

LEARNING BY EAR 2012

"I am still human- A story of Africa's mentally ill"

EPISODE 2: "Hurting in silence"

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List of characters by scene:

SCENE ONE: KAPAKA AT HOME AFTER BEING SACKED

- **Kapaka (m, 25)**
- **Cheupe (f, 25)**
- **Narrator**

SCENE TWO: VALERIE AND IRENE IN THEIR COLLEGE ROOM

- **Valerie (f, 19)**
- **Irene (f, 19)**
- **Narrator**

SCENE THREE: MALEMBA AND CHUMBA AT THE LOCAL CLINIC

- **Malemba (f, 35)**
- **Chumba (m, 16)**
- **Matilda (f, 40)**
- **Narrator**

SCENE FOUR: KAPAKA AND CHEUPE AT HOME

- **Kapaka (m, 25)**
- **Cheupe (f, 25)**

INTRO:

Hello and welcome to the second episode of “**I am still human**”, a Deutsche Welle Learning by Ear radio drama production. This story is about mental illness in Africa. In the first episode, Kapaka was fired from his job as a cashier in a supermarket. Valerie, a nursing student, seemed to surprise her friend Irene with her strange reactions while having lunch. And back in the village, Malemba was doing her best to chase the evil spirits from her son who keeps making noises and sounds that no one can understand. So where will the story take us next? Stay tuned to find out in today's episode entitled, “**Hurting in silence**”. We start off with Kapaka arriving home earlier than usual. Waiting at home is his pregnant wife, Cheupe.

SCENE ONE: KAPAKA AT HOME AFTER BEING SACKED

1. **ATMO:** **AT KAPAKA’S HOME**

2. **SFX:** **DOOR BEING OPENED AND LOCKED**

3. **CHEUPE:** **(surprised)** Kapaka! You are home early. Did you miss me that much?

4. **KAPAKA:** **(complaining)** No, I didn't do it...

5. **CHEUPE:** **(teasing)** You didn't miss me? That's very painful because I missed you.

6. **KAPAKA:** I didn't do it, didn't you hear what I said? It wasn't me!
This is not fair, this is not right!
7. **CHEUPE:** Kapaka, are you alright? What happened?
8. **SFX:** **FIST HITTING TABLE LOUDLY**
9. **CHEUPE:** **(screams in fear)** Wooi, don't get so aggressive! I'm sorry. I am very sorry if I did something wrong to you.
10. **KAPAKA:** **(breaking down to tears)** It wasn't me...I swear.
(now crying uncontrollably)
11. **CHEUPE:** **(Trying to comfort her husband)** Kapaka, it's fine. I don't know what happened but I believe you. I have never seen you like this before. You are scaring me and it's not good for my pregnancy. Now please calm down and tell me, what is it that has driven you to tears?
12. **KAPAKA:** **(Bitterly)** Leave me alone! Just leave me alone Cheupe, please. I need time to think about this. I am sorry but I just don't know how to tell you this. Give me time to figure it out.

KW begin

13. **CHEUPE:** Kapaka, It's only been a few months since we swore before God and man to be there for each other in good times and bad times. Why won't you tell me? Mmmh, I am your wife now. We need to support each other.

14. **KAPAKA:** No, Cheupe! You just take care of yourself and the baby. I will take care of this myself. Forgive me, but I need some time alone.

KW end

15. **CHEUPE:** **(bewildered)** But my dear...you...

16. **KAPAKA:** Please don't make it worse than it already is. I need to lie down for a moment. Maybe it will help calm me down.

17. **SFX:** **SOMEONE LYING DOWN ON A BED WITH SPRINGS**

18. **NARRATOR:** A shocked and pregnant Cheupe stands and watches as her once cheerful husband lies down in bed without saying another word. The question in her mind is: what could have happened to change Kapaka that much in such a short time? As we leave her lost in her thoughts, back at the medical college, Valerie and Irene are in their room after finishing their lessons.

SCENE TWO: VALERIE AND IRENE IN THEIR COLLEGE ROOM

19. ATMO: POPULAR LOCAL MUSIC PLAYING ON RADIO

20. IRENE: **(singing along and dancing)** Val... come on, get into the groove! Don't be so serious. Hey, you know what? We need some fun. We need to go out and party like crazy.

(music plays in background)

21. IRENE: Valerie...what's wrong with you? You used to be excited about dancing... uuuh... come on - get on the dance floor.

22. VALERIE: **(softly)** Turn off the radio.

23. IRENE: What? I didn't hear you. Speak up, Val!

24. VALERIE: **(screams at the top of her voice)** Turn off the radio!!!

25. IRENE: **(caught by surprise)** Hey, okay...okay. I hear you. No need to act crazy.

26. SFX: RADIO TURNED OFF

(absolute silence)

27. **IRENE:** Now what? No music, no...
28. **VALERIE:** **(cuts her short)** Ssssh!
- (short silence)**
29. **VALERIE:** They are here. They are here and they want to take me!
30. **IRENE:** Valerie, stop acting so foolishly. There is no one here except you and me. What have you been taking? Whatever stuff it is, it's not good for you.
31. **VALERIE:** **(out of her mind)** No! You are not going to take me...I will not accept that! **(fearful)** Don't come near me...no! No! Leave me alone...
32. **IRENE:** **(shocked)** Oh my... Val, you are not joking. You have really gone mad! I need to get help. I am living with a crazy person, and I had no idea.
33. **VALERIE:** **(begging)** Please don't go. If you go, they will take me with them. Stay here with me. I am scared. Please don't go. I beg you.
34. **IRENE:** **(scared)** Okay, Valerie, let go of my hand, I won't go, I promise. Just slowly let go of my hand.
35. **VALERIE:** Thank you, thank you.

