

**Learning by Ear 2014**

**Crossroads Generation – Season 4: Facing New Challenges**

**EPISODE EIGHT: Water Is Life**

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**List of characters by scene:**

**INTRO/OUTRO: NARRATOR**

**SCENE 1: MERCY AT TINA'S**

- MERCY - F 19
- TINA - F 20

**SCENE 2: LULU AND BANDA SICK**

- KADU - M 12
- BANDA - M 12
- LULU - F 40s
- NEWSREADER - M/F ADULT

**SCENE 3: TINA AND MERCY TALK**

- TINA - F 20
- MERCY - F 19

**SCENE 4: AT THE HOSPITAL**

- DR. ROBERTS - M 40s
- LULU - F 40s
- KADU - M 12
- BANDA - M 12

## **INTRO:**

1. **NARRATOR:** Hello! Great to have you back on Crossroads Generation, our ongoing radio drama about a group of African teenagers. We're on the fourth season, "Facing New Challenges", and this is episode number eight, called "Water Is Life". Previously, Lulu and her children ate a dinner of fish from the Tandika river, which her sons Kadu and Banda had brought home. She was very proud of them for catching their own food and contributing to the household. But what none of them realised was that the fish was contaminated, and that night they paid the price:

### **2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 7, LINES 73-74**

***BANDA:** Mum, my stomach hurts.*

***LULU:** Mine too, Banda. I haven't slept a wink. I was just going to go to the toilet...*

3. **NARRATOR:** The same night, 19-year-old Mercy was shocked when her husband Niki wanted to sleep with her without protection, even though he's HIV positive. Mercy couldn't understand his behaviour:

### **4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 7 LINES 99-101**

***MERCY:** Why... why are you doing this? Do you want to infect me? Is that what you want?*

***NIKI: (ANGRY, SHOUTS)** I want a baby, okay?! I want a baby!*

***MERCY: (UTTERLY SHOCKED)** What?!*

5. **NARRATOR:** Niki and Mercy already have a child: Linda. But Niki's not her biological father - he adopted her. So - what now? Today's episode starts at the university hostel...

### **SCENE 1: MERCY AT TINA'S**

6. **ATMO: MORNING, UNIVERSITY HOSTEL**

7. **SFX: HEAVY RAINFALL**

8. **SFX: URGENT KNOCKING ON DOOR**

9. **MERCY:** Tina! Tina, open up. It's me, Mercy.

**SILENCE**

10. **MERCY:** Tina, please open up, we're getting wet out here!

11. **SFX: DOOR OPENS**

12. **TINA:** Mercy! Linda! What are you doing here at the hostel so early in the morning? And in this weather?

13. **MERCY:** Oh Tina, thank God. Can we come in?

14. **TINA:** Sure. Come in out of the rain.

15. **SFX: FOOTSTEPS WALKING IN, DOOR CLOSING**

16. **TINA:** Here's a towel - dry yourselves! Poor Linda. How are you, poor baby?

17. **LINDA: SILENCE**

18. **TINA:** **(LAUGHS)** You're such a shy girl! When are you going to start talking to people, Linda? **(TO MERCY)**  
Hey, Mercy - is everything okay?

19. **MERCY:** Linda, go and lie on Auntie Tina's bed. Mum needs to talk to your auntie, okay?

20. **SFX: LINDA MAKES SOME NOISE / SAYS "OKAY"**

21. **SFX: LITTLE FOOTSTEPS WALKING AWAY**

22. **MERCY:** **(CRIES)**

23. **TINA:** Hey! Hey! What's wrong? Tell me!

24. **MERCY:** He's going crazy, Tina!

25. **TINA:** Who's going crazy?

**Flashback Ep. 9, line 4**

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

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

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

29. **TINA:** **(SHOCKED)** He *what?*

**Musical interlude**

**SCENE 2: LULU AND BANDA SICK**

**30. ATMO: SLUM, MORNING**

**31. SFX: RADIO IN BACKGROUND**

**32. BANDA: VOMITING**

**33. KADU: LAUGHS**

**34. LULU:** Kadu! Your brother is sick and you're laughing at him?

**35. KADU:** He's not sick, Mum. Banda just ate too much.

**36. BANDA:** You shut up, Kadu!

**37. LULU:** I'm not feeling well, either. Did I eat too much as well?

**38. KADU:** I didn't say that.

**39. LULU:** So shut your big mouth, boy. And turn the radio up. We need to know what's going on in the world.

**40. SFX: VOLUME TURNED UP**

41. **NEWS READER:** ...Some news just in: the government has announced an immediate ban on fishing and other activities in the Tandika river after hundreds of fish were reported to have mysteriously died. Government officers who visited the area are urging anyone who might have eaten fish from the river in the past week to visit the nearest health facility immediately. Some people in and around Tandika are reported to have contracted food poisoning, with symptoms such as stomach pain, diarrhoea and vomiting. In other news, rebels in the west... **(FADE OFF)**
42. **LULU:** What? Did you two boys...? Where exactly did you get the fish we ate yesterday?
43. **KADU:** We fished it from the Tandika river...
44. **LULU:** Oh great!
45. **BANDA:** What is it, Mum?
46. **LULU:** **(MIMICS)** *Nye nye nye?* Don't you have ears? You two fed us all on poisoned fish! Come on, we need to go to the hospital right away.

