

AMA[©] IN AMERICA

"Mom comes home"

A sitcom

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AMA IN AMERICA
"Mom comes home"
TABLE DRAFT
06/30/20

CAST LIST

AMA GILMAN.TBD
TIM GILMAN.TBD
CHRISTINE GILMAN.TBD
BEN-DAVID GILMAN.TBD
NASHAE LINDSETH. TBD
TEALEANNA LINDSETH.TBD
JAYLA LINDSETH.TBD
KEN LINDSETH (GRANDFATHER).TBD
MIRIAM LINDSETH (GRANDMOTHER)TBD
JACE KRIEGER (NEIGHBOR BOY).TBD
PRINCIPAL BILL WELLS.TBD
JILIAN CRUMPETT (ENGLISH TEACHER). TBD
MYRA BRIGGS (BIOLOGY TEACHER). TBD
MR. HACHREL (ALGEBRA TEACHER). TBD
COACH JACK HARCOURT. TBD
JACKSON MONROE (FELLOW STUDENT). TBD
LUCY WASHINGTON (LIBERIAN HAIRDRESSER).TBD
GEORGIE TARDY (AMA'S LIBERIAN BROTHER - GREBO TRIBE). . . .TBD
ROSE TARDY (AMA'S BIRTH MOTHER - GREBO TRIBE). TBD
JAMES TARDY (AMA'S BIRTH FATHER - GREBO TRIBE).TBD

AMA IN AMERICA
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TABLE DRAFT
06/30/18

LOCATIONS

EXT. WALDO HIGH SCHOOL
INT. WALDO HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY
INT. PRINCIPAL WELLS OFFICE — WALDO HIGH SCHOOL
EXT. AFRO-ROOTS BEAUTY PARLOR IN WALDO
INT. MS. BRIGGS BIOLOGY CLASS
EXT. A NEIGHBORHOOD IN WALDO
INT. BETTY'S BODACIOUS BAKERY IN WALDO
EXT. WALDO CITY PARK
EXT. THE STREET BY THE GILMAN'S HOUSE, IN WALDO
INT. AMA GILMAN'S BEDROOM
INT. GILMAN HOUSE KITCHEN
EXT. GILMAN BACK YARD
EXT. BY THE SIDE OF THE GILMAN'S HOUSE
EXT. THE GILMAN'S DRIVEWAY
EXT. THE GILMAN'S PORCH
INT. TIM AND CHRISTINE GILMAN'S BEDROOM
INT. JACKSON'S VAN
EXT. WALDO BOWL-A-RAMA
INT. WALDO BOWL-A-RAMA
EXT. A RUNNING TRACK IN WALDO
EXT. THE STREET BY GILMAN'S CAR

ACT ONETEASER

FADE IN

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

1 EXT. WALDO HIGH SCHOOL – WALDO - FRIDAY AFTERNOON 1

The school is a one-story brick building. A bronze image of a badger, the school mascot, sits on a stand by the flagpole.

SFX: THIRD PERIOD BELL

2 INT. WALDO HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY 2

AMA GILMAN, age 14, a lean, quirky looking black girl with braided hair walks toward camera with a referral card in hand. She's barefoot, and waves to friends she passes.

AMA

(shows card to camera)

In Liberia, teachers don't give teenagers
REFERRALS! They give them, like, time outs.

3 INT. PRINCIPAL WELLS OFFICE – WALDO HIGH SCHOOL 3

Ama, sits facing the principal. She fans herself with the referral card, and chews her favorite minty green gum.

PRINCIPAL WELLS is in his early 40s. He wears black retro glasses, a light blue suit, and a narrow 80s tie. He looks up from papers on his desk, and sees Ama is chewing gum.

CG GRAPHIC: A flashing white arrow appears and points to the gum in Ama's mouth. The type reads: SHE LOVES MINTY GUM.

CG: A sparkle of light on the gum.

SFX: Bell sound.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Have you forgotten Waldo's pet peeves?

(MORE)

CLOSEUP OF SIGN ON THE WALL BY THE DOOR.

