

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 4: Facing New Challenges

EPISODE SIXTEEN: A Sigh of Relief!

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INTRO:

1. **NARRATOR:** Hello and welcome back to our ongoing radio novella, Crossroads Generation, about the struggles faced by young Africans. We continue today with the sixteenth episode. Last time, Sama's and Noni's father Paulo was arrested for making his children beg for money in the streets:

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 15, LINES 128-129

MRS. MORGAN: *Please arrest this man. And find his daughters - we'll take them with us.*

OFFICER: *Paulo, you are under arrest for using your children to solicit for money, and for obstructing justice.*

3. **NARRATOR:** It was Anita who informed the child welfare department and the police about what was happening to Sama and her disabled sister, Noni. Anita is a teacher at Kisimba Special School. With the permission of Mrs. Morgan from the child welfare department, Anita took Sama and Noni under her wing following their dad's arrest. Anita and the pupils at her school are also involved with a group of young activists for environmental protection, and its first clean-up day is coming up. Also in the last episode, Anita's friend Mercy paid a visit to Doctor Florence. She discussed with her the possibility of having a healthy baby with her HIV positive husband - with a very low risk of becoming infected herself:

4. FLASHBACK EPISODE 15, LINES 19-20; 23

***DR. FLORENCE:** (...) And you wanted to know whether it's possible to have a child with him - safely?*

***MERCY:** Yes, Doctor. (...)*

***DR. FLORENCE:** (THOUGHTFULLY) I see. Well, I may be able to help you, if you're quite sure you know what you're getting yourselves into. But you need to come and see me together.*

5. NARRATOR: Sounds like good news! We're back with Doctor Florence for the start of today's episode, "A Sigh of Relief". This time, Mercy and Niki have come together, to find out more...

SCENE 1: NIKI AND MERCY TALK TO THE DOCTOR

6. ATMO: HOSPITAL ATMO, CHILDREN CRYING IN

BACKGROUND

7. SFX: DOOR OPENS

8. SFX: FOOTSTEPS COME IN

9. DR. FLORENCE: Hello. I'm Doctor Florence. You must be Niki.

10. NIKI: Yes, that's right. Good to meet you.

11. DR. FLORENCE: Hi, Mercy, glad you could make it.

12. MERCY: We couldn't wait, Doctor. We're so excited!

13. DR. FLORENCE: Great. Shall we get straight to the point?

14. MERCY: Yes, Doctor. I've already told Niki about what you said last time.

15. DR. FLORENCE: Niki, I assume you're on ARVs?

16. NIKI: You mean anti-retrovirals - the medicine to control the HIV infection? Yes. And Mercy always makes sure I take the drugs on time!

- 17. DR. FLORENCE:** Good! The ARVs help to reduce your viral load, this is the amount of HIV in your blood. The lower it is, the better. Now, before we go any further, there are a few things you need to know. Yours is a special kind of relationship. It's what we call a discordant or a mixed-status relationship. This means that one partner is HIV positive, and the other is not. And as I already told Mercy: yes, it is possible to have a baby with a very low risk of transmitting the virus to your partner.
- 18. NIKI:** **(SIGHS IN RELIEF)** Yeah, and I'm so relieved! But tell us, Doctor, how exactly does it work?
- 19. DR. FLORENCE:** Well, there are several ways of dealing with your situation. First of all, we have to make sure that we protect the uninfected from infection. This means that you two should continue practising safer sex, using condoms.
- 20. NIKI:** Yes, Doctor.

21. **DR. FLORENCE:** As regards the actual conception, two options are available. One is the natural way, meaning intercourse. If you choose this way, Mercy, we'll have to start you on your own therapy. We call it pre-exposure prophylaxis.
22. **MERCY:** And what's that?
23. **DR. FLORENCE:** It's a therapy where you take a pill daily to reduce your chances of getting infected.
24. **MERCY:** Really? And that works?
25. **DR. FLORENCE:** Research has proven that it minimizes the risk of infection, but doesn't eliminate it entirely. The chance of not getting infected is better if Niki's viral load is so low that it is undetectable. Another option is what we call sperm washing.
26. **NIKI:** **(SHOCKED)** Sperm washing?

