

Learning by Ear 2014

Crossroads Generation – Season 4: Facing New Challenges

EPISODE SIX: Only Dead Fish Go with the Flow

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- MIXED CROWD

INTRO:

1. **NARRATOR:** Hi there, and thank you for tuning in to Crossroads Generation! This is our ongoing radio drama about the challenges facing young Africans. We all know about Dan, the 19-year-old who started a green business. He has already convinced Mrs Jumbe to be his senior partner. Last time he was trying to get more people to join him in his campaign for a cleaner environment. He spoke to the director of Kisimba Special School:

2. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 5, LINES 59, 68-69

***DAN:** (...) I'm planning to organise a group of young environmental activists, here in Kisimba, and I was wondering whether you could help.
(...)*

***DIRECTOR:** You know this is a special school, don't you? All the pupils here have some kind of disability.*

***DAN:** Yes, I know that. But I think that's all the more reason to get them involved. Because as well as saving the environment, the students would be helping to change perceptions in society. After all, having a disability doesn't mean you can't do anything.*

3. NARRATOR: Dan has already asked Tina and Anita to be part of the group, and the first meeting is about to take place. Meanwhile, Mercy and her husband Niki have been going through a rough patch because Niki's finding it hard to accept that he's HIV positive. For Mercy, it's sometimes really tough to support him. Last time, she told her friend Tina about it:

4. FLASHBACK: EPISODE 5, LINES 44-48

***MERCY:** (...) Sometimes I ask myself if I did the right thing marrying him.*

***TINA:** Mmm. Did you go and see the counsellor Margaret again, like I told you?*

***MERCY:** I want to, but....*

***TINA:** But what, Mercy? This is no joking matter*

***MERCY:** I know, Tina, I just... I don't know. Niki's not very approachable the moment! I don't know how to deal with him.*

5. NARRATOR: Will Mercy follow her friend's advice and seek support from the counsellor? Let's find out in today's episode: "Only Dead Fish Go with the Flow"!

SCENE 1: MERCY TALKS TO MARGARET

6. ATMO: INDOORS, BIRDS CHIRPING IN THE BACKGROUND

7. MERCY: Thank you for seeing me at such short notice,
Madam Margaret.

8. MARGARET: No problem at all, Mercy! And please, just call me
Margaret. So: how's Niki, your husband? I thought
you would come together?

9. MERCY: Well, I wanted to see you on my own, without him.

10. MARGARET: All right! And what seems to be the problem? Is he
taking his anti-retroviral drugs? And eating well?

11. MERCY: **(WITH DIFFICULTY)** ...Yes and no.

12. MARGARET: What do you mean?

13. MERCY: I mean... he hasn't missed a dose since he started
taking the drugs, but....

14. MARGARET: But...?

15. MERCY: But the food... sometimes he eats well, and
sometimes he just picks at it.

16. MARGARET: Why's that? Doesn't he have any appetite?

17. MERCY: I don't think it's that. It's a mood thing. He has these mood swings, and I don't know how to deal with them any more. Sometimes he's super-happy, and sometimes it's like he's just off in his own world.

KW BEGIN

18. MARGARET: How do you mean?

19. MERCY: Well, when I came home yesterday, he was really happy all of a sudden. He'd even bought me a fridge, and he asked me to forgive him for being so bad-tempered lately. But after a couple of hours he was back to his old sulky ways. It's even starting to affect his work and his studies.

KW END

20. MARGARET: (THOUGHTFULLY) Hmm. ...Listen, Mercy: Niki's going through a difficult transition at the moment --

21. MERCY: I know, but --

22. MARGARET: It is not uncommon for people who've recently been diagnosed as HIV positive to behave like this. He's still struggling to accept his condition. He may well be anti-social and easily annoyed.

23. **MERCY:** But what do I do?
24. **MARGARET:** **(CHUCKLES)** The thing is: in his mind, Niki's convinced that everyone knows about his condition and they're all judging him. What he needs is for someone to understand him, guide him and stand by him.
25. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS)** But that's what I've been trying to do!
26. **MARGARET:** It takes time, and a lot of patience. I know it's not easy for you, Mercy. But believe me: you'll both get used to the situation eventually. You can also take time to spend with him, just the two of you. Exercise with him, go out with him, do things together, and together you'll find a way to deal with it long-term.
27. **MERCY:** **(SIGHS)** Thanks, Margaret. It's always a relief talking to you.
28. **MARGARET:** Any time, Mercy! Any time at all. I tell you what: I'll schedule an appointment for the two of you to come in together. How about next Wednesday at five o'clock? Does that work for you?

29. **MERCY:** I'll have to check with him, but I'll confirm with you as soon as I know.
30. **MARGARET:** All right. If it doesn't work out, just let me know and we'll schedule a different time. Okay?
31. **MERCY:** Okay. Bye, Margaret! And thank you very much.
32. **MARGARET:** Bye, Mercy.

Musical interlude

SCENE 2: ANITA AND TINA MEET AT THE FIRST ENVIRONMENTAL MEETING

33. ATMO: QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD, EXTERIOR

34. **ANITA:** Hi, I'm Anita.

35. **TINA:** Hi, nice to meet you! My name's...

36. **ANITA:** **(CUTS IN)** -- You must be Tina!

37. **TINA:** Yes, I am. How did you know?

38. **ANITA:** Dan mentioned you might be coming, and when you spoke, I recognised your voice from the university radio. You're doing a great job!

39. **TINA:** Ah - thank you! Are we the only ones here?

