

LEARNING BY EAR

“The Lost Kid – the Story of Single Mothers in Africa”

EPISODE 3: “More than just a Game”

AUTHOR: Mantegaftot Sileshi Siyoum

EDITOR: Stefanie Duckstein, Adrian Kriesch

PROOFREADER: Kate Hairsine

List of characters by scene:

SCENE ONE: DAY TIME AT THE LOCAL MARKET

- Askale (f,21)
- Kassech (f, 22)
- Buyer: (f, 58)
- Narrator (m, around 35)

SCENE TWO: AFTERNOON IN JONAS’ VILLAGE

- Jonas (m,15)
- Mekete (m,16)
- Challa (m,17)
- Aster (f, 15)
- Narrator (m, around 35)

SCENE THREE: AT NIGHT AT KASSECH’S HOUSE

- Kassech (f, 22)
- Begidu (m, 7)
- Narrator (m, around 35)

SCENE FOUR: AT NIGHT AT ASKALE’S HOUSE

- **Askale (f,21)**
- **Samy (m, 6)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

8. Kassech: I know, but as you know, many things have just gotten too expensive these days. Anyway, here's some more.

9. SFX: **CHARCOAL THROWN INTO PLASTIC BAG**

10. Buyer: **(as she leaves)** Thanks! I'll come back tomorrow, too.

KW end

11. Askale: **(comes close)** No one has come to buy some of my homemade bread yet. Today is your day, Kassech. You've sold almost all of your charcoal.

12. Kassech: **(Adamant)** Yes, Askale.

13. Askale: Sorry about the quarrel yesterday.

14. Kassech: It's OK!

15. Askale: By the way, my son Samy is doing well at school.

16. Kassech: **(without interests)** I see.

17. Askale: I met our teacher from evening school and he asked after you. Why don't you start going to evening classes again?

18. Kassech: **(Angrily)** Could you please mind your own business! When I sell my charcoal, I earn enough money to pay the rent, and to buy things my child needs! That's enough!

19. Askale: OK! OK!

20. NARRATOR: Askale is very worried that her strong friendship with Kassech is slowly breaking apart, just because she keeps giving Kassech advice about how to care for her child. On the other hand, Kassech can't understand why Askale keeps telling her how to raise her son, Begidu. Elsewhere, Kassech's younger brother Jonas is sitting outside playing cards with his two friends, Challa and Mekete.

SCENE TWO: AFTERNOON IN THE SUBURB

21. SFX: **OUTSIDE, THUNDER AND BOLT IN THE DISTANCE**

22. SFX: **SHUFFLING, CARDS BEING MIXED**

23. Jonas: This weather is really strange!

24. Challa: Yes, no one can tell when it's going to start to rain.

25. **Mekete:** Whatever! If it starts to rain, we'll run for shelter. Guys, forget about the rain, and let's keep playing our game. Here are your cards.
26. **SFX:** **FLIP OVER CARDS**
27. **Challa:** Hey, people! Look over there!
28. **Mekete:** What! Oh! Aster.
29. **Challa:** Papa Tilahun's granddaughter!
30. **Mekete:** **(panics)** What if she knows that we'd planned on robbing her grandpa?
31. **Challa:** Hey! Not so loud! She's coming over to us!
32. **SFX:** **FOOTSTEPS APPROACH**
33. **Aster:** Hi! Jonas.
34. **Jonas:** **(Nervous)** Hi! A...A...Aster.
35. **Mekete and Challa: (Giggling).**
36. **Aster:** Did you hear what happened to your nephew?
37. **Jonas:** No, what happened to Begidu?

38. **Aster:** Two days ago, I found him in our kitchen. It was raining and very cold outside. He slept so close to the fire he was almost in the glowing ash!
39. **All Three:** What!?
40. **Aster:** It's true, I am telling you. And your sister wasn't at home.
41. **Jonas:** She's stupid!
42. **Aster:** Then, I brought him to bed at our place. Begidu is a very cute little boy.
43. **Jonas:** Thanks! Please keep an eye out for him.
44. **Aster:** That's OK. Bye!
45. **Jonas:** Bye!
46. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS LEAVE**

KW begin

47. **Challa:** **(teases Jonas)** Uiiii. To bad that she didn't bring you to bed, Jonas.
48. **Mekete:** **(Laughs)** A...A...Aster!
49. **Both:** **(Laugh)**
50. **Jonas:** Stop it!

KW end

51. SFX: STARTS TO RAIN

52. SFX: FOOTSTEPS OF THE THREE BOYS LEAVE

53. NARRATOR: While Aster leaves in one direction, the three teenagers run in the other direction to find shelter from the sudden rain. That evening, Kassech has to deal with Begidu's problems again. Her son has started his first year of school and he isn't doing very well. And as usual, back at home, Kassech can't find the right words to talk to her son about his problems at school.

