

Learning by Ear 2011/2012 – Corruption – The Elephant in the Room

Episode 02 – "Corruption Needs a Scapegoat"

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Intro & Outro:

- NARRATOR

Scene 1:

- Jeffrey (MALE, 58)
- Mrs Mbata (FEMALE 55)
- Chairman (MALE, 65)
- NARRATOR

Scene 2:

- Isaac (MALE, 22)
- Policeman (MALE, 25)

Scene 3:

- Jennifer (FEMALE, 55)
- Isaac (MALE, 22)
- Sylvia (FEMALE, 19)

- Lydia (FEMALE, 16)
- Alfayo (MALE, 58)

Intro:

0. Narrator: Welcome to Learning by Ear and the second episode of our radio drama on corruption, "The Elephant in the Room". We'll be following the Odhiambo family to see how corruption affects people's lives; how it's almost deeply rooted in society in many African countries, but how it's still possible to get on in life without getting involved in it yourself.

In the last episode Lydia was shocked to discover her friends' parents had been bribing the teachers to make sure their children got good grades. Meanwhile Lydia's father, Alfayo, got some bad news at work. He discovered that his firm had been supplying electricity meters to companies that didn't really exist. As a result, his company is now part of a big energy scam involving some very powerful people. Alfayo is very upset. He hopes that his friend Jeffrey, who works at the Anti-Corruption Board, will be able to help him. But as we'll hear in this episode, "Corruption Needs a Scapegoat", Jeffrey has problems of his own...

Scene One:

KW begins

1. Atmo: Office background noises: typing, telephones ringing

2. Jeffrey: Good morning, Mrs Mbata, how are you this morning?

3. Mrs Mbata: Fine, thank you, sir. The chairman would like to see you in his office. He's expecting you.

4. Jeffrey: Okay. Any idea why?

5. Mrs Mbata: I'm afraid not. He did say it's quite urgent, though.

6. Jeffrey: Right. I'll go straight in then. Thank you, Mrs Mbata.

KW ends

7. SFX: Door opening and closing

8. Chairman: Yes, good morning, Jeffrey. Come in and sit down.

9. Jeffrey: Thank you, sir. **(moves chair to sit down)** I guess there's something urgent you need to see me about?

10. Chairman: Yes, that's right. This is quite a delicate matter, and it's quite difficult for me to say... I know you've been a loyal member of the Board ever since we started our work, and that makes it even harder...

11. Jeffrey: Makes what harder, sir?

12. Chairman: All right, Jeffrey, I'll get straight to the point. People feel that your work isn't up to scratch. It's not thorough enough. I'm afraid we're going to have to let you go.

13. Jeffrey: What? You're sacking me?!

14. Chairman: I do hate that word. But yes, if you put it like that, Jeffrey, we are sacking you.

15. Jeffrey: But on what grounds? I put in twice as much work as anyone else here - apart from yourself, of course, sir. I have put forward more corruption cases for prosecution than any other employee here. Why are you sacking me? Who's been complaining about my work?

KW begins

16. Chairman: I know you *think* you work very hard, Jeffrey. But it's been brought to my attention on many occasions that you're simply not pulling your weight.

17. Jeffrey: But that's ridiculous! I'm almost always the first one at my desk, and the last one to leave at night. The only part of my work you could complain about is the fact that the cases I put forward for investigation and prosecution don't get investigated, and so far no one has been prosecuted. But that's not my fault.

KW end

18. Chairman: Well, I'm afraid there seems to be general agreement that it just isn't working out, so as I said, we have to let you go.

19. Jeffrey: **(deciding to take the bull by the horns:)** This is to do with the energy scam I put forward for investigation, isn't it? You're all in on it together, trying to cover it up, aren't you?

20. Chairman: Jeffrey Thiongo, how dare you! That so-called energy scam appears to be a complete fabrication. We had one of the office juniors do some research into it, and we found no grounds whatsoever for further investigation, let alone prosecution.

21. Jeffrey: I spent six months working on that case. I know all about it, and there are very good grounds for investigation. What there doesn't seem to be is the desire or the will to investigate, and I'm guessing that's because you're afraid you might lose your job.

22. Chairman: I beg your pardon?!

23. Jeffrey: Well, you're part of the establishment, aren't you, sir? Part of that same little clique? I'm quite sure someone's told you to quietly 'get rid' of the energy case. But I'm telling you, I won't let it lie. Fire me if you want, but this scandal has to be exposed.

24. Chairman: **(laughs)** Jeffrey, Jeffrey! Be realistic. Who's going to believe you? The President? I think he'll take my word over yours, don't you? You have one hour to clear your desk, hand over your ID and leave the building. And a word of warning... There are people in high positions with a lot of power who won't be happy if you threaten to blow the whistle on them, Jeffrey Thiongo. I suggest you just go quietly.

25. Jeffrey: **(scraping back his chair)** Oh, I don't think so. I'm not the quiet type. I'm going to expose this energy scandal, and you'll go down with the rest of them, Mr Chairman. Mark my words!

