



4 YEARS LATER. PINE VALLEY, USA

MY NAME IS ZAWADI AND I'M A REFUGEE FROM CONGO. BUT THAT IS NOT ALL THAT I AM. I WAS BORN WITH A GIFT THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHAT'S MESSED UP IS THAT EVEN THOUGH I CAN SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD, NO ONE OUTSIDE MY FAMILY KNOWS ABOUT THIS GIFT AND NONE OF US KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT. IF ONLY MAMA WAS HERE...

MAMA!!

ZI, WAKE UP!

YOU'RE DREAMING AGAIN...

WE HAD BEEN RUNNING FROM THE WAR IN CONGO FOR MANY YEARS, LIVING IN CAMPS WHERE WOMEN WERE NOT SAFE AND THE WATER WAS NOT CLEAN. MAMA GOT VERY SICK. THEN A FIRE TOOK THE LIVES OF MANY REFUGEES, INCLUDING MAMA. I WAS SO HEARTBROKEN, I WISHED THE FIRE HAD TAKEN ME INSTEAD. BUT I SURVIVED AND I HAD A PROMISE TO KEEP...

SHH, SHH. WE ARE SAFE NOW...

BABA WORKED HARD TO MOVE US TO AMERICA. IT WAS A MIRACLE WE MADE IT HERE. I KNOW MAMA HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT. I THANK HER AND GOD EVERY DAY.

I CAN'T REMEMBER ALL THESE STUPID GRAMMAR RULES!

AMINA, FIX THAT WORD, IT'S SPELLED "T-H-E-Y-' R-E"...

JUST KEEP STUDYING,

EASY FOR YOU TO SAY, YOU CAN SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE...

SHUSH NOW, FINISH YOUR FUFU.

BABA GOT A JOB AT THE CHICKEN FACTORY. HE WORKS LONG HOURS AT NIGHT, SO MY JOB IS TO LOOK AFTER MY SISTERS WHICH ISN'T EASY. MANY TIMES, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO AND I DON'T WANT BABA TO WORRY. SO I PRAY TO MAMA. I MISS HER. SHE ALWAYS KNEW WHAT TO DO.

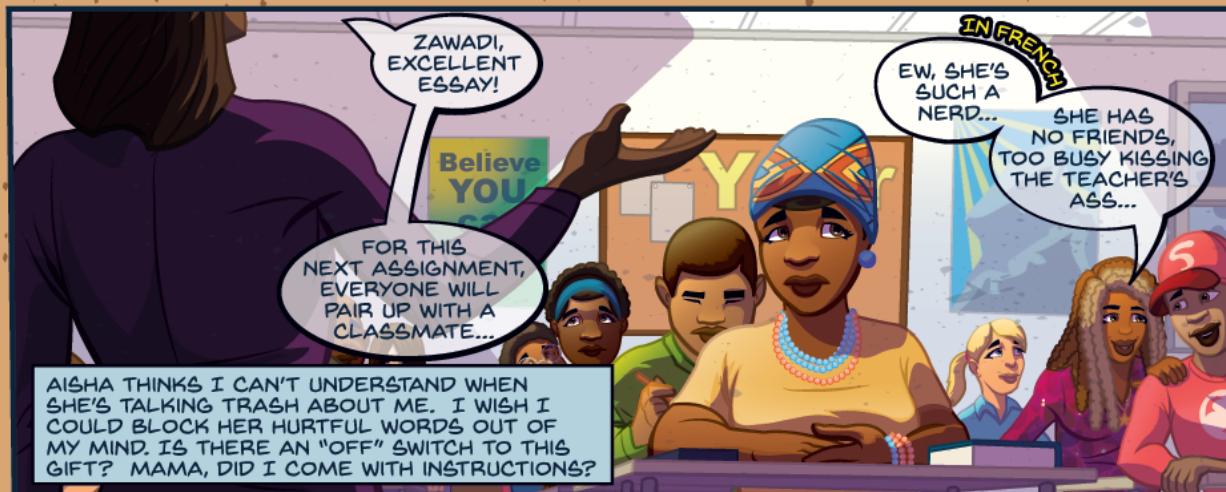
IN SWAHILI
BABA IS HOME!

