

**Learning by Ear 2013**

**Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices**

EPISODE SIX: Surprise, Surprise!

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**List of characters by scene:**

**SCENE 1: END OF THE SCHOOL DAY AT BONGO ACADEMY**

- TRUDY (F, 15)
- MERCY (F, 15)

**SCENE 2: JUMBE AND MRS. JUMBE DISCUSS NIKI AT HOME**

- JUMBE (M, 45)
- MRS. JUMBE (F, 35)

**SCENE 3: MERCY ARRIVES HOME FROM SCHOOL**

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

**SCENE 4: TRUDY AND DAN MEET DOWNTOWN**

- DAN (M, 15)
- TRUDY (M, 15)

**1. INTRO - NARRATOR:**

Welcome to "Crossroads Generation", a Learning by Ear radio drama production brought to you by DW. In this sixth episode, called "Surprise, Surprise", we'll be following Mercy, Niki and Dan who've all just started at a new school. Let's recall what happened last time on "Crossroads Generation": Mercy's mother gave birth to a little girl, but her husband Msoto decided to give the baby away because the family couldn't afford another mouth to feed:

**2. MSOTO (EP 05, 106):** "Lulu, give me that baby..."

**3. LULU:** "Please, don't do this. The baby needs to be fed first. Give me some time."

**4. MSOTO (111):** "Listen to me carefully. If Seda or anyone else asks you what happened to the baby, tell them it died a few minutes after you gave birth. If you make a mistake and tell them what I'm about to do... I promise you will regret it!"

Meanwhile, at school, their daughter Mercy had no idea what was going on at home. In fact, she had a rather pleasant surprise. Dan and Niki are both paying her a lot of attention. Her friend Trudy seems even more amazed about it than Mercy herself:

**5. TRUDY (EP 05, 85):** "Mercy, girl! That's a beautiful problem you've got there. Two love letters, from the two handsomest boys in class. (...) I wish I was in your shoes."

**6. MERCY:** "I wish I wasn't."

So let's start right there at the Bongo Academy. School is almost over for the day, and Mercy is about to find out what Dan and Niki have written to her.

**SCENE 1: END OF THE SCHOOL DAY AT BONGO ACADEMY**

**7. SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGS FOLLOWED BY STUDENTS LEAVING CLASS AND WALKING ALONG THE CORRIDOR**

**KW BEGIN**

**8. TRUDY:** Mercy, you're so funny. You're acting so cool about all this. I mean, two boys are head over heels in love with you, and you don't even seem to notice.

**9. MERCY:** Ah, Trudy, I don't think it's that. I think they just want to have fun like all the rest, and then dump me like a hot potato.

**10. TRUDY:** Well, come on. Let's open the letters. I'm so curious to find out what they have to say! You know, if you ask me, I'd say: take Niki! He's charming and handsome. And... he's also the class prefect.

**KW END**

**11. MERCY:** I don't know, Trudy... Here you are! *You* open the letters!

**12. SFX: PAPER RUSTLE OF TWO ENVELOPES BEING HELD**

**13. TRUDY:** **(surprised)** Me? No, I can't. They're for you!

14. **MERCY:** Please, go ahead and open them! There's no one around.
15. **TRUDY:** Okay... Ooh, I feel so nervous! I'll start with Niki's letter because he's my favourite.
16. **SFX: LETTER BEING RIPPED OPEN**
17. **SFX: LETTER BEING UNFOLDED**
18. **MERCY:** Read it aloud!
19. **TRUDY:** Okay, listen to this: **(starts to read)** "My dear Mercy. Where do I begin? I have been searching for the right words to express how I feel. The first time I saw you, you were standing at the school gate with the security guard. Despite your ragged clothes and unkempt hair, I still saw a beautiful girl. Since then you've always been on my mind. I know you may think I'm stupid, and probably you are right, but I'm just stupidly in love with you."
20. **MERCY:** **(breaks out in huge laughter)** That's so funny!
21. **TRUDY:** I think it's romantic! Shall I go on reading?
22. **MERCY:** Yes, yes! Go on! But make it quick, I don't want to get home late because of some stupid letter. My mum could give birth any time, and she needs my help.

