

Learning by Ear 2013

"Crossroads Generation" – Facing the Consequences

EPISODE 14: Wear Your Own Clothes!

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- BIKO (M, 16)
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INTRO

1. NARRATOR:

Hi there! It’s good to have you back for today’s episode of “Crossroads Generation – Facing the Consequences”. We’ve been following a group of African teenagers who all went to the same high school: Bongo Academy. But the head teacher has discovered that Niki has been taking drugs. And that’s not all:

2. EPISODE 12, LINES 87 – 91:

***JULIETTE:** (...) Apparently, Dan and Mercy have been playing husband and wife, and are now expecting their first-born! (...)*

***91.** (...) The three of you are hereby suspended from Bongo Academy.*

3. NARRATOR:

Mercy comes from a poor family, and she only got to Bongo Academy thanks to a scholarship. Her ex-boyfriend Dan was a boarder at the school. He comes from the neighbouring country, Laboria, where there’s recently been a civil war. Dan’s been kicked out of school, but he can’t return home - his father isn’t answering his phone, and the situation in Laboria is still dangerous. So he’s asked his friend Biko for help:

4. EPISODE 13, LINES 82 – 83:

DAN: (...) *I need a place to stay for a while, just until I can get hold of my dad.*

BIKO: *All right, Dan, you can stay here. But we'll have to be very, very careful. Nobody can know, all right? I don't want to get into trouble.*

5. NARRATOR:

Since then, two whole months have gone by. Let's find out what's been going on with our teenage heroes in the meantime... This fourteenth episode is called “Wear Your Own Clothes!”, and we start at Mercy's home in Tandika slums.

SCENE 1: MERCY AND KADU IN TANDIKA

6. ATMO: TANDIKA, DAYTIME, INTERIOR

7. MERCY: (snores lightly)

8. KADU: (yawns)

9. KADU: Mercy, are you asleep?

10. MERCY: (**wakes up**) No, I’m just feeling a bit tired. What is it, my brother?

11. KADU: When’s Mum coming back?

12. MERCY: I don’t know. She didn’t even tell me where she was going. Why?

13. KADU: I’m hungry. (**realizing**) Hey, Mercy, you’ve cooked for us every day the last few weeks. Why can’t you cook for us today?

14. MERCY: (**annoyed**) Kadu, why don’t you go out and play? I need to rest a bit.

15. KADU: I don’t want to. It’s boring without Banda. Why has our brother been in hospital for so long, Mercy?

16. MERCY: I’ve told you, Kadu. Because he has TB. And when you’ve got TB it takes a long time to recover.

KW BEGIN

17. KADU: How long?

18. MERCY: About six months.

19. KADU: And how long has he been there now?

20. MERCY: Two months.

21. KADU: So will he be there much longer?

22. MERCY: Ai, Kadu, please stop asking questions!

KW END

23. KADU (**yawns**) Mercy, I’m so hungry!

24. MERCY: (**sighs**) Look, I’m hungry too, but let’s just wait for Mum, okay?

25. KADU: How can you be hungry when your belly is so big?
You’re lying.

26. MERCY: (**embarrassed**) Kadu!

27. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: LULU TALKS TO PRINCIPAL JULIETTE

28. ATMO: BONGO ACADEMY EXTERIOR + LIGHT TRAFFIC

29. LULU: Guard, please let me speak to Principal Juliette. My daughter is ... I mean... she was a student at this school. I promise it won't take long.

30. GUARD: You must have appointment. Madame Juliette is busy, very busy...

SFX: VEHICLE APPROACHES AND STOPS, HOOTS

31. SFX: ENGINE STILL RUNNING

32. GUARD: Move away from gate, I open for Madame Juliette.

33. SFX: GATE OPENED

34. SFX: CAR WINDOW ROLLS DOWN

35. JULIETTE: Is everything okay?

36. GUARD: Everything okay, Madame Juliette. No problem...

37. LULU: **(cuts in)** Excuse me, Principal Juliette, my name is Lulu Msoto. Mercy Msoto is my daughter. Please, can I talk to you? It'll take only a few moments.

