

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 3: Facing the Future

EPISODE 24: A New Beginning

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List of characters by scene:

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- PROF. NYAMBUNE (M, 50s)
- TINA (F, 19)

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- NIKI (M, 19)
- MERCY (F, 18)
- MARGARET (F, 40s)

INTRO

1. NARRATOR:

Hi there! This is “Crossroads Generation”, our radio series about a group of young Africans looking for their path in life. 18-year-old Mercy has a young daughter, Linda. Mercy’s mother Lulu is taking care of her while Mercy goes to university. Mercy’s younger brothers Kadu and Banda are not always well-behaved, and Banda seems to be deeply under the bad influence of his father Msoto. And Lulu will be taking care of another child from now on: little Joy, her youngest daughter. Msoto sold her to the wealthy politician Mukaraba almost four years ago, when she was just a tiny baby. The case ended up in court:

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 19, LINES 82-83

JUDGE: *(clears throat)* Further, I order that the child in question be handed over to Mrs. Lulu Msoto. (...)

LULU: *(from behind)* Oh my God, my baby!

3. NARRATOR:

But in spite of all this, things are finally looking good for Mercy. She and her boyfriend Niki want to get married! And although she recently lost her good friend Trudy, Mercy and another friend, Tina, were able to honour Trudy's memory on the university radio:

4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 23, LINES 97-98

***MERCY:** I think a lot of our listeners will know that Trudy died here at the university. People believe that she was killed as part of a robbery that went wrong, but I think you have evidence that this wasn't the case?*

***TINA:** Yes. Before she died, Trudy was compiling a report about the brothel where I used to work. (...)*

5. NARRATOR:

Having worked in that business, Tina had enough explosive inside information to unmask the man behind the brothel business: the politician, Mukaraba. Let's see what's next for our young heroes in today's episode, entitled "A New Beginning".

SCENE 1: TINA GETS A JOB AT THE UNIVERSITY

6. **ATMO: OFFICE ATMO, TAPPING ON A COMPUTER KEYBOARD**

7. **PROF:** (to himself) Oh no! I thought I'd finished this...?
What the hell happened? Did I delete it?

8. **SFX: SOFT KNOCK ON DOOR**

9. **PROF:** Yes, come in!

10. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**

11. **TINA:** Hello, Professor Nyambune.

12. **PROF:** (distracted) Hello, Tina. Just a minute, I'll be with
you shortly. Have a seat.

13. **SFX: COMPUTER TAPPED**

14. **PROF:** (to himself) All right! (sighs) Good. (to Tina) Now
then, Tina: how are you?

15. **TINA:** I'm okay, thank you, Professor.

16. **PROF:** How are your counselling sessions at the women's
centre going?

17. **TINA:** They're good. Actually, I have a great counsellor.
She really knows how to make me feel comfortable.
I can talk to her about anything.

KW BEGIN

18. **PROF:** Good. Tell me – how many siblings did you say you have?

19. **TINA:** Three. Two sisters and a brother.

20. **PROF:** And do they all go to school?

21. **TINA:** Yes.

22. **PROF:** And you take care of them all by yourself?

23. **TINA:** Yes, sir.

KW END

24. **PROF:** Well, Tina... The department has decided to offer you a position as a research assistant at the university radio, for a small salary – that is, if you want the job?

25. **TINA:** **(excited)** What?! Of course I want it, sir! Thank you so much!

26. **PROF:** **(interrupts her)** Hold your horses. Tina – I'm putting my neck on the line for you here. You have to promise me that you will no longer have anything to do with your former work.

27. **TINA:** I won't. I promise. That part of my life is in the past! Oh my God, I'm so grateful! I don't know how to thank you!

28. **PROF:** Don't worry about it! Just do your job, and do it well. It'll consist of organizing a new weekly radio show about women's rights. We don't usually offer jobs like this to first-year students, but your contribution to the programme on prostitution convinced us.

29. **TINA:** **(almost crying)** Thank you! Thank you!

KW BEGIN

30. **PROF:** **(laughs)** Now go on: get out of here before I change my mind.

31. **TINA:** Yes, Professor! I... I'm so excited!
32. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPENED AND SHUT**
33. **PROF:** **(laughs, to himself)** These young people – I don't know...!

KW END

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: NIKI AND MERCY GO TO PRE-MARITAL COUNSELLING

34. **ATMO: OFFICE ATMO, LIGHT TRAFFIC OUTSIDE**
35. **MARGARET:** Hello! My name is Margaret; I'm a counsellor here.
You're Mercy and Niki, I assume?
36. **MERCY / NIKI:** Yes.
37. **MARGARET:** I understand you're planning to get married?
38. **MERCY / NIKI:** Yes.

39. **MARGARET:** Well, the first thing we usually do is take blood samples from both of you, which will be taken to the lab for HIV testing. Are you okay with that? I must remind you that the test is purely voluntary.
40. **MERCY / NIKI:** Yes. / Okay.
41. **MARGARET:** Okay then.
42. **SFX: PLASTIC/PAPER RUSTLING AS NEEDLE IS UNWRAPPED**
43. **MARGARET:** Here's the needle. I'll take a little blood from each of you and put it on these little gadgets. Mercy, give me your finger, please.
44. **MERCY:** **(makes a pained noise)**
45. **MARGARET:** ... All right. There we go. Niki, you're next. Here's your needle...
46. **SFX: PLASTIC/PAPER RUSTLING AS NEEDLE IS UNWRAPPED**
47. **MARGARET:** Please give me your finger.
48. **NIKI:** **(makes a pained noise)**

49. **MARGARET:** Okay. Done. Now tell me: how long have you two known each other?

50. **NIKI:** Four years.

51. **MERCY:** Going on five.

KW BEGIN

52. **MARGARET:** And have you been dating all that time?