23. **TRUDY:**           **(continues reading)** "My only request is that you give me a chance to show how much I like you. If you do, I will be the happiest boy in the world! Even now, as I finish this letter, I am thinking of you. Sealed with a kiss - Niki Jumbe"
24. **MERCY:**           Sealed with a kiss? **(disgusted)** Eeewww, that's disgusting!
25. **TRUDY:**           **(laughs out loud)** Now, hold on. We still have another one...
26. **SFX: LETTER BEING HANDED OVER**
27. **TRUDY:**           Let's see if Dan Kanyama can match Niki's poetry.
28. **SFX: LETTER BEING RIPPED OPEN**
29. **SFX: LETTER SPREAD OPEN**
30. **MERCY:**           And...? Trudy, what's wrong? Why aren't you reading Dan's letter? You look stunned!
31. **TRUDY:**           **(disbelief)** You're not going to believe this, Mercy! Here - see for yourself!
32. **MERCY:**           **(also in disbelief)** Oh my goodness! All this money!
33. **TRUDY:**           Dan's certainly out to impress you. The big question is: what are you going to do?
34. **MERCY:**           **(confused)** Aah... I don't know. What do you think I should do, Trudy?

35. **TRUDY:** Do you want my honest answer?
36. **MERCY:** Yes – you’re my friend, Trudy. I need your help.
37. **TRUDY:** Okay, let’s go. I’ll tell you on the way.
38. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 2: JUMBE AND MRS. JUMBE DISCUSS NIKI AT HOME**

39. **SFX: FOOTBALL MATCH GOING ON IN TV**
40. **JUMBE:** **(reacts to match)** Aaah, what kind of player is that!
41. **MRS. JUMBE:** **(interrupts)** Jumbe, we need to talk.
42. **JUMBE:** Can't it wait? I'm watching my favourite football team.
43. **MRS. JUMBE:** I'm afraid it can't. I want us to discuss it before Niki gets home from school.
44. **SFX: TV SET BEING SWITCHED OFF**
45. **JUMBE:** So what is it? What has Niki not done this time round?
46. **MRS. JUMBE:** It's not what he hasn't done, it's what he *is* doing.
47. **JUMBE:** Get to the point, then. I'm missing the match.
48. **MRS. JUMBE:** I suspect that Niki is watching... erm... how can I put this...? I think he's watching naked women on the Internet.
49. **JUMBE:** **(surprised)** What? You mean pornography? Niki is watching porn? How did you find out?

50. **MRS. JUMBE:** I caught him this morning on his computer, and he didn't want me to see what he was doing. He actually shut it down before I could take a look.

51. **JUMBE:** Hmm. This is not good. What do you think we should do?

52. **MRS. JUMBE:** You're asking *me* what we should do? You're his father! I think it's high time you two had a talk, man to man!

**KW BEGIN**

53. **JUMBE:** Well, honestly, I have no idea. I've tried to talk to him about school, but he won't open up to me. He's been very distant.

54. **MRS. JUMBE:** Should we talk to his teachers?

55. **JUMBE:** No! No way - we can't do that. That's like hanging our dirty linen out in public. What do you think other people will think of us when they find out about our son's habit?

56. **MRS. JUMBE:** Okay, then I will just have to confront him again myself. But if it's true, we need to do something. This habit could completely ruin his sense of morality.

**KW END**

57. **JUMBE:** Don't worry, Mama Niki, I will speak to him. If need be, I will take the computer away from him. Can I go on watching the match now?
58. **MRS. JUMBE:** You and your football matches! Like father like son. You're both screen addicts!
59. **SFX: TV SWITCHED ON, MATCH CONTINUES**
60. **MRS. JUMBE:** I hate the man who invented this silly game!
61. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**SCENE 3: MERCY ARRIVES HOME FROM SCHOOL**

62. **SLUM ATMO**
63. **SFX: IRON SHEET DOOR BEING OPENED**
64. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS - MERCY COMES IN**
65. **MERCY:** **(calls out)** Mum, I'm home. Hello - Mum? **(sees her mother lying on the floor)** Oh! No! What's happened here? Mamaaaa...
66. **LULU:** **(faintly)** Mercy... Mercy, I'm so glad you're home.
67. **MERCY:** **(utterly shocked)** Mama! You've lost so much blood.
68. **LULU:** Mercy, do you mind tidying up a bit? I need to rest. I'm so tired.
69. **MERCY:** **(deeply concerned)** But where's the baby? What happened to the baby?



