

LEARNING BY EAR

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

EPIISODE NINE: "Sesi's Dark Secret"

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List of characters EPIISODE NINE:

Narrator

SCENE 1 Mulogo (m, 22)

SCENE 2 Mulogo (m, 22) Chika (f, 18)

SCENE 3 Talib (m, 20) Chika (f, 18)

SCENE 4 Mulogo (m, 22) Chief(m, 40)

SCENE 5 Isi (f, 18) Akiki (f, 7)

SCENE 6 Mother (m, 36) Mulogo (m, 22) "Themba" (f, 30)
Chika (f, 18) Chief (m, 40) Talib (m, 20)
Mixed crowd

SCENE 7 Chief (m, 40) Isi (m, 18) Sesi (f, 18)

SCENE 8 Akiki (f, 7)

INTRO

Welcome to *Learning By Ear* and episode nine 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.

What does Sesi know and has Akiki got yet another dark secret? Dovani Refugee Camp leader, Talib, is upset. He has set an eye on his colleague Chika. But she says they should just be friends. Meanwhile Mulogo has toned down his rhetoric and admits he has changed.

Episode NINE: "SESI'S DARK SECRET."

1. MUSIC UP

Scene 1

2.MULOGO NARRATOR: Working with Chika and Talib in the last few months, has made me change my mind about a lot of things. I agree now- deforestation is destroying our environment and our livelihoods. Carbon dioxide is at dangerously high levels, adding to greenhouse gases and causing the Earth's climate to change. Trees absorb CO₂ which is why we must stop farmers from slashing and burning forests for land and find alternative ways to live. I am aware of the floods on Mount Elgon, the melting glaciers of Mount Kilimanjaro, the drying up of Lake Chad. Deforestation affects us all, not just in Africa but across the world. I have learnt a lot from my discussions with Chika and after the big meeting yesterday when we agreed on a forest management group, I finally got to talk to her alone. And one thing led to another!

3.MUSIC UP

Scene 2

4. SFX Daytime ambience outside

5.MULOGO: That was a very impressive meeting, Chika. At last we are moving onto a higher scale of operation!

6.CHIKA: Yes- you were impatient for that to happen. But some of your ideas were too high tech - the hydroelectric plant, the dam and reservoir. We need solutions that people on the ground can put into practice and take control of.

7.MULOGO: I suppose what you are saying is work from the bottom up, not from the top down.

8.CHIKA: Exactly!

9.MULOGO: (softer tone) What do think you will do when we all return to our communities?

10.CHIKA: I don't know. And you?

11.MULOGO: My father wants me to get a proper education. He thinks I'm full of hot air. I've fought against his traditional ideas for so many years. But, I must admit, I have grown to respect him. He is a good leader.

12.CHIKA: His stove idea was a great success!

13.MULOGO: Yes and I would like to develop my interest in science too, join an agricultural college, learn more about agroforestry, biofuels, stuff like that.

14.CHIKA: (Shocked) Oh my goodness! You could be gone for years?

15.MULOGO: (tenderly) Would you miss me?

16.CHIKA: (embarrassed) Yes. I think I would. We've had great discussions.

17.MULOGO: (intimate) Is that **all** you would miss?

18.CHIKA: (tenderly) Mulogo.**(Kiss)** Oh Mulogo!

19.MULOGO: (soft kisses) Why don't you come and study with me!

20.CHIKA: (laughing) You really are so sure of yourself!

21.MULOGO: Of course. I know what I want! I'm the son of Chief Apaloo! And one day you will be my wife!

22.MUSIC UP

SCENE 3

23. SFX Office ambience (typing, papers)

24.TALIB: (feeling shy) Chika. I hope you don't mind if I say that...well..um..I have noticed a change in you.

25.CHIKA: Oh! What sort of change?

26.TALIB: I don't know. We have worked so closely on so many projects. And now I feel we are moving apart somehow.

27.CHIKA: But I am very committed to what we do.

