

Rampe? Reicht! Season 1 Episode 8: Crisis and Friendships

tier: ramp?

SR: enough!

tier: 20 minute podcast about

SR: today's episode is about crisis and friendships

tier: i'm simo tier and currently i bake a lot of delicious things and as always with me is my co-host SchwarzRund, author of the afroqueer novel Biskaya, from which they are reading us a scene as an introduction to today's topic

SR: exactly, we are entering the scene at a concert. the protagonist Tue is Black german and she used to live in a flat together with Plenz, a white trans person, and Mal, another queer person. Mal and Tue took care of Plenz for a long time until Plenz then actually took their life. Since then the Tue and Mal had almost no contact, and now they're meeting for the first time on the roof of this concert location again, before Tue's show. "With music on her ears, she sang herself warm, went through the setlist, avoided every eye contact. She skipped the soundcheck, no one held her accountable. As the drinks were finally made available, she grabbed one of the frozen vodka bottles. Armed with music, alcohol, and Betto's weed that he surely would miss, she made for the roof of the location. as she arrived on the flat roof, she balanced carefully to the edge, let her legs dangle, while the pure vodka burned in her throat. there were still two hours left until she had to go on stage. she felt empty, looked without thinking at anything over the old town, on who's streets the evening sun was burning. The smell of the soft asphalt mixed with the evening kitchens serving up big for the tourists. the summer reared up one last time, it was still over 30 degrees. quietly she sang along to classics, while she nibbled on her nails. despite everything that happened in her band: to sit on a roof, to sing, to know what would happen in the next few hours, prescribed euphoria, this was the cocktail she was enjoying. In these moments she could allow every sadness because there is no degree of depression which wouldn't be automatically wiped away in the two hour show. she called out loud to the vibrant old town below: 'I'm pretty tired now and I'm getting used to that, no matter what one tries to do, one can only lose this type of game' " that's from the song "I used to be mostly sad " (Früher war ich meistens traurig) by the band Herrenmagazin. "she flinched when an arm was put around her. Mal, her former roommate, grabbed her Vodka bottle, both stared wordlessly into the sunset. there was only silence in her, there was no energy to inquire. after some minutes, Mal took her headphones out. 'I knew I would get you here. I let myself in with a backstage pass', he said. 'really very good security check here', replied Tue dryly, but continued softer: 'how are you, dear? I'm sorry that I couldn't be be there for you ...' but Mal interrupted her. 'Do not worry. The main thing is that you are still here. You did not follow Plenz.' Only now she realized how long it had been since she'd heard the name, though all that had happened, was connected to Plenz's death. 'well, Plenz would surely have hated that if I had copied them.' Mal laughed. 'Yes. allow Plenz a few years without you, wherever the place is after death.' She nodded. 'who is now going to deal with Plenz's pointless discussions about the rules of the truly good, noble queerness?' ,she asked thoughtfully. 'someone will surely be found. very fast, I assume, Plenz unites all stylistic clichés in themselves for the purpose of fast recognition.' it felt good to talk about Plenz, to laugh without having to gloss over things. with Mal up here she had the first conversation, which did Plenz justice, which didn't feel like a lie. Somehow Plenz was with them, drank the Vodka empty too quickly, annoyed both of them with their well-known narrow-mindedness when it came to scene codes that neither Tue nor Mal wanted to meet. They badmouthed Plenz's buttons and patches, that had made every pocket to a political operating instruction. it was a farewell to each other, as much as they enjoyed the presence of one another. In the last few years that they had taken care of Plenz, their old connection was frozen under the pressure to keep Plenz alive. they were like parents who no longer loved each other, staying together because of the child. now their faces reminded each other only of the loss, the disappointment to have failed. Sometime Tues the phone rings, she had to go downstairs to get ready. Mal wanted to stay on the roof, Tue left him the vodka bottle, hugged him

goodbye, which would be permanent."

tier: thank you!

SR: that's the excerpt.

tier: its nice to hear, now at the end of our first season ...

