

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

Episode 10: “Reunion Day”

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List of characters for episode 10:

- Narrator /Philip, male (17)
- Layton-Browne (Philip’s father), male (50)
- Harry, male (17)
- Layla, female (16)
- Roshi, female (16)
- Mat, male (17)
- Ishmail Omer (Laylas father), male (43)
- Chief Dembele (Harry’s father), male (51)
- Father Barnabus (Harry’s uncle), male (49)
- Mrs. Milulu (School Director), female (48)
- Sister Rebecca, female (28)
- Hassan, male (12)
- + Students
- + Linesman (at sports competition)

1. **SIG TUNE UP**

2. **INTRO:**

Welcome to Learning by Ear and the final episode 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 religious communities, two families... and two young people, Harry and Layla, who are forced to hide their love for each other.

In our last episode called “Reunion Day”, Harry and Layla inform their families of their plans for the future. How will they react? But first, listen in as Philip’s father finally reveals his dark secret to his son! Philip is one of Harry’s best friends. He tells you the whole story.

3. **PHILIP/NARRATOR:** Today when I look back over the last two years, I realise I was driven by envy for Harry. Every religion warns against envy, the principle of Ubuntu rejects envy. Everything became clear when my father finally opened up and revealed the secret he had kept for many, many years.

Scene 1. At the Layton-Browne's

Layton-Browne, Philip

4. SFX: soft music (radio)

5. **P'S FATHER:** **(feeling uneasy)** Philip, this all happened before your time- you weren't born yet.
6. **PHILIP:** What all happened, dad?
7. **P's FATHER:** **(remembering)** The woman in that photograph on my desk was an auditor. Our finance office was in a mess and she was sent to go over the figures. It took several days. She was working late every night and...and ...well ...we got to know each other.
8. **PHILIP:** **(irritated)** OK, so she was your girlfriend and then you split up? And you still love her? Is that it?
9. **P's FATHER:** Yes. Um, no...not like that... We were very much in love. But she was Muslim and although I came from a non-religious family, obstacles were put in our way.
10. **PHILIP:** And? So who is she? Can't you tell me?

11. P's FATHER: **(reluctantly)** Her name is... was Anisa.

12. PHILIP: Anisa?

13. P'S FATHER: You knew her as Mrs. Omer when she was
alive.

14. PHILIP: **(gasps)** Mrs Omer? You...you mean...LAYLA's
mother?? Papa! And the baby in the picture?
(upset) Oh don't tell me... please don't tell
me...

Cut ambience. Fade music

15. PHILIP/NARRATOR: So finally the pieces of the puzzle were falling
into place. My fascination for Layla was
because ...she was my... my half-sister! Her
mother married Ishmail Omer in the very early
stages of her pregnancy, so he never found
out. Later, she gave Ishmail a son, Hassan, but
she never told him the truth about Layla and
when she died, she took her secret to the
grave. So that is what I know, now... at last.
(sounding more cheerful) But- listen in! At this
very moment, Ubuntu College is celebrating
Reunion Day with the whole town of Gori!

16. FADE UP NOISE OF CELEBRATIONS

Scene 2. Outside Reunion Centre

Harry, Layla, Mat, Philip, Roshi, Mr Omer, Chief Dembele, Father B, Sister Rebecca, Hassan, students, linesman

17. SFX: Outside Reunion Centre, cheering students, festive music

18. MAT: (shouting over the noise) Come on, Philip!
Don't sit there on your own. We won the
Debating Club Competition! You should be
celebrating with us!

19. HARRY: Mat is right, grab your camera Philip! Let's do a
self-timer of the Ubuntu Chiefs together!
Ready... (laughing) 3..2..1..

20. ALL: (shouting) CHEESE!

21. SFX: camera clicks

22. HARRY: Great! Now come, Philip...we need you to take
photos of Roshi and Layla winning the 400
meter hurdles!

23. PHILIP: OK, Harry! But- some Muslims don't allow
themselves to be photographed - I need to ask
them first.

24. HARRY: It's OK. Mrs Milulu asked everyone and they all gave permission to appear in the school magazine and in your dad's newspaper.

25. PHILIP: Right! I love the long sleeves and pants the Muslim girls are wearing- and that neat scarf over the hair - I must get closer.

26. HARRY: Hey Mat, look! The boys are wearing the body covering, too. I heard that it's a special light material that keeps them cool.

27. MAT: **Yes,** it's a huge breakthrough! Everyone who wants can now take part!

28. LINESMAN: **(distant shout)** "On your marks.....Go!"

29. SFX: RUNNING/WHISTLING/CHEERING

30. SINGING UBUNTU ANTHEM ABOVE THE CHEERING.

OFF MIC

31. HASSAN: **(shouting, excited)** Go, Layla, go!

32. MR OMER: **(excited)** Go... that's it! My daughter! She's still in third place! Look, Hassan, Sister Rebecca from the hospital!