27. DR. FLORENCE: Yes. It's basically just what it sounds like, Niki.

We take your sperm and send it to a laboratory where the virus is eliminated. That's what's meant by "washing". Then we perform a process called intra-uterine insemination, where we introduce the sanitized sperm into the woman's womb.

28. NIKI: Hm, doesn't sound very romantic...

29. DR. FLORENCE: This method is safer compared to conception via unprotected sex - and you would still be having your own biological child.

30. MERCY: But what's the risk of our baby being infected?

31. DR. FLORENCE: If we've washed the sperm, the risk is very low - as long as you both continue to do everything you can to prevent you, Mercy, from getting infected. I have to say, though, that this method is not cheap.

KW BEGIN

32. SFX: OFFICE TELEPHONE RINGS

33. DR. FLORENCE: Sorry, I have to take this.

34. SFX: PHONE PICKED UP

35. DR. FLORENCE: Hello? Yes... where? The maternity ward?

Okay, I'll be there.

36. SFX: PHONE REPLACED

37. DR. FLORENCE: Sorry - I have to deal with a complicated case

on the maternity ward. But that was basically it,
anyway.

KW END

I'd like you two to think about the options, and when
you feel ready to proceed, let me know what you
decide.

38. NIKI: We will. Thank you very much for seeing us, Doctor
Florence.

Musical interlude

SCENE 2: CHILDREN'S OFFICER INSPECTS SCHOOL

**39. ATMO: SCHOOL GROUNDS, CHILDREN TALKING, PLAYING
ETC.**

40. SFX: THREE PAIRS OF FOOTSTEPS WALKING

41. DIRECTOR: So, Mrs Morgan, you've seen the improvements we've made to our school since your last visit. I hope the child welfare department approves?

42. MRS. MORGAN: Well, Director Babu, it's a very important task and a great responsibility, taking care of children with special needs. And I'm impressed by the changes I've seen. For example, the ramps you've put in to make the school more accessible.

43. DIRECTOR: We have to thank Anita for that, madam. Since she came to work with us, a lot of things have changed around here. She sees things most of us don't think of.

44. ANITA: You flatter me, Director.

- 45. DIRECTOR:** No! You deserve it, Anita. Your idea that we should integrate the special pupils with others seems to be working well. The children with special needs are catching up with the others bit by bit, and the interaction between the children has positive effects on them all.
- 46. MRS. MORGAN:** Anita, how's Noni doing?
- 47. ANITA:** She loves it here! It's only been a couple of days, but she's already picking up more words! I think she's learning a lot now she's finally able to interact with others. And her sister Sama has been helping, too, ever since she joined the school.
- 48. MRS. MORGAN:** Great. I have to go now, but I will come and check up on you from time to time.
- 49. DIRECTOR:** Okay. Thank you, Mrs. Morgan.
- 50. MRS. MORGAN:** Not at all! Goodbye!
- 51. DIRECTOR/ANITA:** Goodbye!
- 52. SFX: FOOTSTEPS FADE AWAY**

53. **DIRECTOR:** **(SIGHS IN RELIEF)** Anita, really, if you hadn't come and made all those suggestions, the school would have been closed down! I don't know how to thank you!
54. **ANITA:** Well, if you don't mind, there is a favour I'd like to ask.
55. **DIRECTOR:** Anything!
56. **ANITA:** Remember the clean-up activity I mentioned? For Dan's environmental project?
57. **DIRECTOR:** Yes...?
58. **ANITA:** You still haven't given me a final answer, and the day has come.
59. **DIRECTOR:** Oh - it's today?
60. **ANITA:** In the afternoon, yes.
61. **DIRECTOR:** Okay. I agree that our pupils may join in. I think it'll be a very useful activity.