SR: a bit of prose, bit of history. exactly we have thought about it a bit how we approach the subject and decided to start with fiction. because the subject is not that easy.

tier: that's right. I notice with myself too it pushes many buttons.

SR: yes

tier: also this scene in the book touched me a lot while reading it, because i think many many of us know that: this, like a farewell or when a friendship comes to an end although you still very very very much love eachother

SR: yes

tier: that's not that easy and i think how you were able to put it into words in this scene andin the novel is very impressive.

SR: oh thank you!

tier: yes, thanks to you!

SR: yes I decided to read this scene because it's represents like a bit of a closure from the first act which revolves around Plenz, and today is also our last episode of the first season, that goes very well together. Plenz is of course a now an extreme example but ultimately we all know that queer people, disabled people, people with mental health issues, we are simply more crisis-ridden, we have more crises in our lives and that is just a burden. So I don't think that is meant derogatory at all, but it is simply a burden for friendships.

tier: that's right. if you then also look at that a big percentage of queer and disabled people are also more likely to be friends with queer and disabled people, it comes together that crisis-ridden people share their lives with other crisis-ridden people

SR: you shape your lives together

tier: exactly, share your life

SR: work together

tier: exactly, and sooner or later it happens that it can also become difficult very quickly.

SR: Exactly and it's very difficult to then say who has to do what now so that the friendship doesn't get destroyed, because, for example, in the book it's about that Plenz, that is only mentioned in the margin, because of trans-hostility didn't have had access to psychiatry and psychiatric medicine and so on and so on, so was left alone with themselves to deal with everything while Tue, who cis, for example ends up in a psychiatry. and in hospital and so on and that is a bit of the problem: like with this ancient doctrine we got of "everyone can get help" we have to think about racism, transantagonism, fat-shaming and the health system and think about status too! so for whom are also because citizenship medical facilities accessible at all?

tier: yes!

SR: maybe you like to tell: how are you dealing with it? because you have for example chronic pain and a high pain level is otherwise .. that is a crisis that rarely occurs, maybe somebody breaks their leg in circle of friends or something

tier: exactly

SR: and that happens every ten years and then everyone cares very much and then the leg is healed again and then all is good again.

tier: yes, that's a good question, especially because today is another day where it's pretty bad, so i had to organize my Podcast recording station completely differently, so that I can sit or lie down on the sofa. that is the question, so with me it's actually so that i try as much as possible to get help from outside. I'm for example waiting to hear after applying for assistance (in the home), but the way there is very long and I have the privilege that it will probably work out at some point.

Nevertheless, friendships are in demand, especially you (both laugh) because you are the person I call first and will complain to on the phone

SR: very good!

tier: but also when it comes to practical things, like shopping or preparing food.

SR: yes, also the ability to make decisions, I think with pain it's so extreme, because you would actually need someone to hold your hand all the time, even if you can do things, but it's just..

tier: what works, what doesn't and it is, yes probably this that happens very very quickly and very often with chronic illnesses and crises that quickly friendships become assistants .. so friends become assistants.

SR: yes, that is definitely a big problem.

tier: and it's a problem, but it doesn't have to be a problem either when that's named and i think that's like: people have fear of contact, but also have fears to name that because I believe it's actually better to say, "hey, friends, i need help with abc and I still don't get any help from outside or official help or something, it doesn't work yet, or it is not that far, that would be the list of things I would need, who could take over what in which form?"

SR: yes that's right

tier: I think that's a very good solution and i would like to appeal to address these things more directly, because it requires an incredible amount of energy and effort required by the, I'll call it now, affected person, but also from the friends who want to help because it is really hard sometimes first to ask for help, and secondly if one wants to help to ask "what do you actually need?"