47. **KADU:** I'm not going. I'm not sick!
48. **LULU:** We're all going! Wake up your sister! Didn't you hear what they said on the radio? Anyone who ate fish from the Tandika river has to go and see a doctor immediately!

***Musical interlude***

**SCENE 3: TINA AND MERCY TALK**

49. **ATMO: UNIVERSITY HOSTEL**

50. **SFX: HEAVY RAIN**

51. **MERCY:** I can't stay there, Tina. I can't take it any more.
52. **TINA:** Mercy, I don't understand. Niki's always been so decent and reasonable. What has come over him?
53. **MERCY:** Don't get me wrong - he's not violent or anything. It's just that I don't understand him. One minute he seems perfectly happy, the next he's suddenly gone broody. **(CALMER)** He says he wants to have a baby.
54. **TINA:** A baby?

55. **MERCY:** Imagine! I mean, how is that even possible? Is he crazy or something?
56. **TINA:** But I thought he adopted Linda?
57. **MERCY:** Apparently she's not enough for him. Now he wants a child of his own with me. I mean, does he want to infect me or what? I don't understand him, Tina!
58. **TINA:** **(SIGHS)** What do you want to do?
59. **MERCY:** I don't know. Please let us stay here until I figure something out!
60. **TINA:** I didn't mean that. You know you and Linda can stay here as long as you want. What I'm asking is: do YOU want to have a baby with him?
61. **MERCY:** How... how can you even ask me that?
62. **TINA:** Just tell me, Mercy: do you still love him?
63. **MERCY:** **(CRIES)** That's the crazy thing! I do - I love him very much!
64. **TINA:** Listen, Mercy. Back when I was working as a callgirl, I heard from the other girls that it was possible to have a baby with someone with HIV - without getting infected.



65. **MERCY:** You're joking, right? How would that work?
66. **TINA:** I don't know. But if you love him, and you want a baby with him, maybe the two of you should talk to a doctor and find out.

***Musical interlude***

**SCENE 4: AT THE HOSPITAL**

67. **ATMO: HOSPITAL, CHILDREN CRYING ETC**
68. **SFX: DOOR OPENS, THREE PAIRS OF FEET WALK IN**
69. **LULU:** Hello, Dr. Roberts!
70. **DOCTOR ROBERTS:** Oh - Mama Mercy! And the boys - Kadi and Bandu, isn't it?
71. **BANDA:** No, Doctor. Kadu and Banda.
72. **SFX: PAPER SHUFFLED**
73. **DR. ROBERTS:** Kadu and Banda! Right! Yes, of course - I've got your files right here. Come in and have a seat.
74. **SFX: SEAT NOISES AS PEOPLE SIT**
75. **DR. ROBERTS:** How are you, boys?
76. **KADU/ BANDA:** We're fine, Doctor.

77. **DR. ROBERTS:** Well, I can't say it's good to see you again,  
Mama Mercy.
78. **LULU:** Why, doctor?
79. **DR. ROBERTS:** Well, when someone has to come and see a  
doctor it's not usually good news.
80. **LULU:** You're right there, Doctor.
81. **SFX: PAPER SHUFFLING**
82. **DR. ROBERTS: (HEAVY BREATH)** Now then. The samples my  
colleagues took from you earlier have been  
examined, and we have your results already.
83. **LULU:** Are we going to be okay, doctor?
84. **DR. ROBERTS:** Luckily, yes. You did well to come in  
immediately. Your results show that you all had a  
mild case of food poisoning.
85. **KADU:** All of us?
86. **DR. ROBERTS:** Yes, Kadu. All of you.
87. **KADU:** But I don't feel sick, Doctor.

- 88. DR. ROBERTS: (CHUCKLES)** Food poisoning presents differently in different people. Sometimes you have it and it clears up all by itself, while other people have to be treated. In your case, Kadu, your body was able to protect itself this time, and that's why you didn't feel as sick as your brother and mother. But of course this doesn't mean you should eat poisoned fish again!
- 89. LULU:** But what exactly killed the fish, Doctor?
- 90. DR. ROBERTS:** I'm not an environmental expert, but it seems the heavy rains swept waste from the Tandika garbage dump into the river. So the water was contaminated and poisoned the fish.
- 91. LULU:** I see... So what do we need to do to get better?
- 92. DR. ROBERTS:** I'm going to give you all some antibiotics. Make sure you finish the whole dose as prescribed, and be sure to drink lots of clean water. The problem should clear up in a few days.
- 93. LULU:** Oh - thank you so much, Doctor!
- 94. DR. ROBERTS:** You're very welcome!

- 95. LULU:** Come on, boys, let's go and fetch your sister from the children's doctor and go on home. Goodbye, Dr. Roberts!
- 96. DR. ROBERTS:** Goodbye, take care!

**OUTRO:**

And with that we end today's episode. We hope you'll join us again next time, when Niki comes to Tina's hostel place looking for Mercy. What does he want to tell her? Also coming up: Sama reveals her secret to Kadu! Be sure to catch the next episode - and feel free to contact us via Facebook in the meantime. You can also visit our website, [dw.de/lbe](http://dw.de/lbe), for more. Bye for now!