

Learning by Ear 2010

Theme: Literacy and education

“A GIRL FINISHING SCHOOL”

Episode 07: "The price of success"

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Characters: **Latifa** (*18 years old, Papa Wali and Mamoua’s daughter. In the third year of her medical assistant course. Very intelligent, has never had to retake a year. She has been living with her older brother in the big city for two years.*)

Elinam (*22 years old, Papa Wali and Mamoua's son, Latifa's older brother. He is in his fourth year at university in a big city 120 kilometers away from his parents' small town.*)

Zakia (*23 years old, a very emancipated woman, Latifa's best friend, has just been promoted to marketing director in her tourist agency and still works in the small town she and Latifa are from.*)

The visitor (*Asian man in his 40’s*)

INTRO

Hello and welcome to Learning by Ear for the seventh episode in our series "A Girl Finishing School" about illiteracy and education.

When she arrived in the big city, young Latifa had to quickly get used to the constraints of a metropolis. Lack of space in the apartment she shares with her brother, the high cost of living, noise, pollution... The transition phase was difficult but worth going through for her success. She made sure she didn't miss any classes at the school of Medical Assistants and tried to live frugally so as not to further complicate her brother's life.

But as the years pass, the more burdensome her sacrifices seem to be. The 18-year-old is now in her last year and her natural charm is beginning to draw attention.

Tonight, Latifa has to struggle with her brother.

Listen in to the seventh episode entitled: "The high price of success."

Scene 1, IN ELINAM'S ROOM

Latifa and Elinam

- SFX ATMO: HOME SOUNDS IN THE CITY. SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS IN THE CORRIDOR. PEOPLE COOKING. SOUNDS OF POTS AND PANS. RADIO CAN BE HEARD FROM ONE ROOM, MUSIC FROM ANOTHER. TRAFFIC FROM THE DISTANCE.**

2. **Elinam:** (**Very angrily**) I'll ask you one last time, Latifa. Where did you get the mobile from?
3. **Latifa:** A friend gave it to me.
4. **Elinam:** What's his name? What does he do?
5. **Latifa:** Serge. He's a car salesman.
6. **Elinam:** Why's he giving you a mobile? What's going on between you?
7. **Latifa:** He wanted to date me. But I refused.
8. **Elinam:** You refused to date him and he gave you a mobile? What would he have given you if you'd said "yes"? A car?
9. **Latifa:** (**Silence**) ...
10. **Elinam:** Is he the one who gave you the money that was in your bag?
11. **Latifa:** Elinam! (**stuttering**) How, how...!! No!
12. **Elinam:** Who did then?
13. **Latifa:** (**Silence**) Patrick.

14. **Elinam:** Oh, and he probably works in a bank?
15. **Latifa:** **(Silence)** He works for an insurance company.
16. **Elinam:** And are you dating him?
17. **Latifa:** He's never asked me. He just offered to take me to school and drop me off at night.
18. **Elinam:** Latifa, I had no idea you were so naïve! These guys are family men who neglect their homes to run after underage girls!
19. **Latifa:** You've got a mobile, haven't you? There's a university bus that takes you to campus. Have you seen where **my** school is? It's not a crime to get dropped off at school, is it?
20. **Elinam:** It is a crime to be kept by married men! Especially when a girl is only 18 years old!
21. **Latifa:** They're the ones running after me! I never asked anyone for anything!

22. **Elinam:** You have to know how to say "no" when someone wants to do you certain favors! Dad gave me my mobile! I worked hard to get my scholarship and I teach students every night so I can feed us and pay for what we need. There is no desperate old woman paying for my keep!
23. **Latifa:** (Silence) ...
24. **Elinam:** You'd better give that mobile back within the next 24 hours! Do you understand?
25. **SFX ATMO** **DOOR SLAMS LOUDLY**

Scene 2, IN ELINAM'S ROOM

Latifa and Zakia on the telephone

26. **SFX ATMO:** **RUMMAGING IN A BAG.**
27. **SFX ATMO:** **DIALLING OF A NUMBER ON A MOBILE TELEPHONE**
28. **Zakia:** Hello?
29. **Latifa:** Hello! Hi Zak! It's Latifa!

