

Learning by Ear 2013

"Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices

EPISODE TWENTY: What Have I Done?

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List of characters by scene:

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- **MERCY (F, 15)**

SCENE 2: NIKI GETS READY FOR SCHOOL

- **JUMBE (M, 45)**
- **MRS. JUMBE (F, 35)**
- **NIKI (M, 16)**

SCENE 3: KADU AND BANDA BEGIN THEIR JOURNEY HOME

- **KADU (M, 8)**
- **BANDA (M, 8)**
- **ODUMBE (M, 40)**

SCENE 4: EXAM TIME FOR MERCY’S CLASS

- **TRUDY (F, 15)**
- **MERCY (F, 15)**
- **NIKI (M, 16)**
- **DAN (M, 16)**
- **PRINCIPAL JULIETTE (F, 50)**
- **GROUP OF STUDENTS (M/F, 15)**

1. INTRO - NARRATOR:

You're tuned to the twentieth episode of Learning by Ear - "Crossroads Generation", called "What Have I Done?" Let's recap on what's happened so far.

After having been forced by their aunt Lena to work in the mines - unbeknown to their parents - Mercy's two younger brothers Banda and Kadu managed to escape. They ended up on the street, begging for money. A stranger found them there and offered them help: **(KW BEGIN)**

2. BANDA (EPISODE 19, LINE 20): "Help! Please! We need money to go home."

3. ODUMBE (41): "Stop crying, little boy, it's all right. (35) I am a truck driver and Tandika is on my way. (...)I'll take you back with me to Kisimba."

(KW END)

So will Banda and Kadu finally get back to their family? And what about Niki? What happened to him after he stole his parent's car and hit a pedestrian?

4. (EP 19, 71) SFX: SOMEONE BEING SLAPPED

5. JUMBE (74): "What in the world were you thinking, Niki!! Eh? You could have killed that lady." **(76)** "Niki, I want you to go to your room and think hard."

So how will Niki cope with his guilt? We'll find out later in this episode. But first - remember Mercy, and her surprise visit to Dan in the last episode?

6. SFX: DOOR SLOWLY BEING OPENED (EP 19, 99)

7. DAN (98): "Mercy? Am I dreaming or what?"

8. MERCY (104): "Dan... I've been thinking... about what you asked of me."

(114) "For you, I'm ready to become a real woman!"

So Mercy changed her mind about sex before marriage. But will she regret it afterwards? Here she is, at home early the next morning...

SCENE 1: MERCY REFLECTS ON HAVING SEX FOR THE FIRST TIME

9. SFX: MORNING ATMO (LIGHT TRAFFIC, BIRDS)

10. SFX: MERCY YAWNS

11. MERCY: (tired voice) Ah... I feel so... tired... (remembers) Oh my goodness! What have I done?

12. SFX: BLANKETS PULLED OVER HEAD

13. MERCY: (deep in thought, full of regret) I’ve lost my virginity! I’m no longer innocent... Trudy told me I'd feel more like a woman... Do I? Am I different? Hmm... I feel... kind of guilty... and ashamed. But why? I like Dan... He’s tall, handsome, rich... he’s from Laboria, and he’s the ONLY one who understands me. It was right to sleep with him... wasn't it?

14. SFX: BEDCLOTHES RUSTLING

15. MERCY: (still deep in thought) But will my parents notice a change in me? Can they tell from my behaviour that I’m not the same? What about my classmates?

16. SFX: SQUEAKING SOUND FROM BED AS SHE GETS UP

17. SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING

18. MERCY: (panic) Oh no! I’m late - I have to hurry. I don't want to miss the exam.

19. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: NIKI GETS READY FOR SCHOOL

20. SFX: BRUSHING OF TEETH

21. SFX: GURGLING OF WATER AND SPITTING OUT

22. JUMBE: Gosh, what is Niki doing? I’m running late for work! He’s been holed up in his room for ages.

23. MRS. JUMBE: **(hits back)** Well, you told him to stay in there! Let me check up on him.

24. SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING

25. SFX: GENTLE KNOCK ON DOOR

26. MRS. JUMBE: Niki, my boy... Your dad is ready to drop you off at school.

SILENCE

27. MRS. JUMBE: Niki, come on. Come out of your room. You can’t hide from the world forever! **(short pause)** It was an accident. It could have happened to anyone. Even your dad!

