

Learning by Ear 2013

Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices

EPISODE TWENTY-THREE: Good and Bad News

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List of characters by scene:

SCENE 1: MERCY IN SCHOOL

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

SCENE 2: KADU, BANDA AND ODUMBE CROSS THE BORDER TO KISIMBA

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

SCENE 3: MERCY TALKS TO PRINCIPAL JULIETTE AFTER CLASS

- JULIETTE (F, 50)
- MERCY (F, 15)

SCENE 4: MERCY VISITS TRUDY IN BED

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

1. INTRO:

Welcome to “Crossroads Generation”, a Learning by Ear production brought to you by DW. Let’s recap on what’s happened so far:

Mercy’s twin brothers are finally on their way back home. They were supposed to be living with their aunt Lena, but she sent them away to work in the mines. They managed to escape, and found a good Samaritan who offered them help and took them with him in his truck:

2. 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!”

3. BANDA & KADU (62): “Okay.”

Will Banda and Kadu manage to rejoin their family? Remember: their parents don’t even know where they are - and the family has recently moved to a new house... On top of that, their father Msoto has had to flee the police. He’s gone to hide out in his wife’s parents’ village. And what about their sister Mercy? She’s not sure how to deal with her boyfriend Dan. They’ve just had sex for the very first time. When she woke up at home the next morning, she was full of regrets: **(KW BEGIN)**

4. MERCY (EP 20, LINE 11/13): “What have I done? (...) I’m no longer innocent! (...) I feel... kind of guilty... and ashamed..” **(KW END)**

Will Mercy overcome her doubts? Will she confide in Dan? How will he react?

In the last episode, Dan’s father took him out to dinner for a serious chat, but the conversation wasn’t a success:

5. DAN (EP 22, 58): “Dad, are you listening to me at all? I have no interest in your business whatsoever.”

6. KANYAMA: “Dan, you can refuse to join the family business, but I hope you understand that I will never accept an outsider in my family. I suggest you end this little adventure with the girl here right now, and come back home with me.”

Will he follow his father back home to Laboria? Let’s find out how the story unfolds, in this twenty-third episode called "Good and Bad News". It’s morning, and Mercy has managed to come to class, even after the police ransacked the house looking for her father, Msoto.

SCENE 1: MERCY IN SCHOOL

7. SFX: CLASSROOM ATMO

8. SFX: DAN’S FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

9. DAN: Hi, Mercy. You look tired today...

10. MERCY: I’m fine, Dan.

11. DAN: Okay. (**hesitating**) Mercy, I don’t want to bother you, but-

KW BEGIN

12. MERCY: Not now, Dan. Not in class, okay? Let’s talk later.

13. DAN: **(concerned)** But it’s really important!

14. MERCY: **(firmly)** Dan, I don’t want to talk about it! Okay? I don’t want to talk about it or think about it.

15. DAN: But it’s not about ... I --

KW END

16. SFX: DOOR OPENING

17. SFX: HIGH-HEELED FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

18. JULIETTE: **(orders)** Dan, get back to your seat! Stop bothering Mercy!

19. DAN: Yes, Madam Juliette.

20. JULIETTE: Right. Before I tell you all who came top in the Biology test, I have an announcement to make.

21. SFX: GRUMBLES FROM STUDENTS

22. JULIETTE: **(plainly)** Maybe you’ve already heard from him that ... from next term, Dan Kanyama will no longer be one of our students. He’s going back to Laboria, and of course we’ll all be sorry to see him go.

23. SFX: SHOCKED MURMURS FROM STUDENTS

24. MERCY: **(totally shocked)** What?

25. NIKI: (trying to suppress laughter)

26. SFX: LOW MURMURS FROM STUDENTS

27. JULIETTE: Silence, everyone!

SILENCE

28. JULETTE: Good! Now to the results. The best student in this class’s first test is... **(announces)** Niki Jumbe!

29. SFX: CLAPS AND APPLAUSE FROM STUDENTS “NIKI!” “NIKI!”

30. NIKI: **(proudly)** Thank you, Madam Juliette.

31. JULIETTE: Oh, you don’t have to thank me, Niki - you’re the one who wrote it! Second was Mercy Msoto. Most of the rest of you did okay, but I suggest you revise the chapter about evolution. Especially Trudy. Her work was by far the worst.

