

**Learning by Ear 2013**

**Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices**

EPISODE TWENTY-ONE: Bad News

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**List of characters by scene:**

**SCENE 1: ODUMBE, KADU AND BANDA AT CHECKPOINT**

- OFFICER (M, 40)
- ODUMBE (M, 45)
- BANDA (M, 8)

**SCENE 2: MERCY AND MSOTO AT HOME**

- MSOTO (M, 45)
- MERCY (F, 15)
- TRUDY (F, 15)

**SCENE 3: KANYAMA MAKES A SURPRISE VISIT TO DAN’S SCHOOL**

- BIKO (M, 16)
- DAN (M, 16)
- MR. KANYAMA (M, 55)

**1. INTRO – NARRATOR:**

Hello and welcome to “Crossroads Generation”, a Learning by Ear radio drama production brought to you by DW. Let’s recap on what’s happened in previous episodes:

Mercy got a letter from her classmate Niki. His parents were robbed recently, and they suspect that Mercy’s dad Msoto, who used to work as their watchman, was responsible:

**2. SFX: PAPER BEING UNFOLDED (EP 20, LINE 96)**

**3. MERCY:** “What! This is a joke, right? Niki, what is this? This can't be true!”

Will Mercy manage to warn her father in time? Was Msoto really behind the robbery? Things have been falling apart for him these last few months. He’s been drinking too much, he quit his job as a watchman, his wife left him - and his two sons, who were supposed to be with his sister Lena in Laboria, have disappeared. What he doesn’t yet know is that Kadu and Banda are on their way home right now. Odumbe, a truck driver they met by chance while they were begging on the street, has offered them his help. In the last episode they’d just begun their journey together:

**4. ODUMBE (EP 20, LINE 55):** “I can’t drive very fast in this truck. If we’re lucky, we should be home by tomorrow.” **(+57)** “And boys - if anyone asks you, tell them I’m your father!”

**5. BANDA & KADU (62): “Okay.”**

Keep listening to find out where the story takes us next in this, the twenty-first episode, entitled “Bad News”. We meet up again with Odumbe and the boys as they reach a police checkpoint...

**SCENE 1: ODUMBE, KADU AND BANDA AT CHECKPOINT**

**6. RURAL DAYTIME ATMO**

**7. SFX: TRUCK SLOWLY COMING TO A STOP**

**8. SFX: RADIO ON**

**9. OFFICER:** (ordering from outside through open truck window)

Everyone inside the truck, come out! Open the canvas - we need to check everything!

**10. ODUMBE:** Yes, officer. One moment, I’ll wake up my boys.

(whispers in truck) Banda! Kadu! Hey boys, get up! We need to get out. We’re at a police checkpoint.

**11. SFX: SNORING FROM TWO YOUNG BOYS**

**12. ODUMBE:** Officer, I’m sorry but my two sons are fast asleep. It’s been a long journey.

**13. OFFICER:** (curious) You have your two sons with you? I have to see them. We have to check everyone!

**14. ODUMBE:**       **(with confidence)** They’re up on the sleeping deck. You can come and see them, but do you have to use your torch? I’d rather not wake them up. I’m glad to have some peace and quiet! You know how boys are, especially when they’re travelling.

**15. OFFICER:**       Yes, I know what you’re saying. Where are you travelling to?

**16. ODUMBE:**       Back to Tandika... I was delivering goods to Laboria, and I thought it would be nice for them to visit. They really enjoyed it.

#### **KW BEGIN**

**17. OFFICER:**       **(friendly voice)** I can imagine. You know, I also have a son...

**18. ODUMBE:**       Really? How old?

**19. OFFICER:**       He’s five years old now. And I also have a --

**20. KADU:**           **(dreaming; faintly, from inside truck)** No! No!... Please, leave me alone... I’m tired... No! No! Don’t beat me!

**21. OFFICER:**       Did I hear something? Did that voice come from your truck?

**22. ODUMBE:** Oh that was just the radio. You know, to keep me awake while I’m driving.

**23. OFFICER:** And what are you carrying? You’re not smuggling anything, I hope?

**24. ODUMBE:** No, no, of course not! I have some bags of cereal: maize, rice, beans and the rest. I’m a regular visitor. You can check my travel documents.

**KW END**

**25. OFFICER:** No, that’s okay. You seem like a good person. Have a safe trip, and say hi to your boys when they wake up.