30. **Zakia:** Latifa! You never get in touch with me anymore! I always call your brother but you're never with him, even late at night! What's going on?
31. **Latifa:** I can't stand the atmosphere here at home anymore. We just argued again!
32. **Zakia:** What about?
33. **Latifa:** About the mobile I'm calling you with.
34. **Zakia:** Whose mobile is it?
35. **Latifa:** A friend gave it to me and Elinam has given me 24 hours to give it back. Do you think he's overdoing it?
36. **Zakia:** Well... that depends on the friend and why he gave you the mobile!
37. **Latifa:** His name is Serge. He wanted to date me but I refused. Then he gave me the mobile.
38. **Zakia:** So he tried to bribe you? That's dangerous, Latifa!
39. **Latifa:** I'm not planning on going out with someone who's as old as my dad!
40. **Zakia:** Don't tempt the devil then!

41. **Latifa:** So you also think I should give back the phone?
42. **Zakia:** Did you do anything to deserve it?
43. **Latifa:** Obviously not!
44. **Zakia:** So, give it back to him, Latifa! Remember what we used to say? That men always think women are lazy and love being supported by men?
45. **Latifa:** Yes, I remember.
46. **Zakia:** So go out and show them you're not like that – that you don't need to be kept by some man!
47. **Latifa:** Zak, if some guy drops me off at school in the morning and at night, it's not like he's doing me a huge favor, is it?
48. **Zakia:** Does he do that too?
49. **Latifa:** No, not him! I'm talking about Patrick.
50. **Zakia:** Who's he? Your boyfriend?
51. **Latifa:** No! He's never said anything outright! Once he gave me some money to buy new clothes.
52. **Zakia:** How old is he?

53. **Latifa:** 40, 45 perhaps...
54. **Zakia:** Latifa! He's probably married! These guys don't do anything for free. Don't just take the easiest option, please!
55. **Latifa:** So I shouldn't let him give me lifts, is that right?
56. **Zakia:** It's a question of moral integrity, Latifa! Soon you'll be qualified and you'll have a good job. It's in your interest not to owe anything to anyone. Moreover, what will your co-students think if some guy who's not in the family drops you off at school?
57. **Latifa:** OK, Zak... I promise to clean up my life! But believe me, please, I've refused everyone's advances!
58. **Zakia:** I should hope so, Latifa. What's going on otherwise?
59. **Latifa:** It's all a bit miserable. I don't have any real friends here. I can't wait for the year to end. I really miss you Zak! What's going on in **your** life?
60. **Zakia:** Everything's going well! I was promoted to marketing director of the tourism agency four months ago!
61. **Latifa:** Wow! So, you're a boss now?

62. **Zakia:** You could say that. And we'll see each other in three months because we're going to have a stand at a trade fair that's going to take place in the capital.
63. **Latifa:** Really? How cool!
64. **Zakia:** We'll have at least two weeks to reminisce about the good old days!
65. **Latifa:** Oh, I can't wait Zak!
66. **Zakia:** So, see you soon then!
67. **Latifa:** See you soon! Thanks for your advice!

MUSIC

68. **NARRATOR:** *The two friends were really excited about the trade fair that Zakia's agency is to take part in. They arranged to meet on the day of the opening. Finally the day has arrived. Latifa is with her brother Elinam. He discovers a new Zakia. The young woman radiates beauty and class from her stand.*

Scene 3, AT THE FAIR

Elinam, Latifa, Zakia and the visitor

69. **SFX ATMO:** **TRADE FAIR HALL, SOUND OF STEPS (ONE MAN&ONE WOMAN WALKING), DISCUSSIONS, DIFFERENT MUSIC**
70. **Zakia:** **(Shouting from the distance)** Hey Latifa! Here!
71. **Latifa:** **(Very enthusiastically)** Oh, Elinam, look, it's Zakia over there!
72. **Elinam:** **(Surprised)** Really?
73. **Zakia:** **(Shouting from the distance)** Come to my stand! Take the other corridor, it's simpler!
74. **Latifa:** **(Shouting)** OK, we're coming!
75. **Elinam:** **(In shock)** Is that really her? It can't be!
76. **Latifa:** Of course! **(teasing him)** Oh, you mean she's even more beautiful than before?
77. **Elinam:** **(Trying to get a grip of himself)** Oh! It's all relative!
78. **Latifa:** **(teasing him)** Go on! Admit she's had an effect on you!

