

Learning by Ear 2011/2012 – Corruption – The Elephant in the Room

Episode 06 – "The Truth Must Come Out"

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CHARACTERS:

- NARRATOR

Scene 1:

- Lydia (FEMALE, 16)
- Tekla (FEMALE, 16)
- Ms Tatu, teacher (FEMALE, 43)

Scene 2:

- Jeffrey (MALE, 58)
- Lydia (FEMALE, 16)
- Tekla (FEMALE, 16)
- NARRATOR

Scene 3:

- Jeffrey (MALE, 58)
- Alfayo (MALE, 58)

Intro:

0. Narrator: Welcome to Learning by Ear and the sixth episode of our radio drama on corruption called "The Elephant in the Room". Throughout the ten episodes we follow the Odhiambo family and their friend Jeffrey Thiongo in their struggle against corruption in daily life. In our last episode, Jeffrey publicly launched his new NGO, Stop Corruption Now, to an enthusiastic reception by the press. Jeffrey was caught off guard when he was asked whether he would consider running for parliament. Meanwhile, Isaac Odhiambo came face to face with corruption in his office when his colleague put forward some 'preferred' candidates for a job.

In this episode, "The Truth Must Come Out", we'll find out whether Alfayo Odhiambo, the father of the family, is really going to admit that his company is involved in the energy scam. But first we join Lydia Odhiambo at her school, where she and her friend Tekla have decided to have a word with their teacher about some surprising results in the end-of-year exams.

Scene One:

1. SFX: **Classroom: Low murmuring, papers rustling**

2. Ms Tatu: So those are the end-of-year results. I think we should all give Jane a big clap for coming top this year. And of course there were some other excellent results as well.

3. SFX: **clapping**

4. Lydia: **(muttering under breath)** Tekla, how did Jane get such good grades? I mean, she barely lifts a finger. I've never once seen her hand in her homework on time, and she never answers questions in class, either.

5. Tekla: **(murmuring)** I know. I'm actually quite shocked.

KW begin It just doesn't seem possible. I bet everyone is thinking the same. And how did Samuel get into the top ten? He managed to beat me, and everyone knows he's not exactly the sharpest tool in the box!

KW end

- 6. SFX:** **Chairs scraping, loud chatter. Kids leaving the classroom**
- 7. Lydia:** **(to Tekla)** Come on, Tekla. Let's confront her!
- 8. Tekla:** Confront who?
- 9. Lydia:** Her. Miss Tatu. Our teacher. She's supposed to mark fairly and make sure that it's those who work the hardest and do the best in the exams who come out on top.
- 10. Tekla:** Ohhh... I don't know, Lydia. She might get really angry with us if we suggest that she isn't marking fairly. You know she's got a temper.
- 11. Lydia:** I don't care! Come on, Tekla, you're the smartest person in the class. You should be coming top, not Jane. I'm going to confront the teacher. Come on.

12. Lydia: (clears throat) Umm, excuse me, Miss Tatu. Do you have a minute?

13. Ms Tatu: Of course, Lydia, what is it?

14. Lydia: Well, Miss Tatu... this is a bit sensitive, and I don't mean to be offensive in any way. But how is it possible that Jane came top of the class and not Tekla?

KW Begin

15. Ms Tatu: What do you mean, Lydia? Jane got the best grades.

16. Lydia: Yes, I know. But how could she have done? She never hands in her homework on time, she never says a word in class, and she never actually seems to do any work. Surely you can see that too, Miss?

KW End

17. Ms Tatu: What are you suggesting, Lydia?

- 18. Lydia:** I'm not exactly sure. But I thought you might be able to explain. Everyone knows that Tekla is the smartest in the class, but she came fifteenth this year. How is that possible?
- 19. Ms Tatu:** Mmmmmm. Weeeeee... How about you, Tekla? What do you think about your results?
- 20. Tekla:** Well, I'm very disappointed, actually, Miss Tatu. I would never expect to be top - but fifteenth ... I've never been lower than third. It's like Lydia says: it feels like something strange is going on.
- 21. Lydia:** My mum's a teacher at another school, and the other week a parent came in and offered her money to improve his son's grades. You wouldn't agree to take a bribe, would you, Miss Tatu?

22. Ms Tatu: Listen. Do you have any idea what teachers are paid? The long hours we work? So yes: from time to time I do accept a bit of help if one of the parents offers it. It seems to me I don't have much choice. That's just the way it is. Now if you'll excuse me, girls, I have to go home. I'll see you tomorrow.

23. SFX: chair scraping

24. SFX: door opening and closing

25. Lydia: (angry) I knew it! It makes me sick! It makes me so angry! What is the point of working hard the whole year if some lazy girl's parents are just going to bribe her way to the top?

26. Tekla: It's so depressing. I wish there was something we could do. Expose it. The whole thing... I mean, it's not just our school. It goes on at your mum's as well, and I'm sure every school is the same.

27. Lydia: **(thoughtful)** Hmm... Tekla, you've just given me an idea. Come with me. We *will* expose it. Because if the education system is corrupt, hard work is just a complete waste of time. Come on - let's go!

