

Learning by Ear

“Once upon a time... in Africa”

Episode 9: “INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS”

Author: Marta Barroso

Editors: Maja Braun, Jan-Philipp Scholz

CHARACTERS:

Intro/Outro (female/male)

Scene 1:

- June (13, female)
- Mum (38, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)

Scene 2:

- Governor/Neighbor (35, male)
- Crowd

Scene 3:

- Mum (38, female)
- June (13, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)

Scene 4:

- Samora Machel/Dad (40, male)
- Crowd

Scene 5:

- Mum (38, female)
- June (13, female)
- Grandpa (77, male)

Intro:

Hello and welcome to the ninth episode of “Once upon a time... in Africa”, the “Learning by Ear” series about African History! In today’s episode, June wants to know more about the story behind the scar on Grandpa’s arm. Stay with us to find out how the independence movements developed in Africa some decades ago...

Music 1, then cross fade with SFX

First Scene: At the yard next to the house.

SFX: June weeping, mother consoling her. In the background: chicken, goats, birds, then fade under

1. June: (sobbing) I was just playing with the chickens, Mum! Then, all at once they started flying about and I fell over dad's bike!
(pause) Ai!

2. Mum: If you don't calm down I won't be able to clean the dirt out of the wound! Do you want it to get infected? Who told you to play with the chickens?

3. June: (sobbing) Ai, ai, ai! Wait a bit, Mum! It hurts so much!

SFX: Footsteps coming nearer on gravel path. In the background: chicken, goats, birds, then fade under

4. Grandpa: What happened to Charles' bike? (pause) Huh? June! Did you hurt yourself, dear? You've been riding around on dad's bike then, have you?

5. Mum: She was playing around with the chickens, Father! And the bike was lying in her way...
(June: Ai!) Calm down, June! **(pause)**

6. June: **(sobbing)** Will I get a scar, Grandpa?

7. Grandpa: No, Daughter! But if you get one, it won't be that big! And every scar has its own story.

Grandpa unbuttons his shirt sleeve and rolls it up

8. Grandpa: Do you see this one on my arm?

9. June: HUUUHHHH, Grandpa! The story of that one can't be very funny... **(pause)** Ai, Mum! Haven't you finished yet?

10. Mum: Just a bit longer! Listen to Grandpa so that you take your mind off it!

11. Grandpa: **(meditative)** Indeed it isn't very funny. I had been sent by the newspaper to the north of Mozambique in order to find out some details about the Massacre of Mueda. But on the way there, we had an accident – that's when I got this scar.

12. June: **(shocked)** You said massacre, Grandpa?

13. Grandpa: Massacre, yes... At that time, Mozambique was still a Portuguese colony. **(pause, then meditative)** Some of the local chiefs had contacted the Portuguese authorities and asked for more freedom and better pay. So, the police had gone to the neighboring villages inviting the people for a meeting in Mueda. And, it's said, thousands turned up to listen what the Portuguese had to say! Until today, there are many versions of the massacre: some say 14 people died, others speak of 150 or even 600 dead! But as the massacre was over by the time we got there, I didn't have any other choice but to interview the people who had witnessed it.

14. June: Ah, Grandpa, it is much better that you weren't there! Can you imagine? You would have got many more scars if you had been! **(pause)** But tell me more, now I'm curious! **(pause)** Aiii!

15. Grandpa: One version a boy told me at that time went as follows: the Portuguese administrator had asked the provincial governor to come to Mueda and to bring soldiers with him. Then, the governor met with local chiefs in the administration building. And when they finished, he went to the balcony to speak to the crowd that was waiting on the square in front of the building. Imagine our neighbor here was that governor...

Flashback music

Second Scene: During the Massacre of Mueda.

SFX: Many people of all ages murmuring. Above: door opening. In the background: birds, then fade under

16. Governor: **(from a distance/from above, speaking loudly)** Does anyone have anything to say?

17. Crowd: **(speaking loudly)** Yes! I do! Me, too! I also want to talk! I do! I do! Me, too!

18. Governor: **(from a distance/from above, speaking loudly)** The ones who wish to say something, go to that side of the square!

SFX: Footsteps from various people going away on gravel path. In the background: people murmuring, birds, then fade under

19. Governor: (from a distance/from above, shouting)
Soldiers, bind the hands of those who wanted to say something! Now!

SFX: Footsteps from various people running away on gravel path, then in the background: people beating others with bars, people murmuring, birds, then fade under

20. Crowd: (murmuring, surprised) Ah! What are they doing? Ha? Ah, they're beating them! My God, that's horrible! (shouting) Bandits! You liars, you called us here for this? Go away you oppressors!

21. Governor: (from a distance/from above, shouting)
Get the lorries! I want the captives to be put in them!

SFX: Footsteps from many people running away on gravel path. In the background: birds, then fade under

22. Crowd: (running, shouting) Get your hands off them! You can't take them! You can't arrest them! Stop! You bandits!

SFX: Gunshots, people shouting. In the background: birds

Flashback music

Third Scene: At the yard next to the house.

SFX: Chicken, goats, birds, then fade under

23. Mum: That's it. Finished! Don't get the plaster wet, now! And don't go play with the chickens again!

24. June: No, Mum! I will behave now, I don't want to get any more scars, right, Grandpa?

25. Grandpa: That's right!

26. June: That wasn't fair from the governor in Mueda...

27. Grandpa: Well, if it happened exactly that way, I cannot tell. But it was not fair, indeed! And one thing is for sure: many people say that it was at the Massacre of Mueda that it became clear for the Mozambicans that any peaceful attempt of achieving independence would be useless. And that the only way would be through violence and armed conflict.