40. **ANITA:** Yeah, but the director of the school where I work will join us later. Our pupils might be taking part in the project, but we'd only be able to work with them at weekends and during the school holidays. ...Who's that lady Dan's talking to over there?
41. **TINA:** Isn't that Mrs. Jumbe?
42. **ANITA:** Do you know her?
43. **TINA:** **(CHUCKLES)** Yeah, my friend Mercy is married to her son Niki. Crazy woman!
44. **ANITA:** Wait a minute - are you talking about Mercy Msoto?
45. **TINA:** Yes, do you know her?
46. **ANITA:** **(EXCITED)** Yes, I do! She was my friend in high school. I'll kill her! How could she get married without telling me? ... Oh well - maybe I shouldn't blame her. We lost touch when I went back to Laboria...

Musical interlude

SCENE 3: KADU AND BANDA CATCH DEAD FISH

47. ATMO: RIVER FLOWING, BIRDS CHIRPING

48. SFX: SOMEONE WADING IN WATER

49. KADU: Come on, Banda! Jump in!

50. BANDA: No! The water's cold, and it's very dirty today. I think I'll fish from over here.

51. KADU: It's not cold, you're just a sissy!

52. BANDA: Shut up! ... Hey, Kadu, look! Dead fish, everywhere! There's one floating right next to you!

53. KADU: Ha! I'll try and catch some!

54. SFX: WATER SPLASHING AS SOMEONE TRIES TO CATCH SOMETHING

55. KADU: There! I got it! I got it! That was easy!

56. BANDA: **(CELEBRATES)**

57. VOICE: **(FROM AFAR)** Hey, you!

58. BANDA: Kadu! It's that crazy farmer who's always chasing us away from the river! Come on, Kadu! Run!

59. SFX: SOMEBODY GETTING OUT OF THE WATER IN A HURRY

Flashback Ep. 7, line 4

60. **VOICE:** **(APPROACHING)** Hey, you kids! Get out of the river! And throw that fish away! Can't you see it's contaminated?!

61. **KADU/BANDA:** **LAUGH AS THEY RUN AWAY**

62. **SFX:** **FOOTSTEPS RUNNING AWAY**

63. **VOICE:** Hey - stop! **(TO HIMSELF)** Damn it! These kids! I hope they don't eat that fish.

Musical interlude

SCENE 4: YOUNG ACTIVISTS ALLOCATE RESPONSIBILITIES

64. **ATMO:** **QUIET NEIGHBOURHOOD**

65. **SFX:** **SOME PEOPLE TALKING**

66. **DAN:** **(CLEARS THROAT)** Excuse me - guys! Just move in a bit closer...

67. **SFX:** **SHUFFLING OF FEET AS A FEW PEOPLE MOVE IN**

68. **DAN:** First of all, I want to say thank you for your interest in joining this group of young environmental activists. Secondly, I'd like you to meet Mrs. Jumbe.

69. **TINA/ANITA:** **(MURMUR)**

70. DAN: I know, I know! Mrs. Jumbe is obviously a little older than we are. But she's young at heart, and she has expressed an interest in joining us. As a patron. A silent observer.

71. MRS. JUMBE: (LAUGHS) Well, I won't always be silent! I couldn't even if I tried!

72. THEY LAUGH

73. DAN: Let's get started. Does anyone have any ideas they want to share, to set the ball rolling? - Yes, Anita?

74. ANITA: I think the best place to start would be for us to define our objective. What do we want to do? How do we want to go about it? - and so on.

KW BEGIN

75. TINA: Yeah, good idea. We have to look at what we hope to achieve in the long run.

76. ANITA: Okay. So what are we all about?

KW END

- 77. DAN:** The whole community could live a lot better if we all avoided doing certain simple things that damage the environment. Like casually throwing away plastic bottles, or leaving rubbish in the street, or cutting down trees to make quick money... Obviously what we need to do is raise awareness among the people of how these things affect them. And that's where we come in. Civic education doesn't have to be a big project with lots of funding. We can start just by educating the people close to us. Talk about it with our friends, neighbours, colleagues, and so on.
- 78. TINA:** I agree, civic education is very important. It sounds as if radio would be a great medium for this. But my programme is about women's issues.
- 79. ANITA:** The environment affects women, too!
- 80. DAN:** Exactly! And vice versa. You don't have to change the focus of your show - you can just add an environmental angle.

- 81. TINA:** Yeah, well... I guess I could try to highlight environmental issues now and then, to create and increase awareness.
- 82. DAN:** Great! Anita, as you're already in charge of a big group with our first batch of students, I suggest you should be in charge of recruiting and training young activists.
- 83. ANITA:** Fine! I think I can also persuade my colleagues to get involved in introducing our pupils to these issues.

KW BEGIN

- 84. MRS. JUMBE:** Well, I know I'm supposed to be silent, but allow me to butt in here. Maybe you already know that Dan and I are partners in what we like to call 'green business'. We're reusing waste to create attractive items that we sell. Maybe you guys could introduce this concept to your group, as well? You could use it to fund your other projects.
- 85. TINA/ANITA: (MURMUR)**

86. DAN: I was going to suggest the same thing, Mrs. Jumbe. We wouldn't just use the concept to bring in money. We'd also train the youngsters to empower themselves economically by recycling what others consider to be waste.

KW END

87. DAN: Well, this seems like a very good starting point to me. Let's see how far we get by our next meeting, and then we'll discuss where to take it from there.

OUTRO:

Any idea what their first projects could be? And how about Mercy - will she be able to put the counsellor's advice into practice? The twins also got some advice, about the dead fish, but they didn't even hear it. Hmm... If you want to know what happens next, be sure to tune in next time. And if you missed today's or any other episode, you can catch up with us on dw.de/lbe or join us on Facebook. Take care!