

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 4: Facing New Challenges

EPISODE SEVENTEEN: Something to Smile About

AUTHOR: JAMES MUHANDO

EDITORS: JULIA MAAS, MAJA BRAUN

COPY EDITOR: CHARLOTTE COLLINS

List of characters by scene:

INTRO/OUTRO: NARRATOR

SCENE 1: PAULO RELEASED

- OFFICER - M ADULT
- MRS. MORGAN - F 40s
- PAULO - M 40s

SCENE 2: DAN LIKES TINA

- TINA - F 19
- DAN - M 19

SCENE 3: MERCY REACHES OUT TO LULU

- BANDA - M 12
- LULU - F 40s
- MERCY - F 19

SCENE 4: MERCY AND TINA TALK

- MERCY - F 19
- TINA - F 19

INTRO:

1. **NARRATOR:** A very good day to you, and welcome to Crossroads Generation, a radio drama about the challenges faced by a group of young Africans. This is episode seventeen, entitled “Something to Smile About”. In the last episode, Tina confessed something to Dan:

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 16, LINES 103-105

TINA: I... just... no, forget it!

DAN: Come on! Tell me.

TINA: It's nothing... just that... I... I don't know what you'll think of me, but... I kind of like you.

3. **NARRATOR:** How will Dan respond? And what will Mercy say? She's Tina's best friend, and she was in love with Dan back when they were in school. Mercy and Dan even have a child together, Linda, but they're not in touch because their relationship ended badly. Now Mercy's married to Niki, and he's adopted Linda as his own. Mercy and Niki have decided to have another child, but it's problematic, because Niki is HIV positive. Nonetheless, they've learned that it is possible. Mercy's mother Lulu cut contact completely when she discovered what was wrong with Niki:

4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 12, LINES 33-35

LULU: Get out of my house! Get out of my house right now, before you infect my children with that devil's disease! You think I'm a fool?

MERCY: Mum, wait...!

LULU: (ANGRY) I said get out!

5. NARRATOR: Mercy's relationship with her mother Lulu is at an all-time low. Meanwhile, Paulo has been arrested for making his daughters beg in the street. Now he's in a cell at the police station:

KW BEGIN

6. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 16, LINES 64-65, 68

PAULO: Hey, is someone there? I need to go back home! Please, let me go!

OFFICER: (SHOUTS) Paulo, will you shut up in there! (...)

PAULO: Please, officer, let me go. I'm sorry - I won't make my children beg again, I promise!

KW END

7. NARRATOR: Will Paulo be taken to court to answer for his crimes? Let's join him at the police station. The children's officer, Mrs. Morgan, is on her way to see him...

SCENE 1: PAULO RELEASED

8. **ATMO: POLICE STATION, WALKIE-TALKIES ETC.**

9. **OFFICER: (ON WALKIE-TALKIE)** Reading you loud and clear.

We're sending in a team. Over and out.

10. **SFX: BEEP OF WALKIE-TALKIE GOING OFF**

11. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS COMING IN**

12. **OFFICER:** Oh, good afternoon, Mrs. Morgan. How are you?

13. **MRS. MORGAN:** Very well, thank you, Officer Muruli.

14. **OFFICER:** Here to see our guest Paulo?

15. **MRS. MORGAN:** Yes. How is he?

16. **OFFICER:** He's only just stopped yelling!

17. **MRS. MORGAN:** I think he's learned his lesson. You can let him
go.

18. **OFFICER:** Are you sure, madam?

19. **MRS. MORGAN:** It can be hard, to be a parent in his situation.
I'd like to give him one more chance. But I need to
talk to him first. Please would you bring him here?

20. **OFFICER:** Yes, Madam.

21. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS GOING AWAY**

22. **SFX: KEY TURNS IN LOCK, CELL DOOR OPENS (FURTHER AWAY)**
23. **OFFICER: (SHOUTS FROM AFAR)** Prisoner Paulo! Come out.
You have a visitor.
24. **SFX: TWO PAIRS OF FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING**
25. **MRS. MORGAN:** Hello, Paulo.
26. **PAULO:** Oh no! Not you again! What do you want now?
27. **MRS. MORGAN:** We're letting you go, Paulo – under certain conditions...
28. **PAULO:** Really? Oh, thank you! Thank you, Mrs. Morgan.
29. **MRS. MORGAN:** You must promise not to misuse your children like that ever again!
30. **PAULO:** No, no, it'll never happen again!
31. **MRS. MORGAN:** And you have to let your two daughters attend Kisimba Special School! Your wife has already agreed – but we want you to give us your word as well.
32. **PAULO:** But... but I thought it was a school for the disabled? Sama's not --

33. MRS. MORGAN: They've recently started an integrative programme in which students who have special needs study together with others who don't. Your daughter Sama has already been enrolled as one of the pioneering pupils who don't require special attention. And Noni has also started there, as a special student. They're both boarding! They're on a state scholarship that supports students on this new integrative programme.

34. PAULO: **(EMBARRASSED)** I don't know how to thank you, madam.

35. MRS. MORGAN: You can thank me by being a model citizen! Now go and get your things. You're going home.

Musical interlude

SCENE 2: DAN LIKES TINA

36. **ATMO: SLUM IN THE AFTERNOON, PEOPLE TALKING IN THE**

BACKGROUND

37. **DAN:** **(HIGH SPIRITS)** Hey, Tina, the clean-up day with all those young people was great. I really enjoyed it!

38. **TINA:** **(FLATLY)** Me too, Dan.

39. **DAN:** I mean, look at Tandika - it looks a lot cleaner, doesn't it?

40. **TINA:** Yeah.

KW BEGIN

41. **DAN:** Now, if only we could get people to maintain this level of cleanliness! I hope they use the rubbish bags we put on every door.

42. **TINA:** **(LOW SPIRITS)** I hope so, too...

KW END

43. **DAN:** Hey, Tina, what's wrong?

44. **TINA:** Nothing.

45. **DAN:** Nothing? This doesn't look like nothing.

46. **TINA:** I'm just tired, that's all!

47. **DAN:** Like hell you are. Listen. About what you said earlier...
48. **TINA:** Come on, just... just forget I said anything!
49. **DAN:** No, I won't forget it. I --
50. **TINA:** I don't want to hear it. It was stupid of me.
51. **DAN:** -- I like you too!
52. **TINA:** **(DISBELIEVINGLY)** Sorry, what?
53. **DAN:** I said: I like you too!
54. **TINA:** Really? ... You're just saying it to make me feel good.
55. **DAN:** No, I'm not. I was going to tell you anyway. You just beat me to it.
56. **TINA:** But why didn't you say anything earlier?
57. **DAN:** Well... let's just say I'm a bit of a coward.
58. **TINA:** Oh, Dan!
59. **DAN:** **(SNIFFS HIS CLOTHES)** A stinking coward!
60. **TINA:** **(LAUGHS)** And I'm a very happy girl! Stinking, but happy!
61. **THEY LAUGH**

Musical interlude

SCENE 3: MERCY REACHES OUT TO LULU

62. **ATMO: SLUM ATMO**

63. **SFX: SOUND OF FRESH LEAVES BEING TIED TOGETHER**

64. **SFX: LULU'S TELEPHONE RINGS**

65. **BANDA:** Mum, your phone's ringing.

66. **LULU:** Who is it, Banda?

67. **BANDA:** It's Mercy.

68. **LULU:** Let it ring!

69. **SFX: PHONE STOPS RINGING**

70. **BANDA:** Why won't you talk to her, Mum?

71. **LULU:** Don't ask questions. Help me tie up these vegetables in bunches. I need to take them to the shop before my buyers start arriving.

72. **SFX: PHONE RINGS AGAIN**

73. **LULU:** All right! Give it to me!

74. **SFX: PHONE ANSWERED**

75. **LULU:** **(RUDELY)** What is it, Mercy?

76. **MERCY:** **(ON PHONE)** Hello, Mum? Can I talk to you?

77. **LULU:** No, Mercy, you cannot talk to me! I thought I told you that before?

78. **MERCY:** Mum, please...

Flashback Ep. 21, line 4

79. **LULU:** What do you want, Mercy?

80. **MERCY:** I can't say it on the phone. Can I come and see you? Please?

81. **LULU:** No, you can't come and see me. What is it? I don't have all day.

82. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS)** Okay. I thought you should know that Niki and I have decided to have a baby.

83. **LULU:** **(SHOCKED)** What? Mercy, will you ever listen to anything I tell you?

84. **MERCY:** That's how it is!

85. **LULU:** Well then, I guess you and I have nothing more to talk about.

86. **MERCY:** Mum, please --

87. **SFX: PHONE DISCONNECTED**

88. **LULU:** **(TO HERSELF)** What is wrong with children nowadays?

89. **BANDA:** What did she say?

90. **LULU:** **(ANGRILY)** Nothing that concerns you, Banda.
Don't be so nosey.
91. **BANDA:** But I wanted to talk to her...
92. **LULU:** **(INTERRUPTS, MIMICS)** *Nye nye nye!*

Musical interlude

SCENE 4: MERCY AND TINA TALK

93. **ATMO: UNIVERSITY HOSTEL, DAYTIME**
94. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**
95. **TINA:** Hey, Mercy! Come in - you got here fast!
96. **MERCY:** Oh Tina, I really need someone to talk to...
(NOTICES) Wow, you're glowing!
97. **TINA:** No, I'm not!
98. **MERCY:** Yes, you are!
99. **TINA:** No way!
100. **MERCY:** Come on, girl, tell me! What's happened?
101. **TINA:** Okay, okay. All in good time! What was it you
wanted to see me about? It sounded rather urgent
on the phone.

102. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS HEAVILY)** Well... Niki and I have decided to go for it.
103. **TINA:** Go for what? I don't understand.
104. **MERCY:** We've decided to have a baby.
105. **TINA:** Really?! Did you find out how you can, with his HIV status and all?
106. **MERCY:** Yes. I took your advice and saw a specialist. She says it *is* possible to have a baby with a very low risk of passing the virus on - not to the mother, and not to the child! We've already made an appointment for the treatment!
107. **TINA:** **(HAPPILY)** Oh, that's great news, Mercy. But... you don't seem very happy. What is it?
108. **MERCY:** It's my mother. She's refused to talk to me since she found out about Niki's status.
109. **TINA:** Oh?
110. **MERCY:** I feel so abandoned. So alone!
111. **TINA:** Oh no! Don't say that. You know I'm always here for you.

112. **MERCY:** **(ALMOST CRYING)** I know. It's just that... she's my mother. I expected her to be more supportive.

113. **TINA:** **(CONCERNED)** Mercy, give it time. She'll come round, eventually.

114. **MERCY:** **(CRIES)** I'm sorry. It's just so hard, Tina.

KW BEGIN

115. **TINA:** **(SOOTHES HER)** Oh, come here! Cry it out, go on! Cry it all out!

116. **MERCY:** **(CRIES AND CALMS DOWN GRADUALLY)** I'm sorry.

KW END

117. **TINA:** It's okay, Mercy! Nothing to be sorry for. You know you can always lean on me.

Flashback Ep. 18, line 2/ Ep. 23, line 6

118. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS)** Well, anyway - enough about me. Tell me, Tina, why are you glowing like this?

119. **TINA:** **(SIGHS)** Well... I hope you won't take this badly, but... Dan and I are... you know...

120. **MERCY:** **(GASPS)** Dan?

121. **TINA:** Yes.

- 122. MERCY:** You mean Dan, the father of my child? Who made me pregnant and walked out on us?
- 123. TINA:** That's the old Dan! He's changed since then. And yeah ... I like him. Is it a problem for you?
- 124. MERCY:** **SILENT**
- 125. TINA:** Mercy? Hello, Mercy?
- 126. MERCY:** I'm sorry Tina, I ... I have to go.
- 127. SFX: SOMEONE STANDS UP SUDDENLY**
- 128. SFX: FOOTSTEPS LEAVE URGENTLY**
- 129. TINA:** Wait, Mercy...! Wait!
- 130. SFX: DOOR BANGS**

OUTRO:

Ooops! Looks like Mercy's pretty upset... Will her friendship with Tina survive this news? And what about her mother, Lulu? Has she really cast Mercy out for good? Tune in next time to hear how the story continues. In the meantime, you can take a look at our website, dw.de/lbe, or find us on Facebook. Bye for now!