SR: yes, I think this actually is a really big thing because I believe the way we usually help in friendships is more of a kind of, it's not meant to sound mean, I'm definitely doing it myself also, something like .. I can't think of an example, but that we are more likely to help in the form of lifting the life of the other person on the level what we find right, but won't ask what the person actually, so what is the idea of ??buen vivir, of the good life is for the person and ...

tier: (laughs), i have a good example because i do that too and if everything is too much for me, laying down and resting is always the most important thing and I always recommend to others: "go take a rest" though, I do I recommend it to you too and if you're then currently in work mode, you're like: "why should I rest now?" (laughs)

SR: (laughs) exactly! if i have such problems because somehow i have a big to-do list, I'm having problems to start doing things I think "if I go to rest now I feel even worse and I don't get anything done" like that.

tier: (laughs) exactly, and that would be really the point to say: "okay I hear you need support, how can I support you now? "

SR: exactly, exactly! I think that's just an intense step to take oneself back, which is definitely always important, but is especially important when we're talking about physical and psychological chronic situations.

tier: indeed!

SR: exactly, so I think, for example, we both have different focal points for what is a good apartment for us, so to speak, so not the perfect apartment, I think the perfect apartment is the same for us, because that is socially determined: everything is clean, period! but a good apartment, by that I mean so that you can feel ok with it. and that is for you: the kitchen of the clean and the rest is ok but the kitchen is spotless.

tier: yes!

SR: and for me it's exactly the other way around, because I work at home, so the kitchen is a workroom that also exists

tier: and the desk must be completely free of things (laughs)

SR: the desk has to be spotless, and I think that's totally funny to notice how like the two of us also find more and more a way that if you need help, i try now to be more careful to ask "okay, how about your kitchen? okay what groceries do you need?" so more to understand that for you it is simply different topics, while for me it is more like "ok, can you somehow make it five to ten minutes to tidy up your living room or what would be the first task you have to deal with at your desk?" and I think that's the way it is with such a constant possibility for crisis, it's really important to learn and also to learn proactively outside of the crisis, because otherwise you come in exactly where the people in the book are, that you actually lose friendship dynamic because you only find

yourself on ... you know, you're only constantly reacting but not at all longer planning and ..
tier: yes that's right that no framework of conditions are set and therefore there is no ... one has actually never such a free time but then it's all about reacting and supporting

SR: exactly and that's just no friend- dynamic, that is an emergency care dynamic!

tier: it would of course be ideal if we were to talk about that friends don't actually have to intervene, or that people would not be on their own, it's not what we're saying "that's how it should be", but a little bit suggestions on how to make it easier for yourself.

SR: that's exactly what I think, so I think if the same mistake shows up again and again, written now a bit in program language , but if you keep being confronted with the same problem in a friendship, then the question definitely arises at some point: "ok, which assistance could take over that?" or how do we get there that you can deal with it yourself, or is that just not possible and then you just need another solution, and i believe that is definitely something where you can use yourself up. unless it's something that do you like to take over and brings a benefit for you too. the typical example would be helping old people with going out with the dog.

tier: yes

SR: then it can make total sense that for example the grandchild that actually would like to have a dog or is annoying the parents with it, could take the dog out once a day, because that's always recurring, but it benefits the person, because dogs are simply amazing!

tier: (laughs) yes that's right!

SR: Exactly, so I think it is definitely a point that's in there, of course it would be good if the system could take over everything, but it doesn't and i believe it's also a very western point of view on that any care work must always be nationalized and is actually delegitimized in each form of illegitimate social connection

tier: ah, outside of family because we're so detached here in the western world from family, but now when I look at us personally with our migration histories, that we are both actually geographically removed from family

SR: yes, definitely!

tier: we are not there, even if our family might want to support us, they are not...

SR: exactly, not tangible.

tier: exactly and that's why it inevitably goes so we ourselves then build up family structures that are then based on friendships.

SR: I struggle with it, there are both concepts: on the one hand this thing to say this is the chosen family

tier: yes

SR: and then there is this concept of that there is only friendship that's like a family, and somehow it's all like (laughs), that's so very German for me, so this "acquaintance, friend, chosen family, family" and the only queer thing in it is to call someone chosen family. while out of my cultural context if you have someone .. so my dad always says five years, so if you are friends with someone for longer than five years, they are family! and actually a very good rule of thumb, because that actually says "between the third and fifth year someone becomes accepted in the family" there is no word for it (laughs) familized, so! and that's more independent, so there is no that moment of "you get married and then are you family "but if you are five years in the life of someone, then you are family with all pros and cons, like that. but it doesn't matter if you got married after the first year or after the seventh, or after that, you know, it does none, none, has no influence on it! and then I think you don't even have that struggle with "oh god, it's just a friendship, like can i ask for help? "or "who is actually family?"

tier: that's right

SR: in the broader sense, and not choisen family, because I also choose my biological family. that is also such a handing over of responsibility that I don't like. I choose who from my birth family I have in my life

tier: yes, absolutely!

