

**Learning by Ear 2013**

**Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices**

**EPISODE NINE: Butterflies in the Stomach**

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**List of characters by scene:**

**SCENE 1: LULU MOVES INTO THE NEW HOME**

- **MSOTO (M, 45)**
- **LULU (F, 40)**
- **MERCY (F, 15)**

**SCENE 2: TRUDY TALKS TO NIKI DURING SCHOOL BREAK**

- **TRUDY (F, 15)**
- **NIKI (M, 16)**

**SCENE 3: MSOTO QUILTS HIS JOB AS JUMBE’S WATCHMAN**

- **GROUP OF DRUNKARDS (M)**
- **MSOTO (M, 45)**
- **JUMBE (M, 45)**

**SCENE 4: MERCY AND LULU HAVE A MOTHER-DAUGHTER CHAT**

- **LULU (F, 40)**
- **MERCY (F, 15)**

**1. INTRO - NARRATOR:**

Hello everybody! You're listening to "Crossroads Generation", a Learning by Ear radio drama brought to you by DW. We're following Niki, Dan and Mercy, three students at Bongo Academy, a very good and exclusive school. Let's catch up on what has happened so far.

Last time Mercy was suffering from bad stomach ache. But it wasn't an ordinary upset stomach... In the toilet, Mercy made an unexpected discovery:

**2. MERCY (EP 08, 75):** "Trudy! I'm bleeding!"

**3. TRUDY:** "See, it's your period. Congratulations, Mercy. You're a woman now!"

It's Mercy's best friend Trudy who helps her in this embarrassing situation. But Trudy has two faces. What Mercy doesn't know is that, behind her back, Trudy tried to seduce Mercy's admirer, Dan:

**4. TRUDY (EP 06, 99):** "I think we could have a lot of fun together, Dan!"

**5. DAN:** "Well, I'm sorry, Trudy, but I have to go. [...] Do say hi to Mercy if you see her before I do."

**6. SFX: STEPS DAN LEAVES**

**7. TRUDY (LINE 103): (thinking to herself)** "Okay, Dan. You want to play hard to get? I'll show you what Trudy's made of. This is just the beginning!"

Even at home Mercy doesn't know the truth about what's been going on. Her father hatched a plan to get the family out of poverty - he sold her newborn baby sister to a rich local businessman. Let's see how things develop in this ninth episode, “Butterflies in the Stomach”. Mercy's mother Lulu has just been released from hospital. Her husband, Msoto, came to meet her and bring her home, but now Lulu finds herself in a completely new neighbourhood...

### **SCENE 1: LULU MOVES INTO THE NEW HOME**

**8. SFX: PADLOCKED DOOR BEING OPENED WITH KEY**

**9. SFX: DOOR OPENING**

**10. MSOTO:** (proud) Welcome to your new home, Lulu. I hope you like it.

**11. LULU:** (amazed) This is our new home? Wow! Msoto, it's wonderful!

**12. SFX: FOOTSTEPS: TWO PEOPLE ENTERING**

**13. SFX: DOOR CLOSING**

**14. MSOTO:** Look around! I've bought new furniture, and since we have electricity here I also bought a small TV set. And most important of all...

**15. SFX: TAP BEING TURNED ON - WATER STARTS FLOWING**

**16. LULU:** Water in my own house! This is like a dream. You mean we won't have to buy water anymore?

17. **MSOTO:** Well, of course we have to pay for it. But you and Mercy don't have to waste hours queuing for water early in the morning any more. You see, Lulu – we've said goodbye to a life of poverty and hopelessness.
18. **LULU:** But Msoto, where did you get all the money to -- **(stops, realizes)** No! You didn't do it! Tell me you didn't sell our baby for this! I thought you said you would give it away! **(starts screaming)** Tell me, tell me the truth!
19. **MSOTO:** Hey, calm down! Lulu, listen to me. I had to do it. There was no other way out of the poverty we were in. The baby girl is better off without us! I found good parents for her! And you? Did you want to live in the slum forever? Lulu, we can always have another baby. We can have ten more babies, if that's really what you want.
20. **LULU:** You've already taken three children away from me! You told me my two little boys were going to stay with your sister in Laboria, but I don't believe you. I've never spoken a word to them since your sister came and took them with her! Now you've sold **(breaks down in tears)** my little baby girl as well - and for what? Some furniture and a TV? Is that all our baby was worth?