TYPE ON SIGN: GUM & CELL PHONES FORBIDDEN ON SCHOOL GROUNDS!

Principal Wells points down with his index finger, but Ama doesn't get what he is communicating.

PRINCIPAL WELLS (CONT'D)

No gum allowed. It's verboten.

Ama takes the gum from her mouth, feigns to throw it in the trash, and sticks it to the bottom of her chair.

AMA

Verboten? What does that mean?

SFX: THE SOUND OF AMA'S CELL PHONE VIBRATING.

Principal Wells holds out his hand. Ama takes her cell phone from her backpack, and is about to give it to him but she notices a text message and quickly types BBL, BBS, BFN.

CLOSE UP OF AMA'S CELL PHONE, from Ama's POV.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Look it up. Let's have the phone.

Ama unhappily puts the phone in Principal Well's hand.

PRINCIPAL WELLS (CONT'D)

You can pick up your phone after school.

AMA

Can't I just read my text messages?

PRINCIPAL WELLS

No, the Ama cyber-cafe is closed.

AMA

Geez, I'll have like a million messages by the end of school today.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Right. May I have the card, please? (MORE)

Ama hands him the card. He reads it and appears perplexed. He looks up at Ama. She smiles, and shrugs her shoulders.

PRINCIPAL WELLS (CONT'D)

This says you missed Algebra, and English.
And something about. . .shoes?

AMA

Yeah; I had very important stuff to do.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

'Stuff' more important than classes?

CLOSE UP OF AMA AS SHE RECALLS HER DAY.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

4 INT. AFRO-ROOTS HAIR SALON - WALDO - NOON 4

LUCY, a Liberian, smiles while braiding Ama's hair.

AMA (V.O.)

Like, first I had to get my hair braided. . .

5 INT. WALDO HIGH SCHOOL - A HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 5

Ama and her friend, NASHAE, are trading shoes by a locker.

AMA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

. . .then I traded Nashae for shoes.

END FLASHBACK

6 INT. PRINCIPAL WELLS OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE UP OF AMA, as she suddenly remembers another thing.

AMA (CONT'D)

OH! And I need to make my Mom A BANNER!
She gets home from Germany tomorrow!
If I don't make a banner I won't get to
visit Liberia this coming summer!

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Gosh, it's a TRAVESTY! Ama, do you realize
you've missed five days of school thus far?
Do you intend to be a freshman forever?

AMA

If I say yes will I be in trouble?

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Read my lips: YES.

AMA

I missed for good reasons! There was a Hanna Montana reunion show on Disney, and I went to look at puppies, and Justin Bieber had a special on in the afternoon.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

All fiddle-faddle. Who is Nashae?

AMA

Nashae Lindseth. She's like the second best runner in this school.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

Ah. And I assume you are the best runner?

AMA

DUH! I'm the best girl runner, anyway.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

I'll alert the media. You should use your speed to get to class. You're excused. One more referral and you'll be suspended.

They stand. Ama adjusts her backpack. He notices her feet.

AMA

Yes sir. Will I have to go back to Liberia?

PRINCIPAL WELLS

What? No. And, where are your shoes?

AMA

I never wore shoes in Liberia.

PRINCIPAL WELLS

All students MUST wear shoes. FIND some.

FADE OUT

END TEASER
ACT ONE

ACT ONE

FADE IN

MUSIC: African theme music "Across Kossanto."

EXT. THE GILMAN'S FRONT YARD — DAY

Tim, Christine, and Ama Gilman come from the house. AMA, IN THE FOREGROUND, BLOWS A KISS TO THE CAMERA.

CG GRAPHIC: SHOW TITLE COMES ONSCREEN "AMA IN AMERICA."

END TITLE SEQUENCE

7 INT. A HALLWAY IN WALDO HIGH SCHOOL — AFTERNOON 7

Ama walks to class in furry boots, and is chewing gum.

AMA

(to camera)

This school has dumb rules. Like, in Liberia lots of students go barefoot. And they don't have gum police. UGH! Liberia has a woman president. The women of Liberia overthrew the government. Once, Liberia had a really evil dictator named Charles Taylor. Women rock! One day I'm going to be president of Liberia!