**26. ODUMBE:** **(politely)** Of course, of course. Thank you, officer.

**27. SFX: STEPS OFFICER LEAVE**

**28. ODUMBE:** **(takes deep breath)** That was close!

**29. BANDA:** **(sleepy voice)** I need to pee!

**30. ODUMBE:** Not now, Banda! We have to drive out of here as fast as we can! I’ll stop later, I promise!

**31. SFX: TRUCK ENGINE STARTS, TRUCK DRIVES OFF**

**32. MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 2: MERCY AND MSOTO AT HOME**

**33. SFX: EVENING ATMO AT MSOTO’S**

**34. MSOTO:** (angry) Mercy! Mercy!

**35. SFX: MERCY ARRIVES**

**36. MERCY:** Here I am! What is it?

**37. MSOTO:** Mercy, you should have burned the trash, but nothing’s been done! It’s already evening now!

**38. MERCY:** Sorry, Dad, I had homework.

**39. MSOTO:** Homework, tss! *This* is your homework. This is your *home!*

**40. MERCY:** (shyly) Yes, Dad.

**(short pause)**

**41. MSOTO:** Why are you looking at me strangely?

**42. MERCY:** Huh? Am I?

**43. MSOTO:** Yes, you are. I know that look. Sad and reproachful. You’ve got it from your mother. Either you tell me right now what’s going on, or else stop giving me that look!

**44. MERCY:** Dad. Today in school... Wait. **(fumbles a paper out of her pocket)** Someone gave me this note. It says you had something to do with a robbery...?

45. **MSOTO:** (furious) What on earth...? (mumbling something unintelligible)
46. **SFX: TAKES THE PAPER, TEARS IT INTO PIECES**
47. **MSOTO:** (shocked) Rubbish! How can you even think such a thing? Do I look like an armed robber to you? Who told you this?
48. **MERCY:** The note was from Niki Jumbe. He’s in my class. His parents were robbed last week, and they think you had something to do with it! It’s because you used to be their watchman, and then you suddenly quit.
49. **MSOTO:** (defensive) Yes, I quit, so what? Is it illegal for a watchman who’s worked for ten years (**stresses, with bitterness**) - *ten years* of earning peanuts - to resign? You’re telling me my former employers are accusing me of stealing and robbing from them, after all those years I spent protecting their property?!
50. **MERCY:** I believe you, Dad, but I think the police and Mr. and Mrs. Jumbe probably won’t. The police are going to come for you very soon... I think you’d better go!
51. **MSOTO:** Mercy, what do you mean? I have nowhere to go...

**52. MERCY:** You could go to Mum’s parents. Nobody will think of looking for you in the village.

**KW BEGIN**

**53. MSOTO:** No! I’m not going to your grandparents! Your mum chose to leave us. How can I go and seek shelter at their house? She can do that if she wants, but not me! Besides - village life? I am not that old yet!

**54. MERCY:** Father, you can sort all this out with Mum. Right now, we have very little time. Niki was kind enough to warn us, but any minute now the police might come knocking on the door.

**KW END**

**55. MSOTO:** **(worried)** But I don’t even have bus fare... How will I manage?

**56. MERCY:** I’ll give you the fare.

**57. MSOTO:** **(concerned)** Mercy! Where did you get the money from? Do you have a boyfriend? Is it a sugar daddy?

**58. MERCY:** Look, Dad, don’t worry about me. I can take care of myself.

**59. SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR**



60. **MSOTO:** (scared stiff) It's the police! Oh no! We're too late, Mercy... What shall I do? Tell me!
61. **MERCY:** Let me check first.
62. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING ACROSS FLOOR**
63. **MERCY:** Yes? Who is it?
64. **TRUDY:** (through the door) Mercy, open up! It's me Trudy.
65. **MSOTO:** (still scared) Mercy, don't open the door. It could be a trick.
66. **MERCY:** (whispers) Dad! Trudy's a friend of mine. She's been here before, when you were out.
67. **SFX: DOOR UNLOCKED**
68. **MERCY:** Hey, Trudy!
69. **TRUDY:** (worried) Hi. I'm really sorry to bother you, Mr Msoto. But Mercy, I need to talk to you.
70. **MERCY:** Sure, come on in...
71. **SFX: DOOR BEING OPENED**
72. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING IN**
73. **MERCY:** Please, take a seat and meet my Dad. Dad, this is Trudy.
74. **MSOTO:** Hello Trudy. Mercy... I'll be in my room then, packing.
75. **TRUDY:** Nice to meet you, Mr Msoto.

