

Learning by Ear 2011 – Road Safety

Episode 10 – Children to be kept under surveillance if by busy road

Text: Victoria Averill

Editing: Johannes Beck, Katrin Ogunsade

Proofreading: Martin Vogl

CHARACTERS:

Scene 1:

♣ NELSON (MALE, 14)

♣ WORKER (MALE, 60-70)

Scene 2:

♣ NELSON (MALE, 14)

♣ MR WANYAGA (MALE, 30-40)

♣ DANIEL (MALE, 6)

♣ TAYLOR (MALE, 4)

Intro/Studio/Outro:

♣ PRESENTER BEATRICE (FEMALE, ADULT)

♣ GEORGE – ROAD SAFETY EXPERT (MALE, ADULT) □

Note: there could also be a male presenter and a female safety expert.

Intro:

1. Beatrice: Welcome to Learning by Ear and our radio drama series about road safety. My name is Beatrice.

This is the last of our ten programs where we are following the Wanjiru family and a period in their lives where they experience how dangerous the roads in Africa can be. I'm 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 Nelson resists the peer pressure coming from his friend, Matthew, and opts to buy a helmet for riding his bike rather than the latest mobile phone. Hours later, he is told Matthew has been knocked off his bike and has brain damage. He was not wearing a helmet.

In this episode Nelson goes to visit Matthew's family who live and own a small shop next to one of the city's busiest roads.

Scene One: by the busy road

- 2. SFX Atmo:** traffic, cars driving past, horns blaring
- 3. NELSON:** Excuse me, Sir. Sorry to interrupt your work. Do you know where the Wanyagas live? Their son is called Matthew.
- 4. WORKER:** Err, yeah... You see the stall with the mobile phone sign just up there. That's their house. You can see the three small kids playing with the football just outside.
- 5. NELSON:** Ah yes, I see... They must be Matthew's youngest siblings, right?
- 6. WORKER:** **Yes, they are, but** sorry, I've got to get on with my work.
- 7. NELSON:** Ok, thanks.

Scene Two: Inside the stall

8. SFX Atmo: **sound of cars passing**

9. NELSON: **(Knocking)** Hello! Hi there? I'm Nelson,
Matthew's friend. Are you Mister Wanyaga,
Matthew's father?

10. MR WANYAGA: Yes, I'm his father, what did you say your name
is?

11. NELSON: Nelson. I'm at school with Matthew.

12. MR WANYAGA: I see. His mum's in the hospital with him. She's
been there all night. I have to keep the shop going
and look after the younger kids. They should be at
school but it's Matthew who normally takes them
while his mum and I run the business.

13. NELSON: Sure. I was with Matthew yesterday just before he got knocked off his bike. I'm so sorry to hear about it. Have you seen him?

14. MR WANYAGA: Yes, last night. Although he's still in a coma and even if he does wake up the doctor's think he will have severe brain damage. They don't know what kind of state he'll be in. I just don't understand how it happened.

15. NELSON: The roads are dangerous, drivers are crazy and I guess he wasn't wearing a helmet. But I hope he'll be ok, when he comes out of the coma.

16. MR WANYAGA: If he does... **(worried)** The doctors don't sound too hopeful. I don't know what we're going to do. He was meant to be helping me with the business. Anyway I have to keep going for the other kids.

17. NELSON: Of course, there are three of them? How old are they? Is it safe for them to be playing right by the roadside alone?

18. MR WANYAGA: Well, I have to keep an eye on them. Normally their mother would be here too. The eldest one, Daniel, is six, he has a bit of common sense. But the younger two, Taylor and Thomas, are twins and just four years old. They should be ok. But of course young boys get up to all sorts of mischief.

19. NELSON: Wouldn't it be easy to put up a little fence outside your house, so they have a bit of protection from the road? These cars drive so fast. It's as if they don't even see the people walking along the road or outside the shops.