- 38. JULIETTE:** Ah, it's you, Mama Mercy! Good to see you. But I'm sorry, I'm on my way out now. I'll have to ask you to come back tomorrow.
- 39. LULU:** Please - just give me five minutes.
- 40. JULIETTE:** **(sighs)** All right then. Get in the car. We can talk while I drive into town.
- 41. SFX: CAR DOOR OPENS (HEARD FROM OUTSIDE)**
- 42. SFX: FOOTSTEPS LULU**
- 43. SFX: LULU GETS IN CAR**
- 44. SFX: CAR DOOR SHUTS (HEARD FROM INSIDE)**
- 45. SFX: CAR STARTS TO DRIVE (HEARD FROM INSIDE)**
- 46. ATMO: INSIDE MOVING VEHICLE, TRAFFIC OUTSIDE**

47. LULU: **(struggles to talk)** Madame Juliette, I... It... I’m not used to speaking to a head teacher ... but ... Madame Juliette, it is so hard for her! It’s been two months since you sent Mercy away, and my daughter can’t eat and she can’t sleep. Even though she’s pregnant, she’s lost so much weight! Please, Madame. She made a big mistake, but she has learned from it.

48. JULIETTE: Mama Mercy, I wish I could help. God knows I’ve already tried. But rules are rules, and there are no exceptions. Not even for your daughter.

49. LULU: But there must be something you can do! My daughter is the great hope of our family. She’s the only one who’s had any higher education. Please give her another chance, Principal Juliette!

KW BEGIN

50. JULIETTE: Let me tell you something, Mama Mercy. When I was young, my family was also very poor. And just like your daughter, I was eager to learn. That’s why I placed a lot of hope in Mercy.

51. LULU: But --

52. JULIETTE: Wait: I haven't finished. I expected her to be grateful for the opportunities she was given here. I too had high hopes and expectations for her. I made that very clear to her. But your daughter let me down. Now, I'm afraid, she has to face the consequences.

53. LULU: **(cuts in)** But Madame Juliette, I thought you understood how important education is for a girl! I myself didn't understand this until recently! I only went to school for a few years. But now that my husband is ... away, I see how dependent I was on him. He was the one who earned the money, but that meant he also took all the decisions. And now I'm the one who's struggling to get money for food. I don't want that for my daughter! She has ambitions! She once told me that she wanted to study medicine!

54. SILENCE

55. JULIETTE: Mama Mercy. You didn't let me finish.

56. LULU: I’m sorry. I’m sorry... I’m just so... I just want a second chance for my daughter!

57. JULIETTE: As I was saying: Mercy has to face the consequences, and for now that’s temporary suspension. **(sighs)**

KW END It’s not me who has the final say on this. It’s the school disciplinary board. I fought and am still fighting hard for Mercy to be kept on at this school, because she’s a very intelligent girl. But it’s not just up to me to decide.

58. LULU: **(sighs)** I see. Well, thank you for your time, and for your support, Madame Juliette. You’ve been very kind. Please - could you let me out here?

59. SFX: CAR BRAKES AND STOPS, ENGINE STILL RUNNING

60. JULIETTE: All right. One more thing, though, before you leave. Don’t lose hope. And please tell Mercy not to lose hope, either. There are still other avenues she can pursue, like vocational training, or going to a polytechnic.

61. LULU: She’s already on vacation – life-long vacation, now that she can’t go to school any more!

- 62. JULIETTE:** No, not vacation – vocational training.
- 63. LULU:** What’s that?
- 64. JULIETTE:** Vocational schools and polytechnics teach skills that may not necessarily be academic. Mercy could learn a skill that would help her secure a position or be able to work for herself – as a tailor, for example, or a caterer.
- 65. LULU:** **(disappointed)** I don’t think that’s what my daughter needs. Mercy’s such a clever girl. She loves books.
- 66. SFX: DOOR OPENED**
- 67. JULIETTE:** Please think about it, though, as an alternative.
Goodbye, Mama Mercy.
- 68. LULU:** Goodbye.
- 69. SFX: DOOR CLOSED**
- 70. SFX: CAR DRIVING OFF (heard from outside)**
- 71. MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

