

Learning by Ear 2013

"Crossroads Generation" – Facing the Consequences

EPISODE 18: Are You *The* Mercy?

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List of characters by scene:

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- MERCY (F, 15)
- ANITA (F, 16)

SCENE 2: LULU AND KADU TALK

- KADU (M, 8)
- LULU (F, 40)

SCENE 3: ANITA MEETS "THE" MERCY

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SCENE 4: MERCY AND NIKI ARE REINTRODUCED TO CLASS

- STUDENT (M, 15)
- BIKO (M, 16)
- JAEL (F, 15)
- JULIETTE (F, 50)
- 5 – 8 CLASS STUDENTS (M/F)

INTRO

1. NARRATOR:

Hi there, and welcome back to “Crossroads Generation”! I bet you’re all curious to know how our young heroes’ story continues, aren’t you?

Niki was suspended from school for drug abuse, but now he’s been given a second chance. His classmate Mercy was suspended too, when her headmistress found out that she was pregnant. But recently Mercy told her mother some exciting news:

2. EPISODE 16, LINES 109 – 110:

***MERCY:** Principal Juliette wrote me a letter. Apparently, the board of directors has agreed that I can go back, on certain conditions!*

***LULU:** That’s wonderful, my daughter!*

3. NARRATOR:

Mercy’s classmate Dan comes from the neighbouring country of Laboria. He’s the father of her unborn child, and he was suspended, too. But it seems Mercy’s not the only girl in Dan’s life... Exchange student Anita from Laboria has just arrived at Bongo Academy, and she’s very interested in what’s happened to Dan:

KW BEGIN

4. EPISODE 15, LINES 65 – 69:

ANITA: *Um - may I ask you something, Principal Juliette? (...) Do you know Dan Kanyama?*

JULIETTE: *Yes, of course. Actually, Dan is one of the students we suspended.*

ANITA: *What? Why?*

KW END

5. NARRATOR:

So there are sure to be some surprises in today's episode, called "Are You The Mercy?" We start in the head teacher's office at Bongo Academy. It's a big day for Mercy...

SCENE 1: MERCY RETURNS TO SCHOOL

6. ATMO: JULIETTE'S OFFICE ATMO, DURING SCHOOL TIME

7. **JULIETTE:** Have a seat, Mercy.

8. **SFX: CHAIR PULLED**

9. **MERCY:** **(Acts out sitting heavily)**

10. **JULIETTE:** Welcome back to Bongo Academy.

11. **MERCY:** Thank you, Principal Juliette. I'm so happy to be back!

KW BEGIN

12. **JULIETTE:** Tell me: how have you been? How is the pregnancy going?

13. **MERCY:** **(shyly)** It's okay, Madame Juliette.

14. **JULIETTE:** Have you been eating well? You look quite thin. Your arms, your face... Apart from your belly, of course.

15. **MERCY:** I have been eating, Madame. Thank you.

KW END

16. **JULIETTE:** **(takes a stricter tone)** Mercy, as you already know, there are certain conditions you must abide by if you want to stay at this school.

17. MERCY: Of course, Madame Juliette. Anything you say.

KW BEGIN

18. JULIETTE: First of all, I want to know if you are really prepared for this.

19. MERCY: Yes, I am!

20. JULIETTE: To be honest: you're going to have to cope with the prejudices of your fellow students. They WILL mock you. I'll try my best to stop them, but I can't be there all the time. And of course you're the one who put yourself in this position, so now I'm afraid you have to face the consequences. Are you ready to deal with that?

21. MERCY: (**eagerly**) I don't care what they say. All I care about is my education. And I want to be a role model for my child.

22. JULIETTE: It's good to see you haven't lost your high ambitions.

23. MERCY: Thank you, Madame.

KW END

- 24. JULIETTE:** One important condition is that you attend a pre-natal clinic. We usually don't do that here, of course, but in this special case I've spoken to the school nurse, and she's agreed to arrange this for you. Do you know what pre-natal clinics are?
- 25. MERCY:** Yes, Madame. My brother's doctor told me they prepare expectant mothers for giving birth.
- 26. JULIETTE:** Good. Now, if for any reason you fail to attend a check-up, you'll be expelled from the school. Do you understand me?
- 27. MERCY:** Yes, Madame Juliette.
- 28. JULIETTE:** In addition, you have to attend counselling sessions at the youth centre once a week.
- 29. MERCY:** Yes, Madame.
- KW BEGIN***
- 30. JULIETTE:** Now, I know all this will take up quite a lot of time in addition to your studies, but it is necessary. And remember – if you fail to abide by our conditions, you won't be given another chance!