SFX: CLASS BELL RINGS.

8 INT. BIOLOGY CLASSROOM — DAY 8

NASHAE LINDSETH, and Ama sit by each other in the back of the class. Nashae is a half-black girl with blondish hair, and being raised by her white grandparents. ALL Students are holding bananas. The teacher, MS. MYRA BRIGGS, is showing how to put a condom on a banana.

MS. BRIGGS

Pregnancy can be avoided by using a condom.
Now everyone, slide a condom on your banana.

Nashae puts a condom on her banana. Ama tears hers, and raises her hand. Ms. Briggs comes to their table. Ama holds up the condom.

AMA
My condom tore. Can I get another one?

MS. BRIGGS
(hands condom to Ama)
Yes. Here you go dear. Be more careful.

Ms. Briggs goes to help other students. Ama puts the condom on the banana but tears it. She blows it like a balloon.

AMA
(laughs)
I am never going to use one of these!
They're stupid! I'm never having sex.
I'm also done with social distancing.

NASHAE
Yeah. You are so getting knocked up.
You should keep a mask in your locker.
Did Principal Wells yell at you?

AMA
YEAH! He says I have to wear shoes!
First it was masks, and then shoes.

Nashae has put the condom on her banana and it is perfect.

NASHAE
(she pinches the top of the condom)
Later, they'll make us cut up frogs.

AMA
GROSS! Stop touching that thing.

NASHAE
You have to leave stretchy rubber at the top for the guy's junk, or the junk overflows and you get pregnant and you have to work at McDonald's to feed your bratty kid.

AMA
UGH! THAT'S DISGUSTING, NASHAE!

9 EXT. A SIDEWALK IN WALDO — AN HOUR LATER

9

Ama and Nashae walk home, texting each other. Ama is barefoot again. She carries a grocery bag full of shoes.

AMA

Your phone has an awesome keyboard. You can text, like, a billion words a minute.

NASHAE

Yeah. But I get service, like, nowhere.

AMA

But it has 3,000 awesome hip-hop ring-tones.

NASHAE

Yeah, it even has fart ring-tones.

10 INT. BETTY'S BODACIOUS BAKERY - WALDO - AFTERNOON 10

Ama and Nashae stare at the items in the display case.

NASHAE

Does your mom even like pie?

AMA

DUH! Nashae, all moms like pies.

NASHAE

Why don't you just bake her a pie?

AMA

UGH! 'Cause I don't have TIME, NASHAE!

NASHAE

Buy frozen crust and put filling in it.

AMA

Just because you put junk in a pie shell doesn't make it a pie, Nashae.

NASHAE

What about cheesecake? Cheesecake has crust.

AMA

Cheesecake isn't pie.

NASHAE

Have you even seen a cheesecake?

AMA

"Cake" means it's not a pie. Pies have top crusts with dimples. DUH!

11 EXT. A SIDEWALK – TEN MINUTES LATER – AFTERNOON 11

Ama is carrying a white bakery box that contains a pie.

NASHAE

Are you going to tell your parents you got another referral?

AMA

NO! That would be stupid! Then I'd be grounded, like, FOREVER. UGH!

NASHAE

Do parents ground children in Liberia?

AMA

DUH! PROBABLY! OH GOD – I forgot about THESE SHOES! I can't take them home!

Ama sets the paper bag with the shoes on the sidewalk.

NASHAE

You don't like the furry boots? I thought they totally rocked.

AMA

YEAH! But these others are STINKY!

NASHAE

Okay, give me the ones you don't want. I know what we can do with them.

12 EXT. WALDO CITY PARK – MINUTES LATER 12

Nashae tosses a pair of green high-top tennis shoes onto a limb of the tree. The tree is festooned with pairs of shoes.

AMA

Wow, there are a zillion shoes in this tree.

NASHAE

Yeah, it's like recycling. We ought to toss rubbers in a tree. That'd be cool.