- 20. MR WANYAGA:** That's true: some drivers think they own the roads. It was one of them who knocked Matthew off. Can you believe he didn't even stop to help him?
(sadly) He just left him there like a dead dog... Maybe I'll get round to putting up a fence one day. But at the moment I've got to concentrate on keeping my store open. I have to pay the medical bills for Matthew, you know.
- 21. NELSON:** Of course. Well, I'll let you get on. I just wanted to come over and see how Matthew is. Please let me know how things are with him.
- 22. MR WANYAGA:** Sure. Bye, Nelson!
- 23. NELSON:** Good bye Mister Wanyaga! **(approaching the kids)** Hey Daniel, kick the football over to me!
- 24. SFX:** **Sound of football being kicked**

25. NELSON: (shouting) Stop! Don't run after the ball, there's a car coming (Nelson runs) Stop!

26. SFX: Screech of brakes, Football squashed

27. MR WANYAGA: Hey, what's going on?

28. NELSON: I just caught one of the twins running onto the road after the football. He's ok. Wow, that was close!

29. DANIEL: It wasn't me, dad, honest, I just didn't see that car coming and Taylor just ran after the ball without looking.

30. TAYLOR: Dad, look the football is squashed. It's ruined. Can we buy a new one?

31. MR WANYAGA: Ok, stop. Now everyone inside the shop!

- 32. TAYLOR:** But what about the football, dad?
- 33. MR WANYAGA:** It doesn't matter about the football. We've already Matthew in hospital. We don't need another son injured, dead or in coma. What have I told you all about playing by the side of the road?
- 34. DANIEL:** I know dad, we need to be careful of the cars. But Taylor just didn't stop to look, he just ran out after the ball!
- 35. MR WANYAGA:** You're the eldest, Daniel, you should be looking after them.
- 36. DANIEL:** (Complaining) But dad, I can't always run after him. He's fast you know.

37. MR WANYAGA: (Sighing) I know. It's my fault. I shouldn't be letting you play right by this busy road. If Mathew or your mum were here we'd be able to keep an eye on your better. Maybe you're right, Nelson. Maybe it's about high time to put up a fence.

END OF SCENE TWO

SHORT MUSIC

38. BEATRICE: Well, as you've just heard in this episode of our radio drama about road safety, until now, Matthew's parents haven't taken the safety of their children playing by the roadside that seriously. With me in the studio is George, our road safety expert. Welcome George!

39. GEORGE: Thank you.

40. BEATRICE: Well, George, a close shave for Matthew's siblings and indeed Matthew's father. One son in hospital and a near accident with another.

41. GEORGE: Yes. It's interesting to see how Nelson's perception of the roads has changed over the course of the radio drama. He's now very aware about road safety and even as he approached Matthew's house and saw his young brothers playing right by the side of the road and alarm bells started ringing.

42. BEATRICE: He almost seemed to second-guess what could happen to the kids.

43. GEORGE: He did, which is why he warned Matthew's father and suggested the idea of putting up a small fence. But as we've learnt through this radio drama often it isn't until after the accidents that people can clearly see and understand the risks. Matthew's father is a case in point. Before Taylor ran into the road after the football, Mister Wanyaga assumed the kids had good road sense. After the close shave, he's now more in tune with how children perceive danger and road safety.

44. BEATRICE: And in this case that's being very careful about letting small children play right by a busy road and assuming children will not run out after a football.

45. GEORGE: Small children aren't aware of danger. They can't imagine what might happen to them so it's up to their parents to minimize the risks to them. We have to act on behalf of our kids and if we live by the side of a busy road, parents have to ensure children have a safe place to play. If we can't keep an eye on them 100% of the time, put up a small fence, let them play in the backyard or do anything else to ensure children are safe from dangerous traffic.

46. BEATRICE: Thank you George.

MUSIC (FADE UNDER OUTRO)

OUTRO

47. BEATRICE: That was the last episode of our series about road safety. We hope you've enjoyed and learnt from our radio dramas written by Victoria Averill.

If you want to hear this program or the other episodes of this series again, please visit our website at

www.dw.de/lbe.

Have we been able to make your life on roads safer?

Tell us what you think about this program! Write us an

Email to lbe@dw-world.de (l b e at d w hyphon world dot de).

Thank you for joining us and keep safe on the roads!