28. June: But why didn't the Portuguese grant the colonies their independence at once?

29. Grandpa: **(meditative)** Well, that's exactly what the Mozambicans asked themselves for so long! **(correcting himself)** The Mozambicans, the Angolans, the Guineans... **(pause)** The Massacre of Mueda happened in June 1960. Before that, Sudan had already declared independence in 1956 and Ghana in 1957, for instance. But do you know how the year 1960 got nicknamed? **(June: Hmhm!, like saying "No")** The year of Africa! And do you know why? **(June: Hmhm!, like saying "No")** Because in that year 17 countries achieved independence: Senegal, Mali, Cameroon, Togo, Chad, Congo, Nigeria...

30. June: **(surprised)** Huh?! So many?

31. Grandpa: Well, the European powers, namely France, Great Britain, and Belgium – which were the ones who granted independence to their colonies that year – had come out of the Second World War very weak – both politically and militarily. So they couldn't finance their colonies anymore. **(pause)** Although it was still took 15 years after the end of the war before they began granting independence to the Africans...

32. June: I still don't understand... Wasn't Portugal weakened either?

33. Grandpa: Of course it was! But the military regime there, under Salazar, the dictator, didn't want to lose control of this overseas territory for anything in the world! And, as the Mozambicans, the Angolans and the other colonies saw one neighbor after the other declaring independence, their nationalist and anti-colonial feeling grew stronger and stronger. Therefore, some of the bloodiest struggles for independence in Africa took place in the former Portuguese colonies!

34. June: And did nobody protest?

35. Grandpa: That's what I want to explain! In 1962, the political party FRELIMO, the Liberation Front of Mozambique, was founded in exile in Tanzania.

36. June: Why did they found a Mozambican party in Tanzania, Grandpa?

37. Grandpa: Because it was too dangerous for those politicians to do it in Mozambique: the founding of a political party that struggled for independence meant they were against the colonizers. So they left the country. **(pause)** And two years later, FRELIMO started the armed struggle against the Portuguese. **(pause, then meditative)** What a terrible time! **(pause)** But in Portugal, too, the population grew more and more discontent!

38. June: In Portugal? Didn't you say the Portuguese wanted to keep the colonies?

39. Grandpa: The regime did. But the wars in Africa didn't only cause many deaths on the Portuguese side, they also consumed a big part of the national budget. Until a revolution took place in 1974 in Portugal and the government was overthrown. **(pause, then amused)** And now guess what happened one year later!

40. June: **(enthusiastic)** Mozambique got its independence!

41. Grandpa: Exactly! All Portuguese colonies actually... But now imagine Dad was Samora Machel...

42. June: Who was Samora Machel?

43. Grandpa: Samora Machel was a Mozambican military commander, one of FRELIMO's founders and the first President of the People's Republic of Mozambique...

Flashback music, then cross fade with beginning of Machel's speech

Fourth Scene: Mozambique's Independence Proclamation.

44. Machel: **(speaking loudly as in a political speech)**
Mozambican women and men, labourers and farmers, workers of the plantations, the saw mills and concessions, mine workers, workers of the railway, the harbours and factories, intellectuals, civil servants, students, Mozambican soldiers in the Portuguese military, men, women and youth, patriots...

SFX: Cheerings, whistles, hands clapping from the crowd

45. Machel: **(speaking loudly as in a political (discurso))** In your name, FRELIMO faithfully proclaims today the general armed insurgence of the Mozambican people against Portuguese colonialism for the conquest of the total and complete independence of Mozambique!

SFX: Cheerings, whistles, hands clapping from the crowd

46. Machel: (shouting) Long live the People’s Republic of Mozambique!

47. Crowd: (shouting) Long live the Republic!

48. Machel: (shouting) Long live the People’s Republic of Mozambique!

49. Crowd: (shouting) Long live the Republic!

50. Machel: (shouting) The fight goes on!

51. Crowd: (shouting) The fight goes on!

SFX: Cheerings, whistles, hands clapping from the crowd

Flashback music

Fifth Scene: At home in the evening.

SFX: Kitchen (pots, fire, kerosene lamp). In the background: crickets, then fade under

52. Mum: **(from a distance)** June, when I told you to listen to Grandpa's story, I didn't want you to spend the whole afternoon without doing anything...

53. June: **(speaking loudly)** It won't take long, Mum!
(talking to Grandpa) Tell me, Grandpa! Were all African countries colonized by the Europeans?

54. Grandpa: There were some exceptions but very few. At the beginning of the 20th century, two African countries were independent: Ethiopia, which was briefly invaded by the Italians in the thirties but which never became a colony and Liberia, which had achieved independence from the USA in 1847.

55. June: Only two?!

56. Grandpa:

Unfortunately, yes. Although many African economies were stronger during colonial times, it was one of the blackest chapters of our history. And when the Europeans left Africa, they left their traces. They didn't teach the Africans how to rule a country democratically. And that favored the formation of dictatorships. **(pause, then meditative)** Many countries like Mozambique also went through decade-long civil wars. You know, the second half of the 20th century wasn't easy for Africa either...

SFX: Footsteps approaching. In the background: kitchen (fire, kerosene lamp), crickets, then fade under

57. Mum:

(serious) Little girl, come on before I get angry! Now!

Outro:

And this is the end of the ninth episode of "Once upon a time... in Africa", the "Learning by Ear" series about African History!

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