79. **Elinam:** (In a low voice) Cut it out will you?

80. **SFX:** FOOTSTEPS

81. **Zakia:** Latifa, Elinam! I'm so glad to see you!

THEY KISS EACH OTHER ON THE CHEEK.

82. **Latifa:** Ah, good to see you too, Zakia! We were about to get lost. The fair's so big!

83. **Zakia:** Yes, I still don't know my way around yet.
Wow, Latifa, you've become a woman! I wouldn't have recognized you without Elinam!

84. **Latifa:** What about you! So classy! You'd think you were the managing director!

85. **Zakia:** (laughing) Don't exaggerate! But look at you! Enough to start a riot... Now I understand! Why don't you take a seat! Sorry Elinam, but we haven't seen each other for over two years...

86. **Elinam:** But you haven't seen **me** for more than **four** years!

87. **Zakia:** Don't be jealous! I recognized you straightaway. You haven't changed a bit! Apart from the beard of course...
What are you up to?

88. **Elinam:** Civil engineering. I qualify in two months! We haven't been home for a while... is your mom well?
89. **Zakia:** Yes, very well! I often go to your dad's workshop. He even gave me a bag of rice for you. He seems to be getting more and more exhausted.
90. **Elinam:** Really? What about Mom?
91. **Zakia:** He told me she was well. I don't have the impression things have been so great between them since Latifa left... Souleyman hangs out with strange people... He's not going to school anymore.... He smokes.
92. **Elinam:** **(shocked)** What? At 14?
93. **Zakia:** Your dad can't stand him being at home anymore. They're always arguing and Mamoua defends him.
94. **Latifa:** That's not surprising! Have you spoken to Souleyman?
95. **Zakia:** You know that I can't go to your house. Epiphane tells me what's going on with your family when I go to your dad's workshop.
96. **Latifa:** Oh, really? How is he doing?

97. **Zakia:** He's becoming the big boss now! He looks after practically everything in the workshop. He did so well in his literacy classes and now he's registered to do further training in metalwork... A good future lies ahead of him!
98. **Elinam:** So business is improving?
99. **Zakia:** Yes, for sure. Epiphane is very creative. He keeps creating new models and he sub-contracts when they don't have the right equipment for doing certain things in the workshop. I encouraged him to print a brochure to give to visitors and he also puts out commercials on the radio.
100. **SFX:** **FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING**
101. **The visitor:** Good evening! Could I visit your stand?
102. **Zakia:** Welcome to our Trails of Africa Agency. I am your guide!
103. **The visitor:** Thank you!
104. **Zakia:** **(In a low voice to Elinam and Latifa)** Take a tour of the stands and we'll meet up later...
105. **Elinam:** OK!
106. **Latifa:** See you later!

107. **Zakia:** (To the visitor) Our agency offers 15-day trips, which takes in a dozen historical sites, and even more beautiful landscapes, six different art markets, the chance to watch folk and ritual dances...(fade out)

MUSIC

OUTRO

Despite her heavy schedule, Zakia manages to see Latifa and her brother several times while the trade fair is on. Latifa and Elinam buy presents for their family back home, as well as for Epiphane. But Elinam regrets not telling Zakia what he feels about her. He thinks she might be out of bounds because of her professional success. Is it true that love can conquer all? What does Zakia's heart hide? And what about Latifa in all this? Will she find a place to settle down?

To find out, tune in to the next episode in our series, "A Girl Finishing School", a series about illiteracy and education.

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Thanks for your loyalty and all the best till next time!

END OF 7th EPISODE