**KW BEGIN**

21. **MSOTO:** (**furious**) Stop lecturing me, woman! You hear me? I did what I had to do. And I’m warning you again, for the last time, if you ever tell anyone about this I will make sure you never walk or talk again.
22. **LULU:** (**still angry**) You know what, Msoto? I’m not scared of your threats any more. Go ahead and kill me if that’s what you want. You’ve already taken away from me all the things that matter most.
23. **MSOTO:** (**furious**) Lulu, don’t push me. I swear I’m going to –

**KW END**

24. **SFX: DOOR BEING OPENED**
25. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS - MERCY COMES IN**
26. **MERCY:** (**faintly**) Hi, Dad, hi, Mum. I could hear you arguing a kilometer away. Mum, what is it? Don't you like our new home?
27. **LULU:** (**surprised**) Mercy, what are you doing here? Shouldn't you be in school?
28. **MSOTO:** Yes, Mercy, why are you here at this time?
29. **MERCY:** It's a long story. Mum, can I have a word with you?
30. **LULU:** Of course, child. I also need to tell you something. It's time we had a mother-daughter heart-to-heart.

31. **MSOTO:** Oh, so the two of you are ganging up on me now? Hmm? Is that it? You want to overthrow me in my own house!
32. **SFX: MSOTO’S FOOTSTEPS WALKING RAPIDLY TO THE DOOR**
33. **MSOTO:** I will not allow that to happen!
34. **SFX: DOOR BANGS**
35. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 2: TRUDY TALKS TO NIKI DURING SCHOOL BREAK**

36. **SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGS**
37. **SCHOOLYARD ATMO**
38. **TRUDY:** Niki, can I have a word with you?
39. **NIKI:** **(bluntly)** No.
40. **TRUDY:** It’s about Mercy.
41. **NIKI:** **(interested)** Okay then. What is it, Trudy? What about Mercy?
42. **TRUDY:** Erm, I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but...
43. **NIKI:** But what? Come on, Trudy, spit it out. Break will be over in a few minutes.
44. **TRUDY:** Well... it’s Dan.
45. **NIKI:** What’s he done? **(grinning teeth in anger)** What did that good-for-nothing idiot do? I should have broken his teeth when we were fighting.

46. **TRUDY:** Dan gave Mercy some money. A lot of money.
47. **NIKI:** **(shocked)** He did what? Trudy, are you sure about this?
48. **TRUDY:** It was me who opened the envelope. Niki, I saw the money.

**KW BEGIN**

49. **NIKI:** And did she take it?
50. **TRUDY:** **(chuckles)** That's a funny question. What girl wouldn't accept money from an admirer?
51. **NIKI:** So you're saying she took it.
52. **TRUDY:** She took it, and she's probably spent it by now.
53. **NIKI:** I don't believe you. Mercy's not that kind of girl.
54. **TRUDY:** Listen, I just wanted to make you aware of what you're up against. It's up to you whether you believe me or not.
55. **NIKI:** Hmm. Okay, thanks for letting me know. One more question - what was the matter with Mercy? Why did the principal send her home early?
56. **TRUDY:** I can't tell you. You'll have to ask her yourself.
57. **NIKI:** **(depressed)** Okay.

**KW END**

58. **TRUDY:** Look, I have an idea. And if you agree, maybe we can both get what we want.
59. **NIKI:** I’m listening.
60. **TRUDY:** As you might have guessed, I’m interested in Dan. So if you help me get closer to him, I’ll help you with Mercy.
61. **NIKI:** **(thinking)** Hmm. As you know, Dan and I aren’t exactly the best of friends... So how do you expect me to help you?
62. **TRUDY:** Simple. You have to *make* him your friend.
63. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 3: MSOTO QUILS HIS JOB AS JUMBE’S WATCHMAN**

64. **LOCAL BAR ATMO**
65. **MSOTO:** **(drunk, in the middle of telling a story)** And then I bring her home ... Imagine, my friends, to this beautiful new – **(stops)**
66. **SFX: MOBILE PHONE RINGING**
67. **MSOTO:** **(picks up, annoyed)** Yes. Msoto speaking. Who’s calling?



68. **JUMBE:** (on the phone) Msoto! This is your boss, Mr. Jumbe, Papa Niki. Why haven't you reported to work? Are you aware of the inconvenience you're causing? I can't leave the house without a security guard. You need to report back here immediately, or else...

69. **MSOTO:** Or else what? Mmm?... What, Jumbe?

70. **JUMBE:** Or else I will fire you!

71. **MSOTO:** (laughs) Fire me? Do you think I'm a matchbox that can be *fired*?