**76. SFX: FOOTSTEPS LEAVING ROOM**

**77. TRUDY** (to Mercy) Hey - are you going somewhere?

**78. SFX: CHAIRS PULLED OUT**

**79. MERCY:** Me? No, not me, just my dad... So tell me, what is it that couldn't wait till tomorrow?

**80. TRUDY:** (very concerned, low voice) Mercy, I think... I think I've got an STD.

**81. MERCY:** What is an STD? You seem very worried, Trudy.

**82. TRUDY:** An STD... Don't you know? A sexually transmitted disease.

**83. MERCY:** (shocked) Oh my goodness! Trudy, are you serious? You mean you could be HIV positive?

**84. TRUDY:** Oh, no, come on, now you're taking it too far. I only said an STD...

**85. MERCY:** How did you get it? How do you even know you have it?

**86. TRUDY:** I think I caught it from the conductor. That's the boy I see most of time. And I know the symptoms. It's not the first time I've had it.

87. **MERCY:** (a bit surprised by the response) Trudy – you mean you’ve already had a sexually transmitted disease? When? How come you didn’t tell me about this before?
88. **TRUDY:** (sarcastic) Well, it’s hardly my favourite topic! Anyway, I wanted to tell you now because I need to get it treated, so I’ll be off school for a few days.
89. **MERCY:** Trudy, I’m really shocked! Is it dangerous?
90. **TRUDY:** All STDs are kind of dangerous if you don’t treat them. At least, that’s what my doctor told me. I’ve already been to see him. He says it’s not so bad. But he warned me to be careful.
91. **MERCY:** But ... what does it ... feel like?
92. **TRUDY:** It itches, like an irritation. And it hurts a bit when I pee....
93. **MERCY:** Eww, my god. What did your parents say about it?
94. **TRUDY:** (surprised) Are you crazy? I would never tell my parents about this!
95. **MERCY:** (realizes) Oh no! What if I’m infected, too?
96. **TRUDY:** (puzzled) You can’t be. And don’t worry; I’m not going to die!

97. **MERCY:** No! Trudy, you don't get it. I... I haven't told you this, but Dan and me ... well... **(under her breath)** I'm not a virgin any more.

98. **TRUDY:** **(surprised - whispering)** What? Mercy! You and Dan? So... you did it?

99. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS - MSOTO APPROACHING**

100. **MSOTO:** **(clears throat)** Mercy... I'm ready to go.

101. **SFX: MUSIC INTERLUDE**

### **SCENE 3: KANYAMA MAKES A SURPRISE VISIT**

100. **SFX: BASKETBALL BEING DRIBBLED, SHOTS TAKEN**

101. **SFX: TWO PEOPLE RUNNING**

102. **BIKO:** **(celebrates)** Wuuuuh! What a shot... Biko leads 5 to 4.  
Show me what you got, Danny boy.

103. **SFX: DAN JUMPS**

104. **SFX: DAN SCORES**

105. **DAN:** **(takes a deep breath)** Ha! 5 - 5! Time out! I need a rest.

**KW BEGIN**

106. **BIKO:** **(sarcastic)** Ha ha ha! You have no stamina, Danny.

107. **DAN:** Hey, man, this is the first time you’ve ever even tied with me. So stop blowing your own trumpet.

**KW END**

108. **SFX: CLAPPING OF HANDS**

109. **KANYAMA: (far off, proudly)** That’s my boy! Show them what you’re made of.

110. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING**

111. **DAN:** **(shouting, startled)** Dad! What are you doing here?

112. **BIKO:** Man - is *this* your father? He looks very... **(whispers)** bling bling...

113. **DAN:** Dad, when did you arrive? I wasn’t expecting you at all.

114. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS STOP**

115. **KANYAMA:** I decided to surprise you. Even the Principal doesn’t know I’m here yet. I spoke nicely to the guard. You know my style, eh? So of course he let me in. He told me you two get along very well.

116. **DAN:** Dad - this is Biko.

117. **BIKO:** Hello, Papa Dan. Nice to meet you, Mr. Kan--

118. **KANYAMA: (interrupts him)** CEO Kanyama. Chief Executive Officer of Kanyama Enterprises. Didn’t Dan tell you who I am?

**119. BIKO:** (formally) Oh, I guess I just didn't remember, sir. It was a pleasure meeting you, CEO Kanyama. I have to go and study now. See you later, Dan.

**120. SFX: FOOTSTEPS LEAVE**

**121. KANYAMA:** Good! So... here I am. I've come to see your new school for myself ... and the new girl who's been driving you so crazy that you've completely forgotten about Anita.

**122. DAN:** Er - what?

**123. MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**124. OUTRO - NARRATOR:**

As a shocked and startled Dan stands there with sweat dripping from his shirt, we reach the end of this episode. What awaits Msoto as he flees the police? After hearing Trudy's news, Mercy is now worried about her sexual encounter with Dan. Will her fears come true? Don't miss the next episode to find out. And if you'd like to listen to this episode again, visit our website at [dw.de/lbe](http://dw.de/lbe). You can also follow us on Facebook. Until we meet again, take care - and stay safe!