AMA

Do all guys have things as big as bananas? Because if they do I'm never dating guys.

NASHAE

No. Some are short but fat as watermelons.

AMA

NASHAE! BE SERIOUS! Do they or don't they?

NASHAE

Mostly they're long as firemen's hoses.

AMA

STOP, NASHAE! I know you're a virgin like me.

DISSOLVE TO:

13 EXT. THE STREET - GILMAN'S HOUSE - SATURDAY MORNING 13

We see the front of the late model two-story light gray house on a cul de sac. Many fir trees can be seen behind the house. Similar houses are on either side of the Gilman's house.

SFX: A ROOSTER CROWS.

14 INT. AMA'S BEDROOM 14

POV from the doorway of the room. A bedside lamp is on. A graphic mural is on the far wall. The bed is wood, glazed white, and has a fabric draped over the headboard. Ama sleeps on the floor beneath a pile of blankets. We can hear her breathing.

CG GRAPHIC: White type, with a white arrow, appear. Arrow points to Ama. Type reads: SHE HATES SLEEPING IN HER BED.

15 INT. THE KITCHEN - SATURDAY - MORNING 15

MUSIC TRACK: AFRICAN DRUMS

TIM GILMAN, age 60, loads a dishwasher. He is a heavysset man, with short white hair. Ama is in the foreground doing a sort of hip-hop style dance. Tim does not notice what Ama is doing and continues loading the dishwasher. The walls of the kitchen are mango yellow, the hardwood floor, new appliances, and wood cabinetry convey the Gilmans are rich.

THE KITCHEN TABLE - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Ama and her father are seated at the kitchen table. Ama has

a blanket over her head. They are discussing Ama's desire to get a dog. Ama has drawn a cartoon of her ideal dog.

TIM

Think of the other things you've gotten,
and what happened to them.

AMA

DAD! I'm not going to destroy a dog by
pulling its legs off. UGH!

TIM

You could. You destroyed a telephone, and a
camera. You break things that can't be broken.

AMA

Be serious, Dad. I won't destroy a dog.

TIM

How do I know that?

AMA

I'd have fun with it.

TIM

But what if it doesn't obey you?

CG GRAPHIC: Animation bubble. A dog sits facing Ama, stands, wags its tail, barks, and the bubble breaks apart.

AMA

I'd put it in a time out.

TIM

Yeah, then what happens?

AMA

I wouldn't play with it for a while.

TIM

Is that what you did with your phone?
You told me you didn't like your phone.

AMA

Because it's all scratched up.

TIM

Well, look at the dog. He has a band-aide.

AMA
That's a necklace, Dad. See?

TIM
What if the dog got scratched up? If I was
a dog I'd be afraid to live with you.

MUSIC TRACK: AFRICAN DRUMS

Ama wraps the blanket around herself and we follow her
upstairs to her bedroom. She moves in fast motion.

16 INT. AMA'S BEDROOM - MORNING 16

AMA
(to camera)
About the dog. . .my Dad is right.

Ama squats down under a white wicker desk. From her POV we
see rows of gum stuck to the bottom of the desk.

CG GRAPHIC: White type, with a flashing white arrow, appear
on the left side of the frame.

CG TYPE ON SCREEN: Ama's gum gallery.

AMA (CONT'D)
(to camera)
I've been pasting gum here for three
months. My goal is to cover this with gum.
(sits on bed)
In Liberia they reuse junk. Like, I saw a gum
bracelet, and a tambourine made from flattened
tops of soda bottles. It was cool.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A VILLAGE IN LIBERIA - DAY

A retro 1940s style film clip of traditional Liberian
dancers. A DANCER, chewing gum, shakes a homemade tambourine.

FADE OUT

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

17 INT. THE GILMAN'S KITCHEN - SATURDAY - LATE MORNING 17

Tim is dressed for work. Ama wears her polka-dotted robe. Tim is reminding Ama about her chores for the day.

TIM
(points to his own eyes)
Right here.

CLOSE UP OF TIM'S FACE, AS IF WE ARE LOOKING FROM AMA'S POV.
CG GRAPHICS: A VORTEX OF LINES AS IF HE IS HYPNOTIZING AMA.