36. SFX: IRENE IS QUICKLY STANDING UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM

37. SFX: DOOR QUICKLY BEING OPENED, CLOSED AND LOCKED

38. VALERIE: (totally frightened) Nooo! Open this door, open it please.

39. IRENE: (from outside the room while running away) Help! Somebody help!

40. NARRATOR: Irene is genuinely scared of her friend Valerie, as she runs down the hallway screaming for help. Many people in Africa, even those in the medical field do not fully understand mental illness. The stigma and fears that are rooted in African culture play a major role in how mentally ill persons are treated. Most people believe mentally ill people are either possessed by demons, or have been cursed for doing something evil. What will happen to Valerie? Will her friendship with Irene survive the new scare? Stay tuned to find out. But now, let's go back to the village where Chumba, the boy suffering from a mental sickness, has a fever. His mother Malemba, fearing the worst, decides to take him to the local clinic. There they meet nurse Matilda.

SCENE THREE: MALEMBA AND CHUMBA AT THE LOCAL CLINIC

41. ATMO: CLINIC AMBIENCE (INCLUDING PEOPLE IN THE BACKGROUND)

42. MALEMBA: **(desperate)** Excuse me, please, my boy... He needs to see the doctor, his temperature is very high. I did all I could but he has gotten worse.

43. CHUMBA: **(groaning in pain)** Aaargh... aarrgh... head... head...

44. MATILDA: How old is your son?

45. MALEMBA: Chumba is now sixteen years old. Nurse, please do something, he is in a lot of pain.

46. MATILDA: **(shocked)** Sixteen years! He looks like a 7 year old! Why is he so tiny? What else is he suffering from?

47. CHUMBA: **(still in pain)** Head... head... Mama... head...

48. MALEMBA: Nurse, please do something, he must be having a terrible headache. He rarely complains this much!

49. MATILDA: Madam, before he sees the doctor, I need to know a bit of his medical history. Obviously there is something else wrong with him. Is he crazy?... I mean mentally impaired?

50. MALEMBA: Chumba is not crazy. He only suffers from bad spirits from time to time. But that's all.

51. CHUMBA: (starts to make noises hard to understand)

52. MATILDA: (angrily) Can you please tell him to shut up! We have other patients here. Listen, I am sorry but we cannot help you. Your son needs specialized treatment and we don't have those facilities here. I recommend you take him to the National hospital, they can probably help your son there.

KW begin

53. MALEMBA: But I just need medication for his fever! I cannot afford it myself, how do you think I will get to the city? I had to carry him for almost an hour to get here. Nurse, you must help us. Can't you see he is suffering?

54. MATILDA: Of course I can see that, but as I have said, we are not capable of handling mental patients, we only offer outpatient services. Your son needs to be in a mental institution.

KW end

55. **CHUMBA:** (continues with his noises)
56. **MATILDA:** I am sorry, but you have to leave. Your son is scaring people, and we don't want anything to happen.
57. **MALEMBA:** My son is not dangerous! He is not a threat to anyone.
58. **SFX: BABIES START CRYING IN THE BACKGROUND**
59. **MATILDA:** That's what I didn't want. Please take your son away from here. Your son should be in a mental hospital.
60. **MALEMBA:** My son is not crazy! How many times do I have to tell you that? Come, Chumba, let's go back home. I will take you to the traditional healer Mizanja. At least, he is compassionate.

61. NARRATOR: Malemba is right. Most African health facilities have little compassion for those suffering from mental illnesses. According to a recent study, Guinea Bissau has no psychiatrists, psychologists or social workers who are specialised in this field. Liberia has only one practicing psychiatric doctor for the entire population, and there are some countries with virtually no mental health services, even though the World Health Organization estimates that over 80 percent of people with mental and psychosocial disabilities live in developing countries. They have little to no access to any form of psychological or psychiatric treatment. As Malemba carries off her son Chumba to see Mizanja, the traditional healer, Cheupe is about to discover a side of Kapaka she has never seen before.

SCENE FOUR: KAPAKA AND CHEUPE AT HOME

62. SFX: SOMEONE SNORING HEAVILY

63. CHEUPE: Kapaka! Kapaka! Wake up. We need to get ready for church, remember? It's Wednesday afternoon, and choir practise will start soon.

64. KAPAKA: (**getting up**) Ah Cheupe, you go ahead. I am not in the mood today. Please tell the choirmaster that I am not feeling well.

KW begin

65. CHEUPE: Kapaka, you are not serious! Are you asking me to lie in church? You used to love singing in the choir, what happened? Is it because you lost your job? Kapaka, many people have no jobs and...

66. KAPAKA: Cheupe, I am not in the mood for a sermon either, you go ahead. I will go next week.

67. CHEUPE: Should I tell the choir to pray for you? You know that you can get another job, a better one.

68. KAPAKA: Cheupe, you do whatever you want. I need to sleep now.

KW end

69. CHEUPE: Hmm, you are really acting strange, you are not eating well, you sleep long, you don't enjoy the things you used to like singing in the choir. What is happening to you?

70. KAPAKA: Nothing! Please just go and switch off the light and draw the curtains, I don't want any sunlight.

71. CHEUPE: It is 3 o'clock in the afternoon. And you want to have darkness? You are scaring me Kapaka... I am getting really concerned.

OUTRO:

Cheupe is right to be concerned. Kapaka has been acting very strange of late, in medical terms he has fallen into a depression. But what exactly is depression? And how will the stories of Chumba and Valerie continue? For the answers to these questions and much more, tune in to the next episodes of **"I am still human"**, our ongoing radio drama on mental illness in Africa. If you wish to listen to this episode again, or to previous episodes, just visit our webpage at dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook and share your comments there. Until next time, bye bye.