

## **LEARNING BY EAR 2012**

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

#### **EPISODE 1: “Sleepwalkers”**

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**List of characters by scene:**

#### **SCENE ONE: MIDNIGHT AT BELETU’S HOUSE**

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

#### **SCENE TWO: MIDNIGHT AT ASKALE’S HOUSE**

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

#### **SCENE THREE: MIDNIGHT IN JONAS’ PLACE**

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

#### **SCENE FOUR: MIDNIGHT AT BELETU’S HOUSE**

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

**SCENE FIVE: MIDNIGHT IN JONAS' PLACE**

- **Kassech (f, 22)**
- **Jonas (m, 15)**
- **Narrator (m, around 35)**

### **INTRO:**

Hello everybody! This is our brand-new series of Learning by Ear radio drama “**The Lost Kid – the Story of Single Mothers in Africa**”. The following ten episodes focus on early child development and single mothers. This novella encourages single mothers to help their babies and young children grow mentally and emotionally strong. Let’s now go to a suburb near the capital where our story is set. You will meet the seven year old boy Begidu who lives with his 22-year-old single mother, Kassech and her brother Jonas. Begidu’s best friend Samy and Samy’s mother Askale live next door. The two single mothers are both poorly educated. Kassech sells charcoal at the local market and Askale is a food vendor. Let's now listen to our first episode “**Sleepwalkers**”. A boy's sudden and frightened shout breaks the silence at midnight.

### **SCENE ONE: MIDNIGHT AT BELETU’S HOUSE**

1. **SFX:**                                   **THUNDER AND BOLT FROM OUTSIDE**
  
2. **Begidu:**                               **(Shouts loudly, frightened).**
  
3. **Kassech:**                             Why did you wake me up in the middle of the night, you bastard? **(Slaps)**
  
4. **Begidu:**                               Mama, he’s gone. He’s gone! **(He cries).**
  
5. **Kassech:**                             What...?
  
6. **Begidu:**                               The door’s open.... Mama, please!

7. **Kassech:** Oh, lord! The door really is wide open. Stay on the mattress! Where's the torch...?
8. **SFX:** **TORCH FALLS DOWN**
9. **Kassech:** Goddammit! The bulb is broken.
10. **Begidu:** Mama!
11. **Kassech:** I said shut up! Stay there! Where's the newspaper that I brought from the bakery?
12. **Begidu:** I used some for the toilet.
13. **Kassech:** You, miserable rat! How can I see in the dark now?
14. **SFX:** **SCRUMPLING NEWSPAPER**
15. **Kassech:** OK, here's a match and the rest of the newspaper.
16. **SFX:** **SPARKING MATCH AND FIRING  
NEWSPAPER**
17. **Kassech:** Stay where you are! **(Walks fast towards the door and opens it completely).**
18. **SFX:** **NIGHT AMBIENCES AND THUNDER  
BECOME LOUDER**

**19. Kassech:**                   **(Outside)** Hey! You! Stop! Stop!

**20. Begidu:**                   Mama! **(He cries)**.

**21. NARRATOR:**

Kassech rapidly follows a young man who she spies walking near her door. But who is this young man? And is he the one who opened the door in the middle of the night? We'll find out soon, but for now let's join the 6-year-old boy Samy and his mother Askale who live just next door.

**SCENE TWO: MIDNIGHT AT ASKALE'S HOUSE**

**22. SFX:**                       **THUNDER AND BOLT OUTSIDE**

**23. Samy:**                   Mum, why did Begidu cry? Does he want a glass of water like me?

**24. Askale:**                I don't think so, my dear son.

**25. SFX:**                       **WATER BEING POURED INTO GLASSES**

**26. Askale:**                Here is a glass of water, drink it and go back to sleep, my dear.

**27. Samy:**                   Mum, Begidu told me why he's always crying.

**28. Askale:**                What did he tell you, Samy?

**29. Samy:** He told me, he's never met his father. Is his father dead?

**30. Askale:** Drink your water, Samy.

**31. Samy:** **(Drinks)** But I don't cry like Begidu, mum.

**32. Askale:** Good boy! You shouldn't...

**33. Samy:** I've also never met my father.

**34. Askale:** Now, sleep my dear. It's already midnight.

**35. SFX: SWITCHING LIGHT OFF**

**36. Askale:** Good night, my dear! **(She kisses him on his cheek).**

**37. NARRATOR:**

Kassech and Askale were teenage school girls when they discovered that they were both accidentally pregnant. Kassech and Askale's lives are a daily struggle. This is common in many African countries. In West Africa, almost one girl in three becomes a mother before she turns 19.

**38. SFX: WIND BLOWS**



**47. SFX: THE DOG BARKS AND RUNS AWAY**

**48. SFX: TWO PERSONS' FOOTSTEPS, RUN AWAY**

**49. Minabu:** Hey! You two there! I saw you! Come back! Ha ha ha! I said ...the night is mine...!  
Only...mine! Ha ha ha...! **(This scene blends with Minabu's voice.)**

**50. Narration:**

Well, who were those two teenage boys, who ran away with their dog? And what are they doing outside at midnight? Did they plan to steal in the neighborhood? You will find out soon. In the meantime, Papa Tilahun and Mama Beletu peer through a small window watching what is happening outside in the dark night. The old couple rent out three small single rooms. Kassech and her son live in one of them, Askale and Sam in another one and the Drunkard Minabu in the third one. The drunken man can still be heard shouting in the darkness.