28.TALIB: I suppose I am more worried for myself. I always liked you a lot and hoped we could become more than just colleagues.

29.CHIKA: (gently) Oh I see. Ai Talib! We are too similar! I have always looked on you as a brother!

30.TALIB: (disappointed) Oh! That makes me sound so boring!

31.CHIKA: (laughing) Not at all. I can relax with you and be myself. But ..well... I think attraction is difficult to define.

32.TALIB: And you are attracted to Mulogo! Sorry! It is none of my business!

33.CHIKA: No! It isn't. Look, there is a war on and one day when it's all over who knows where our paths will lead.

34.TALIB: I'm sorry I mentioned it.

35.CHIKA: No Talib. I think it is good to be honest. But let us focus on the here and now! Stage two. Mapping our forest and resources. Our communities are going to need these skills to save their forests when they finally return.

36.TALIB: (Laughing) And I guess we have to make THAT sound sexy, sister!

37.CHIKA: (Laughing) Exactly! Here! **(slapping hands)** Give me five, brother!

38.MUSIC UP

Scene 4

39. SFX Daytime ambience

40.MULOGO: Father, I'm leading the next session on forest management. Can I ask you to help me make a map of Abanto District forest in the sand. Then everyone can have a look at it and comment.

41.CHIEF APALOO: Sure. I'll be happy to do that! **(groans)** Oh oh! My bones. Ouch! Crouching like a vulture never was my strong point!

42.MULOGO: Here! Take this chair!

43. SFX: Moving Chair

44.CHIEF APALOO: (groaning) Thank you, son! That is much better.

45.MULOGO: Here's a stick. Can you please draw what you can remember of the forest- its boundaries, settlements, rivers, roads, paths.

46.SFX: STICKS SCRAPING IN SAND

47.CHIEF APALOO: (Breathing heavily) Ai Mulogo! Here you go!

48. SFX; Scraping sounds

49.CHIEF APALOO: (Stretching/ groaning) And these stones represent villages.

50.MULOGO: How many hectares? Roughly?

51.CHIEF APALOO: The total area is about 100.000 hectares. As Chief I had official documents showing all the different departments in the forest and who owned what.

52.MULOGO: But if our forests and villages have been destroyed by war, then these figures won't be accurate.

53.CHIEF APALOO: And those documents have probably been destroyed too.

54.MULOGO: Surely the government has copies? We will need to ask for them. According to the *Help Africa* field manual, an important first step in forest management is to identify the real owners of the land.

55.CHIEF APALOO: Sure, and when FARM is firmly established, they will give us the information.

56.MULOGO: Come, dad! Let's finish this map in the sand, then we will be well informed and ready to run the meeting.

57.CHIEF APALOO: (Proudly) You are a born leader, my son! I am proud of you!

Scene 5

58. SFX Daytime ambience

59.ISI: Akiki, I need to ask Sesi what happened to my brothers, especially to Kato. I get the feeling she knows something.

60.AKIKI: Isi, why do you want to upset yourself? She is not able to tell you. She can't speak at all.

61.ISI: But a week ago you said she was getting better.

62.AKIKI: Yes, when Chief Apaloo tells her one of his forest stories.

63.ISI: Are you saying she was struck dumb by what she saw several months ago?

64.AKIKI: Yes. She definitely saw terrible things.

65.ISI: But I have one question I want to ask her. Just one. I have to know.

66. MUSIC UP AND FADE

Scene 6

67. SFX Daytime ambience

68.MOTHER: Welcome to FARM- our new forest and rural management meeting. Step 2:forest management. Over to you Mulogo!

69.MULOGO: Good afternoon. Let us start by looking at a map of our forest that my father Chief Apaloo has drawn here in the sand. Please come closer. Take a good look!

70.SFX Footsteps...voices approving.

71.THEMBA: What about our forest in Banega?

72.MOTHER: Yes, our district should be included.

