

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 3: Facing the Future

EPISODE 25: Recalling the Past

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INTRO

1. NARRATOR:

Welcome back to our radio series “Crossroads Generation”! We’re moving towards the end of this third season of our ongoing radio drama about the daily lives of Mercy, Dan and Niki, three African teenagers. Dan has a child with Mercy, but right after the baby was born three years ago, he took off and came back only recently. Mercy didn’t want to see him, though. Dan has just started his own business, producing and selling handbags for ladies – with a unique twist:

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 20, LINES 46, 47, 55

MRS. JUMBE: *Are you serious? You mean these cute little handbags are made from plastic bags? From waste?*

DAN: *Yes. But of course they’re all clean now. (...)*

MRS. JUMBE: *Well, Dan, I’m Mrs. Jumbe. I would very much like to discuss business with you.*

3. NARRATOR:

Dan's new business partner just happens to be the mother of Mercy's boyfriend, Niki! And she's not a big fan of Mercy's – but Niki's asked Mercy to marry him anyway. Before they took the big step, the couple went for premarital counselling – and were utterly shocked when the counsellor gave them the results of a blood test:

4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 24, LINES 107-110

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

MERCY: (sighs in relief)

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

NIKI/MERCY: (shocked) What?!

5. NARRATOR:

This is the 25th episode, entitled "Recalling the Past". We pick up the story with Mercy and Niki, who are standing outside the counselling centre.

SCENE 1: MERCY AND NIKI FIGHT

6. **ATMO:** **OUTSIDE COUNSELLING CENTRE, LIGHT TRAFFIC**

7. **NARRATOR:**

8. **MERCY:** **(cries)** Niki, how could this have happened?

9. **NIKI:** Mercy I... I don't know what to tell you.

10. **MERCY:** Just tell me the truth, Niki! Have you been sleeping with other women behind my back?

KW BEGIN

11. **NIKI:** Mercy, I'm so sorry...

12. **MERCY:** **(stern)** Don't keep telling me you're sorry! Tell me what I want to know: did you or did you not sleep around?

13. **NIKI:** Mercy, please... This is hard for me, too!

14. **MERCY:** Answer me, Niki. Just answer me!

KW END

15. **NIKI:** **(angry)** Of course not. I've always been honest with you! I... I never slept with anyone. You know that! I was waiting for you. You're the one who slept with Dan back then!
16. **MERCY:** **(angry)** I can't believe you'd bring that up again! You and I weren't even together at the time! And you told me when we got together that you could handle it!
17. **NIKI:** **(bitter)** Well, right now, I have other things I have to handle!
18. **MERCY:** So how did you get infected if you weren't sleeping around?
19. **NIKI:** **(shouts)** I don't know how it happened! I don't know, okay?
20. **MERCY:** Niki – I don't know what to think, or who to believe any more. I trusted you! And... And I've already told my parents that we're getting married tomorrow...
(cries and leaves)

21. SFX: FOOTSTEPS LEAVING IN A HUFF

22. NIKI: Where... where are you going? We need to go back in and talk to the counsellor!

23. MERCY: **(from afar)** I can't even look at you right now!

24. NIKI: Mercy, come back! Please come back!

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: MRS. JUMBE LEARNS ABOUT THE WEDDING

25. ATMO: QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD, EVENING

26. SFX: DOOR OPENS

27. JUMBE: Mama Niki, you haven't said a word all the way to and from the doctor. What's wrong?

28. MRS. JUMBE: **(snaps)** Nothing!

KW BEGIN

29. JUMBE: Come on, my wife, I know you.

30. MRS. JUMBE: **(angry)** I said there's nothing wrong, okay?

31. JUMBE: All right, no need to snap at me. Where's my medicine?

32. MRS. JUMBE: I don't know. You were carrying it.

33. JUMBE: I can't see it.

34. MRS. JUMBE: Don't ask me. We don't share it, do we?

KW END

35. JUMBE: Look, how long are you going to sulk for, Janet? It's not my fault that you and Niki are fighting all the time. Just stop this nonsense and make peace with your son!

36. MRS. JUMBE: Niki wouldn't listen to me. So he's no longer my son as far as I'm concerned.

37. JUMBE: You're pushing him away. You are making him rebellious!

38. MRS. JUMBE: I don't care any more.

KW BEGIN

39. JUMBE: Aha. So you don't care what he does?

40. MRS. JUMBE: No, I don't. What I'm concerned about is that my husband does not support me!

41. JUMBE: I do. You just can't see it. I don't want Niki to hate us if he marries a girl we pick for him, a girl he doesn't want. He would blame us every time something went wrong!