TIM (CONT'D)
Read my lips. FOCUS. . . .

CAMERA POV again shows Tim and Ama facing one another.

TIM (CONT'D)
I gotta go upstairs and do design work.
Can I trust you not to burn the house down?

AMA
(smiles)
I think so. . . .

CG GRAPHIC: White type, with a flashing white arrow, appear in the gap between Tim and Ama. Arrow points to Ama.

CG TYPE ON SCREEN: Don't mess with me, I'm African.

TIM
What do you need to do? Do you remember?

AMA
Nope!

TIM
Will you mow the lawn today?

AMA
Sure, if you let me go bowling.

TIM
Bowling? Who would you go with?

AMA
With Nashae and her sisters.

TIM
Maybe, if you're accommodating.

AMA
What does accommodating mean, Dad?

TIM
It means being nice and getting your
chores done before Mom gets home.
Who's driving you to the bowling alley?

AMA
A boy from school named Jackson.

TIM
Well, you did buy your mom a pie.

AMA
Yeah, I totally deserve to go, right?

Ama turns and begins walking away.

TIM
Okay. Now go mow, and leave the cat alone!

AMA
But, I can make it our cat.

18 EXT. THE GILMAN'S DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON

18

Ama, now dressed for the day, sits on the driveway petting
STRAWBERRY, a homeless, pale orange haired neighborhood cat.

CG GRAPHIC: White type, with a white arrow, appears. The
arrow points to the cat. TYPE READS: "Strawberry" the cat.

AMA (CONT'D)
(to camera)
My neighbor and I have been feeding
Strawberry. Our plan is to get her fat.
(MORE)

19 EXT. BY THE FRONT PORCH — MINUTES LATER 19

Ama is kneeling, pulling weeds from around the front porch.

SFX: Boink sounds occur as Ama pulls the weeds. Strawberry the cat nudges Ama's head and Ama smiles.

AMA (CONT'D)

I am going to get a dog. And a million cats.

MUSIC TRACK: AFRICAN DRUMS

DISSOLVE TO:

20 EXT. THE GILMAN'S BACK YARD — A HALF HOUR LATER 20

Ama fills the mower's tank with gasoline from a gas can.

AMA (CONT'D)

(to camera)

Chugga, chugga, chugga, gulp, gulp.
I love the smell of gas.

(beat)

No, not this kind of gas, the other kind
of gas.

(laughs)

My parents in Liberia have a dirt lawn.
I guess they mow their dirt. UGH!

Ama starts mowing. SPED UP ACTION of her mowing the lawn.

21 EXT. ON THE SIDE OF THE GARAGE — DAY 21

We see a very full garbage can by the side of the garage.

22 INT. THE KITCHEN — DAY 22

Tim sits at the kitchen table, reading the paper.

TIM

Ama, did you move our garbage can?

Ama comes from the foyer to the edge of the kitchen.

AMA

Somebody put it on the street.

TIM

I did. Go put it back out there.

AMA

DAD! I'm too tired. I broke a nail the first time. I'll do it if you pay me.

CG GRAPHIC: A hand-drawn cartoon crown appears on Ama's head with an arrow pointing to Ama. She smiles at camera.

CG TYPE ON SCREEN: The Liberian Queen.

SFX: Bell sound.

TIM

I'm not going to pay you. The garbage isn't picked up until tomorrow. Some things you have to do for free to be obedient to your parents.

AMA

But I just put it away!

TIM

You mean you put a full garbage can away?

AMA

(laughs)

Yeah!

TIM

Go put it back, please.

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

CUT TO:

23 EXT. THE GILMAN DRIVEWAY — SATURDAY — AFTERNOON 23

Ama, wearing a tie-dye tee shirt and shorts, does a cheer.

AMA

Give me a 'T' — give me an 'R,' — give me an 'O,' — give me a 'U,' — give me a 'B,' — give me an 'L,' — give me an 'E.' That spells TROUBLE — my name!