KW BEGIN

28. JUMBE: **(far away)** Don’t put that on me! I never stole car keys from my parents when I was sixteen.

29. MRS. JUMBE: **(sarcastic whisper)** That’s because all your parents owned was a bicycle!

30. JUMBE: Precisely. And whatever they had, we were strictly forbidden to touch, let alone ride.

31. MRS. JUMBE: (**whispers**) Jumbe, I’m trying to help our son. The least you could do is be supportive.

KW END

32. NIKI: (**from inside**) I almost killed a lady. I ran her over! I can’t get this picture out of my head!

33. MRS. JUMBE: (**comforting**) Nooo, Niki! No one is dead. Stop thinking like that! Do we have to have this conversation through the door? And... wait, what’s that smell? Niki! I’m coming in now!

34. SFX: DOOR BEING OPENED

35. MRS. JUMBE: (**shocked**) Goodness me! Niki, what have you been up to? (**shouting**) Jumbe, I think you should see this for yourself!

36. SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING QUICKLY

37. JUMBE: This better be serious because -- (**stops midway**) Oh no! Oh no! Niki, when did you...? (**furious**) Take that cigarette out of your mouth! Right now!

38. NIKI: (**softly**) You don’t have to shout at me. I can hear perfectly well, Dad.

39. **MRS. JUMBE:** I’m leaving this to you, Jumbe. I can’t handle this.
40. **JUMBE:** We’re running late. Niki, get your school stuff and let’s go! We’ll talk about this later tonight.
41. **MRS. JUMBE:** Don’t forget to stop by the police station. They have to arrest Msoto. I want my car back!
42. **JUMBE:** **(takes deep breath)** Oh come on, Mama Niki. We just caught our son with a cigarette, and all you can think about is your stolen car?
43. **NIKI:** **(gently)** Msoto? You’re on totally the wrong track. Why do you keep insisting it was him? Mercy's father had nothing to do with the robbery!
44. **JUMBE:** **(orders)** You just shut up! How would *you* know, eh? One more word from you and I swear I will beat that cigarette smoke out of you! Now move!
45. **SFX: SOMEONE BEING PUSHED AND FALLING DOWN**
46. **MRS. JUMBE:** **(screaming)** Jumbe, stop it! You’ll hurt him!
47. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

SCENE 3: KADU AND BANDA BEGIN THEIR JOURNEY HOME

48. SFX: HEAVY TRUCK ENGINE BEING TURNED ON

49. ODUMBE: Now listen carefully, you two. What were your names again?

50. KADU: **(at the same time)** Kadu.

51. BANDA: **(at the same time)** Banda.

52. ODUMBE: Kadu and Banda, right. Sorry, I’m not so good with names. All right, boys, here we go. We’re leaving Ouango now to go to Kisimba.

53. KADU: **(interrupts Odumbe, excited)** Yes! To see Mama and Daddy and Mercy and all our friends in Tandika!

54. BANDA: Shush, Kadu. Let Mr. Odumbe finish!

55. ODUMBE: Don’t worry, Banda. I understand that you can’t wait to see your families again. But I have to warn you. It’s going to be a very, very long journey. I can’t drive very fast in this truck. If we’re lucky, we should be home by tomorrow. If it rains, and the road is bad, it may take longer.

56. BANDA: Isn’t there a short cut? In Tandika slum, where we live, we always have short cuts.

- 57. ODUMBE:** (laughing) No, Banda. I wish there were. There’s only one road we can take, I’m sorry. And boys - if anyone asks you, tell them I’m your father!
- 58. KADU:** But that’s not true!
- 59. ODUMBE:** It’ll save us trouble, though. If they discover that you are not my children, they might think I’m stealing you, and you know what could happen then?
- 60. BANDA:** They’ll send us back here?
- 61. ODUMBE:** Exactly! They’ll send you right back - and not only that, they’ll arrest me for kidnapping you. So remember: during this journey I am your father. As soon as we get to Tandika, I’ll stop being your father. Okay?
- 62. BANDA & KADU:** Okay.
- KW BEGIN**
- 63. ODUMBE:** I’ve bought enough food and water for the journey.
- 64. KADU:** What about the toilet?
- 65. BANDA:** Kadu, you can’t do that in the truck!
- 66. ODUMBE:** No, no, no. If you want to go to the toilet, let me know. I’ll stop the truck and take you into the bush.
- 67. KADU:** What if there’s a lion in the bush?

