

## **Learning by Ear 2011 – Road Safety**

### **Episode 04 - Training**

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### **CHARACTERS:**

Scene 1:

- ♣ ALICE (FEMALE, 13)
- ♣ PAMELA (FEMALE, 30-40)
- ♣ NELSON (MALE, 14)
- ♣ SAMUEL (MALE, 30-40)
- ♣ PETER (MALE, 60-70)

Intro/Studio/Outro:

- ♣ PRESENTER BEATRICE (FEMALE, ADULT)
- ♣ GEORGE – ROAD SAFETY EXPERT (MALE, ADULT) □

**Intro:**

**1. Beatrice:** Hello, my name is Beatrice and I welcome you to Learning by Ear and our radio drama series about road safety. Throughout our ten programs we are following the Wanjiru family and a period in their lives where they see and experience how dangerous the roads in Africa can be. We are also talking to a road safety expert to find out how we can make travelling on the roads safer and, crucially, save lives.

In the last episode Alice and her friend, Nancy, were both involved in road accidents as pedestrians. They saw how pedestrians, as well as drivers, have to take responsibility and thus precautions whilst walking along busy roads, especially at night.

In this episode, the Wanjiru family is all back home together. For the first time they sit and discuss what has happened to them in the past few days. But, what starts as a thoughtful discussion on driving and the roads turns into an angry blame game and some shocking information is revealed.

**Scene One: In the family house**

**2. SFX Atmo:**     **cooking, TV on in background**

**3. PAMELA:**     Thank you, Alice, for cooking our supper. I still don't feel strong enough to stand up and do it.

**4. ALICE:**       That's ok, mum. You really need to rest still. The doctor said it would be a good few weeks until you are out and about.

**5. NELSON:**     It's strange, I feel OK physically now. I mean, despite having to wear this neck-brace. But I just keep on having flashbacks to those last minutes before the crash and then there is this awful sound of breaking glass...

**6. PAMELA:**     I imagine you do, dear. I do too... . It will take some time to get over.

- 7. NELSON:** Mum, do you think dad is also having these same flashbacks? He hasn't even mentioned the crash to me since we both came back from hospital. And I think I kind of blame him for the accident. I haven't told him yet, but he was the one driving...
- 8. PAMELA:** Nelson, I think he just can't bear to admit that he wasn't driving safely... And you know when you see one of your kids hurt, you just can't forgive yourself. Give him a bit of time Nelson.
- 9. SFX:** **Sound of mini bus engine drawing up outside the house, doors of mini bus opening and closing**
- 10. SFX:** **door of house opening, 2 people walk in**
- 11. ALICE:** Hi dad, hi grandpa...did you both come back in the mini bus?
- 12. SAMUEL:** Yup.

- 13. PETER:** We've just been back to the police again and it seems one of the families of the passengers involved in the mini bus accident are going to press charges against your father. The boy who was killed is the son of a wealthy lawyer so he knows all about the legal system. It could be quite serious for your father.
- 14. PAMELA:** Oh my goodness! Are you serious? That could go on for months and even years. How are we going to earn any money, Samuel?
- 15. SAMUEL:** I don't know, Pamela. I don't know... I really don't know what we're going to do. I don't even know where to start with all this mess.
- 16. SFX:** **Plates, cutlery being gathered together and put down on the table**
- 17. ALICE:** Everyone, dinner is ready. Come and sit down.

**18. SFX:**            **Footsteps moving to the table, Chairs scraping on the floor, all the family sitting down and pulling up chairs**

**19. ALICE:**        You know, dad. You could start by talking to Nelson about what happened... Maybe it would help you understand how that other family who lost their son are feeling if you actually talk to Nelson about it.

**Silence**

**20. PETER:**        Alice is right, Samuel. We all have to live in this house and we can't just ignore what's happened.

**21. SAMUEL:**     It's easy for you all to sit there and judge me. But I will never forgive myself for as long as I live for what happened.

**22. NELSON:** But dad you've got to tell me about what happened! So I can try and deal with it...I just remember the pothole, the sound of squeaking tyres and broken glass.

**23. SAMUEL:** In many ways you're lucky that's all you remember... There were many people screaming, blood everywhere, bodies on the road... And the thought that the dead body on the road could have been you... **(almost breaking down in tears)**.

