

Learning by Ear 2013

Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices

EPISODE TEN: A Tale of Two Brothers

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List of characters by scene:

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- KANYAMA (M, 45)
- LENA (M, 40)

SCENE 2: NIKI TRIES TO BEFRIEND DAN IN THE SCHOOLYARD

- NIKI (M, 16)
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SCENE 3: LULU TALKS TO MERCY ABOUT HER TWIN BROTHERS

KADU AND BANDA

- LULU (F, 40)
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- MSOTO (F, 45)
- LENA (F, 40)

1. INTRO - NARRATOR:

Welcome to "Crossroads Generation", a Learning by Ear radio novella brought to you by DW. So much has happened in Dan's, Niki's and Mercy's lives recently, but before we dive into our tenth episode, "A Tale of Two Brothers", let's recap on recent events.

The rivalry between Dan, the new boy from the neighbouring country, and Niki, the class prefect, escalated when the two boys started fighting at school:

2. **NIKI (EP 08, 57):** "That's it, Dan! I've had enough of your stupid comments and bad attitude. (...) We'll settle this here and now, like real men!"

3. **DAN (LINE 60):** "Bring it on! I've just been waiting for the opportunity."

Both boys are chasing after Mercy – and this hurts her best friend Trudy, who's in love with Dan. So Trudy has secretly teamed up with Niki to get him together with Mercy:

4. **TRUDY (EP 09, 60):** "So if you help me get closer to him, I'll help you with Mercy."

5. **NIKI:** "As you know, Dan and I aren't exactly the best of friends... So how do you expect me to help you?"

6. **TRUDY:** "Simple. You have to *make* him your friend."

But before we see whether Trudy's plan works out, let's make a detour to Laboria, the neighbouring country Dan comes from. His father Kanyama is sitting in a café with a beautiful woman. But ... wait! Isn't that ... Lena, Mercy's aunt?

SCENE 1: KANYAMA TALKS TO MSOTO'S SISTER LENA

7. **SFX: CAFE AMBIENCE**

8. **LENA:** (romantic) Oh, Kanyama. It's so good to see you! I haven't seen you in such a long time! Did you miss me too?

9. **KANYAMA:** (nervous) Lena, stop it. You don't understand! We have a very big problem. The two young workers you brought to me from Kisimba have gone missing.

10. **LENA:** (shocked) What? Kanyama, how did that happen? They were in your care, in your mines! How is this my problem?

11. **SFX: COFFEE CUP PUT DOWN ON SAUCER**

12. **KANYAMA:** Don't pull that trick on me, Lena. You're the one who supplied the workers to me, and now they've disappeared without a trace. You have to find them and bring them back.

13. **LENA:** But where would I even start? We agreed that once I brought them to you, you'd handle them from then on. All I got from you was the money they earned. That was the deal.

14. **KANYAMA:** Yes, I know what we agreed. But this is the first time something like this has happened. Since you brought them here, and you know their language, you're best suited to find them. We underestimated them – that was our mistake. We thought our threats would scare them enough to stop them running away – but it seems that wasn't enough.
15. **LENA:** Kanyama, those boys come from one of the biggest slums in the world. They're used to threats. They're survivors. Did I tell you: their father used to send them out onto the street to beg for money, and they would come home with more than their father earns in a month!
16. **KANYAMA:** You make them sound like some kind of action heroes! Listen - I need to find them before someone else does! Especially the police. You know the reason why.
17. **LENA:** Yes, Kanyama, I do. Don't worry - we'll find them. They may be street-smart, but I don't think they'll be able to cross the border from Laboria to Kisimba and make their way home. I'll find them.
18. **KANYAMA:** You'd better find them, Lena. The sooner the better.
19. **SFX: COFFEE BEING SIPPED**
20. **LENA:** So what happens to my monthly payments?

21. KANYAMA: What payments, Lena? How do you expect me to pay you for workers who aren't there? Find them first, and when you do, bring them straight to me. I need to make sure they don't talk to anyone about what goes on in the mines.

22. SFX: MOBILE PHONE RINGS

23. KANYAMA: **(picks up call)** Excuse me, I have to take this call. –
Yes? Kanyama speaking...

24. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: NIKI TRIES TO BEFRIEND DAN IN THE SCHOOLYARD

25. SCHOOLYARD ATMO

26. NIKI: Hey, Dan. How are you?

27. DAN: None of your business.

28. NIKI: Listen, man. I've been thinking about this rivalry thing between us, and I think we need to put a stop to it. We should call a truce.

KW BEGIN

29. DAN: **(sceptical)** Oh really, Niki? And just when did you decide that?

30. NIKI: When? I’ve been thinking about it for a few days now. Look, we’re both in the same class. We spend a lot of time together. We might as well learn to get along with each other.

31. DAN: What if I don’t want to get along with you? I didn’t like you right from the start.

32. NIKI: Same here. But I’m offering you a truce. You come from another country, and I think you don’t need to make enemies here. Your life will be much easier if –

33. DAN: **(laughs sarcastically)** Haha. What makes you think I need some kind of godfather to protect me? Listen, Niki: you have no clue who I am, where I come from, or what I’m capable of.