32. SFX: STUDENTS LAUGHING UNCONTROLLABLY

33. JULIETTE: Quiet! You’re laughing at her now, but it could be you next time, if you don’t work hard! Mercy, do you have any idea why Trudy isn’t here today?

34. MERCY: She’s sick, Madam. She told me she wasn’t feeling well.

35. JULIETTE: All right. Well, since you’re her friend, perhaps you can take her paper after school. Oh, and Mercy – I’d like to see you briefly in my office later. Now then - let’s go over some of the test questions...

36. SFX: PAPER RUSTLE

37. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: KADU, BANDA AND ODUMBE CROSS THE BORDER TO KISIMBA

38. SFX: TRUCK DRIVING ON A ROUGH ROAD, RADIO ON

39. ODUMBE: Boys, we’re about to cross the border to our country. It may take a while before we’re cleared by the border guards, so do either of you need to pee before we get to the crossing?

40. KADU: **(screams joyfully)** Me!

41. BANDA: **(calmly)** I need to go, too.

42. ODUMBE: All right. Let me find a spot to park the truck.

43. SFX: TRUCK SLOWLY COMING TO A HALT

44. ODUMBE: Fine - here we are. Hurry up, boys. And don’t go too far. I’ll wait for you here.

45. SFX: TRUCK DOOR OPENING

46. ATMO COUNTRYSIDE INSECTS

47. SFX: FOOTSTEPS OF THE TWO BOYS LEAVING, ON GRASS (WE FOLLOW THEM)

48. BANDA: Kadu, let’s hide behind this tree so no one will see us from the road.

49. ODUMBE: (**far away**) Quickly, boys! We need to cross before sunset.

50. SFX: PEEING SOUND ON THE GROUND

51. FAR AWAY: SFX: STONE THROWN AND WINDOW BROKEN

52. FAR AWAY: SFX: RAPID FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

53. THUG: Hey, you! Driver! Get out of the truck! Open the back!

54. ODUMBE: (**scared stiff**) Okay, okay! Please, don’t shoot. I’ll do whatever you ask. Just – please, don’t shoot me...

55. SFX: PEEING SOUND ON THE GROUND STOPS (SIMULTANEOUSLY)

56. KADU: Banda, did you hear that? Did it come from the truck?

57. BANDA: Yes, I heard it, too. Let me check!

58. SFX: ZIPPER CLOSED, CLOTHING RUSTLING

59. SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING CAREFULLY ON GRASS, THEN RUNNING BACK

60. BANDA: (whispers in fear) Kadu, quick, hide! Some bad people are stealing bags from Odumbe’s truck!

61. KADU: (starts to cry)

62. BANDA: (whispering) Ssssh! Be quiet, Kadu. And stay down! I hope they don’t hurt Odumbe!

PAUSE - JUST COUNTRYSIDE ATMO

KW BEGIN

63. KADU: Are they still there?

64. BANDA: Yes! They’ve taken several bags and they’re heading back with them into the bush.

65. KADU: I’m so scared. I want to run!

66. BANDA: Not yet, Kadu. We need to wait until we’re sure they’re not coming back! Let’s stay calm!

KW END

PAUSE - JUST COUNTRYSIDE ATMO

67. SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING RAPIDLY THROUGH HIGH GRASS

68. KADU: They’re coming!

69. KADU AND BANDA BREATHING HARD IN FEAR

70. ODUMBE: (screaming in panic) Boys?

71. BANDA: (to Kadu) It’s not them! It’s Odumbe! **(shouting to Odumbe)** We’re here!

72. ODUMBE: Boys! There you are! Are you okay?

73. BANDA: Yes! We saw what happened but we were too scared to come to you!

74. ODUMBE: You did well! Luckily another car came along and they ran away... but we must get out of here quickly, before more highway robbers show up. Let’s go, boys!

75. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 3: MERCY TALKS TO PRINCIPAL JULIETTE AFTER LESSON

76. OFFICE ATMO

77. SFX: DOOR CLOSED BEHIND THEM

78. JULIETTE: Mercy, thank you for coming. Please, have a seat. This won’t take long at all. I just asked you to come and see me because I’m not happy with your performance.

79. MERCY: **(confused)** But... Principal, I came second in the class!

80. JULIETTE: Exactly! Why did you come second?

81. MERCY: I did my best, Madam! Believe me - I studied hard.

82. JULIETTE: But you could have done better, I think. Especially in view of the fact that you’ve started to waste a lot of your time with someone.

