

Learning by Ear – Religious Dialogue: “A Bridge over Gori”

Episode 02: “I am because you are”

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List of characters for episode 2:

- Narrator /Philip male (17)
- Harry, male (17)
- Mat, male (16)
- Layla, female (16)
- School director, Mrs. Ayo Milulu, female (48)
- Father Barnabus Dembele, Harry’s uncle (49)
- Hassan, Layla’s brother (12)
- Philip’s father, Layton-Browne (50)
- + Student chatter
- + Students and teachers (singing anthem)
- + Students and teachers (saying prayer)

1. **SIG TUNE UP**

2. **INTRO:**

Welcome to Learning by Ear and Episode 2 of our 10 part radio drama series “A Bridge over Gori”, which tells the dramatic story of how religion and politics drive a wedge between two communities, two families ... and two young people, Harry and Layla.

A new school year has started for them and their friends.

Philip is one of Harry’s best friends. He will tell you the whole story.

In today’s episode called “I am because you are”, he receives a big shock at school and his father puts pressure on him. Layla and Harry also face obstacles at home. Listen in!

Scene 1. In school assembly hall

Director, Students, Harry, Mat, Philip, Philip Narrator

3. **SFX: In a big hall. Student chatter. Noise slowly dies down as director speaks**

4. **DIRECTOR:** Good morning and welcome to Ubuntu College.
(Noise dies down) For those who are new to our place of learning let me introduce myself. I am the director and my name is Mrs. Ayo Milulu. Our college is 10 years old this year. Ubuntu is the key to our school’s name and message: It means “I am because we are.” It is embedded in African culture.

***FADE UNDER AND OVER PLAY THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION**

*Without our community we are weak and lonely. Our community is our family, our school, our neighbours and they lie at the heart of all we do. It is because of them that we develop into better human beings.

5. **HARRY:** **(whispering)** Try telling my Holy Uncle that! He thinks he is God's representative on earth.

6. **PHILIP:** **(whispering)** Ai! Harry! Your uncle is a fine priest.

7. **HARRY:** **(whispering)** Why do you support him, Philip? He wants to spoil our fun and make a Catholic priest out of me!

8. **DIRECTOR:** **(Louder)** Let us stand for our college anthem! Sing out everybody!

9. **Song: Ubuntu Anthem**

10. **NARRATOR/PHILIP:** Ubuntu College was special. Learners only went there for two years. But in that period, we learnt about each other's customs and beliefs. Well, we lived in the same region alright. But we had no clue about each other's religion. Sure, many of us **thought** we knew. But very often we were completely wrong, full of nonsense that we'd picked up from gossip, TV or movies. So the aim of Ubuntu College was to bring us nearer, teach us about each other in order to promote tolerance and respect.

11. LEARNERS AND TEACHERS START SOFTLY SPOKEN PRAYER (see below)

FADE UNDER PHILIP AND UP AGAIN

- 12. ALL** *Send Thy peace, O Lord, which is perfect and everlasting,
that our souls may radiate peace.
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may think, act,
and speak harmoniously.*

FADE OUT. BRING UP PHILIP

*Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may be contented and thankful for Thy bountiful gifts.
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that amidst our worldly strife we may enjoy thy bliss.
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that we may endure all, tolerate all in the thought of thy grace and mercy.
Send Thy peace, O Lord, that our lives may become a divine vision, and in Thy light all darkness may vanish.*

- 13. PHILIP/NARRATOR:** Every morning we started with a prayer- not of any one faith – a general praise to a God we could all accept, even if, like me, you didn't really have one.

- 14. DIRECTOR:** **(End of prayer)** *Send Thy peace, O Lord, our Father and Mother, that we Thy children on earth may all unite in one family. Amen.*

15. **SFX: Rustle as learners cough and move**

16. **DIRECTOR:** In keeping with the principles of our founder, Chief Solomon Banda, I will now announce the names of the Head Girl and Head Boy. They will act as your representatives and as my link to all of you. And they are **(pause)**: Layla Omer. And Harry Dembele!

17. **SFX: Excited murmur among the learners**

18. **DIRECTOR:** Please come up and get your badges.

19. **MAT:** **(Whisper)** Hey Philip, you must be disappointed. I thought you were a certain choice!

20. **PHILIP:** **(Whisper)** Well thanks, Mat. I guess I don't have a Bishop Uncle who's a big shot!

21. **MAT:** **(Encouraging)** Hey- don't let this come between you and Harry. We ARE still the Ubuntu Chiefs, right?

22. **PHILIP:** **(sounding deflated)** Right!

23. **APPLAUSE. FADE**

24. **PHILIP/NARRATOR:** My blood turned cold. I should have been the next head boy, surely. I was older than Harry. I had the better grades. Why had I been overlooked? My father wasn't very pleased either when he heard.

Scene 2. At the Layton-Browne's

Philip's father (Layton Browne), Philip

25. SFX: Radio / Music on in the background

26. P's FATHER: **(Irritated)** But I thought I made it clear to the director, Philip. It is important to include agnostics like us who may be more sceptical. We are there to question people's claims to having the one true God and offer the school a model in secular leadership. That's what this country needs!