SR: well, in crises we tend to be more likely to ask the people around us for help to ask.

tier: who is the person when you are in a crisis, who is the first person you think of that you want to talk to?

SR: yes

tier: that could also be an indication for actual family and connectedness

SR: and also a good rule of thumb!: if that's you for someone else, so someone calls you first if the person is in crisis, but that feels totally weird to you, then you should definitely have a conversation about your dynamics and that's something i am learning! some people really like to have me as a pillar in their crisis where I think "hey, we've only known each other for five minutes, why ..? "

tier: yes, and then also this: "will you only be called when they are in crisis? "

SR: exactly, exactly, exactly!

tier: or are there other aspects to your connection?

SR: yes, and I think that's quite a important pillar: you are not a good crisis aid out of a friendship perspective if you are only there when it is crisis, because then you are only assistance and nothing more, it was never friendship.

tier: exactly

SR: yes, that as the first first look, we have absolutely a few ideas about this topic for the next season.

tier: uh, yes that is such a huge topic, to start dissecting it now, it's not easy to keep everything short, but we're trying!

SR: Exactly, we have two shipping recommendations besides (the novel) Biscaya for you all, say yours first

tier: I recommend my ... one of my zines, that is the friends zine, maybe some of you know that already. when we're now talking about friendships, maybe that's something a little cheerful, it's something like a my friends- book where you let your friends write in. it's not so normative, it's rather a queer feminist version of this and that you can find it in my etsy-shop, which is linked here.

SR: great! exactly, that's very very colorful and also very suitable for children. yes I have another recommendation: a book that will now appear, it's published by Eliah Lüthi with close supervision by Lahya Aukongo, it will be published by the edition assemblage and is called "Disabled and Crazy Signing Words Finding Images", there are texts from I think over 40 authors and I'm represented in it with a text on neurodiversity and friendships, so in keeping with the topic today, and a fan text about Nina Simone

tier: I'm curious about it!

SR: exactly! otherwise this is the last episode of the first season!

tier: wow! There's already a whole series of ramp is enough, amazing!

SR: that is very, very cool and completely recorded in a crisis, I am very proud of us! exactly, you can support us on patreon this has various great consequences! consequence one is that i don't have to pay the cost of the website myself no longer, that would be wonderful!

tier: that would be really great!

SR: the much greater consequence would be that we could invite guests for the next season

tier: yes, because we are already busy planning the second season and also very motivated! our big wish is that we can invite guests to take over our podcast, produce their own episodes about topics where we may not know a lot.

SR: exactly, so if you feel like supporting go to patreon.com/rampereicht, or support once at rampereicht@gmail.com via paypal and exactly there you can also send us what topics you want to hear us discuss, we'll see if we feel competent enough to do that or whether we want to get a guest for it, or if you yourself are disabled and or chronically ill and or mentally ill, or neurodivergent, neurodiverse, then you are welcome to do takeover! just write us, we'll try like i said to organize money we don't want anyone to work unpaid and we are definitely planning to produce a season 2! when it premieres you will find out

tier: as usual via youtube, or via social media where you will find us, you will find me for example on twitter at [@simo_tier](https://twitter.com/simo_tier) or on instagram as [simo_tier](https://www.instagram.com/simo_tier)

SR: you can find me [@SchwarzRund](https://www.instagram.com/SchwarzRund) and everywhere very simply everywhere the same that is easy

and you can now find us at instagram, we chose one social media account which is @rampereicht
tier: exactly, at the latest there you will find out when it continues with season 2!
SR: we're at the end of this season!
tier: and this podcast
SR: is it as well!