argue about large scale versus small scale solutions to solve the problems of climate change.

Remember, if you want to hear the program again or tell friends about it, please visit our website at w w w dot d w – world dot d e slash l b e

www.dw-world.de/lbe

Goodbye for now

END OF EP.1