

LEARNING BY EAR

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

EPISODE 5: “Who is responsible?”

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List of characters by scene:

SCENE ONE: NIGHT IN THE COMPOUND

- **Drunkard Minabu (m, 55)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

SCENE TWO: NIGHT AT PAPA TILAHUN'S HOME

- **Papa Tilahun (m, 76)**
- **Mama Beletu (f, 65)**
- **Drunkard Minabu (m, 55)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

SCENE THREE: AT NIGHT AT ASKALE'S HOME

- **Askale (f,21)**
- **Kassech (f, 22)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

SCENE FOUR:NIGHT AT PAPA TILAHUN'S HOME

- **Aster (f, 15)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

INTRO:

Greetings to you all, dear listeners! Welcome to our Learning by Ear radio drama “**The Lost Kid – The Story of Single Mothers in Africa.**” Let’s recap some of the events in the last episode: after fighting with his friend Samy, seven-year-old Begidu has been missing from home for almost a week. No one can find him. Kassech's brother, Jonas, together with his teenager friends, has decided to rob Mr. Kasu and he doesn't know that this wealthy man is his own father! This is episode five, “**Who is responsible?**” We start the episode with nightly shouting of the drunkard Minabu, who is at his compound in a suburb of the capital where our story is set.

SCENE ONE: NIGHT IN THE COMPOUND

1. SFX: NIGHT AMBIENCE, THUNDERS AND WIND

2. **Drunkard Minabu: (Monologue, speaks out aloud).** No, I'm not afraid of any one of you! Do you think the drunkard Minabu doesn't know what all of you are doing right now, tonight? **(Hiccups)** I know, you're enjoying the night with your wives **(laughs)**. I don't care! I've also enjoyed and kissed her deeply. **(Hiccup).**

Oh! My sweet little bottle, let me kiss you again **(he drinks liquor from a bottle).**

KW Begin

Hey! You all know that I'm the only educated man in this suburb **(laughs)**. So, listen up carefully; you're lazy... **(Hiccup).**

3. SFX: THUNDERS AND WIND

4. **Drunkard Minabu:** First of all, you have to collect wisdom like me! **(Laughs)**. When you do that, you will be able to understand what I'm saying. Well, enjoying the night without considering your children's future is criminal! **(Drinks liquor from a bottle)** That's absurd indeed! If you have a child, you are responsible for his development, starting from the day he was born. Do your children feel safe and warm at home? Do you know about their talents and weaknesses? Do you make sure they're healthy? Let me ask you people, when did you last read a fairy tale to your child? When did you last help them with their homework?
(Hiccup) You have to devote more time and energy to your children. **(Hiccup)**.

5. SFX: THUNDERS AND WIND

KW End

6. Drunkard Minabu: Why am I still a bachelor? It's obvious;
because I can't stop drinking alcohol! **(Crying)**
No one needs a drunkard! I'm a drunkard and
I'm drunk like a skunk! **(Laughs)**.
Before I have a child, I need to think about
whether I can raise the child properly. I don't
want to send him to the local tavern and let him
to drink with me! No, no, no, no! **(Hiccup)** I tell
you, take care of your children!

7. SFX: HEAVY RAIN

8. NARRATOR: As usual, the old couple and landlords, Papa Tilahun and Mama Beletu, are watching the drunkard through their window. They believe in the saying, "in wine lies the truth". The drunkard gets caught in the heavy rain and tries to stand up on his feet. His legs tremble.

SCENE TWO: NIGHT AT PAPA TILAHUN'S HOME

9. SFX: HEAVY RAIN OUTSIDE

10. Minabu: **(Shouts from outside)** I like children. **(Drinks liquor from a bottle)** I like my neighbor Kassech and her child! Oh! Begidu, a week has passed and still no one can find you! That's such a pity! **(Cries)**. Oh! Poor Kassech! **(He throws the bottle away)**.

11. SFX: SMASHING BOTTLE

12. **Papa Tilahun:** **(while he looks through the window)** Oh!
Look Mama Beletu, he's smashed his liquor's
bottle against the brick wall! Did you hear what
he was saying?

13. **Mama Beletu:** I heard every single word.

14. **Papa Tilahun:** This drunkard Minabu is right!

15. **Mama Beletu:** I've told you before he's an educated person.
Move over, it's my turn to look now. Let me see
what he is doing outside **(Pause)**. He is
staggering in the rain.

KW beign

16. **Papa Tilahun:** Oh! Minabu, he is a naive person. He insults
the neighbors every night but he doesn't
remember any of it in the morning...

17. **MINABU:** **(From outside, loudly)** I tell you all frankly; I'm
not afraid of Papa Tilahun!

18. **Mama Beletu:** **(Laughs).**

19. **Papa Tilahun:** Forget what he's saying. Early tomorrow morning, he'll knock on our door with his usual apologies.

20. **Mama Beletu:** **(Exited)** He's lurching towards us!

21. **Papa Tilahun:** Let me see!

KW end

22. **SFX: BANGS, AS SOMEONE FALLING DOWN IN THE MUD**

23. **Mama Beletu:** Wait! Oh! He's fallen down.

24. **Papa Tilahun:** Hurry up! Open the door. We have to help him.

25. **SFX: DOOR OPENING**

26. **SFX: HEAVY RAIN GETS LOUDER**

27. **NARRATOR:** While Papa Tilahun and Mama Beletu run out to help Minabu; Askale, at her home, tries to console her friend Kassech, whose son is missing. Askales' own son, Samy is already in bed.