Musical interlude

SCENE 3: PAULO WALLOWS IN JAIL

62. SFX: SOMEONE HITTING METAL BAR REPEATEDLY

63. PAULO: (SHOUTING FROM AFAR) Somebody please get me out of here!

SILENCE

Flashback Ep. 17, line 6

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

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

66. PAULO: Why am I locked in here? What did I do?

67. OFFICER: Shut up! You're a guest of the state. No amount of shouting is going to get you released!

68. PAULO: Please, officer, let me go. I'm sorry - I won't make my children beg again, I promise! Can't we talk about this?

69. OFFICER: You had your chance! The child welfare department offered to talk with you, but you refused. Now you're paying for it.

70. **PAULO:** **(HOWLS)** Please, officer! Please!
71. **OFFICER:** You either shut your mouth or I'll shut it for you,
Paulo!

Musical interlude

SCENE 4: CLEAN-UP DAY

72. **ATMO: SLUM IN THE AFTERNOON, PEOPLE TALKING, CHILDREN'S VOICES**
73. **DAN:** So, the day is finally here! I'm so proud of you, Tina and Anita, for mobilizing everyone. I didn't expect such a huge crowd!
74. **ANITA:** You're welcome, Dan.
75. **TINA:** You don't have to thank us. Whatever's good for the environment is good for us, too.
76. **DAN:** Yeah, you're right! **(SIGHS)** Damn! It's so muddy, but I think we'd better start. Anita, you lead one group, and Tina and I will lead the other.
77. **ANITA:** All right. **(CLEARS THROAT AND ADDRESSES CROWD)** Okay, children. We're here today to clean

up Tandika. As we discussed, we're going to start over here and finish up at that end - is that clear?

78. CHILDREN: (IN UNISON) Yes, Madam Anita!

79. ANITA: We'll pick up anything plastic and anything that looks like litter and put it in the wheelbarrows the boys will be pushing. Don't forget to put on your gloves before we start, okay?

80. CHILDREN: Yes, Madam Anita!

81. ANITA: Those of you who are able to, please help those in wheelchairs by pushing them. Is that okay?

82. FEW CHILDREN: Yes, Madam Anita.

83. ANITA: And what's the name of our operation today?

84. CHILDREN: Operation Clean Tandika!

85. ANITA: Great! Okay, here we go! Let's start - let's make Tandika clean! 1, 2, 3!

86. SFX: FOOTBALL WHISTLE BLOWN

87. SFX: MANY FOOTSTEPS, WHEELCHAIRS, WHEELBARROWS AS THEY MOVE OFF EXCITEDLY

88. **MANY VOICES IN BACKGROUND:** Pick up that over there! -
Don't leave that! (etc.)
89. **DAN:** And we'll start from here and go this way. We'll meet
the other group in the middle. Let's go!
90. **VOICES:** **(MURMUR AS THEY LEAVE)** Pick up the banana
skins, they're horrible. - No, plastic is the worst - *etc.*
91. **TINA:** Shit, it stinks like hell!
92. **DAN:** **(LAUGHS)** Yeah... and it's really slippery here with
all this mud!
93. **SFX: SOMEONE SLIPS IN MUD**
94. **TINA: SCREAMS**
95. **DAN:** Woah, Tina! Careful! Here, let me help you...
96. **TINA:** **(PANTS)** Thanks for rescuing me, Dan!
97. **DAN:** If you fall over, we'll have to pick you up like a piece
of rubbish and load you onto the wheelbarrow.
98. **TINA:** **(LAUGHS)** Get lost!
- SILENCE**
99. **TINA:** Dan?

100. DAN: Yes?

101. TINA: I...

102. DAN: What?

Flashback Ep. 17, line 2

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

104. DAN: Come on! Tell me.

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

106. SFX: SHOVELS IN MUD, WHEELBARROWS CREAKING,
DISTANT VOICES ETC IN BACKGROUND

OUTRO:

That's it for today! So... Tina likes Dan! And what about Dan? Does he like her too? We'll find out next time on Crossroads Generation - and we'll also hear what Mercy thinks of Tina's feelings. After all, Dan let Mercy down very badly when they were together, and Tina is Mercy's friend... Also, Niki has recorded a new video blog for you. Check it out on our website, dw.de/lbe. You can also follow us on Facebook. Until next time - bye!