

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 4: Facing New Challenges

EPISODE NINE: Talk to Me!

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INTRO:

1. NARRATOR: Hello everybody, and welcome to Crossroads Generation, a Learning by Ear radio novella about a group of African teenagers with some tough decisions to make. This is the fourth season, “Facing New Challenges”. In the previous episodes, 12-year-old Sama seemed to be hiding something from her friend Kadu.

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 3, LINES 38; 46-47; 50-53

***KADU:** Come on. I want to see you home today. Every day I walk you back, but you don't want me to come in. We always stop behind your house. Why? (...)*

***NONI: (FROM AFAR, WAILING AS SHE HITS DOOR DESPERATELY)**
Go out! Go out!!*

***KADU:** What is that? (...)*

***SAMA: (URGENTLY, IN SPITE OF HERSELF)** Oh my God - Noni!*

***KADU:** Sama, wait! Who's Noni?*

***SAMA: (AS SHE GOES)** No one! Bye, Kadu, see you tomorrow at school.*

3. NARRATOR: Noni is Sama's sister. She's disabled, and her family keeps her hidden so no one will see her. Niki and Mercy are hiding something, too - they don't want people to know that Niki is HIV positive. Recently, they had an argument in the middle of the night, and Mercy ran away to her friend Tina's:

4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 8, LINES 26-29

MERCY: *Niki. He... he... (CRIES)*

TINA: *He what? Mercy, you're not making any sense. Did he hit you?*

MERCY: *No, no. He woke up in the middle of the night and asked me to have unprotected sex with him!*

TINA: *(SHOCKED) He what?*

5. NARRATOR: Mercy was shocked about this because of course she doesn't want to get infected. Niki explained that he really wants to have a baby with her - but we'll come back to that later... In this ninth episode, entitled "Talk to Me!", we'll find out whether Mercy and Niki are able to settle this argument and stay together. We start at Tina's room in the university hostel, where Mercy is hiding with her little daughter Linda after her row with Niki...

SCENE 1: NIKI KNOCKS ON TINA'S DOOR

6. ATMO: UNIVERSITY HOSTEL, MORNING

7. SFX: SIPPING AS TWO PEOPLE DRINK TEA

8. TINA: Mercy, you need to hurry up, we'll be late for work at the university radio.

9. MERCY: I don't know if I can go, Tina.

10. TINA: What do you mean?

11. MERCY: I can't leave Linda alone. What'll happen when she wakes up?

12. TINA: We'll find one of the girls here in the hostel to stay with her.

13. MERCY: I don't know, Tina...

14. TINA: Look, Mercy, I know the university radio doesn't pay us much, but you can't keep missing work like this. Sooner or later you'll be fired, and I know you need the money. I'm always hearing on the radio show about how important it is for women to earn their own money, so that they don't end up completely dependent on their husbands...

15. SFX KNOCK ON DOOR

16. **NIKI:** **(FROM OUTSIDE)** Mercy? Tina? Open this door!

17. **MERCY:** **(WHISPERS)** Don't answer! It's Niki.

18. **TINA:** **(WHISPERS)** How did he know you were here?

19. **MERCY:** **(WHISPERS)** I don't know.

20. **SFX: PERSISTENT KNOCKING.**

21. **NIKI:** **(SHOUTS)** Mercy, I know you're in there! Please open up. It's me, Niki.

SILENCE

22. **SFX: KNOCK ON DOOR**

23. **NIKI:** Mercy! I'm sorry, okay?

SILENCE

24. **NIKI:** Mercy, open this door at once!

SILENCE

25. **NIKI:** All right! I'm not leaving until you open up! Sooner or later you'll have to come out, and I'll be standing right here!

26. **TINA:** **(WHISPERS)** I think you're going to have to talk to him.

27. **MERCY:** **(WHISPERS)** No. I don't want to talk to him!

28. **TINA:** **(WHISPERS)** Okay! Okay. Then let me talk to him. I won't let him know you're here.
29. **MERCY:** **(WHISPERS)** Tina, wait....
30. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS**
31. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**
32. **TINA:** **(PRETENDING TO YAWN)** Hey, Niki! What are you doing here so early?
33. **NIKI:** I'm looking for Mercy and Linda.
34. **TINA:** Mercy and Linda? Why would they be here? Aren't they at home with you?
35. **NIKI:** We had a row and they ran away. Look, Tina, I know they're here.
36. **TINA:** A row? What about?
37. **NIKI:** None of your business! Now can I please talk to my wife now?
38. **TINA:** I told you - she's not here.
39. **SFX: LINDA WAKES, CRIES OUT**
40. **NIKI:** Oh yeah? So much for not being here! That's Linda crying, isn't it?

41. **TINA:** Okay, fine. They are here, but Mercy doesn't want to talk to you right now.
42. **NIKI:** Get out of my way and let me talk to my wife!
43. **SFX: COMMOTION AS SOMEONE IS PUSHED**
44. **TINA:** Ow! You're hurting me!

Musical interlude

SCENE 2: LULU BRIBES OFFICER

45. **ATMO: MARKET, PEOPLE SELLING WARES**
46. **WOMAN:** Thank God the sun's shining for once, eh, Lulu!
There's been far too much rain this season.

KW BEGIN

47. **LULU:** **(CHUCKLES)** People will always complain. If it rains, we complain, and if it doesn't, we complain then as well. What is it we actually want?
48. **WOMAN:** You're right, Lulu, but you have to admit, this really was too much rain!

