

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

Episode 09 – "Votes: Not for Sale"

Text: Victoria Averill

Editing: Johannes Beck, Friederike Müller

Proofreading: Charlotte Collins

CHARACTERS:

- NARRATOR

Scene 1:

- Jeffrey (MALE, 58)
- Sylvia (FEMALE, 19)
- Crowd (min 5 persons, male and female mixed)
- Voter (FEMALE, 45)

Scene 2:

- Alfayo (MALE, 58)
- Jennifer (FEMALE, 53)
- Lydia (FEMALE, 16)
- Helen Drayson (FEMALE 30's)

Intro:

0. Narrator: Welcome to Learning by Ear and the ninth episode of our radio drama on corruption, "The Elephant in the Room". We're nearing the climax of our story about the Odhiambo family and their good friend Jeffrey. In our last episode, Alfayo Odhiambo admitted to his wife, Jennifer, that his company was part of the energy scam involving governmental ministers, while their daughter Lydia and her friend Tekla broke the scandal about bribery in schools to the press.

In this episode, called "Votes: Not For Sale", the Odhiambos prepare for the backlash against their father, while Jeffrey, who's standing in the elections, is out on the campaign trail.

Scene One:

1. Atmo: **Outside Atmo, Music playing. crowds gathered for political rally**

2. Jeffrey: **(shouting)** Take their gifts, but don't give them your vote.
That's right - take their gifts, but don't give them your vote!

3. Crowd: **(chanting)** Take their gifts, but don't give them your vote!

4. Jeffrey: **(to rounds of applause)** Thank you for coming out today.
I'm going to be brief. As most of you know, in our country corruption has become part of our daily lives. It's like an epidemic, and it's holding back the growth of the country and the prosperity of each of us as individuals. That's why I'm here today!

5. Crowd: **(cheers and applause)**

6. Jeffrey: I'm not going to say I can change things overnight. I'm not going to make promises I can't keep. But what I will say is that if you vote for me you will see me work tirelessly to rid our country of the disease of corruption.

7. Crowd: **(cheers)**

8. Jeffrey: It won't happen quickly. It may take a generation. But if you vote for me, I promise that we will put in the groundwork to make our country a more prosperous, more transparent place to live. Take the money from my competitors who are standing over there with their sacks of notes, ready to fill your pockets in return for your vote. Yes, take their money - but don't give them your vote. Because they aren't trying to kill corruption - they're feeding it. Thank you!

9. Crowd: **(big cheers)**

10. Sylvia: Well done, Jeffrey! That seemed to go well. You kept it simple and to the point... Look over there at John Maina's men handing out money to the people. They don't look happy at all.

11. Jeffrey: Yes. Let's just hope our catchphrase sticks. It was genius, Sylvia. How did you think of it?

12. Sylvia: Well, you know, telling people not to take money when it's being handed out like that was never going to work, especially if they really need it. So why not say: sure, take the money if they want to give it to you, but you don't have to buy what they're selling. Give *us* your vote. Who knows if it will backfire in the long run, but for now people seem to like it.

13. Jeffrey: Yes, they certainly do...

KW begin

14. Voter: Excuse me, sir. I read in the local newspaper about the education scandal – you know, about how teachers are being bribed. I just wanted to thank you for helping to expose it. It's been going on in my kids' schools for years. I have seven children, and I don't have the money to pay for better grades ...

15. Jeffrey: Well, madam, I'm glad you approve. Obviously, after exposing the whole scandal, the next thing we need to do is pass a law against it. Teachers who take bribes should be prosecuted. But we have to go one step at a time. It's certainly something I'll make a priority if I'm voted in to parliament.

16. Voter: Well, sir, you have my vote, and my family's votes, too. But I'm going to take some of that money your rival is handing out – I can use it to buy dinner for my family.

17. Jeffrey: Well, thank you very much for coming.

KW end

18. Sylvia: Hey, Jeffrey. You might want to move on. Look who's coming over. It's John Maina, the Energy Minister himself. He doesn't look too happy.

19. Jeffrey: I'm not running away from him. If he has something to say to me, he can say it. I'm not scared.

20. Maina: **(Maina shoves Jeffrey to the ground and kicks him)**
Stay away, Thiongo. This is my turf.

21. Jeffrey: **(groaning in pain)** Owwww...

22. Maina: These people are voting for *me*. At least we know how to look after them properly. What are you doing for them? Saying you'll stop corruption? Fat chance. At least if they vote for me they know they'll be able to put food on the table.

23. Jeffrey: **(getting up again)** All they're doing by voting for you is feeding your bloated stomach and bank account. Wake up, Maina. These people may be poor, but they're not stupid. They recognise a crook when they see one. And they'll see one in you pretty soon, you mark my words. Let's go, Sylvia.