26. SFX: **Opens and slams the door**

27. Narrator: Wherever there is corruption, it's often people doing honest work who are used as scapegoats. Trying to do your job correctly and stamp out corruption can leave you out of a job and questioning your beliefs, as has just happened to Jeffrey.

As we're seeing, corruption is very hard to tackle. A great many people are involved in these scandals, from top politicians and businessmen right down to the secretaries and the ordinary people paid to keep quiet. Jeffrey insists he's going to expose the scandal. But life as a whistleblower is tough; it can put you and your family in danger. Will Jeffrey be strong enough to stick to his belief in zero corruption? We'll soon find out.... But first, let's get back to the Odhiambo family. Alfayo's son Isaac is on his way home...

Scene Two:

28. SFX: car driving, radio on

29. Isaac: **(speaking on the phone as he drives)** Yeah, yeah! Okay Sam, let's do it at the weekend. I can always swing by your house, or you can come over to mine...Yeah, sure.... Oops, listen, I've gotta go. I think a cop just saw me on the phone. Oh damn - he's pulling me over! Gotta go. **(hits steering wheel)** Damn!

31. SFX/Atmo: **Opens car window: outside busy traffic on road**

32. POLICE: Papers, please!

33. ISAAC: Yes - here you are, Officer.

34. POLICE: You were driving while talking on the phone. That's an offence. I'm going to have to take you to the police station.

- 35. ISAAC:** Oh come on, officer, it was really urgent, I had to take the call!
- 36. POLICE:** As I said, it's an offence. I'll have to accompany you to the police station.
- 37. ISAAC:** Now? But it's rush hour. We'll be stuck in traffic for hours.
- 38. POLICE:** That's your problem. You've broken the law. Please open the door and we'll drive to the police station together.
- 39. ISAAC:** Okay, okay... Maybe we could discuss this on the way?
- 40. SFX:** **opens car door and closes**
- 41. SFX:** **starts the car, drives off**
- 42. ISAAC:** Listen. I'm going to drive down this side road and turn around. I'm thinking that maybe if I give you... this... I could just drop you back at the main road...?

43. SFX: **Rustling a banknote**

44. POLICE: I'm afraid 'this' small something is not going to stop me taking you to the police station.

45. SFX: **Rustling another banknote**

46. ISAAC: Okay, okay, take this as well. Now please get out of my car.

47. POLICE: That's better. Remember, you shouldn't make phone calls while you're driving. Think of this as a fine.

48. SFX: **car stops, car door opens and closes**

Scene Three:

- 49: Narrator:** At home, Isaac's mother and father are already having supper with his two sisters, Lydia and Sylvia.
- 50. SFX:** **Family eating supper. Cutlery clinking, conversation**
- 51. SFX:** **Door opens and slams**
- 52. ISAAC:** Ahhh, you wouldn't believe it - I got pulled over by this stupid cop just for being on the phone!
- 53. JENNIFER:** Well, you shouldn't talk on the phone while you're driving! Do you know how many accidents happen because of people doing that, Isaac?
- 54. ISAAC:** Mum!
- 55. LYDIA:** So did you have to go to the police station?
- 56. ISAAC:** Me, Lydia? Go to the police station? Of course not. I just paid him off.

57. SYLVIA: You did what, Isaac? But that's bribery!

58. LYDIA: Sylvia's right. It's corruption, Isaac. I'm ashamed of you! You're studying to be a lawyer, and even you are bribing people! This is exactly the problem - the people who are supposed to be setting an example are involved in corruption as well!

59. ALFAYO: Yes, Isaac, I agree with Lydia. You're studying to be a lawyer. What'll happen if you start paying bribes now? How will you prosecute corruption cases in future if you're part of the system yourself?

60. ISAAC: Oh come on! You're really over-reacting.

KW begins All it is is like paying a fine...

61. SYLVIA: Yeah, but if it's a fine you should pay it at the police station, so it can go to the council where it might actually do some good. Not into a policeman's pocket.

62. ISAAC: You seriously believe the fine would go to the council?!?
You're living in cloud cuckoo land, Sylvia!

63. SYLVIA: All right, but at least it's not open bribery. At least you can say you're not part of it.

KW ends

64. ALFAYO: Isaac. If you want to be a lawyer, I suggest you have a long, hard think about what that means. Your sisters are right. If we want to rid this country of corruption, it all has to start with people like you. You should lead by example.

End of scene

MUSIC (FADE UNDER OUTRO)

65. NARRATOR: And that brings us to the end of the second episode of our radio drama on corruption, "The Elephant in the Room", based on real-life stories. The Odhiambo family can't ignore the elephant in the room – corruption is affecting every aspect of their lives. In the next episode, the children's mother, Jennifer, is offered a bribe to improve the grades of one of her pupils. How do you think she'll react?

Tune in next time to find out how the story continues. And if you want to hear this programme again, please visit our website at dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Goodbye for now, and thanks for listening!