KW END

49. **LULU:** The climate has really changed! It used to rain here only in March and August. And we could always predict exactly when it would start and when it would end. But nowadays you can never tell--
(STARTLED) Oh! Oh no - here comes Caesar!
50. **WOMAN:** Caesar? Who's Caesar?
51. **LULU:** The tax man.
52. **WOMAN:** Where? Where? Shit!
53. **LULU:** Damn! And I don't have any money today. I haven't sold much!
54. **CAESAR:** Don't you ladies try to shut up shop. I've already seen you!
55. **LULU:** **(LAUGHS UNCOMFORTABLY)** No, no, we're not trying to close, Officer.
56. **WOMAN:** No, no, we're not.
57. **CAESAR:** Okay, show me your business licenses. And if you don't have one, you know what to do: give unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar! **(LAUGHS SHEEPISHLY)**

58. **LULU:** Officer, business is really slow today. We've hardly sold anything.
59. **WOMAN:** Yeah, that's true.
60. **CAESAR:** Then I guess I'll have to drag you before the court for operating your businesses without a license.
61. **LULU:** No, no - no need for that. Here. Take this. I'm afraid that's all I have.
62. **SFX: COINS JINGLE**
63. **WOMAN:** And - here!
64. **SFX: BILLS SHUFFLE**
65. **CAESAR:** **(LAUGHS IN SATISFACTION)** I've told you ladies before: it's cheaper just to buy a business license. Otherwise you're going to keep on seeing me here.
66. **LULU:** The license is too expensive, Officer.
67. **CAESAR:** What you give me every week adds up to even more! I'm only telling you this because you remind me of my mother. Buy a license. In fact, insure your business, too. It doesn't cost much. That way, if something should go wrong, you'll at least be able to start again.

68. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS AS HE LEAVES**

69. **WOMAN: (MIMICS HIM)** Buy a license; insure your business... How
are we supposed to do that if he takes our money?

70. **LULU: LAUGHS**

Musical interlude

SCENE 3: NIKI CONVINCES MERCY TO COME HOME

71. **ATMO: UNIVERSITY HOSTEL**

72. **TINA:** Mercy, I'm sorry. I couldn't stop him.

73. **MERCY:** It's okay, Tina.

74. **NIKI:** Pack your things, Mercy, we're going home! Come
on, Linda, let's go!

75. **MERCY:** **(DETERMINED)** We're not going anywhere with
you!

76. **TINA:** Er - listen, Linda and I will leave you guys to talk.
We'll be at the studio if you need us, Mercy. Just
close the door when you're done. I have the keys. -
Come on, baby, let's go!

77. **SFX: KEYS JINGLE**

78. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPENS, CLOSES**

79. **NIKI:** **(POLITE)** Look. Mercy: I'm sorry, okay?
80. **MERCY:** I am so sick and tired of your mood swings and unreasonable demands, Niki, and... I'm just really tired, okay?
81. **NIKI:** I don't know what came over me. I'm sorry. I promise you'll never see me like that again. Please come home.
82. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS)** Okay. But on one condition.
83. **NIKI:** Anything!

Flashback Ep. 9, line 4

84. **MERCY:** We have to see Counsellor Margaret again.
85. **NIKI:** Counsellor Margaret? Again? What for?
86. **MERCY:** Because you're not talking to me about what's really going on with you. You need to talk to someone.
87. **NIKI:** I'm not going.
88. **MERCY:** Then we're not coming with you. It's as simple as that, Niki!
89. **NIKI:** **(SIGHS)** Okay, fine! I'll go and see Counsellor Margaret with you.
90. **MERCY:** Good! We already have an appointment.

Musical interlude

SCENE 4: KADU SEES SAMA HOME

91. **ATMO: SLUM, LIGHT TRAFFIC**

92. **SFX: TWO PAIRS OF FOOTSTEPS WALKING ON ROUGH ROAD**

93. **SAMA:** Thank you for walking me home from school, Kadu.

94. **KADU:** No problem, Sama. You know I enjoy our little walks.

95. **SAMA: LAUGHS SHYLY**

PAUSE

96. **SAMA:** Kadu.

97. **KADU:** Yes?

98. **SAMA:** You know why I don't let you see me to my door?

99. **KADU:** Yes. It would cause trouble with your dad.

100. **SAMA:** Not really. The real reason is my sister.

Flashback Ep. 10, line 2

101. **KADU:** Your sister? I know you have brothers. You never told me you had a sister.

102. **SAMA:** Well, I do. Her name is Noni.

103. **KADU:** Why didn't you tell me?

- 104. SAMA:** Because my sister is... is... She's different.
- 105. KADU:** I don't understand. You won't let me see her because she's different? What do you mean?
- 106. SAMA:** My dad doesn't want people to see her. He keeps her chained to the bed.
- 107. KADU:** What? Are you serious?
- 108. SAMA:** Yes.
- 109. KADU:** But that's wrong!
- 110. SAMA:** I know. I tell Dad, but he doesn't listen.
- 111. KADU:** Can I see her?
- 112. SAMA:** Okay. But only for a few minutes before Dad comes back from town.

OUTRO:

Wow... Kadu's finally going to meet Sama's sister Noni. How will the meeting go? We'll be back next time to find out. Meanwhile, you can check out Niki's video diary. Just click on our website dw.de/lbe - you'll find it there, along with all the previous episodes! And if you'd like to share your thoughts with us, please join us on Facebook. Until then – goodbye, and take care!