24 INT. AMA'S BEDROOM — AFTERNOON

24

Ama sits on her bed, talking to Nashae on a cell phone.

AMA

So a guy at school asked me to go bowling.

NASHAE (V.O.)

Who?

AMA

His name rhymes with 'action.'

NASHAE (V.O.)

Fraction? Traction? Maxim?

AMA

No. And that doesn't rhyme.

NASHAE (V.O.)

I give up. Just tell me already.

AMA

Jackson Monroe.

NASHAE (V.O.)

COOL. Let's all go bowling!

AMA

It's MY DATE, NASHAE!

NASHAE (V.O.)

Get real. Your parents won't let you date!

AMA

Jackson doesn't care if I'm fourteen.
He likes me because I'm from Africa.

NASHAE (V.O.)

No. Because he wants to jump your bones.

AMA

His Dad is a Baptist minister, Nashae.

NASHAE (V.O.)

I know. That's what makes it so hot.
He's a total secret perve. (MORE)

NASHAE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Because he's the son of a preacher, he'll only do it missionary style. But, does he like, have a license and drive?

AMA
DUH! Of course! He has a gigantic van.

NASHAE (V.O.)
Yeah, a van full of condoms. He'll say, "Step into my love-van, baby."

AMA
STOP! Nashae, I've never gone on a date. Can you come over to help me practice doing my makeup so I'll be pretty?

NASHAE (V.O.)
You don't need makeup! We're just going bowling with a dumb guy with a big van!

AMA
Yeah, but DUH! Can you come over now? My parents won't be home until seven.

NASHAE (V.O.)
Okay. Should I bring makeup with me? I have tons of mascara and eyeliner.

AMA
Sure, and my Mom has makeup I can use.

NASHAE (V.O.)
Does she let you use her makeup?

AMA
DUH! OF COURSE! Well, once she did.

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

25 INT. TIM AND CHRISTINE'S BATHROOM — TEN MINUTES LATER 25

Ama and Nashae stare at the makeup containers on the counter.

NASHAE
Wow, Christine has, like, a billion dollars worth of makeup. What is this Estée Lauder stuff?

AMA

I don't know; some fancy lady brand. Mom buys her makeup at Macy's.

NASHAE

My grandma wears an inch thick of makeup because that was a disco thing in the 70s. My mom wears makeup 'cause she's a hooker.

AMA

Where is your mom, now?

NASHAE

She's in Las Vegas I think.

AMA

Is she really a hooker?

NASHAE

TOTALLY! And my Dad's in rehab.

Nashae opens a bottle of base and sets it on the edge of the counter. She pours base on her fingertips and applies it to Ama's cheeks.

NASHAE (CONT'D)

(laughs)

It's way too light for you.

Ama looks like a clown. Nashae uses an eyebrow pencil to exaggerate Ama's eyebrows. She applies too much mascara and eye shadow. They bust up laughing. In moving around, Ama accidentally knocks the bottle off the counter onto the white carpet. They are horrified, and stare at the blob of base. Ama picks up the bottle and screws on its cap.

AMA

OH GOD, NASHAE! Give me that washcloth!

Nashae laughs. She hands Ama a washcloth. Ama wipes the carpet, but soon has spread it into a three-foot-wide circle.

NASHAE

(laughs)

If you keep spreading it the carpet will look like Grizzly Bear fur. Then you'd have to stain all the carpet.

Ama stops wiping. They stare at the stained carpet.

AMA

UGH! It just keeps spreading! I am so going to get busted for this.

NASHAE

Yeah, your mom will definitely notice it. You'll be under house arrest for about a billion years.

AMA

It's okay; I'll use a sponge and soap.

NASHAE

I should go home. I don't even want to witness your parents killing you.

AMA

FINE. I'll text you about bowling.

NASHAE

They are so not going to let you go. If I was your mom I wouldn't let you out of your bedroom. You'd be like an old woman before you went on a date. You'd be wearing dentures.

AMA

It's fine. I can fix this. I'll call you.