31. MERCY: I understand, Madame Juliette. I promise I won't let you down.

32. JULIETTE: Hmm. I've heard that promise before. Let's hope you don't forget it again! And now there's someone I'd like you to meet.

KW END

33. SFX: PICKS UP PHONE AND DIALS

34. JULIETTE: Beatrice? Please show her in.

35. SFX: PHONE IS REPLACED

36. SFX: KNOCK ON THE DOOR

37. JULIETTE: Come in, Anita.

38. SFX: DOOR OPENING

39. ANITA: Good morning, Principal Juliette.

40. JULIETTE: Good morning. Anita. This is Mercy.

41. MERCY: **(friendly)** Hello, nice to meet you.

42. ANITA: **(gasps)**

43. JULIETTE: Is there a problem, Anita?

44. ANITA: **(forces a cough)** No, Madame, just something in my throat.

45. JULIETTE: Mercy, this is Anita, our new exchange student from Laboria. She's a peer group counsellor, and she'll be in charge of your counselling at the youth centre.

46. ANITA: **(gasps again)**

47. JULIETTE: So I'd like the two of you to go outside, maybe sit under the tree and talk for a bit, so you can get to know each other. I'll pick you up there in fifteen minutes.

Okay?

48. MERCY/ANITA: Yes, Madame.

49. JULIETTE: And please ask Niki to come in. He should be waiting outside.

50. MERCY/ANITA: Yes, Madame.

51. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

KW BEGIN

SCENE 2: LULU AND KADU TALK

52. ATMO: TANDIKA SLUMS, INSIDE MERCY'S HUT

53. SFX: SOMEONE STIRRING BUBBLING PORRIDGE

54. KADU: **(laughs to himself)** Cooking porridge isn't so difficult after all. From now on I won't wait for Mum or my sister Mercy to do the cooking for me. But I'd better finish and wash up before Mum comes home. If she catches me, she'll --

55. SFX: DOOR BURSTS OPEN, FOOTSTEPS

56. LULU: **(approaching)** Kadu, I'm sorry I am late... **(shouts)**
Oh my God! What are you doing? Cooking? I told you never to touch this stove! What's wrong with you?
Can't you hear with those big ears of yours?

57. KADU: **(scared)** I'm sorry, Mum. I was hungry!

58. LULU: You could have burned down the house!

59. KADU: **(silent)**

60. LULU: Answer me!

61. KADU: **(cries)** I'm sorry, Mum. I'll never do any cooking again, I promise.

62. LULU: **(sighs)** Kadu, I'm sorry I yelled at you. I know you meant well. But you're too young to be messing about with fire. You have to understand that fire can be dangerous. And this is a slum. The houses are very close together! If a fire starts here we won't be able to stop it, and that could cause a lot of damage, not just to our house but to all the neighbours' as well. Do you want that to happen?

63. KADU: **(sniffles)** No, Mum.

64. LULU: **(breathes out loudly)** I'm sorry I came home so late. But I needed to pick up the money my parents transferred, so I could buy us some food later. Next time, just wait for me, okay?

65. KADU: **(meekly)** Yes, Mum.

66. SFX: PORRIDGE BEING STIRRED

67. LULU: Now let me make the porridge for you... **(laughs despite herself)** Oh dear, Kadu... You don't cook it like this. You have to add more water, otherwise it'll taste like glue.

68. KADU: **(laughs shyly)**

69. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

KW END

SCENE 3: ANITA MEETS "THE" MERCY

70. SFX: BONGO ACADEMY, OUTSIDE, DURING SCHOOL TIME

71. ANITA: **(mean)** So you're THE Mercy?

72. MERCY: What do you mean?

73. ANITA: You're the Mercy who took my boyfriend away from me! **(more to herself)** And I'm supposed to counsel you and help you fit back into school! I don't believe it!

74. MERCY: Would you please tell me what you're talking about?

We've only just met! How am I supposed to...

(realizes) Wait – is this about Dan? **(disbelieving)**

Dan is *your* boyfriend? No way! Dan told me he'd never had a girlfriend before me!