**24. NELSON:** But dad, I can remember telling you to slow down but you didn't listen to me.

**25. SAMUEL:** I know. Don't you think I don't think about that all the time? I'm wondering how I'm ever going to be able to keep going with this job. Even today I had people overtaking **me** on the roads, hooting their horns because I've slowed down. Honestly, Nelson, I have slowed down. I'm listening to my passengers now.

**26. ALICE:** And what about the seat-belts, dad? Maybe if you'd had them put in the new mini bus and made sure everyone was wearing them no one would have been hurt.

**27. SAMUEL:** I know that too, Alice. We're going to get them put in... I promise. I know that the people in the car I crashed into were all wearing seat-belts and none of them were injured...

**28. PETER:** You know this is what it boils down to: inexperienced, untrained mini bus drivers on the roads driving innocent people around. If all the mini bus drivers on the roads were made to get out and show their licenses I bet over half wouldn't even have one.

**29. ALICE:** But surely to even get into a car you have to have a license? I just assumed everyone driving has to have one. Do you mean some people just drive without them? Isn't that against the law?



**30. PETER:** Of course it is, Alice. But that's why there are so many fatal accidents like your father had.

**31. SAMUEL:** **(getting angry)** So now you're blaming me for the fact that I don't have a license and I've killed two people... What am I supposed to do when I don't have the time nor the money to actually go and do the training and get a proper license... Who's going to support this family if I take a month of work to go and have someone teach me properly?

**Silence**

**32. NELSON:** Dad? **(many doubts)** Dad, do you mean you don't have a legal license?

**33. PETER:** Samuel, is this true? You've been driving your family and all these passengers around for all these years. Yet you don't have a proper license?

- 34. SAMUEL:** No I don't, ok! **(increasingly angry)**
- 35. PAMELA:** How can you live with yourself driving on these roads when you don't know how to drive properly?
- 36. SAMUEL:** But I do know...
- 37. PETER:** So, you know what the speed limits are on the roads?
- 38. ALICE:** And you know that if a pedestrian is trying to cross at a zebra crossing, they have the right of way?
- 39. NELSON:** All the things you're talking about I've read about, but I never ever see practiced on the roads here. And now I know why. Half the drivers don't actually know how to drive and that's why we have all these accidents and people are killed **(stands up)**.
- 40. SFX:** **chair being pushed back**

**41. NELSON:** I'd have expected more from my own father.

**42. SFX:** **Sound of stomping to the door, opening and slamming shut**

**END OF SCENE ONE**

**SHORT MUSIC**

**43. BEATRICE:** Well, as you've just heard in the fourth episode of our radio drama about road safety, the Wanjiru family is shocked. With me in the studio is George, our road safety expert. Welcome George!

**44. GEORGE:** Thank you.

**45. BEATRICE:** George, are you surprised by what we've just discovered – Samuel has no driving license yet he's been driving a mini bus packed full of passengers for years?

- 46. GEORGE:** Sadly, I'm neither shocked nor surprised. In many African countries this is commonplace – cities have grown at such a rapid pace and the need for public transport to get all these people to work is so great that the number of illegal buses, mini buses and taxis has just mushroomed.
- 47. BEATRICE:** But surely it's the police who should be enforcing this – checking the drivers for licenses?
- 48. GEORGE:** Of course. But the police know they can threaten to take a driver with no license to the police station and that if the driver pays a bribe he will be allowed on his way. It's a vicious circle.
- 49. BEATRICE:** So not training or learning the rules of the road is something that people are being allowed to get away with?

**50. GEORGE:** Yes. But in the process these drivers are killing innocent passengers. Laws need to be enforced and vehicles must only be insured and allowed on the roads if they are driven by trained drivers. That's what must happen if we are to reduce the number of accidents on the roads.

**51. BEATRICE:** So, it needs a change of mentality. People should be scared to drive on the roads if they don't have training and a licence.

**52. GEORGE:** Exactly. You face dire consequences in Europe or the US if you drive without a license. In fact you can be banned from the roads and taken to prison. These deterrents have really made a difference in sharply reducing fatal road accidents.

**53. BEATRICE:** Thank you, George.

**MUSIC (FADE UNDER OUTRO)**

## **OUTRO**

**54. BEATRICE:** In the next episode we will hear how a near dispute with the police after a minor accident convinces Samuel to have his mini bus serviced. If you want to hear this program again or to another episode, please visit our website at [www.dw.de/lbe](http://www.dw.de/lbe). Thank you for joining us and keep safe on the roads!