72. **SFX: LAUGHTER FROM DRUNKARDS**

73. **JUMBE:** (furious) This is not a joke, Msoto! I will sack you and replace you! Do you know how many people would be happy to have your position?

74. **MSOTO:** Ah, don't tell me. Just go ahead and fire me, sack me, whatever. Oh no, wait - I have a better idea. Actually, before you fire *me*, I'm firing *you*. I quit!

75. **SFX: APPLAUSE FROM DRUNKARDS**

**KW BEGIN**

76. **JUMBE:** You're making a big mistake, Msoto. Just don't come back to me in a week's time saying you want your job back.

77. **MSOTO:** (sarcastic) Hey, Jumbe, don't worry – I'm not coming back to watch your property. I have my own property to watch now.

78. **SFX: MORE APPLAUSE FROM DRUNKARDS**

79. **JUMBE:** Last chance, Msoto. I'm being kind to you for your family's sake.

80. **MSOTO:** (angry) Don't you involve my family in this! You hear me? You know absolutely nothing about my family! Mind your own business. I mean that, Jumbe.

**KW END**

81. **SFX: MOBILE PHONE DISCONNECTED**

82. **MSOTO:** That former boss of mine is such a fool... He thinks he's the only one with money! **(To friends)** Hey friends, the next round is still on me! Let's drink until daybreak!

83. **SFX: DRUNKARDS APPLAUD AND CHEER WILDLY**

84. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 4: MERCY AND LULU HAVE A MOTHER-DAUGHTER CHAT**

**85. SFX: ONIONS BEING CHOPPED**

**86. LULU:** Thanks for helping me with the onions, Mercy. So tell me - what's going on with you? You seem different all of a sudden. More grown-up.

**87. MERCY:** That's what I wanted to talk to you about. I just got my first period.

**KW BEGIN**

**SILENCE**

**88. MERCY:** Mum, I said I just got my first monthly period.

**89. LULU:** **(bluntly)** I heard you. So how do you feel? Are you coping with everything?

**90. MERCY:** I'm coping just fine. But Mum, why didn't you tell me about this before? I had to go through such an embarrassing experience at school.

**91. LULU:** **(shocked)** Oh no! Don't tell me it started while you were in school.

**92. MERCY:** Yes, it did. I was lucky Trudy was there to help me. But you haven't answered my question, Mum. Why didn't you prepare me for this in advance?

**KW END**

93. **LULU:** My child, I am sorry. I always thought you were still young. But I can tell you all you need to know right now.
94. **MERCY:** You're too late. The principal already did.
95. **LULU:** Oh, she did! Is that why you came home earlier than usual?
96. **MERCY:** Yes.
97. **LULU:** Mercy, these things are normal. You don't need to skip school because you have your period.
98. **MERCY:** Maybe it's normal for you. But it isn't for me. Everything's so difficult at the moment. The new school, the period thing... Not to mention the boys.
99. **SFX: ONION CHOPPING STOPS**
100. **LULU:** **(interested)** The boys? What boys? Mercy, is there something you're not telling me?
101. **MERCY:** There are two boys in my class who are both interested in me. One sent me a letter - a love letter. And the other one gave me money. I don't know what to do, Mum. That's why I need your advice. I'm really confused.
102. **LULU:** **(panicking)** Of course, of course, my dear. Tell me, did you take the money?

103. **MERCY:** (humming and hawing) Erm... yes.
104. **LULU:** And what did you do with it?
105. **MERCY:** I paid the hospital.
106. **LULU:** Ah, *you* did that? I thought your father... Anyway. Did your friend from school want something ... in return for the money?
107. **MERCY:** (stunned) What? No! I haven't done anything. But...
108. **LULU:** But what? Come on, speak up, Mercy. Tell me - but what?
109. **MERCY:** But with one of them, whenever he looks at me... and I look at him... I feel as if I have butterflies in my stomach.
110. **LULU:** (sighs quietly)
111. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**
112. **OUTRO - NARRATOR:**

This kind of mother-daughter heart-to-heart is not one you often hear in African homes - but it's necessary all the same. With that we wind up this episode of "Crossroads Generation". Things are hotting up - if you want to hear what turn the story will take, don't miss the coming episode. And if you want to see how things develop, you can visit our homepage, [dw.de/lbe](http://dw.de/lbe), where Dan is sharing his thoughts in a video blog with us and his friends back home! You can also follow us on Facebook. Until then – take care!