SCENE THREE: AT NIGHT AT KASSECH'S HOUSE

54. SFX. FLIPPING PAPERS

55. Kassech: **(Angrily)** How can you do so badly? Look, what is this a picture of?

56. Begidu: **(With fear)** It is a cat.

57. Kassech: **(Mocking at him)** "It is a cat." Spell it out!

58. Begidu: K...A...T

59. Kassech: **(Very angry)** What is K...A...T...?

60. Begidu: Cat.

61. Kassech: No! It is not **(spells the letters)** K...A...T...!
Rather, it is spelled C...A...T! It's a cat! I tell you, you would be better off if spent time learning instead of rambling around town telling everybody that you don't get enough food to eat! You're a wild cat! Go to sleep now!

62. Begidu: Mama, why do you always insult and beat me?

63. Kassech: Don't speak back to me! I said, go to sleep.

64. Begidu: **(He cries while he leaves).**

65. NARRATOR: What is wrong with Kassech? Actually, Kassech doesn't hate her son. But like many other young single mothers, she isn't sure of the right way to bring up her child. Kassech seems to be overwhelmed with the many challenges she faces in her daily life. And amid all the stress, she can't see how important proper care and education are for the development of the child's brain and personality. As long as Kassech continues to insult and beat Begidu, she will slow his development too. In contrast, Kassech's friend Askale takes her responsibilities as a mother very seriously. That is why Begidu lies crying in his bed, while Askale's son Samy plays and laughs with his mother just next door.

SCENE THREE: AT NIGHT AT ASKALE'S HOUSE

66. **SFX:** **NIGHT AMBIENCES**
67. **Askale:** **(Tickles Samy)**
68. **Samy:** **(Laughs)** mum, stop it! Stop it.
69. **Askale:** You're my good boy! Now, it's time for...
70. **Samy:** Learning!
71. **Askale:** Very good! Even though you learn at school, you need to keep on learning in the evenings. Now, while you're studying, I'll winnow the wheat for my bread, OK.
72. **SFX:** **POURING GRAINS ON A WINNOWER TRAY**
73. **Samy:** OK, Mum. Can I have some bread after you have baked it tomorrow?
74. **Askale:** Sure! But I've also got some bread here that I brought back from the market. I didn't sell all of the bread today. Are you hungry? Would you like some?
75. **Samy:** No, not now, later. Now I've got to study.
76. **Askale:** Good boy! By the way, why is studying so important?

77. **Samy:** I don't know?!
78. **Askale:** To get good marks, my dear Samy. But keep in mind - you don't just learn to have good marks, you also learn for life.
79. **SFX:** **WINNOWER THE GRAINS**
80. **Askale:** You see, your good grades are the result of our good teamwork.
81. **Samy:** Our teamwork?
82. **Askale:** Yes Samy. If you hadn't asked me about things that you didn't understand very well, and if I hadn't explained it to you properly, then you wouldn't understand these things now. You always have to ask for help.
83. **Samy:** OK, let me ask you something that I don't understand then.
84. **Askale:** Go ahead!
85. **Samy:** Why do I go to school? Why don't I play outside with my friends?
86. **Askale:** You see, if you go to school, you learn more.
87. **Samy:** So why don't my friends go to school?

- 88. Askale:** They do go. Your friend Begidu, for example, always goes to school.
- 89. Samy:** Yes, but the others don't go. Why not?
- 90. Askale:** Well, their families can't send them.
- 91. Samy:** Why can't they send them?
- 92. Askale:** Perhaps they can't afford it.
- 93. Samy:** Why can't they afford it?
- 94. Askale:** Oh Samy, you ask a lot of questions.
- 95. Samy:** But mum, you just told me to always ask when I don't understand something.
- 96. Askale:** Yes, yes, you see, most of them don't have enough money to send their children to school.
- 97. Samy:** Do you have enough money, mum?
- 98. Askale:** Oh! Thank God! It's enough for both of us.
- 99. Samy:** How do you earn enough money for both of us then?
- 100. Askale:** From the bread that I always bake at home and sell at the local market.
- 101. Askale:** **(Winnows).**
- 102. SFX:** **WINNOWERING THE GRAINS**

103. Samy: Can I help you, mum by winnowing the wheat?
Then you can earn even more money!

104. Askale: **(laughs)** Thanks a lot Samy, but you concentrate on your studies, and if you find something that you don't understand, you ask me straight away, OK?

105. Samy: OK, mum, I will.

106. Askale: Good boy! **(Winnowing)**.

107. SFX: **WINNOWING THE GRAINS**

OUTRO:

As you already know, the two friends Askale and Kassech share many similarities. They are about the same age; they both didn't finish school and they both have the same kind of job selling goods at the market. However, each of them treats her child very differently. Where do you think this will lead to? Will Begidu continue to bear his mother's negligence and humiliations? Join us for the next episode of our radio drama, **“The Lost kid – the Story of Single Mothers in Africa”**. If you wish to listen to this episode again, or to send in your opinions, comments and suggestions, just log on to **dw.de/lbe**. You can also follow us on Facebook. Until next time – and goodbye!