75. ANITA: **(not believing her)** Oh yeah, right.

76. MERCY: Honestly! He told me I was the only one for him!

(starts crying) I believed everything he said, and now look at me!

KW BEGIN

77. ANITA: Dan has been my boyfriend for a very long time. Our families are very close!

78. MERCY: **(apologetic)** I'm so sorry, Anita. I didn't know.

79. ANITA: **(sighs)** Liar!

80. MERCY: Please believe me! I'd never have had anything to do with him if I'd known.

KW END

- 81. ANITA:** You took my boyfriend away from me, you got him suspended, and now you're even carrying his child! I hate you, Mercy!
- 82. MERCY:** **(desperate)** But I... I didn't know... Please don't hate me! You're going to be my peer counsellor, remember?
- 83. ANITA:** **(sarcastic)** Yeah, right! We're going to have so much fun together!
- 84. MERCY:** Anita, please...
- 85. ANITA:** **(coldly)** We have to go to class with Principal Juliette. She's over there with Niki, waving at us.
- 86. SFX: ANITA GETTING UP AND WALKING AWAY**
- 87. MERCY:** **(sighs)**
- 88. MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

SCENE 4: MERCY AND NIKI ARE REINTRODUCED TO CLASS

89. ATMO: CLASSROOM, INSIDE, DURING SCHOOL TIME

KW BEGIN

90. CLASS: NOISY CLASS, STUDENTS CHATTING, DRUMMING ON DESKS AS THEY SING ETC.

91. BIKO: Red alert! Everybody back to your desks! The principal is on her way! And she's got Mercy and Niki with her!

92. SFX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY RUN TO THEIR PLACES

93. CLASS: (quietens down, but whispering: "So Mercy and Niki are back?" / "But I thought she was pregnant!" / "What about Dan?" etc.)

94. SFX: PAGES TURNED AS STUDENTS PRETEND TO STUDY

KW END

95. SFX: JULIETTE'S HIGH-HEELED FOOTSTEPS ENTERING

96. JULIETTE: (sarcastically, to the class) All busy studying, eh?

97. CLASS: (serious) Yes, Madame Juliette.

98. JULIETTE: Stop pretending. I could hear the noise you were making all the way down the corridor. Biko, since you're now the class prefect, I expect you to make sure the class stays quiet next time. Is that clear?

99. BIKO: Yes, Madame Juliette.

100. JULIETTE: Anita, go and sit down. **(calls)** Niki, Mercy, come in.

101. SFX: FOOTSTEPS (THREE PEOPLE)

102. SFX: DOOR CLOSING

103. CLASS IS SURPRISED, CHATTING

("Oh my god, she really is pregnant!" / "And the drug lord is back, too!" / "But where's Dan?" etc.)

104. JULIETTE: Silence!

105. PIN DROP SILENCE

106. JULIETTE: As you all know, Mercy and Niki were suspended for indiscipline.

107. CLASS STARTS CHATTING AGAIN

108. JAEL: **(cheekily)** Mrs. Kanyama!

109. JULIETTE: Jael, that's quite enough! Now, Mercy and Niki are rejoining the class, as from today. They have to adhere to very strict conditions, otherwise they will be expelled!

110. CLASS ERUPTS - TALKING, SIGHS, CHEEKY COMMENTS

111. JULIETTE: **(talks over them)** Now listen carefully, all of you. If I catch any one of you making snide remarks about Mercy or Niki, you will face the consequences.

112. CLASS IS QUIET

113. JULIETTE: What happened to them should serve as a warning to all of you. Because if anything like this happens again, the disciplinary committee may not be as understanding.

114. CLASS PROTESTS

115. JULIETTE: I hope I've made myself clear. Mercy, Niki, you can take your seats.

116. SFX: TWO PEOPLE'S FOOTSTEPS

117. SFX: CHAIRS SCRAPING AS THEY SIT DOWN

118. OUTRO – NARRATOR:

Wow... A lot has happened today, especially for Mercy and Anita! And it doesn't look as if the two are going to be best friends... Do you want to know how Anita really feels about meeting "the" Mercy? Well, she's been confiding in her video diary, and you can watch it on our webpage, dw.de/lbe! There you'll also find today's and all the other previous episodes, in case you missed one of them. Don't forget to follow us on Facebook, and join our online discussions there! See you next time.