SCENE THREE: AT NIGHT AT ASKALE’S HOME

28. SFX: HEAVY RAIN OUTSIDE, DRUNKARD SCREAMS IN BACKGROUND

29. Kassech: (Sobbing).

30. Askale: Please, don't cry Kassech; Don't lose hope.

31. Kassech: How can we find him, Askale? **(Cries)** He's been missing for almost one week, but still no one has said "I saw Begidu." How will I find him now? My efforts have been in vain. **(In agony)** Oh, my child! My son! Where are you now in this teeth-chattering, blustery winter **(cries).**

32. Askale: Don't cry, my dear friend, please.

33. Kassech: **(Cries more)** I cry and I cry! It's all my fault. If only I had listened to your advice, I wouldn't have lost my child. It's all my fault! MY fault! **(cries)**

34. Askale: As a mother, I can completely understand your grief. It's heart-breaking, indeed, I know. But tell me, will crying bring Begidu back? **(Pause)**
No!

35. Kassech: **(Sorrowfully)** I feel empty, and I'm lonely. I'm living in misery! **(Pause then firmly)** You're right, crying is not a solution. I'm the person responsible for his disappearance!

36. SFX: HEAVY RAIN OUTSIDE TURNS INTO DRIZZLING

37. Askale: I have great faith; you WILL find him!

38. Kassech: And if I get my son back, I now know how to behave. I promise you, Askale, I'll give him so much love and affection. Insulting and hitting a child is not the right thing to do; the drunkard Minabu outside is right. You have a very blessed son indeed, Askale!

39. Askale: You see, children need love just as much as they need food and drink. You have to spend quality time with your child. He needs you. When he does something right, praise him. Even if he does something wrong, don't insult or hit him, explain instead what was wrong and how to do it the right way. Children understand things quickly. And children should also feel secure at home. But Begidu is scared of everything. That's why he ran away from home. You need to make him feel loved and wanted when he returns.

- 40. Kassech:** **(Sorrowfully)** I'll, I'll...If I find him...
- 41. Askale:** You will! Believe me. And the other important thing, try to help him every night with his homework, and before he goes to bed tell him a fable, or sing him a song he loves.
- 42. SFX: RAIN STOP**
- KW BEGIN**
- 43. Kassech:** You're amazing! How do you know all these things? Both of us went to the same school, but you know much more than me.
- 44. Askale:** That's why I'm always nagging you about starting evening school again **(Laughs)**.
- 45. Kassech:** **(Laughs)** No, you didn't nag me, rather you've tried to advise me even though I closed my ears to your advice.
- 46. Askale:** It's still not too late. Start your evening class without delay. You know, sometimes I stay after class to talk to the teachers about how we should care for our children properly. All of them have sons and daughters and they know how it is to juggle a job and a family and get an education. They've been very helpful.

- 47. Kassech:** I have been foolish!
- 48. Askale:** You see, there are many important things we can offer our children without spending a penny. I know you're a very good storyteller, for example. So you could tell Begidu fables and it wouldn't cost you a cent, but your child learns a lot from that.
- 49. Kassech:** Sure!
- 50. Askale:** When he ask something, don't interrupt him but rather try to answer as much as you know. So, my friend, if you want to learn more, please start class again.
- 51. Kassech:** I promise you! When I get my child back, I'll start immediately. First, I've got to find Begidu, then I need to work hard to save some money for my evening class. I also hope that my younger brother, Jonas will come back home soon.
- 52. Askale:** I hope so too!
- KW END**
- 53. Kassech:** Well, the rain has stopped. I've got to go now.

KW begin

54. Askale: Oh! Please stay a bit longer. Let me bring you something to eat.

55. Kassech: No, no, no, thanks a lot, Askale! I've to go home now before it starts to rain again. This winter is very strange. We don't know when it is going to start to rain again **(Walks)**.

KW end

56. Askale: OK! Don't worry too much!

57. Kassech: I won't. Good night!

58. Askale: Good night!

59. SFX: DOOR OPENS

60. SFX: DOOR CLOSES

61. NARRATOR: Kassech really regrets her own behavior. Nevertheless today's talk with Askale has been a huge relief for her. The two mothers had had a giant quarrel about their sons' fight and today was the first time Kassech had talked to her friend since Begidu's disappearance. Meanwhile, Papa Tilahun and his wife have accompanied the drunkard Minabu to his room. At the same time, their granddaughter Aster is at home. She's talking to her best friend, Semira, on the phone.

SCENE FOUR: NIGHT AT PAPA TILAHUN'S HOME

62. SFX: NIGHT AMBIENCE

63. Aster: **(Monologue on the phone)** Are you sure Semira that he is indeed Jonas' nephew? ... Oh! My God! I don't believe it. ... **(laughs joyfully)** I know Semira, you're my best friend. ... **(Suspicious)** But what ...? What? Semira, are you sure it was Begidu? ... I can't believe it. **(shocked)** Oh! My God! Where ...?! **(Cries)** How shall I explain that to his mother? ... I'll call you tomorrow no matter what, Semira, thanks.

64. SFX: HANGS UP THE PHONE

65. Aster: **(Sobs).**

66. SFX: NIGHT AMBIENCE

OUTRO:

What has Aster heard from her friend Semira on the phone? Why is Aster so shocked? Will Kassech find her son as her friend Askale hopes, or is it already too late? Stay tuned for our next episode. You are welcome to discuss your opinions, comments and suggestions about early childhood development on our Facebook page! Or visit our website: dw.de/lbe. Until next time – and good bye!