**KW BEGIN**

**70. LULU:** (groaning in pain)

**71. MERCY:** Did you give birth all by yourself? Where’s Seda, the midwife? I told her to come. And shouldn't Daddy be home?

**72. LULU:** (faintly) Mercy... I’m tired. Your father will explain to you about the baby when he gets home. Please, just do as I say and clean up the room.

**73. MERCY:** Dad? But how can he explain when he wasn’t even here? (disbelief) Oh my goodness! You mean Dad was here? I’m getting confused, Mum. Where’s the baby?

**KW END**

**74. LULU:** (Crying) She died. It's like a bad dream. Mercy, help me up.

**75. SFX: LULU BEING LIFTED OFF THE GROUND BY MERCY WITH SOME DIFFICULTY**

**76. SFX: CLOTH RUSTLE**

**77. MERCY:** Mum, I have to get you some help. Just lie here on the bed... We need to get you to hospital.

**78. LULU:** (faintly) Noooo! Don't go, dear. I need you here. Please, don't go... I don't want to be alone.

79. **MERCY:** Mum, stay where you are - I'll be right back.

80. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING AWAY**

81. **SFX: IRON SHEET DOOR BEING OPENED**

82. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

### **SCENE 3: TRUDY AND DAN MEETING DOWNTOWN**

83. **SFX: TOWN ATMO IN THE EVENING**

84. **DAN:** (**calls out**) Trudy! Trudy! Hi...

85. **TRUDY:** (**pleasantly surprised**) Dan! Hi! What are you doing here? Are you stalking me?

86. **DAN:** (**trying to find words**) Erm... No, I was just taking a walk in the city. You know, window-shopping. Then I saw you.

87. **TRUDY:** Anyway... (**maliciously**) Dan, I saw what you gave Mercy.

88. **DAN:** (**shocked**) You did? How? It was supposed to be... Of course, you two are friends. She must have shown you.

89. **TRUDY:** Mercy's not interested in you, you know, Dan. She prefers Niki. I'm pretty sure she's going to pick Niki.

90. **DAN:** How do you know? Has she told you that herself?

91. **TRUDY:** I'm her best friend. She talks to me about everything.

- 92. DAN:** (heartbroken) No! I don't believe you. Did she actually tell you that? I've seen the way she looks at me. I know she feels something for me.
- 93. TRUDY:** And so you think you can buy her by giving her money?
- 94. DAN:** No! I know she comes from a poor home. I just wanted to help in a little way. I'm not *buying* her at all!
- 95. TRUDY:** (sarcastic) Oh, well, how kind of you, Mr. Generous!
- 96. DAN:** (realizing) You're jealous! I get it now. Trudy, you're jealous of Mercy!
- 97. TRUDY:** (defensive) Jealous? Me? No! What gave you that idea? I've had enough boys in my life, I don't need any more.
- 98. DAN:** I beg your pardon? Did you say, you've *had enough of* boys, or you *have enough* boys? I didn't quite get that.
- 99. TRUDY:** (seductive) I think we could have a lot of fun together, Dan! You and I have a lot in common. Don't you think?
- 100. DAN:** (caught off guard) Well... hmm... sorry, Trudy, but I have to go. It was nice bumping into you. Do say hi to Mercy if you see her before I do. Bye.

**KW BEGIN**

**101. TRUDY:** (still seductive) Dan, would you really leave a girl alone, all by herself in this big city? At this time of the evening?

**102. DAN:** (leaving, acting courteous) No! Of course I wouldn't. (sarcastic) But this girl was already alone, all by herself in this big city at this time of the evening. So I guess she must know the city pretty well. Good night, Trudy. Enjoy your weekend. I'll see you in class on Monday.

**KW END**

**103. TRUDY:** (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!

**104. MUSIC INTERLUDE**

**105. OUTRO - NARRATOR**

With that we wind up the sixth episode of "Crossroads Generation – Facing Tough Choices". What kind of game is Trudy playing? And now that she's shown her interest in Dan, how will he respond? And how will this affect Trudy's friendship with Mercy? All this and more in the coming episodes. If you'd like to listen to this episode again, or download any episodes for free, just visit [dw.de/lbe](http://dw.de/lbe). And remember, you can also follow us on Facebook. Until next time - goodbye.