34. NIKI: I could say the same. Come on, let’s just shake hands and be friends, can’t we? Or at least try to be friends.

KW END

35. DAN: **(thoughtful)** No! I don’t trust you. I smell a rat. I can tell you’re up to something... No, Niki, we can’t be friends. But we don’t have to be enemies, either. If this is about Mercy, I say let Mercy decide for herself. Simple as that.

36. NIKI: **(changes tone)** You fool! I will make your life in this school so miserable you’ll regret you ever came!

37. DAN: (claps) Ah, now the chameleon is showing his true colours. Niki, you can't beat me in anything! Not in class, not in a fight, and definitely not for Mercy!

38. NIKI: (angry) If you think you'll win her by giving her money, then think again! Mercy is mine! She comes from Kisimba. She'll never fall for a foreigner, especially not one from Laboria. Go and get a girl from your own country!

39. DAN: (laughs) Oh, so you know about my little gift, too? Who told you? Was it Trudy?

40. NIKI: You're not the only one with money, Dan! And I'm warning you: from now on you're going to find your stay in this school so unbearable that you'll soon be packing up and taking the next bus, flight, or whatever you need to get back to Laboria. Mark my words!

41. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 3: LULU TALKS TO MERCY ABOUT HER TWIN BROTHERS

KADU AND BANDA

42. ATMO: MERCY'S NEW HOME, AT NIGHT

43. SFX: PAGES OF A BOOK BEING TURNED

44. SFX: QUIET FOOTSTEPS

45. **LULU:** Mercy, are you still studying?
46. **MERCY:** Yes, but I've almost finished. We've got our first tests soon.
47. **LULU:** Mercy, I can't sleep. So much has happened. I feel as if I'm going crazy.
48. **MERCY:** Shouldn't you be talking to Dad about this? Or a doctor, maybe?
49. **LULU:** No, your Dad is not even here. You know him. He'll come home in the middle of the night too drunk to even hear what I'm saying, let alone understand it.
50. **MERCY:** I'm sorry, Mum. But I don't know how else I can help you.
51. **LULU:** **(concerned)** Mercy, don't you miss your two younger brothers? How come you never talk about them? You act as if they don't even exist.
52. **MERCY:** Of course I do! But Dad always ignores me if I even mention them! I wonder about it, too, but maybe he's right and they're better off now that they're with Aunty Lena. And didn't you agree with Dad about this idea?
53. **LULU:** **(sorrowful)** Yes... but I didn't really have a choice. We were living from hand to mouth, and there wasn't enough space for all of you. You're growing up - you couldn't continue sharing a bed with them.

54. **MERCY:** I see.
55. **LULU:** (**bitterly**) But at least we were one family. Now there's this new house, with almost everything I ever wished for, but I feel so sad. I'm more unhappy than I ever was before.
56. **MERCY:** You'll get used to it. That's what I'm trying to do. One more thing, though... Mum... did Dad get a new job? I mean, a few days ago we couldn't even afford to buy me a school uniform. The two of you were even thinking of marrying me off for the dowry. Now suddenly we're living in this new house, and we even have a television!
57. **LULU:** Mercy, my child, as far as your dad is concerned, I'm as much in the dark as you. All I can say is: let's just try to enjoy it and hope it stays the same.
58. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

SCENE 4: LENA TEXTS MSOTO AT A BAR

59. **BAR ATMO AT NIGHT**
60. **SFX: MESSAGE RINGTONE FOR INCOMING SMS**
61. **MSOTO:** (**drunk voice**) Who's sending me a message at this time of night? Some people simply have no sense of decency or time. Excuse me, my friends, I'll be right back.

62. **SFX: CHAIR BEING DRAGGED SLIGHTLY**

63. **SFX: PHONE BEEPING AS WHEN TEXT IS READ**

64. **MSOTO:** Hmm? Lena? What does my sister want from me? Let's see... **(reads text)** "Hi Msoto. Just to inform you that your boys have gone missing. But don't worry, am doing all I can to get them back. Greetings. Lena"

65. **MSOTO:** **(drunk voice)** No... It's not true. I don't believe it. Let's find out!

66. **SFX: PHONE BEING DIALLED**

67. **LENA:** **(on the phone, sleepy tone)** Mmm... Hello, Lena speaking.

68. **MSOTO:** **(drunk: jokingly, on the phone)** Lena, I just got your text! What do you mean? My boys have gone missing? You must be kidding! Are you making it up to hurt Lulu? What do you have against my wife, eh? By the way, I need some money. It's been a while since I got some from you.

69. **LENA:** **(concerned)** Oh, Msoto, my brother, why will you never take me seriously...

70. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

71. OUTRO - NARRATOR

And that telephone conversation between Msoto and his sister Lena brings to an end this tenth episode of "Crossroads Generation", a Learning by Ear production for DW. What will Lulu do when she hears the news about her two sons? And what does Niki have in store for Dan, after trying and failing to make friends with him? Find out all this and more in the coming episode. If you want to listen to this episode again, just visit our webpage at dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook. Until we meet again for the next installment of the story, bye-bye and take care.