26 INT. AMA'S STUDY ROOM – DUSK

26

Ama is seated at a yellow table, making a banner for her Mom.

AMA

(to camera)

The stain is mostly gone. Now I have to hurry to make the welcome home banner because if I can make my Mom happy then maybe she won't be mad I ruined her carpet.

She begins making the banner from letterhead, which she tapes together. She decorates it with glue and glitter.

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

Ama's actions are sped up. She writes on the banner: WELCOME

HOME MOM! I LOVE YOU!" She assembles the banner in seconds.

27 INT. THE FOYER — GILMAN HOUSE — NIGHT 27

Ama hangs the banner over the archway in the foyer.

28 INT. THE GARAGE 28

The Gilman's silver Saab, driven by Tim, pulls in the garage.

29 INT. THE FOYER 29

Tim and CHRISTINE GILMAN enter the house. Christine pulls a small travel suitcase. She is a heavyset woman with brown hair. Ama comes from the living room to greet Christine.

CHRISTINE

Hi! I'm home!

AMA

Hi Mom! I missed you! I spent all day working on this welcome banner!

Christine and Ama embrace.

CHRISTINE

Oh, it's NICE! Kind of sparkly!

AMA

I used glitter. How was Germany?

CHRISTINE

It rained, but it was nice to see my sister. How was school?

AMA

Good. I got rid of those shoes you hated. Nashae and I tossed them in a tree.

CHRISTINE

WHAT? you tossed your shoes in a tree?

AMA

In the park, you know? Everybody does it. It's like a shoe-tree. Like, art.
(beat)

Can I go bowling tomorrow afternoon?

CHRISTINE

It doesn't sound like art, it sounds like vandalism. But thank god those awful shoes are gone. Hold on, who is going bowling?

AMA

Me, Nashae, and Tealeanna, and Jackson Monroe from school.

CHRISTINE

Does this Jackson boy drive?

AMA

YES! He's been driving for six months and he never ran anybody over yet.

CHRISTINE

That's comforting. Okay that's fine. Your Dad and I need some alone time.

AMA

GROSS!

30 INT. JACKSON'S VAN — SUNDAY AFTERNOON

30

Ama, Nashae, TEALEANNA, and JAYLA ride in the back seats. JACKSON MONROE is a lanky white kid with big blonde hair.

JACKSON

Ama, you should ride up front with me.

AMA

You already asked me, Jackson. This way I'm safe from your octopus hands.

JACKSON

OCTOPUS HANDS? WHAT?

NASHAE

That's what Tiffany texted us a minute ago. She said you kept feeling her boobs.

JACKSON

TIFFANY? She's a SKANK! Who are you gonna believe, a skank or ME?

NASHAE, AMA, and TEALEANNA

TIFFANY!!

31 INT. WALDO BOWL-A-RAMA — AFTERNOON 31

Ama is ready to bowl. The camera revolves around her as she stands with a pink bowling ball focusing on the bowling pins.

CG TYPE: YOU GO GIRL!

She bowls and knocks all but one pin down. She celebrates with Nashae, Tealeanna, and Jayla. Jackson frowns.

JACKSON

If you don't spare you have to kiss me.

AMA

GROSS! And if I spare I get five bucks.

JACKSON

Five bucks? That's my allowance! Okay, fine. But there's no way you can spare.

Ama spares. Jackson frowns and hands her a five-dollar bill. Jackson bowls a gutter ball. The girls laugh.

32 INT. AMA'S STUDY ROOM — SUNDAY — MORNING 32

Ama is sitting at her desk, doing homework.

AMA

(to camera)

My Mom in Liberia emailed me. Her name is Rose. She's twenty-nine, and my Dad is James. He's a fisherman and, like, thirty. My little brother's name is Georgie. He's ten, and loves soccer. In Liberia they call soccer, 'football.' I think that's funny. Christine didn't get that mad about the carpet.

33 INT. THE FOYER — GILMAN HOUSE — DAY 33

Christine runs her hands through her hair in a frantic way.