42. MRS. JUMBE: So be it! Let him do what he wants! I don't care what he does any more!

KW END

43. JUMBE: So I guess if I told you that your son is getting married *tomorrow*, it wouldn't bother you, right?

44. MRS. JUMBE: What did you say?

45. JUMBE: You heard me. Apparently Niki and Mercy have an appointment to get married – and we're not invited.

46. MRS. JUMBE: Niki wouldn't dare... He was just bluffing when he told us he wanted to marry that girl!

47. JUMBE: I don't think so, Janet.

48. MRS. JUMBE: How do you know about the appointment anyway?

49. **JUMBE:** Mercy's father Msoto just sent me a message asking for dowry. Can you believe it?
50. **MRS. JUMBE:** **(shocked)** Wha....wha... *what?! I...* I have to go...
51. **SFX: SUDDEN FOOTSTEPS LEAVING**
52. **JUMBE:** Hey, where are you going?!
53. **MRS. JUMBE:** **(from the door)** I'll be back shortly.
54. **SFX: DOOR OPENS AND SHUTS**
55. **JUMBE:** **(deep breath)** This family....

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 3: MERCY AT THE COUNSELLING CENTRE AGAIN

56. **ATMO: OFFICE ATMO**
57. **SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR**
58. **MARGARET:** **(from inside)** Come in!
59. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**
60. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS ENTER**
61. **MERCY:** **(unsure)** Hello again.

62. **MARGARET:** **(surprised)** Hi, Mercy! Come in!

63. **SFX: DOOR CLOSES**

64. **MARGARET:** How are you and Niki doing?

65. **MERCY:** **(sighs)** I don't know... I don't know what to do! I just... I just needed to talk to someone.

66. **MARGARET:** You did well to come to me. That's what our counselling centre is for.

67. **MERCY:** **(cries)** How could this happen to us? Just when we thought everything was going to turn out fine!

KW BEGIN

68. **MARGARET:** I know, Mercy. It's not very good news to receive, especially when you're so close to getting married.

69. **MERCY:** **(cries)** I trusted him! How could he do this to me? How could he sleep around, and yet he asks me to marry him and tells me he wants to be a father to my child?

70. **MARGARET:** Mercy, calm down. Have you talked to Niki about all this?

KW END

71. MERCY: Niki says he hasn't slept with anyone, but then how come he has the virus? How am I supposed to trust him?

72. MARGARET: Mercy, as I've already told Niki, HIV is not necessarily transmitted sexually! That's the way most people know about. But lots of people contract it through an infected blood transfer, for example, or when they take drugs and share a needle. It can also be passed on at birth, or --

73. MERCY: **(to herself)** Niki had this period, years ago, when he had drug problems. But I thought it was just alcohol and marijuana ...

FLASHBACK: Ep. 26, line 4

74. **MARGARET:** Mercy, I can't tell you how Niki got infected. He may not even know himself. But is that really what matters now? You were ready to get married: you told me you trusted each other. Niki needs your support now more than ever before.
75. **MERCY:** I don't know what to think... How can I be with someone who's HIV positive? We won't be able to start a family!
76. **MARGARET:** I thought you were already a family – Niki, your daughter and you...? Besides, there are many other options we can discuss later, with both of you. With the right treatment, it IS possible for a couple to have a healthy child, even if one of the partners is HIV positive. The most important thing right now is that Niki has to start antiretroviral therapy as soon as possible. That will make a big difference to his life expectancy.
77. **MERCY:** I don't know... I just don't know! I have to go!

78. MARGARET: Remember - my door's always open if you want to talk.

79. MERCY: **(walks away)** Thank you!

80. SFX: FOOTSTEPS – MERCY LEAVING

81. SFX: DOOR OPENS

82. MARGARET: **(calls)** Mercy?

83. MERCY: **(from the door)** Yes?

84. MARGARET: Everyone makes mistakes. Haven't you ever made one?

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: MRS. JUMBE WANTS DAN TO STOP THE WEDDING

85. **ATMO:** **STREET ATMO**

86. **DAN:** Bags for the ladies! Beautiful handmade bags! Save the environment! Buy recycled bags!

87. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING**

88. **MRS. JUMBE:** Hi – Dan?

89. **DAN:** Oh, Mama Niki! Hello.

90. **MRS. JUMBE:** How's business?

91. **DAN:** Fine! I was just planning to bring you some more bags.

92. **MRS. JUMBE:** Actually... that's not why I am here.

93. **DAN:** Umm... what do you mean?

94. **MRS. JUMBE:** I bet you don't know that Niki and that girl, Mercy, are engaged and about to get married.

95. **DAN:** **(surprised)** What?

FLASHBACK: Ep. 26, line 1

96. **MRS. JUMBE:** Yes. Tomorrow! She's the mother of your child, Dan, isn't she?
97. **DAN:** She is... **(to himself)** I can't believe this! I wanted to ask her if we could get back together, once I'd built up my business and saved up a bit!
98. **MRS. JUMBE:** Hard, isn't it? Luckily, you and I both want the same thing... We have to stop the wedding!
99. **DAN:** What?
100. **MRS. JUMBE:** Listen. This is what I want you to do.....

OUTRO – NARRATOR:

Sooo..... what are Dan and Mrs. Jumbe planning to do about the wedding? Will there be a wedding at all, after what's just happened? Don't miss the final episode of this third season of "Crossroads Generation – Facing the Future"! Until then, you can check out our webpage at dw.de/lbe, or discuss what you just heard on our Facebook page. Take care!