#### **SCENE FOUR: MIDNIGHT AT BELETU'S HOUSE**

**51. SFX: NIGHT AMBIENCES AND THUNDER FROM OUTSIDE**

**52. Papa Tilahun:** **(Whispers)** No, no, don't switch on the light!

**53. Mama Beletu:** Well, Papa Tilahun, let me see what's happening outside. Why did that poor child cry in the middle of the night?



- 54. Papa Tilahun:** Oh, no! Look, Mama Beletu, this Kassech, our tenant ...She is approaching him... and caught him. Oh my, no! Who is that person? Is he a burglar? She simply caught him.
- 55. Mama Beletu:** Let me see, let me see then. It's my turn.
- 56. Papa Tilahun:** No, wait! Look who is coming there! What is he doing, this old drunkard Minabu?
- 57. Minabu:** **(Outside from far)** Hey! You, Papa Tilahun, wake up, you lazy old man. I know you're in your bed! Ha ha ha!
- 58. Papa Tilahun:** **(shocked)** Did he spot me?
- 59. SFX:** **TRAY FALLS DOWN**
- 60. Papa Tilahun:** What's that falling down? What's it? What...
- 61. Mama Beletu:** It is nothing, only a tray that I put against the door.
- 62. Papa Tilahun:** A tray?
- 63. Mama Beletu:** Yes, a tray! It can alert us any time if any burglars come to us. Now it is my turn. Let me see ...Oh! No, he's coming towards us.

**64. Papa Tilahun:** **(Frightened)** Who...? Mama Beletu, don't say the burglar.

**65. Mama Beletu:** No, your friend, the drunkard Minabu.

**66. Papa Tilahun:** Switch the light on right away!

**67. Mama Beletu:** Just minutes ago, you said not to switch it on.

**68. Papa Tilahun:** But now I have to scare away this drunkard.

**69. SFX: WINDOW OPENS**

**70. Papa Tilahun:** **(Speaks through the window loudly)** You! I catch you!

**71. Minabu:** **(Shouts frightened and runs away).**

**72. Papa Tilahun:** **(laughs)** He's running away like a devil. Oh, and our other tenant is coming back towards her door. Aha! That was Jonas with her.

**73. Mama Beletu:** Jonas, her younger brother?

**74. Papa Tilahun:** Yes! And I thought he was a burglar! I've to talk to Kassech and to that drunkard tomorrow morning. Now, let's go back to sleep.

**75. SFX: WINDOW CLOSED**

**76. SFX: WIND BLOWS OUTSIDE HARDER AND THUNDER**

**77. Narration:** Let's leave Papa Tilahun and Mama Beletu to catch some sleep for the rest of the night. But still outside, Kassech is coming back to her tiny room with her younger brother, Jonas. He is 15 years old. He has a restless mind, drinks alcohol sometimes, and gambles with other teenagers in the suburb. And now his sister Kassech finds out that he has another problem.

### **SCENE FIVE: MIDNIGHT IN JONAS' PLACE**

**78. SFX: WIND BLOWS HARDER AND THUNDER**

**79. Kassech:** It's a curse! It is simply a curse!

**80. Jonas:** It's OK! Now, I've woken up!

**81. Kassech:** Whatever! It's a curse! Our mother died from poverty. We've no idea who our father is. Now, you became a sleepwalker! **(She cries).**

**82. Jonas:** Don't shout at me. I'm not a sleepwalker.

**83. Kassech:** Don't fool me! It is already bad enough for me to have to worry about earning our daily bread. Imagine what could happen to you, outside, at night! I can't bear all of this anymore!

- 84. Jonas:** Shut up!
- 85. Kassech:** **(Surprised)** What! I'm your older sister. **(In a low voice)** Ok! Now it's too late, get inside, and we'll talk about it tomorrow morning.
- 86. Jonas:** To hell with your daily bread! **(He walks away).**
- 87. SFX:** **STARTS TO RAIN**
- 88. Kassech:** **(Very shocked)** What?! Come back! It's already started to rain. Come back!
- 89. Jonas:** **(Laughs sarcastically)** I'll come back when I wake up ... Sleepwalker! **(He runs).**
- 90. Kassech:** Oh! God, where are you going? **(She cries).**
- 91. SFX:** **RAINS HARDER**
- 92. SFX:** **DOOR OPEND AND SLAMMED**
- 93. Kassech:** **(cries frightened while she rushes inside)**

**OUTRO:**

With Kassech's frightened cry, we end our first episode of "The Lost Kid – the Story of Single Mothers in Africa". Why did the young mother Kassech shout aloud when she entered her room? Where does Kassech's younger brother Jonas disappear to in the rainy night? For this and more, join us next time for the second episode. Remember, 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](http://dw.de/lbe) or follow us on Facebook! Until next time – and good bye!