68. BANDA: (worn out by questions) Kadu! Stop asking so many questions!

69. ODUMBE: Don't worry, Kadu. We're not on safari. There are no lions around, okay? I'll watch over you. If you want to sleep, the bed is right above your seats. You can just climb up and sleep. Now, have you understood everything?

70. BANDA: Yes.

71. ODUMBE: Any questions?

72. KADU/BANDA: No.

KW END

73. ODUMBE: Then let's hit the road...

74. SFX: TRUCK ACCELERATES AND DRIVES OFF

75. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: EXAM TIME FOR MERCY'S CLASS

76. SFX: CLASSROOM ATMO, STUDENTS MURMURING

77. TRUDY: (curious) Mercy, what happened to you today? I waited for you at the bus station! When you didn't show up I had to go without you...

- 78. MERCY:** Sorry! Long story, but to cut it short, I'm just glad I made it to class on time.
- 79. TRUDY:** **(whispers)** Mercy, guess what? Yesterday, I had so much fun with my boyfriend! **(laughs cheekily)** You know, the conductor! The ‘cool guy’...
- 80. MERCY:** Oh - yes. Trudy, can you tell me about later? We need to concentrate on the Biology test now. The Principal will be here any moment. I need to do some last-minute revision.
- 81. TRUDY:** **(bored)** Okay, okay... Pfff! You're always studying..
- 82. SFX: PAGES OF A BOOK BEING TURNED**
- 83. NIKI:** **(clears throat)** Hello, Mercy.
- 84. TRUDY:** **(sarcastic)** Yoohoo! Am I invisible or what? I'm sitting right next to Mercy, but no one ever seems to notice me.
- 85. MERCY:** / notice you, Trudy. **(sighs)** Yes, Niki, what is it?
- 86. NIKI:** Nothing. I just... Here - take this note and read it when you're on your own.
- 87. MERCY:** Niki, I've already told you a million times: I'm --
- 88. NIKI:** Just take it and read please. It's urgent! I've done what I can.

89. TRUDY: (acting concerned) Oh, oh, Mercy. Sounds as if Niki is planning to kill himself, now that the love of his life has let him down and chosen someone else! Mercy, you need to read it before he leaves this room! (laughs)

90. NIKI: (angrily) Trudy, mind your own business!

91. MERCY: Okay, I will read it. But after the exam. I need to --

92. NIKI: I suggest you read it now. It could be too late otherwise.

93. TRUDY: Oh, no! He’s already taken poison!

94. NIKI: (furious) One more word from you, Trudy, and I swear I’ll beat this foolishness out of you! Mercy - it’s about your father.

95. MERCY: All right, calm down! I’ll read it right now!

96. SFX: PAPER BEING UNFOLDED

97. MERCY: (shocked) What! This is a joke, right? Niki, what is this?
This can't be true!

98. SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

99. DAN: Is there a problem here, Mercy?

100. NIKI: The problem is always you, Dan.

101. SFX: MURMURS AND GRUMBLES FROM STUDENTS

102. SFX: HIGH-HEELED FOOTSTEPS

103.JULIETTE: Dan and Niki, go back to your seats! Everyone, close your books and put them away inside your desks.

104.SFX: BOOKS BEING CLOSED AND DESKS OPENED AND SHUT

105.JULIETTE: Now, before we start, I know some of you might want to try to be clever and cheat by copying answers from your textbooks or note books. If I catch you - and trust me, I will - I will kick you out of the examination room. You will get zero marks, and the matter will be reported to your parents. So, I hope you've understood me! You'd better think twice before you even think of cheating. Right. I'll pass the exam paper around. Don't turn over the paper over until I give you permission to do so.

106.SFX: PAPER PUT ON THE TABLE

107.MUSIC INTERLUDE

108. OUTRO - NARRATOR:

And with Mercy and her classmates preparing to take their first exam since starting at Bongo Academy, we wind up this twentieth episode. What did Niki’s note to Mercy say? How will Mercy, Niki, Dan and Trudy do in the exam? And don’t forget Kadu and Banda, who’ve started their journey back to Tandika. Will they make it? All this and more in the coming episode. If you’d like to listen to this episode again, visit our website at dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook. From all of us, goodbye for now.