SCENE 3: BIKO AND DAN FIGHT OVER BLANKET

72. ATMO: BONGO ACADEMY, DORMITORY (INTERIOR), EARLY

MORNING ATMO

73. DAN: (snores heavily)

74. SFX: BIKO TURNING OVER IN BED

75. BIKO: Hey Dan! Dude, please, you've got the whole blanket to yourself.

KW BEGIN

76. DAN: (snores loudly)

77. SFX: DAN BEING SHAKEN

78. BIKO: (**shakes him**) Dan, come on! Stop pretending you're asleep. I know you can hear me! *Dan!*

79. DAN: (**wakes up confused**) What? Is she coming? Is Principal Juliette...? Is it morning already?

80. BIKO: Yes, it's morning already. You've got the whole blanket to yourself. I'm freezing!

KW END

81. DAN: (sleepily) Oh... sorry, dude. Here, let's share before you have to get up.

82. SFX: BLANKET RUSTLES AS THEY SHARE.

KW BEGIN

83. BIKO: (unhappy) Okay. But please stop snoring! I can't sleep with you lying next to me croaking like a frog.

84. DAN: Hey, look, I said I'm sorry, man! Let's just get some sleep, okay?

85. BIKO: (Sarcastic) Yeah, right!

KW END

86. BIKO/DAN: BREATHE PEACEFULLY

87. SFX: ALARM RINGS

88. BIKO: (yawns) Great, so much for getting some sleep. I have to get up.

89. SFX: BED CREAKS AS BIKO GETS UP

90. SFX: ALARM OFF

91. SFX: BAREFOOT FOOTSTEPS - BIKO

92. DAN: (mumbles happily) The blanket is mine again...

93. **BIKO:** Hey, Dan, have you seen my white underwear?
94. **DAN:** Nooo.
95. **BIKO:** You haven’t seen the white underwear I hung on the bed frame to dry?
96. **DAN:** **(remembers)** Ahh! The white briefs... Yeah. I kind of put them on.
97. **BIKO:** What do you mean you kind of put them on?
98. **DAN:** Well, I was running short of clothes to wear, you know, with my luggage at the airport and everything, so I borrowed them.
99. **BIKO:** **(not amused)** You borrowed them?! Man, you can’t just keep on “borrowing” my stuff without asking me. That’s *my* underwear, man, and I don’t *share* underwear! Get it?
100. **DAN:** I’m sorry, Biko!
101. **BIKO:** **(deep breath)** Dan, you know what? I think it’s time you left.
102. **DAN:** **(surprised)** What?

103. BIKO: You heard me. I think it’s time you went to your uncle’s place here in Kisimba, or else back to your home country.

KW BEGIN

104. DAN: Come on, Biko. You can’t be serious. I thought we were buddies?

105. BIKO: We *are* buddies. That’s why I’ve let you stay here for two months. But I just don’t think this is working out. I mean, you leave your stinking socks everywhere, and you snore all night so I can’t sleep. Not to mention the fact that it’s getting difficult to keep on hiding you here.

KW END

106. DAN: Is this just because of some stupid underwear?

107. BIKO: That stupid underwear is *my* underwear! And you don’t take my underwear without asking me! That’s *not* borrowing, that is *stealing*!

108. DAN: Ah, come on, dude...

109. BIKO: No. Leave, Dan. Now! You can keep the briefs. I don’t want them any more!

110. DAN: (sighs)

111. OUTRO – NARRATOR:

And that’s it for today! Where will Dan go now? Will he finally manage to reach his dad, back in Laboria? And what about Mercy? Will her mother’s fight for her to continue her education be successful? To find out more, tune in next time! And if you’ve missed one of the previous episodes, don’t worry – you can find them all again on our website, dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook and discuss what you just heard with other Learning by Ear fans. Until next time: take care!