

Learning by Ear 2013

Crossroads Generation - Facing Tough Choices

EPISODE ELEVEN: Decision Time

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List of characters by scene:

SCENE 1: LULU TALKS TO MERCY ABOUT HER NIGHTMARE

- **MERCY (F, 15)**
- **LULU (F, 40)**
- **MSOTO (M, 45)**

SCENE 2: DAN MEETS MERCY BEFORE CLASSES

- **DAN (M, 16)**
- **MERCY (F, 15)**

SCENE 3: LULU GOES TO THE POLICE STATION

- **OFFICER MNENE (M)**
- **LULU (F, 40)**

SCENE 4: NIKI REPORTS DAN TO PRINCIPAL JULIETTE

- **JULIETTE (F, 50)**
- **NIKI (M, 16)**

1. INTRO – NARRATOR:

Hello! You're listening to "Crossroads Generation", a Learning by Ear radio drama about three African teenagers who are looking for their place in life.

Let's lean back and summarize what's happened so far:

Dan and Niki are both in love with Mercy, and both of them have written letters to her. Niki's was full of poetic romantic words, while Dan put in some cash. Looks like there's bound to be trouble!

2. DAN (EP 10, 35): "No, Niki, we can't be friends. (...) If this is about Mercy, I say let Mercy decide for herself."

3. NIKI: "You fool! I will make your life in this school so miserable you'll regret you ever came!"

Mercy hasn't replied to either of them yet. But in a heart-to-heart with her mother she admitted that she does have feelings for one of the boys:

4. MERCY (EP 09, 109): "Whenever he looks at me...and I look at him... I feel as if I have butterflies in my stomach."

Mercy's mother, Lulu, is having a hard time at the moment. She misses her two sons, who are supposed to be living with their aunt Lena, Lulu's sister-in-law, in the neighbouring country Laboria. But instead of taking care of the twins, Lena sent them to work in the gold mines. A few days ago they disappeared without a trace. Lena texted her brother Msoto to let him know the boys were missing. But how will he break this news to Mercy and Lulu? Let's find out in the eleventh episode, called "Decision Time". It's night-time, and Msoto still isn't back from the bar. Lulu is having a bad dream about her sons, and when she wakes up she rushes into Mercy's room.

SCENE 1: LULU TALKS TO MERCY ABOUT HER NIGHTMARE

5. **NIGHT ATMO**

6. **SFX: LULU ENTERS - FAST FOOTSTEPS**

7. **SFX: LIGHT BEING SWITCHED ON (HUMMING SOUND OF THE LIGHT)**

8. **MERCY:** (sleepy voice) Mum, what is it? I was just falling asleep. Why did you turn on the light?

9. **LULU:** (breathing heavily) Mercy, I can't sleep. I just had a terrible nightmare.

10. **MERCY:** What do you mean? Sit down, Mum. You're still not well.

11. **LULU:** I had a terrible dream. I dreamt that something bad had happened to your brothers! I don't know what, but I just have this awful feeling that something's wrong.

12. **MERCY:** (comforting) Mum, I'm sure it was just a dream. If you're so worried, why don't you call Aunty Lena and find out how Kadu and Banda are doing?

13. **LULU:** That's exactly what I did as soon as I woke up, but she didn't pick up.

14. **MERCY:** Mum, I'm not surprised. It's late at night and she and my brothers are probably fast asleep. Try again in the morning.

15. **SFX: KNOCKING ON FRONT DOOR**

16. **MSOTO:** (standing outside, drunk voice) Lulu, open up! Open up at once. I am Ali Baba! (shouts loudly) Open Sesame!

17. **LULU:** I can't wait until tomorrow. It might be too late.

18. **MERCY:** Mum, you're worrying me too, now. But let's wait until tomorrow! I'm sure my brothers are fine.

19. **SFX: MORE KNOCKING ON DOOR**

20. **MSOTO:** I said open this door! What are you waiting for? Do you want robbers to come and mug me?

21. **MERCY:** Mum, you'd better go and let him in. Otherwise we won't get any peace tonight.