28. Tekla: Lydia! Where are we going?

29. Lydia: To see our friend Jeffrey and my sister, Sylvia.

30. Tekla: What can they do?

31. Lydia: Jeffrey's new NGO, silly! Don't you remember? Stop Corruption Now. Sylvia works with him. We'll tell them about the corruption in the education system and see what they say. Don't you think it's a good idea? Come on - we'll go there right now.

32. SFX: **footsteps, door slams**

End of Scene One

33. Narrator: When they hear from Lydia and Tekla about the bribery that goes on at their school, Jeffrey and Sylvia aren't at all surprised. Corruption in schools is a well-known story, but no one's ever tried to bring it out into the open. Jeffrey is very keen to investigate corrupt schools and the teachers who take bribes. But he needs Tekla and Lydia to get hold of some concrete evidence.

Scene Two:

34. Atmo: Office noises

35. Jeffrey: So, Lydia and Tekla: I really want to take this case on. I think we have good reason to assume this isn't just happening in your school; it probably goes on all over the country. What we need is proof.

36. Lydia: How do we get it, though, Jeffrey?

- 37. Jeffrey:** Well, Lydia, I think the only way is for you to do some undercover detective work. If you're willing, I can lend you the equipment you need.
- 38. Tekla:** I think I know where this is heading. You want us to record Miss Tatu admitting that she takes bribes, don't you?
- 39. Jeffrey:** Exactly, Tekla. Do you think you can do it?
- 40. Lydia:** Well, we can definitely give it a go.
- 41. Tekla:** Oh my goodness. What if we get caught? Will we be arrested?
- 42. Jeffrey:** Er... No, don't worry. Don't get caught, ok? **(laughs encouragingly)** Look, of course you should be careful. Do it together. Make sure you speak to your teacher on her own, in her own classroom. That way she shouldn't be too suspicious. Now, are you sure you're up for it, girls? You don't have to, you know.

43. Tekla: No, we'll do it. But I am scared.

44. Jeffrey: Well done. I think you're both very brave. Go with Sylvia. She'll give you the recording equipment and explain how to use it, and how to hide the recorder. Good luck!

End of Scene Two

45. Narrator: Just like his daughter Lydia and her friend, Alfayo also finally summons up the courage to go to "Stop Corruption Now". But Alfayo isn't alerting them to a new corruption scandal. He's given Jeffrey information on the huge energy scam that they're already investigating. Unfortunately he was only able to do so because he and his company are involved. Jeffrey's asked Alfayo to meet him in a café to go over his statement.

Scene Three

46. Atmo: **Café noises**

47. Jeffrey: So how are you feeling, Alfayo Odhiambo? Ready to face the music?

48. Alfayo: **(ashamed)** You know, I wondered whether you'd asked me to meet you in a café rather than your office because you planned to have the police waiting for me with handcuffs...

49. Jeffrey: **(laughing)** Well, it did cross my mind... **(roar of laughter)**
No, of course not. I thought it would be better here because your daughter Sylvia's working with me, and I wasn't sure whether she knew about your part in this.

50. Alfayo: Good thinking. No, she doesn't. Well - not yet, anyway. None of the family do. They're going to get such a shock... **(sighing)** What have I done to get myself into this mess? What will I say to Jennifer? I've let them all down, Jeffrey!

51. Jeffrey: Listen, Alfayo. Don't be so hard on yourself. They'll understand, eventually. You're not a crook; you didn't realise what was going on until it was too late, and now you're doing the right thing. We really need your testimony if we're going to win this case. We've got a lot of written evidence against the Energy Minister and his cronies, but no first-hand witnesses. Are you quite sure you're willing to do it?

- 52. Alfayo:** Don't ask me again or I might change my mind! To be quite honest, I've thought through all the options so many times, and I can't think of any other way out. They're after me anyway for refusing to help them in the run-up to the elections. I put everything I had into those big contracts of theirs. Without them, me and my company are financially ruined. But worse than that, they've ruined my reputation. I want to see them go down!
- 53. Jeffrey:** Good! So let's get them. But be prepared for a rocky ride. Whistleblowing sounds easy, but it's tough, believe me. Just remember - I'm your friend, and I'm always here for you.
- 54. Alfayo:** Thanks, Jeffrey.
- 55. Jeffrey:** Right. Let's sign these documents, and then... your life is in our hands. **(laughing)** Don't worry, Alfayo. It'll be all right in the end, I promise.

End of Scene Three

MUSIC (FADE UNDER OUTRO)

56. NARRATOR: And that brings us to the end of the sixth episode of our radio drama on corruption, "The Elephant in the Room". This series is based on actual events.

It's a difficult time for Alfayo, but he's determined to stand up against corruption, and his friend Jeffrey is going to help him do it. Still, it won't be easy. And will Lydia and Tekla get away with secretly recording their teacher? Will they be able to get her to say more about taking bribes?

Find out what happens in the next episode of our radio drama. If you'd like to hear this programme again, please visit our website at dw.de/lbe. And if you want to share your comments, you can do so on our Facebook page.

Goodbye for now, and thanks for listening!