33. REBECCA: Oh, hello Hassan! Good afternoon Mr Omer!
Oh, now she's pulling ahead! Yes!

34. HASSAN: Roshi's second now. Layla's first! HOORAY!

35. SFX: Roshi and Layla panting heavily

ON MIC

36. ALL: Well done girls!

37. ROSHI: **(panting)** Congratulations, Layla! You helped us
win the Cup! Philip! Please take a photo of us!

38. PHILIP: Sure! Lovely smile!

39. SFX: camera clicks

40. PHILIP: Thank you!

41. LAYLA: **(panting)** Thanks, Philip! Let me see? Oh!
That's nice!

42. PHILIP: I'll give you a copy! A memento to keep...

43. LAYLA: Thank you, Philip! You make it sound like a
farewell present!

- 44. PHILIP:** **(awkwardly)** It is, in a way...look I'm... uh...I just wanted to say...I...
- 45. LAYLA:** **(interrupting)** Oh look! Harry- your father and Bishop Uncle are talking to my father. Let's go over. See you later, Philip!
- 46. PHILIP/NARRATOR:** I would never tell Layla what I knew- about her mother and my father- about us. I just wanted a minute with her, to see her as my sister! But she was too excited about the Omers and the Dembele's standing together! I let her go and realised that this was indeed, a historic moment.
- 47. HARRY:** Mr Omer! Father! Bishop Uncle!
- 48. FATHER B:** Hi Harry- **(stops suddenly)** Bishop who?
- 49. HARRY:** Sorry, Uncle Barnabus! That's my nickname for you!
- 50. ALL:** **(Everyone laughs)**
- 51. MR OMER:** Layla, my beautiful daughter! Well done!

52. **HASSAN:** Well done, sis! Look- Sister Rebecca's over there with her daughter, Abigail. When we are 16, we're both going to go to Ubuntu College. Papa says I can!
53. **LAYLA:** That's good news! **(hesitantly) And... uh...** you know they are Jewish, right?
54. **HASSAN:** Lemba actually. She and I have been comparing the teachings of the Jewish book, the Torah, with our Holy Koran. I want to study the history of religions when I grow up!
55. **LAYLA:** Give me a hug, little brother! I am so proud of you!
56. **HASSAN:** Why? I haven't won the 400 meters hurdles- **you** have!
57. **LAYLA:** But you have jumped SO MANY hurdles too, Hassan: the ones that separated us from our own friends and neighbours. Oh! Ubuntu College will be so proud of you!
58. **HARRY:** **(breathing in deeply, moved)** Father! Layla and I would like to...

59. **LAYLA:** **(interrupting, excited)** Chief Dembele, papa! Harry and I want to date openly.
60. **CHIEF DEMBELE:** Oh! A girl asks to date my son! These are modern times indeed! **(laughs)** But in my culture, we must bring cattle to your family first and bless your love for each other.
61. **LAYLA:** Oh how lovely!
62. **MR OMER:** I understand Chief Dembele and I fully respect that. We have similar rituals in our community. But let us talk more and get to know each other's traditions better. Harry, I can't impose our religious and cultural practices on you. You and Layla will be going to the same university miles away, beyond my authority. Please respect my daughter and just know you are not the only person who loves her! Take care of each other.

- 63. FATHER B:** We can keep our own traditions while accepting others. Politics usually gets in the way and we use religious differences to get what we want. It is very wrong. I realised that when the Reverend Henry Immanuel from the Charismatic Church disappeared with his congregation's money. Mr Omer- as a member of the Development Council, I feel I have more in common with you than with some members of my own faith!
- 64. CHIEF DEMBELE:** Well said, brother! We all want the social and economic betterment of **all** our people! That is Ubuntu! That is what unites us.
- 65. MR OMER:** Yes! And to celebrate the good news, I would like to invite you all to my house! You too, Sister Rebecca, Abigail: I am proud to know you! You have saved my son's life when he got burnt so bad!
- 66. REBECCA:** Thank you Mr. Omer. Hassan asked to be saved! You know - we don't choose to be born in Africa, or as Jews or Muslims- we enter this life on Earth and we need each other to survive.

67. ALL: **(Laughing, kissing, murmurs of agreement)**

68. BRIDGING MUSIC

69. PHILIP/NARRATOR: Ubuntu College term was coming to an end.

We had spent two years together and the last year especially had taught me who I am; why leading a good life, free of envy and hatred, actually benefits our mental and physical health. Also Hassan had learnt a lot. As a punishment for setting fire to the church, he and the older boys from the madrassa had to help build the new multi-cultural Reunion Centre. Now they enjoy coming here, too, and take part in sport with all of us in one team! But wait – Harry is calling me....

70. HARRY: **(off mic) Philip! (on mic) Philip** –Before we all go, please take one shot of us both!

71. LAYLA: Please Philip! For old times' sake!

72. PHILIP: Sure! Where do you want it?

73. LAYLA: On Gori Bridge!

74. PHILIP: You and Harry? On Gori Bridge?

75. HARRY/LAYLA: Yes, Philip **(laughing)**, **ON** Gori Bridge! We don't have to hide **UNDER** the bridge anymore!

76. ALL: **(All laughing)**

77. SIG TUNE UP

78. OUTRO:

Well, that was the end of Learning by Ear's radio drama "A Bridge over Gori", a story written by Romie Singh.

Harry and Layla's love was stronger than the century old conflict between their families. Dialogue, collaboration and tolerance of each other's beliefs have proven to be the keys to bringing back harmony into the town of Gori.

And remember, if you want to hear the programme again, leave your comments 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 and stay well!

END OF EPISODE 10