73.MULOGO: Yes. As you see, this is the boundary here. We don't have your information. You need to add that yourselves.

74.CHIKA: It is also important to discuss whether we want to create a community forest that we agree to manage together and get rid of some of these boundaries.

75.CHIEF APALOO: I think we should identify the trees we need to protect because of what they give us- wood, fruit, nuts, seeds.

76.MULOGO: How about we discuss ranking these products according to their value. For example, we need medicine, firewood, wild honey bees. They are also a form of revenue.

77.VOICES APPROVE

78.TALIB: We can make a chart showing the seasons and the trees and the products. If we lay out our findings in this grid, we can see more clearly which trees must be protected as a priority.

79.MOTHER: I think the traditional healers must take part. They have long years of experience.

80.THEMBA: I know my healer could not find any Hagenia to cure the tapeworm in my little boy.

81.CHIEF APALOO: Themba, you are right. But some healers are also guilty of stripping the forests bare of medicinal plants. They must work with us to replenish what they take.

82.MULOGO: Also those loggers must come forward. They must work with us to decide which trees to cut, and plan how many can be chopped safely. It is not in anyone's interest if the trees are overharvested or disappear altogether. I see this as a win-win situation!

83.CHIKA: That is what forestry management is all about.

84.SFX: PAPER NOISE

85.MULOGO: So, I will pass around these grids. Please get into your groups and start filling them out. Add to the map in the sand and when you have finished, I will draw what I see onto this poster and put it up for us all to see.

86. APPROVING VOICES

87.CHIEF APALOO: (Softly) I don't see Isingoma here, MaKipko.

88.MOTHER: (worried) No. It is not like him to miss a meeting.

89.CHIEF APALOO: I am going now. I will check Sesi and see if Isi is there.

90.MOTHER: That is very kind, Chief Apaloo. You have a very calming influence on the girl. Poor thing. I am just waiting for the day when she finally finds that tongue of hers.

Scene 7

91. SFX Daytime ambience

93.SFX. DISTANT SOUND OF ISI CRYING. KNOCK ON DOOR

94.CHIEF APALOO: Isi? My son, what is the matter?

95. SFX: OPENING OF DOOR

96.ISI: (sniffing in tears) Oh Chief Apaloo, how am I going to tell my mother?

97.CHIEF APALOO: Why? What has happened?

98. SESI WHIMPERING

99.CHIEF APALOO: Sesi! Hallo my child. What is going on?

100.ISI: She is holding some terrible secrets.

101.CHIEF APALOO: Secrets? How? What secrets?

102.ISI: (sobbing) She can't speak! That is the worst of it! But she has told me with her hands that...(bursting out loudly) . Kato is dead!

103.CHIEF APALOO: Oh dear God. Come here dear boy.

(COMFORTS ISI) Shhh. Shhh.

104.SESI WHIMPERS SOFTLY Hmmm

105.CHIEF APALOO: Sesi my child. Come. Put this blanket around you.

106.CHIEF APALOO: Where's Akiki?

107.ISI: (sniffing) Gone with her cow Kiroko to get grass.

108.CHIEF APALOO: Let me go and tell your mother to come here. Isi, go and look for Akiki. Sesi. Stay here. We will all meet back here very soon. MaKipko must be told.

Scene 8

110. SFX Daytime ambience. Cows

111.AKIKI: (talking softly) Kiroko, no one knows. Not a single soul. Only my sister and I. I knew about the Lenge tree. I know something else. Only I do! My sister held my hand and placed it there, on her stomach. I know what that means Kiroko! I could feel it round and warm under my hand. Ai! Ai! And only I know who the father could be.

112. MUSIC UP

OUTRO.

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

The work of FARM is consolidated. But will Sesi ever speak again? Can she reveal what happened to Isingoma's twin brother, Kato?

Please join us to find out in the last and final **Episode, entitled "A Blessing."**

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

Goodbye for now!

END OF EPISODE 9