22. **LULU:** You're right. (shouts) Just a minute, Msoto. I'm coming.

23. **MSOTO:** Coming? Coming? Do you need to take a bus to get to your own front door?

24. **SFX: DOOR BEING UNLOCKED**

25. **MSOTO:** Finally someone responds. Give me something to eat.

26. **SFX: DOOR BEING LOCKED**

27. **LULU:** Msoto, I had this terrible dream tonight, and...

28. **MSOTO:** (not interested) Do we have anything left to eat?

29. **LULU:** (desperate) Msoto, listen! I had this awful dream that --

30. **MSOTO:** (cuts her short) Don't be stupid, Lulu. Just go and get

me some food. I just heard from my sister, Lena. She doesn't like you, you know. She made this bad joke...

31. LULU: (**curious**) You heard from Lena? Oh my goodness! What did she say? Did she say something about Kadu and Banda?

32. SFX: MSOTO SITTING ON SOFA

33. MSOTO: (**drunk**) Yes, but don't take her seriously. She can be foolish sometimes.

34. LULU: (**still very curious**) Please, Msoto. Tell me what she said. Just tell me...

35. MSOTO: She sent me a text message saying the boys had gone missing.

36. MERCY: What?

37. LULU: (**utterly shocked**) Oh God! Mercy! My dream is actually true!

38. MERCY: Maybe Dad is right and Aunt Lena was just joking.

39. LULU: I have to do something!

40. MSOTO: You have to bring something to eat! And Mercy – you go to bed now! You two are waking up the whole neighborhood!

41. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 2: DAN MEETS MERCY BEFORE CLASSES

42. SFX: SCHOOL ATMO IN CORRIDOR

43. DAN: Mercy, it’s so good to see you. I really missed you in class. What was wrong? Are you feeling better now?

44. MERCY: I’m fine, Dan, thanks for asking. It’s good to be back in school.

45. DAN: And what did you think of the gift I sent you? Did you like it? You haven’t said a thing to me about it.

46. MERCY: I don’t know what to say, Dan... Nobody has ever given me so much money before.

47. DAN: I only meant well. I thought you might need the cash. Don’t get me wrong - I wasn’t trying to buy you, or anything like that.

48. MERCY: It’s okay, Dan. But please, don’t make a habit of it. Thank you - I’ve accepted it, but this was the first and last time.

49. DAN: **(chuckles)** Okay, I promise. No more gifts in cash, I promise. But I can buy you some other stuff, can’t I, like... you know... gifts that girls like.

50. MERCY: You speak as if you have plenty of experience. How many girlfriends have you had before?

51. DAN: **(caught off guard)** Me? Girlfriends? Er... To be honest

with you Mercy, you’re the first girl I’ve really... um ...
been interested in.

52. MERCY: (shyly) Really? How can I believe you? You come from another country. Maybe there’s a girl waiting for you back in Laboria.

53. DAN: It’s true that I come from another country. And yes, there are many pretty girls in Laboria. But none that can be compared to you Mercy. I mean, everything about you is beautiful.

54. MERCY: (Giggles) Thanks, Dan.

55. DAN: Mercy, I need to know something. Do you feel the same? Just be honest with me. Do you feel anything for me at all?

KW BEGIN

56. **MERCY:** Hmmm... Dan, I don't know. We barely know each other! I think I need some time. There's so much happening in my life at the moment... Especially at home but I can't talk about it right now.

57. **DAN:** I understand. I don't want to pressure you or anything. But please, please don't break my heart. I --

58. **MERCY:** Dan, don't say that. I don't want to break anyone's heart. Not yours, not Niki's, not anyone's.

59. **DAN:** But you have to decide soon. You do see that, don't you? We can't go on like this forever.

KW END

60. **MERCY:** Dan - I'm really confused at the moment. I just need time. Please.

61. **SFX: SCHOOL BELL RINGS**

62. **DAN:** Can I at least walk you to the bus stop after school?

63. **MERCY:** **(confused)** Er... I think so, but Trudy may be around too. We usually go home together. If you don't mind, you're welcome to join us.

