

Learning by Ear 2013

Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices

EPISODE FOUR: Emotional Battles

AUTHOR: Chrispin Mwakideu

EDITOR: Madelaine Meier, Yann Durand

COPY EDITOR: Charlotte Collins

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SCENE 2: MSOTO AND LULU HAVE BREAKFAST AT HOME

- **MSOTO (M, 45)**
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SCENE 3: DAN AND NIKI CHAT UP MERCY IN SCHOOL

- **TRUDY (F, 15)**
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SCENE 4: DAN TALKS TO HIS FATHER KANYAMA OVER INTERNET WEBCAM

- **KANYAMA (M, 50)**
- **DAN (M, 16)**

1. INTRO - NARRATOR:

Hello and welcome to Learning by Ear and "Crossroads Generation", our new series about the challenges facing young teenagers in Africa. Which path should I take? Who do I trust? What is important in life? We're following Mercy, Dan and Niki while they try to figure out answers to these questions. But first: a quick recap of what's happened so far.

On their very first day at Bongo Academy high school, Niki and Dan squared off in a rap contest to mark their territories:

- 2. DAN (EP 03, LINE 6):** "My name is Dan. I am not from your clan! If you think you have a plan, then talk to Dan."
- 3. NIKI:** "Oh no, no, no, listen, Dan, I'm not your fan. My name is Niki. I can be a little tricky, if you wanna get freaky."
- 4. DAN:** "Wow, what a pathetic rhyme!"

Mercy had a rough first day, too. As the only student from a humble background, some of the other kids made fun of her:

- 5. MERCY (LINE 21):** "Excuse me, may I sit here next to you?"
- 6. JAEL (LINE 27):** "A dirty, ragged, stinking, barefoot girl? No way..."

So, what's going to happen this time? Will Mercy be accepted? Will the boys reconcile? Stay tuned to find out what happens in the fourth episode, "Emotional Battles". We start off with Mercy and her new friend Trudy meeting up in town to go to school.

SCENE 1: MERCY AND TRUDY MEET IN TOWN TO GO TO SCHOOL

7. SFX: STREET ATMO WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORT

8. TRUDY: (Yells out) Mercy! Wow, you look soooo... different!
I mean - you look really pretty. When did you buy your uniform? And your new hairstyle is great, too. Gosh, you're going to drive all the boys in class crazy!

9. MERCY: Ah, come on, Trudy. Don't exaggerate. But thanks for the compliment. **(short pause)** Shall we take this bus?

10. SFX: OLD VEHICLE APPROACHING

11. TRUDY: That old thing? **(chuckles)** Jeez... Mercy, what planet do you come from? Listen, we're Bongo Academy students now. We can't just take any old public transport – it has to be classy, stylish, and preferably playing music.

12. MERCY: Trudy, is that really necessary?

13. SFX: PUBLIC TRANSPORT VAN PLAYING LOUD HIP-HOP MUSIC APPROACHES

14. TRUDY: Relax! Look, here comes our ride. Ready to go? Let's hop in!

15. SFX: VAN DOOR OPENS, MERCY AND TRUDY GET IN. LOUD HIP HOP MUSIC PLAYING

16. MERCY: (talking loudly because of loud music) Trudy, this bus is overloaded!

17. TRUDY: No problem. We can stand until some people get out. (whispering) Look at the driver and the conductor! Aren't they cool?

18. MERCY: Ah... I don't find them cool at all. They look like gangsters to me.

KW BEGIN

19. TRUDY: (laughs) Not so loud, girlfriend!

20. MERCY: Trudy, how come the conductor didn't ask us to pay for transport? He just overlooked us and collected from the rest.

KW END

21. TRUDY: (cautions) Ssssh! Mercy, my goodness, you really are naïve! The conductor is ... (searching for words) a *very* close friend of mine! (laughs) I think you have a lot to learn. It's as if you've come straight from the village to the city.