53. **NIKI:** **(laughs)** No, not really!

54. **MERCY:** It wasn't as straightforward as that!

55. **MARGARET:** The reason I ask is that marriage is not as easy as people often think. It is a good thing, of course; but you have to be friends first before you decide to get married. Would you say you two are friends?

56. **MERCY:** Yes, definitely. We've had our ups and downs, but we're pretty good friends.

KW END

57. **MARGARET:** Good. After you get married, you need to be able to maintain that friendship. Another very important element is trust. It's also one of the most difficult things in marriage. You must be able to maintain that trust and not betray your partner.
58. **MERCY:** I think we've been through so much together that we can say we really trust each other.
59. **NIKI:** Definitely!
60. **SFX: PAPERS RUSTLE**
61. **MARGARET:** It says here that you, Mercy, already have a child...?
62. **MERCY:** Yes. Linda's three years old. Her biological father left me.
63. **MARGARET:** What's your take on that, Niki? Are you ready to be a father to this child?
64. **NIKI:** **(sighs)** At first it was really difficult to accept. And my mother hasn't been very supportive. But Linda's a great kid! I want to be there for her.

65. **MERCY:** Actually, we've agreed that after we get married, Niki's going to adopt Linda.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 3: AT THE MSOTOS'

66. **ATMO: SLUM ATMO – INDOORS**

67. **SFX: UTENSILS BEING WASHED**

68. **SFX: CHILD CRYING (3-4 years)**

69. **KADU:** Banda! It's your turn to see why our new sister is crying!

70. **BANDA:** Why me, Kadu? I'm already washing the dishes!

71. **KADU:** **(laughs)** Yes, but you can't complain about that! You promised to do that for me every day as long as I don't tell Mum --

KW BEGIN

72. **BANDA:** Okay, okay, I get it! **(sulks)** But it's not fair!

73. **KADU:** **(laughs)** I think it is! But I'll be nice to you today -
I'll go and check on our new sister. Ever since Joy was given back to us by the judge I've hardly had a chance to play with her and Linda.
74. **BANDA:** Yes, but that's because you prefer to play with your girlfriend Sama after school. **(laughs)**
75. **KADU:** She's not my girlfriend! And you're just jealous because she's really good at football! Better than you, Banda!
76. **BANDA:** **(sings)** She's your girlfriend! She's your girlfriend!
77. **KADU:** She's not!

KW END

78. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**
79. **LULU:** What's all that noise about?
80. **KADU/BANDA:** Nothing.
81. **LULU:** And why is Joy crying like that?
82. **BANDA:** I think she's hungry.

83. **LULU:** **(to Joy)** Oh, come here, you spoilt little thing. Mum can't afford the fancy food you used to have at Mukaraba's, I'm afraid. But I'll make some porridge for you, okay?
84. **SFX: JOY STOPS CRYING**
85. **LULU:** Be a good girl like your niece Linda, okay? **(angry, to Kadu and Banda)** And now you two are going to explain something to me. Banda, your teacher told me you've been missing classes! And Kadu, she told me you said your brother was sick! What is this nonsense?
86. **KADU:** Sorry, Mum...
87. **BANDA:** I'm sorry too... I was with Dad! But I was learning while I was with him. He taught me all about how to earn money for King Karubu...
88. **LULU:** What? You've been begging for your father?! That's it! I'm never letting him near you again!

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: NIKI IS HIV POSITIVE

89. ATMO: OFFICE ATMO, LIGHT TRAFFIC OUTSIDE

KW BEGIN

90. MERCY: Oh Niki, I'm nervous.

91. NIKI: Why? We're just picking up our results. Nothing to be scared about!

92. MERCY: Did you see how distraught that couple looked when they came out. The lady was crying!

93. NIKI: Come on, Mercy, I really don't think we have anything to worry about.

94. MARGARET: **(calls)** Mercy and Niki...? Please, come in.

95. MERCY: **(low voice)** Here we go!

96. SFX: STEPS MERCY AND NIKI ENTER

97. SFX: DOOR CLOSES

98. MARGARET: Sit down, please.

99. SFX: CHAIR SCRAPING

KW END

100. MARGARET: So, Mercy and Niki, thanks for coming back to our counselling centre. We've got your results. First, though, I'd like to know: have you two been involved with each other? Intimately, I mean?

101. NIKI: No. We decided to wait...

102. MERCY: That's right. Of course, it's obvious that I... I did have one sexual encounter before. The result was my daughter Linda.

103. MARGARET: I see. Now, shall I give you your results together, or... ?

104. NIKI: **(interrupts)** Together. We have nothing to hide from each other. Right, Mercy?

105. MERCY: **(unsure)** Right!

106. SFX: RUSTLING OF PAPERS

FLASHBACK: Ep. 25, line 4

107. MARGARET: Okay. Mercy, it says here that your status is negative. That means that you don't have HIV.

108. MERCY: **(sighs in relief)**

109. **MARGARET:** But Niki... you've tested positive for HIV.

110. **NIKI / MERCY: (shocked)** What?!

111. **MARGARET: (tries to calm him down)** Please, Niki, listen to me. I know this must come as a shock. But HIV is no longer a death sentence. There are ways of managing it these days. And with the right treatment, you should be able to live your life almost like anybody else. I'll talk to you both about all this and I'll try to answer all of your questions. You --

112. **NIKI: (still disbelieving)** Sorry, what??

OUTRO – NARRATOR:

Wow! That's a heavy turn of events for Niki and Mercy! We should give them some privacy now... But if you want to know how they deal with that result, be sure to tune in next time! And if you can't wait that long for more from "Crossroads Generation", head over to our webpage at dw.de/lbe, where Tina's latest video recording is waiting for you. Until next time: goodbye!