64. **DAN:** I don't really fancy Trudy's company, but for your sake I'd love to walk with you.

65. **MUSIC INTERLUDE**

SCENE 3: LULU GOES TO THE POLICE STATION

66. SFX: POLICE STATION, SIREN FROM A DISTANCE

67. OFFICER MNENE: Next! **(short pause)** Yes, how can we help you?

68. LULU: Officer, I’m here to report my two sons missing.

69. SFX: PEN WRITING ON PAPER

70. OFFICER: Okay. Two boys are missing. What are their names?

71. LULU: Kadu and Banda.

72. SFX: PEN WRITING ON PAPER

73. LULU: Kadu and Banda Msoto. They’re twins.

74. OFFICER: All right. How old are they?

75. LULU: Just eight years old.

76. SFX : PEN WRITING ON PAPER

77. OFFICER: So, when was the last time you saw them and what were they wearing?

78. LULU: **(nervous)** I can’t remember what they were wearing. The last time I saw them was almost three months ago.

79. OFFICER: **(completely shocked)** Three months ago! And you’re reporting their disappearance *now*?

80. LULU: That’s because they went to live with their aunty in Laboria! I only found out yesterday that they were missing.

81. OFFICER: I don’t understand. You’re saying that these two boys are not in Kisimba? That they’re actually in Laboria?

82. LULU: Yes. Their aunt took them. Her name is Lena. It was my husband’s idea. I didn’t want it at all...

83. OFFICER: Look, I’m very sorry, but there’s really not much we can do to help.

KW BEGIN

84. LULU: **(bit scared)** Actually, I was hoping maybe you could talk to the police there, and maybe they could look for them.

85. OFFICER: I’m sorry, but we can't help you. Please step aside, madam. **(calls out)** Next!

86. SFX: PAPER BEING RIPPED OFF PAGE AND THEN CRUMPLED AND THROWN AWAY

87. LULU: **(starts to cry)** No, no, no, please don’t throw the report away. Please, my boys need me! I don't know how to find them on my own. Help me, Officer, please!

88. OFFICER: (calls out) Next!

KW END

89. LULU: No, Officer, you have to help me. I’m not going to leave here until you help me.

90. OFFICER: I’m in no mood for these games! Corporal, take this woman and lock her in the cell. When she calms down you can let her go.

91. LULU: (desperate crying) No! Please!

92. SFX: STEPS CORPORAL

93. SFX: HAND CUFFS

94. MUSIC INTERLUDE

SCENE 4: NIKI REPORTS DAN TO PRINCIPAL JULIETTE

95. SFX: KNOCKING ON DOOR

96. JULIETTE: Yes, come in.

97. NIKI: Hello, Madam Principal.

98. JULIETTE: Hello Niki, what is it? How can I help you?

99. NIKI: Well... I’m here to report someone.

100. JULIETTE: Mm-hm. Go ahead. I’m listening.

101. NIKI: It’s this boy Dan. He doesn’t respect me. He’s stubborn, disobedient, and a troublemaker.

102. JULIETTE: Okay. And what do the other students think of him? Do they like him? Does he have a particular friend, or friends?

103. NIKI: That's the problem. Many of the students don't like him, Madam. You know, he comes from Laboria: he acts differently, he talks differently, he thinks differently. He doesn't fit in with the rest.

104. JULIETTE: And if you were in my place, Niki, what would you do?

105. NIKI: **(maliciously)** I would send him back to Laboria.

106. MUSIC INTERLUDE

107. OUTRO - NARRATOR:

And Niki's act of revenge brings us to the end of this eleventh episode of "Crossroads Generation". Will Principal Juliette believe Niki and punish Dan? If the police won't help Lulu, how will she find her sons? And what about Dan? He's confessed his feelings to Mercy, but is he serious? You might find some clues by watching his video blog online. Just log on to dw.de/lbe, where you'll find more information about "Learning by Ear" as well as videos, audios, and free downloads. Just to remind you, we're also on Facebook. Until we meet again: take care.