

Learning by Ear 2013

"Crossroads Generation" – Facing the Consequences

EPISODE 4: Money in the Dirt

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List of characters by scene:

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- DAN (M, 16)
- BIKO (M, 16)

SCENE2: AT MSOTO'S PLACE

- KADU (M, 8)
- BANDA (M, 8)

SCENE 3: MERCY AT PUBLIC TAP

- GIRL 1 (F, 16)
- GIRL 2 (F, 16)
- MERCY (F, 15)
- DAN (M, 16)

INTRO

1. NARRATOR:

Hi there, welcome back to our radio drama Crossroads Generation. We're on the fourth episode of this second season, and quite a lot has happened so far! Mercy's two younger brothers, the twins Kadu and Banda, have made their way back from the neighbouring country of Laboria. Their aunt had promised to take care of them there. But it seems she didn't keep that promise:

2. EPISODE 1, LINES 92 – 94:

***KADU:** You're mean, Banda. As mean as the boys in the mines in Laboria.*

***BANDA:** Kadu, we're not allowed to talk about the mines! That's what Aunty Lena and that man Kanyama told us.*

3. NARRATOR:

Their traumatic experiences in Laboria are not the only difficulty the Msoto family is dealing with. The boys’ father Msoto is currently being held at the police station on suspicion of robbery. And his 15-year-old daughter Mercy has problems of her own: she slept with her classmate Dan, and now she’s pregnant. But Dan has brutally thrown her out of his life, and Mercy is devastated:

4. EPISODE 3, LINES 107 – 114:

***MERCY:** You said you were crazy about me! What happened to you?*

***DAN:** Nothing happened to me. But something clearly happened to you! And I’m not about to take responsibility for something I didn’t do. (...) Mercy, you have to get rid of it!*

5. NARRATOR:

Is Dan really taking it so easy? Today’s episode is called “Money in the Dirt”, and we find Dan in the hallway of the boys’ dormitory at his school...

SCENE 1: DAN TALKS TO BIKO

6. ATMO: INSIDE BONGO HIGH DORMITORY, EVENING

7. SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR

8. DAN: Open up, Biko! I need to talk you.

9. SFX: DOOR OPEN

KW BEGIN

10. BIKO: **(not very friendly)** Hey, Dan, what's up?

11. DAN: I need to talk to you! Now!

12. BIKO: I'm busy.

13. DAN: Come on, Biko. I thought we weren't just classmates and neighbours, but friends as well!

14. BIKO: Well, you're the one who's been giving me the cold shoulder lately. So if you've decided to hang out with other friends, that's fine with me.

15. DAN: No, that's not true! You've got it wrong, man. Honestly, Biko, I really need your help.

KW END

16. BIKO: Okay, then. Stop making such a noise and come in, Dan.

17. SFX: FOOTSTEPS AS DAN ENTERS

18. SFX: DOOR CLOSES

19. BIKO: Sit down. I'm sorry I don't have anything to offer you. I ran out of pocket money a long time ago and my friend Dan wasn't willing to share his.

20. SFX: DAN SITS DOWN ON BED WITH SPRINGS

21. DAN: Look, I'm sorry, Biko. Something's been bothering me lately.

22. BIKO: What?

23. DAN: Mercy.

24. BIKO: Oh, here we go again.

25. DAN: Biko – she's pregnant!

26. BIKO: What? Are you serious? **(realizes)** That's why the two of you are bitching about each other all the time! Oh man! This is messed up!

27. DAN: I don't know what to do, Biko. She's blaming it on me.

- 28. BIKO:** Well, she is kind of right, isn't she?
- 29. DAN:** **(annoyed)** Whose side are you on, man?
- 30. BIKO:** Didn't you guys use protection?
- 31. DAN:** You mean a condom? **(insecure)** No, I mean... We only did it once. I didn't think anything could happen...
- 32. BIKO:** How can such an intelligent guy be so stupid!
Everything can happen if you have unprotected sex!
Didn't you think about HIV, syphilis, gono--
- 33. DAN:** **(not amused)** All right, I get the point. You're starting to sound like my mother!
- 34. BIKO:** **(seriously alarmed)** What? Dude! Your mum talks to you about this stuff?
- 35. DAN:** **(laughs a little)** Of course not. She never talks about sex - I'm not sure she even knows what it is. I just meant you don't have to play the grown-up here.
- SILENCE**
- 36. BIKO:** What are you going to do?

- 37. DAN:** I don't know. I told her to get rid of it. But she doesn't seem to be listening.
- 38. BIKO:** Maybe it's just too expensive for her...
- 39. DAN:** **(sighs, desperate)** Man! I can't be a father now. My mum would kill me if she knew I'd slept with a girl, let alone made her pregnant!
- 40. BIKO:** **(trying to cheer him up)** Kill you? I thought your mum was a saint!
- 41. DAN:** **(laughs bitterly)**
- 42. BIKO:** Hey, she's not going to find out! Look, I think you just need to give Mercy some money for the abortion.
- 43. DAN:** Yeah, well, that's the other thing. Ever since the war broke out at home, my Dad hasn't been sending me money often enough. He says business is slow and most money transfer shops are closed. But he did say he'd send me some today.
- 44. BIKO:** Then just give her the money as soon as possible and make her get rid of it before it starts to show.

KW BEGIN

45. DAN: **(sighs)** Thanks, dude. I'll check at the principal's office and see whether the money's arrived yet. But you have to help me talk sense into Mercy. She won't listen to me.