- 22. MERCY:** Well, sort of... My primary school was just a stone's throw from our house, and apart from fetching water and getting groceries, which was quite nearby, my father has never allowed me to come into town on my own.
- 23. TRUDY:** And where exactly is your home?
- 24. MERCY:** Tandika.
- 25. TRUDY:** **(shocked)** You live in Tandika *slums*?
- 26. MUSIC INTERLUDE**

SCENE 2: MSOTO AND LULU HAVE BREAKFAST AT HOME

- 26. a) ATMO: SLUM DWELLING AMBIANCE, DAYTIME**
- 27. SFX: MSOTO BLOWING ON HOT PORRIDGE TO COOL IT DOWN**
- 28. LULU:** **(jokingly)** Msoto, if you keep doing that, your porridge will freeze. Then what?
- 29. MSOTO:** **(sarcastic)** Hahaha... Very funny. You know very well that I have a toothache and I can't afford a dentist. So maybe you shouldn't let it boil for hours!
- (short pause)**
- 30. LULU:** Mercy looked very beautiful in that school uniform, don't you think?

31. **MSOTO:** With or without a uniform, Mercy is beautiful. She doesn't need a uniform to look pretty.
32. **LULU:** Aren't you even proud, Msoto, that OUR daughter has got in to one of the best schools in the country?
33. **MSOTO:** Proud? Proud of what? **(bitterly)** Proud that some woman I don't know bought the school uniform and took my daughter to the hairdresser? Proud that I have to drink hot porridge in the morning with a pregnant wife without knowing where the money is going to come from to look after the baby?
34. **LULU:** **(calmly)** Msoto, we'll manage. You could borrow money from your employer. Everybody does that from time to time!
35. **MSOTO:** **(thinking)** I have a better idea. Lulu, when do you think you'll give birth?
36. **LULU:** Next week, I guess. Why?
37. **MSOTO:** **(in thoughts)** Hmm... I hate to say it, but I think it's better if we give the baby away.
38. **TENSION BUILDING MUSIC**
39. **LULU:** **(utterly shocked)** No! No, no, no, no, no way! Msoto, you can't do that! I won't allow it!

40. **MSOTO:** Shut up, you useless woman!

41. **SFX: HARD SLAP ON FACE**

KW BEGIN

42. **LULU:** **(screams in pain)** Wuuuuuu! Don't kill me!

43. **MSOTO:** **(threatening)** Not another word from you, Lulu! You hear me? Not a single word!

44. **LULU:** **(fearful)** Yes.

45. **MSOTO:** I am the man of this house! I decide! I make the rules and you obey them!

46. **LULU:** **(fearful)** Yes.

KW END

47. **MSOTO:** I am going to find someone who can take good care of our baby. We can't afford to raise another child.
(To Lulu) This porridge is cold, and it's tasteless. I'm going out for a real drink!

48. **SFX: IRON SHEET DOOR BEING OPENED AND CLOSED**

49. **SAD, MELANCHOLIC MUSIC INTERLUDE**

SCENE 3: DAN AND NIKI CHAT UP MERCY IN SCHOOL

50. SFX: SCHOOL ATMO FOLLOWED BY BELL RINGING

51. SFX: ATMO OF STUDENTS LEAVING CLASSROOM

52. TRUDY: (sigh of relief) Phew... I needed to hear that bell so badly. Finally they're giving us a break, Mercy! I'm totally exhausted with all these classes - introduction to Biology, Physics, Chemistry... Arrgh!

53. MERCY: Well, I thought it was interesting. Especially Biology – “the study of life and living organisms divided into specific fields”.

54. TRUDY: Please, Mercy, stop! A girl needs a break once in a while.

55. SFX: MAN WOLF-WHISTLING

56. TRUDY: (seductive tone) Ooooh, I see you've already caught someone's attention. I told you - you're going to drive the boys crazy.