83. MERCY: What do you mean, Madam Juliette?

84. JULIETTE: I’ve noticed that you like to spend a lot of your time talking to Dan Kanyama.

85. MERCY: But ... It’s not what you think! I --

KW BEGIN

86. JULIETTE: **(firmly)** I haven’t finished, Mercy. Of course, you are very pretty, but you are also very intelligent. Don’t lose your focus. I offered you the opportunity to come to this school because I believed in your ability, and I wanted to give you a chance most students can only dream of. Your scholarship is a gift from heaven, and you shouldn’t take it for granted. You need to prove to me every day that you deserve it!

87. MERCY: **(feeling guilty)** I know... it’s just... There’s been so much happening... at home, with my family. I was a little distracted.

88. JULIETTE: Family? Is your father still against your attending Bongo Academy? I thought we’d sorted that out?

89. MERCY: No, no, it’s okay. Honestly, Madam. I promise I’ll work harder next time.

KW END

90. JULIETTE: Mercy, don’t let anything distract you from achieving your goal! I’ve placed a lot of hope in you. You not only remind me of where I came from myself, you also represent the dreams of so many other girls. Don’t let us down, now, will you?

91. MERCY: No, I won’t. I promise. I’ll do my very best to make you proud of me.

92. JULIETTE: **(pleased)** That’s what I like to hear. That’s all, Mercy. You may go back to class.

93. SFX CHAIR BEING PUSHED BACK

94. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: MERCY VISITS TRUDY IN BED

95. SFX: GENTLE KNOCK ON DOOR

96. TRUDY: **(from inside)** Come in...

97. SFX: DOOR BEING OPENED WIDE

98. MERCY: Hello, Trudy! Your housemaid let me in.

99. **TRUDY:** Hey, thanks for coming!

100. **MERCY:** **(amazed)** Wow! Is this your bedroom? It's beautiful...
Trudy, before I forget: I've brought your Biology results.

101. **TRUDY:** **(anticipating bad news)** Oh, no...

102. **SFX: PAPER BEING HANDLED...THEN RIPPED UP**

103. **MERCY:** Trudy, what are you doing? That's your exam paper!
Aren't you going to show it to your parents?

104. **TRUDY:** Show it to them? Do you see anyone here I could show
my papers to? My parents aren't here. They're hardly
ever home. Anyway... So tell me, what's new?

KW BEGIN

105. **MERCY:** Oh Trudy... I don't know where to start. So much has
happened lately... I feel like I'm losing my mind.

106. **TRUDY:** Don't! Because I need your head to think for both of us in
the next exams.

107. **(They both laugh)**

KW END

108. **MERCY:** First: Dan is going back to Laboria!

109. **TRUDY:** What? As in, for good?

110. **MERCY:** Yes. Principal Juliette announced it in class. He tried to talk with me earlier, but I kind of sent him away. I didn't know he wanted to tell me he was going to leave!
111. **TRUDY:** What about *you*?
112. **MERCY:** I don't know, Trudy. That's what scares me. I've had so many things to worry about lately, and Niki has been so sweet to me, and... I don't know. I'm starting to think there's more to him than I thought. Oh, Trudy! It feels like there are so many people who expect so much from me!
113. **TRUDY:** Woooah! Wait a minute! Did you just say *Niki* has been sweet? Mercy - are you falling for Niki, too?
114. **MERCY:** Trudy, right now, I just don't know! This boyfriend stuff is all just messing me up. On top of everything else, the Principal told me off for not coming top in the test. She talked about how much hope she's invested in me.
115. **TRUDY:** **(sarcastic)** Well, good luck to you, then! Is that why you came round? To tell me how well you're doing?
116. **MERCY:** No... There's one more thing. I came to borrow some of your sanitary pads. I'm supposed to get my period soon.
117. **TRUDY:** **(anxious)** But – Mercy, you've already had your period this month, haven't you?

118. MERCY: No... That’s the thing. I haven’t – it’s late.

119. TRUDY: Oops!

120. MUSIC INTERLUDE

121. OUTRO/ MODERATOR:

And that worrying news brings us to the end of the twenty-third episode of Crossroads Generation. The big question is: is Mercy pregnant? We’ll find out in the next episode. If you’d like to listen to this episode again, just visit our website at dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook. Until we meet again - stay safe.