27. PHILIP: Oh Dad- you didn't try and persuade Mrs. Milulu, did you? No wonder she didn't choose me as Head Boy.

28. P'FATHER: Nonsense! Anyway! Tell me! Who's the Head Girl?

29. PHILIP: **(embarrassed)** Hmmm, well, it's Layla Omer.

30. P's FATHER: **(very interested)** Really! **(warmly)** Layla? Hmmm, **(coming out of his thoughts)** Er, yes. That girl! She has come out of her shell! Why are you looking like that? **(Anxious)** You don't have the hots for her I hope. **(Heated)** Good Heavens, boy! You can't er..er..

31. PHILIP: **(heated)** Why? Just because she's Muslim? Why send me to Ubuntu College if you are against us mixing together!

32. FADE MUSIC. CHANGE IN PHILIP'S VOICE TO NARRATOR

- 33. PHILIP/NARRATOR:** My father stormed out of the room! What was up with him? Meanwhile, Layla was facing a standoff with her younger brother who was not at all impressed with her Head Girl badge!

Scene3. At the Omer's

Hassan, Layla

34. Islamic religious music in the background

35. HASSAN: Layla, why does the college need a head boy AND a head girl?

36. LAYLA: So that our issues are heard too, Hassan. Women should be treated equally, that's why.

37. HASSAN: It's the men who are going to be leaders, not you – you will get married and have children. It's a waste. The whole education thing is a waste.

38. LAYLA: **(angry)** You are a waste – OF MY TIME! I'm going to the gym to do some training.

39. HASSAN: You can't! Muslim girls should not show their face outside!

- 40. LAYLA:** (quietly) Hassan, I wear a hijab. I only need to cover my head, not my whole face. I don't know what they are teaching you at that madrassa, but Muslim girls CAN go out AND play sports. As long as we cover up. Mohammed, Peace Be Upon Him, said so himself!
- 41. HASSAN:** A Muslim woman is not allowed to display herself before unbelievers. Just because papa has gone out, you think...
- 42. LAYLA:** Papa knows the school's philosophy. If YOU have any problems, then go and talk to Mrs. Milulu, the director! But I'm doing what MY teachers allow me to do.
- 43. SFX: jumping up from chair, running out, slams door**
- 44. HASSAN:** (off mic) Wait! I'm coming too.
- 45. BRIDGING MUSIC UP**
- 46. PHILIP/NARRATOR:** Then there was Harry. He was happy of course. Head boy! Son of a chief! His uncle, Father Barnabus, a powerful leader in the Gori Catholic community! But Bishop Uncle was not happy with everything his nephew was up to!

Scene 4. At Father Barnabus'

Philip Narrator, Father Barnabus, Harry

47. SFX: Dance music in the background

48. FATHER B: Turn it down Harry! Why does everything you do have to be so loud? You forget I am a priest. Please! Show a little respect!

TURNS MUSIC SOFTER

49. HARRY: Sorry Uncle. Umm...Mat and Philip just called – we want to go out and celebrate me becoming Head Boy. Is that alright with you?

50. FATHER B: Harry. Haven't you been out enough? I want you to stay home and take your Bible studies more seriously. We need to prepare your mind for adulthood. Maybe for priesthood!

51. HARRY: **(quietly)** Uncle – I..I really don't think I'm cut out to be a priest.

52. FATHER B: Nonsense – you're too young to be the judge of that. **(softly)** My boy, that is why I am here: to guide you to the Lord.

53. HARRY: Hmm. Uncle. It's Friday and I just became Head Boy. The Ubuntu Chiefs want to celebrate.

54. **FATHER B:** **(confused, stuttering)** The... what? Since when...?
55. **HARRY:** **(interrupting, reassuring)** It's just a name! We play soccer together and train at the gym...
56. **FATHER B:** And go to the club. You are **not** allowed to drink - you are under age. If I ever...
57. **HARRY:** **(interrupting)** We know that Uncle! It's a cafe. We drink tea or juice – and play pool. That's all!
58. **FATHER B:** Well, we are going back to the village for the weekend. We need to set new rules for you my boy. Now go!

AMBIANCE FADE OUT

59. **PHILIP/NARRATOR:** So we met at the Reunion Cafe and as usual had fun joking with the local girls, playing pool, talking. But there was one image I just couldn't get out of my head – Harry as Head boy, together with the beautiful Layla as Head Girl, working with her! It should have been me! My heart was so sore. I would give up soccer and the Ubuntu Chiefs, just to be with her. But that was impossible. I could only gaze at her from afar, at the gym or on the race track. Her brother Hassan was always lurking nearby, checking up on her. I would have to find a way to get closer to her. And take her away from Harry.

60. SIG TUNE UP

61. OUTRO:

And that's all from *Learning by Ear* for today! Our young friends have realized that being leaders at school does not mean being leaders at home. Affirming oneself is not that easy. Please join Harry in Episode Three of our series "A Bridge Over Gori", as he discovers the joy of working more closely with Layla and then finds out why he should not.

And remember, if you want to hear the programme again or tell friends about it, please visit our website at [www dot d w – world dot d e slash lbe](http://www.worldde.lbe). Goodbye for now!

END OF EPISODE 2