SFX: AFRICAN ELEPHANT TRUMPETING

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

FADE OUT

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

34 INT. IN THE FOYER — SUNDAY — LATE MORNING 34

Ama is at a piano playing a church song. She stops and turns.

AMA

(to camera)

When we ate pizza, after bowling, Tealeanna burped, and I laughed and soda went up my nose and came down like a waterfall. Then I couldn't stop burping. It was funny.

DISSOLVE TO:

35 INT. TIM AND CHRISTINE'S BEDROOM — LATE MORNING 35

Ama and Christine lie in a big brass bed. Christine is dressed in pajamas. Ama is dressed and lying on top of the sheets. It is their regular "soul sisters" time.

CG GRAPHIC: White type reads - SOUL SISTERS.

CHRISTINE

Thank you for the pie. How was bowling?

AMA

Great. I bowled two strikes and a spare. Jackson's a jerk. He touched Tiffany Sander's boobs on a date last week.

CHRISTINE

Sex is a big focus for teenage boys.

AMA

He ran track last year. I beat his time in the 200 meters when I was in eighth grade, and it still bothers him.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

36 EXT. WALDO MIDDLE SCHOOL — DAY 36

Show footage of Ama winning the 200-dash and the long jump.

END FLASHBACK:

37 INT. TIM AND CHRISTINE'S BEDROOM — LATE MORNING 37

CHRISTINE

Teenage boys act stupid for a few years
and then they eventually grow up and turn
into immature men who leave toilet seats up.

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

DISSOLVE TO:

38 INT. THE LIVING ROOM — NIGHT 38

CAMERA REVOLVES ON CLOCK ON MANGO COLORED WALL. Its hands
show it is 10PM.

Ama and Christine sit on the couch. Christine kisses Ama.

CHRISTINE

Goodnight. By the way, Ben-David's moving to
Arizona. He found a girlfriend online.

39 INT. TIM AND CHRISTINE'S BEDROOM — NIGHT 39

Tim and Christine are in bed, wearing pajamas.

CHRISTINE

That was nice of Ama to buy me a pie.

TIM

It almost makes up for the carpet, huh?

CHRISTINE

Almost. I'm sort of burned out, Tim.

TIM

We raised three kids. I thought I was retired.

CHRISTINE

Do you think Ama can handle high school?

TIM

I don't know. It feels like we tossed her
into a tank full of hungry sharks.

40 INT. AMA'S BEDROOM — NIGHT — A HALF HOUR LATER 40

Ama sits on the floor, dressed in her polka-dotted bathrobe. She holds a bowl with barbecue tortilla chips in her lap. The bedside lamp is the only light on in the room.

AMA

(to camera)

I'm going to miss Ben-David. He is my best brother, though Georgie is my actual brother, but I only see Georgie once a year. Ben-David is twenty years old. Girls are madly in love him. But I say. . .

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

41 INT. THE GILMAN'S KITCHEN - MONTHS EARLIER 41

Ben-David at the Gilman's kitchen table facing camera.

CG GRAPHIC: A white arrow points to Ben-David's perfect hair.
TYPE READS: Hollywood hair.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. AMA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ama takes a bite of chips. She chokes and laughs.

AMA (CONT'D)

(to camera)

. . .BACK OFF - GIRLS! I'm kidding.

MUSIC: AFRICAN DRUMS

CUT TO:

42 INT. THE GILMAN KITCHEN - MONDAY MORNING 42

Christine Gilman, dressed in an African style dress, is getting Ama off to school. She claps her hands and says. . .

CHRISTINE

Okay, Ama, let's go. CHOP! CHOP!
You barely have time to get to school.

CLOSE UP ON AMA. Camera rotates in circle. She is smiling.

MUSIC: African theme music "Across Kossanto."

CUT TO:

43 EXT. A STREET IN WALDO — DAY

43

Side view of the Gilman's riding in their Saab with top down. Christine is driving. Ben-David is in the front seat playing a thumb harp. Tim rides in the back seat with Ama. Ama is framed in the center of the screen. (THIS SCENE IS USED TO END EACH EPISODE).

ROLL CREDITS

FADE OUT

END ACT THREE