24. Maina: You've been warned, Jeffrey Thiongo. People who try to stop me from doing what I want generally end up in a wooden box, six feet under. You should remember that if you plan to take me on. I have a very long memory.

25. Jeffrey: The thing is, Maina, your days in power are numbered. Just you wait and see. I'd be brushing up my CV if I were you. You won't have the day job much longer.

End of Scene One

26. Narrator: Jeffrey is clearly making enemies of his political rivals. His life may even be at risk. But he's so convinced that he has to change things in his country and try to rid it of corruption that he's willing to risk his life to do it. Alfayo Odhiambo is also taking a huge risk. With Jeffrey's help, he's about to expose a huge, high-profile energy scam in which he himself was involved.

Scene Two:

27. Alfayo: I feel like a caged animal, Jennifer. Stuck in our own house, unable to go out... Do you think this is a taste of what's to come? Do you think we'll have to stay behind locked doors for the rest of our lives?

28. Jennifer: I hope not, Alfayo. I'm praying this will just be a phase, and that once the worst is over, people will forget and we'll be able to live normally again.

28a. SFX: Knock at door

29. Helen: Hello - you must be Mr and Mrs Odhiambo? My name is Helen Drayson. I'm with Jeffrey's organisation, "Stop Corruption Now". He's asked me to help you through this difficult time. Do you have a moment to talk?

29a. SFX **Door opens, Footsteps enter, door closes**

30. Alfayo: Yes, Helen, of course. Come in.

31. Helen: Thank you. I just wanted to outline a few things that are especially important. Mr Odhiambo, you've given your witness statement to Stop Corruption Now, and we're just putting together our final report, which will be released to the press this evening.

32. Jennifer: This evening! Oh dear...

33. Helen: Yes, but don't worry, there's no need to panic. Once we get it all out in the open we can begin to manage things a bit better. What I need to emphasise is that you shouldn't speak to the press directly. Anything you want to say should go through us. This is very important.

34. Alfayo: Why's that?

35. Helen: Because some of the press may be in the pay of the Energy Ministry. They may twist your story, or misquote you. There are all kinds of ways they could make trouble, and we have to be very careful how we present things because of your company's involvement in the scam. So you really need to keep a low profile. Okay?

36. Alfayo: Yes, I see. Do you think it could get out of hand?

37. Helen: We have to be ready for anything. Whistleblowers are often seen as troublemakers – and remember, you've not only blown the whistle on the whole energy scam, you've also exposed people from your own tribe. People don't like that.

38. Alfayo: But this isn't about my tribe! It's about corruption, and about people abusing positions of power to make money for themselves.

39. Helen: Of course it is, and hopefully in the long run everyone will see it that way. But I have to warn you - when the news first breaks, you may find some people will avoid you.

40. SFX: **knock at the door, door bursts open**

41. Lydia: Ahh, Dad, there you are! Is everything okay?

42. Alfayo: Hello, Lydia. Helen here is just explaining things to me. She's with Jeffrey's organisation.

43. Helen: I was just warning your father to keep a low profile, and that none of you should talk to the press without consulting us first. The energy scandal will be in the papers tomorrow, so you can expect a lot of attention.

44. Lydia: Why don't you just stay indoors, Dad? I'm going out with Isaac and Sylvia tomorrow to campaign for Jeffrey, but you can just hide out here, and then maybe move to the restaurant where Jeffrey and his team will wait to hear the results?

45. Alfayo: Sounds like a good plan, Lydia. We can watch the election results together. Come in. So, Helen: we'll stay here today, and then tomorrow evening we'll be in the restaurant down the road. Do you think that's keeping a low enough profile?

46. Helen: That sounds sensible. You'll have security here, and tomorrow we'll have plenty of security guards outside the restaurant. But please don't go anywhere else. And, Lydia: I know I can't stop you and your brother and sister going out to support Jeffrey, but please be very careful. Jeffrey's been getting death threats, you know. Right - I'll leave you now. Call me if you need anything - and good luck tomorrow.

47. Alfayo: Okay, Helen, thank you. You know where to find us.

48. Jennifer: I can't wait for this to be over. I feel like we're under house arrest. What did we do to deserve this?

End of Scene Two

MUSIC (FADE UNDER OUTRO)

49. Narrator: And that brings us to the end of the ninth episode of our radio drama on corruption, "The Elephant in the Room", based on real-life stories. What will life be like for the Odhiambo family when the energy scandal is all over the news? And what's going to happen on election day? Will Jeffrey make it into parliament? Will people really believe his message, and vote to rid their country of corruption? All will be revealed in the final episode of our radio drama. If you'd like to hear this programme again, please visit our website at dw.de/lbe. You can also join our Facebook page, where your comments are most welcome.

Goodbye for now, and thanks for listening!