46. BIKO: Um... look, I think you have to handle this one on your own, man. I'm sorry, but this is between you and her.

KW END

47. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: AT MSOTO'S PLACE

48. SFX: TANDIKA SLUM ATMO IN THE EVENING, INDOORS

49. KADU: Banda?

50. BANDA: Yes, Kadu?

KW BEGIN

51. KADU: Do you know where Mum went?

52. BANDA: She said she needed to go to the police station. She was very upset.

53. KADU: And Mercy?

54. BANDA: She went to fetch water.

55. KADU: I'm hungry.

56. BANDA: Me too.

KW END

57. KADU: You haven't been coughing as much today. Has your cold gone?

58. BANDA: I think so. But I still have this pain in my chest.

59. KADU: If you're feeling bad, maybe you should climb on Mum's bed and have a sleep.

60. BANDA: **(dismissive)** I'm not a sissy! Aunty Lena says men don't lie down and go to sleep just because of a little cold.

61. KADU: Aunty Lena's mean. I don't like her.

62. BANDA: Don't speak like that about Aunty Lena. She's still our aunt, remember.

63. KADU: But she took us to that mean man who made us work in the dark caves and beat us.

64. BANDA: I think about it a lot, you know...

65. **KADU:** Me too.
66. **BANDA:** ... But we managed to run away!
67. **KADU:** Yes! **(pause - thoughtful)** Banda, I want to tell Mum about Laboria...
68. **BANDA:** We musn't tell her, Kadu, remember?
69. **KADU:** Yes, but --
70. **BANDA:** No! The man said if we tell anybody, he'll kill them!
71. **KADU:** Okay. **(determined)** But when I grow up I'm going to be a policeman. I'll exercise everyday and I'll be big and have huge muscles. Like that man Rambo we saw in the movie at the shop in Tandika. And then I'll go to Laboria and kick that mean supervisor and rescue our friends Kiki and Gumbe and the other boys from the caves.
72. **BANDA:** And I'll be like Chuck Norris! I'll ride in on my big motorbike and shoot all the bad guys! Bam! Bam!
(both start to laugh)
73. **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

SCENE 3: MERCY AT PUBLIC TAP

74. SFX: SLUM ATMO IN THE EVENING, OUTSIDE

75. SFX: TAP RUNNING, PLASTIC CONTAINERS BEING FILLED

76. GIRL 1: **(quarrelling)** I was here first, and my jerry can was first in the line.

77. GIRL 2: No, I was here first. You saw my containers here, didn't you, Mercy?

78. MERCY: **(calm)** I don't even know what you're arguing about. Somebody threw all my other containers out of the queue while I was carrying home the water I'd drawn.

79. GIRL 2: **(mocking her)** Oh, so are you going to cry now? Go back to that fancy house you moved to! I don't know why you even came back to Tandika.

KW BEGIN

80. GIRL 1: **(laughs)** Oh yes, they were rich and famous for about two minutes before they became poor again.

81. GIRL 2: **(laughs)** Well, how could they be rich for long with a father who's a criminal and drinks like a fish!

KW END

- 82. MERCY:** (unperturbed) Just take your water and go.
- 83. GIRL 1:** Okay, (ironically) "rich girl". (both girls laugh)
- 84. SFX: TAP RUNNING, PLASTIC CONTAINERS BEING FILLED**
- 85. GIRL 1:** (to the other girl) Come on, let's go.
- 86. SFX: FULL CONTAINERS BEING LIFTED**
- 87. SFX: FOOTSTEPS OF TWO PEOPLE LEAVING**
- 88. MERCY:** (to herself) As if I didn't have more important things to think about... Stupid girls!
- 89. SFX: TAP RUNNING, PLASTIC CONTAINERS BEING FILLED**
- 90. SFX: FAST APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS**
- 91. SFX: ENVELOPE THROWN ON WET GROUND**
- 92. DAN:** Here, take that! There are 150 dollars in that envelope!
- 93. MERCY:** Dan, what are you doing here in Tandika? And why are you throwing money at me?

94. DAN: Just take the money, get rid of the baby and leave me alone, Mercy. Do you understand? Don't come to my room again, don't write to me, and don't even try to talk to me in class!

95. MERCY: You can keep your money. I don't want it!

96. DAN: Fine! Then leave it there in the dirt. But don't come crying to me when things get bad.

KW BEGIN

97. MERCY: Dan, is this really you? This can't be the same Dan I knew!

98. DAN: *I'm* the same! It's *you* who changed, and started blaming me for something that was probably caused by that Niki Jumbe, not me.

99. MERCY: Niki?

100. DAN: Come on! Everybody knows he's your boyfriend!

101. MERCY: Niki has never even touched me. But now I wish he had, instead of you! You know why? Because I think he really liked me, and *he* wouldn't have treated me like a doormat.

102. DAN: Oh, you're wasting my time. See you around!

KW END

103. SFX: FOOTSTEPS GOING AWAY

104. MERCY: (**hysterical**) Yeah, that's right! Just walk away, you coward! Coward! I hate you, Dan Kanyama!

105. OUTRO - NARRATION:

So Dan just walks away... and that's the end of Learning by Ear for today. Will Mercy really leave the money lying on the ground? And how will the story continue for Mercy's brothers Kadu and Banda? I'm afraid you'll have to wait until next time to find out! But in the meantime, you can listen to this episode again by visiting dw.de/lbe, or discuss what you just heard on our Facebook page. And if you want to know what's in the headlines in real life, tune in to DW's radio show Africalink. You'll find all the information on dw.de/africa. Take care!