57. SFX FOOTSTEPS - DAN APPROACHES

58. DAN: Excuse me. Mercy, can I talk to you?... In private.

59. MERCY: (indifferent) Why in private? I have nothing to hide!

60. TRUDY: Mercy, don't be mean, come on. Dan wants to talk to you alone.

61. **MERCY:** Yes, but whatever it is, he can say it here.
62. **DAN:** **(confused)** Okay – then: I just wanted to tell you that you look really beautiful to– **(cut short by Niki)**
63. **SFX FOOTSTEPS - NIKI APPROACHES**
64. **NIKI:** **(clears throat)** Is there a problem here?
65. **DAN:** **(annoyed)** What problem? The only problem I see here is *you!*
66. **TRUDY:** **(sarcastic)** Ooops, double trouble. Here we go...
67. **MERCY:** **(confused)** Hmm... No, Niki, I'm fine. Thanks for your concern. Trudy, let's go back to class.
68. **DAN:** May I walk you back to class, Mercy? If that's okay with you, of course.
69. **NIKI:** Well, as the class prefect, I think it would be better if I took her back. She's obviously not interested in your offer...
70. **MERCY:** **(playing kind)** Thanks, both of you. But I think I can find my own way. Come on, Trudy. Or do you want to be escorted back? **(chuckling)**
71. **TRUDY:** **(jealous)** Who? Me? ... Well, no... I mean, nobody's asked me.
72. **MERCY & TRUDY:** **(chuckle as they leave)**

73. SFX: FOOTSTEPS - MERCY AND TRUDY LEAVING

74. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: DAN TALKS TO HIS FATHER KANYAMA OVER INTERNET

WEBCAM

75. SFX: ATMO DORM (LIGHT TRAFFIC NOISE FROM OUTSIDE, FAN)

**76. SFX: INTERNET CALL (Skype) BEING CONNECTED, MOUSE
CLICKS**

77. KANYAMA: Hello Dan, can you hear me?

78. DAN: Yes, Dad, I can hear you, but the Internet connection in this country is slower.

79. KANYAMA: Ah, okay. So tell me, how is the heir to the Kanyama dynasty coping in a foreign country?

80. DAN: Dad, stop it, we're not a dynasty.

81. KANYAMA: No? But you carry my surname, don't you? Kanyama is a respected and powerful name. I hope you're upholding our reputation over there in Kisimba.

82. DAN: Of course, Dad.

83. KANYAMA: Good. So – how's it going?

84. DAN: Everything's fine, Dad.

85. **KANYAMA:** Can you show me around the room with your webcam? I want to see what I’m paying for.
86. **DAN:** Dad, I can’t do that right now, I’m sorry. The room is a total mess.
87. **KANYAMA:** **(annoyed)** So you haven’t changed a bit! I thought your mum and I sent you there so you could learn how to be responsible!
88. **.DAN:** I know. Can we do this another time Dad? I promise I will show you the room. But not today.
89. **KANYAMA:** All right. That’s fine. I’m already looking forward to coming there at half term to visit you.
90. **DAN:** Father, I need to ask you something. I’ve run out of cash.
91. **KANYAMA:** **(shocked)** Already? Dan, I gave you almost 1,000 US dollars as pocket money! What did you do with it?
92. **DAN:** Things are expensive here! I don’t have anything left.
93. **KANYAMA:** Hmm – well, okay, but you must learn how to budget, Dan. I’ll send you some cash on Saturday. That’s the only day I’m free.

KW BEGIN

94. DAN: Can't you find someone to send me the money tomorrow?

95. KANYAMA: **(strict)** Hey. I said Saturday. Don't push it, boy! Is that all you wanted to talk about? More money?

96. DAN: Well, yeah...

97. KANYAMA: You don't even want to know how your mum is doing? And the family business?

98. DAN: **(ashamed)** Oh, of course. How is Mum?

99. KANYAMA: As zealous for her Lord as always. I think she spends more time in church than anywhere else. But she's fine.

KW END

100.DAN: **(short pause, bored)** How's the business, then? Going well, as usual?

101.KANYAMA: Dan, you're the one who will take over the business when I'm gone. So you'd better start thinking and acting responsibly.

102.DAN: **(weary)** But Dad, we've been through this a thousand times! I'm not interested in the mining business.

103.KANYAMA: Yes, and I've told you a million times, you can't escape your des--

104.SFX: NOISE, INTERNET CALL DISCONNECTED

105.DAN: Hello? Hello?? Dad? I can't hear you. Can you hear me? (**ironically**) Too bad...

106.MUSIC INTERLUDE

107.OUTRO - NARRATOR :

It seems Dan is not too unhappy about the conversation with his father being cut short. He's a long way away from home, but he realizes he can't flee his heritage. Mercy is struggling with her new situation, too. How is she going to manage two admirers at once? Find out next time on Learning by Ear's "Generation Crossroads", or visit us online at dw.de/lbe and on Facebook. Until we next time – take care.