BEST PART OF MY DAY IS TO SEE MY THREE BEAUTIFUL GIRLS.

NO MATTER HOW TIRED HE IS, BABA CAN ALWAYS MAKE US LAUGH...

IN SWAHILI
SOFIA, ARE WE SO POOR THAT YOU MUST CUT YOUR SKIRT IN HALF TO MAKE A SECOND ONE?

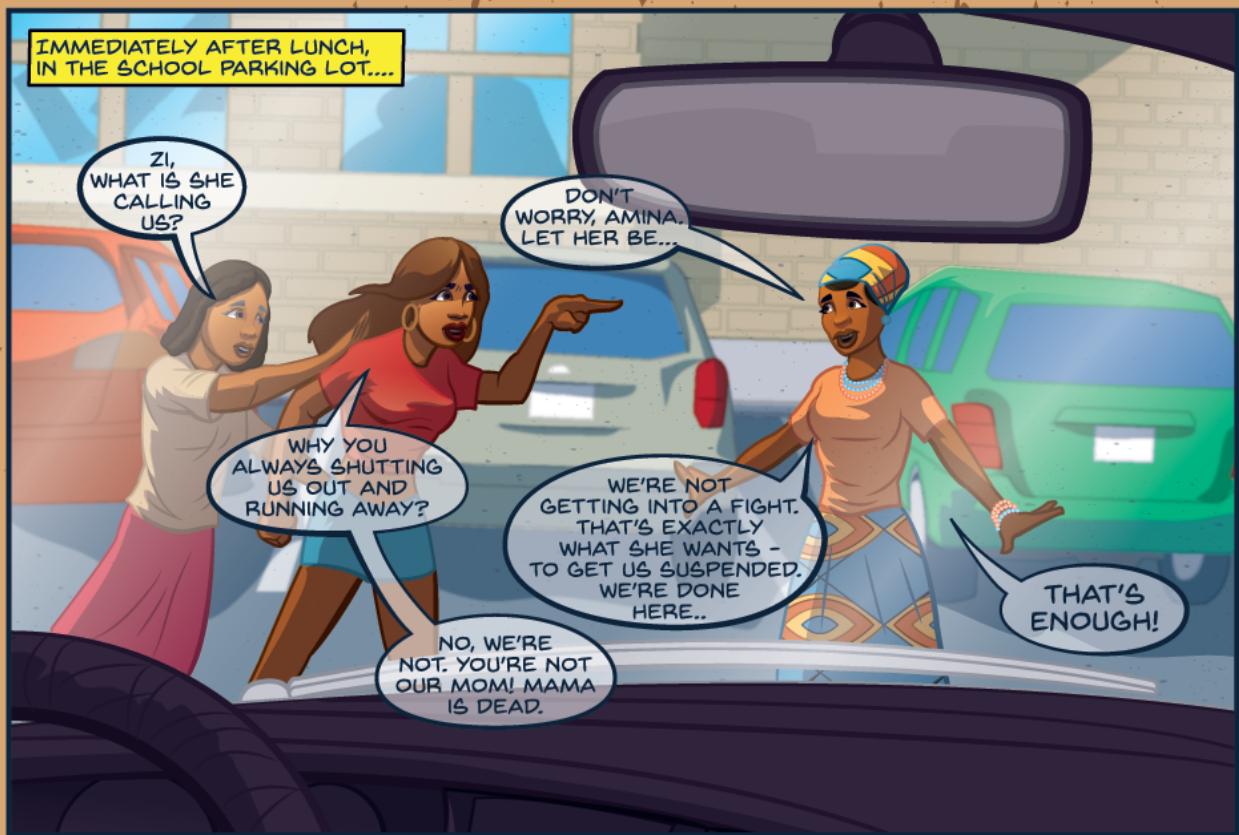
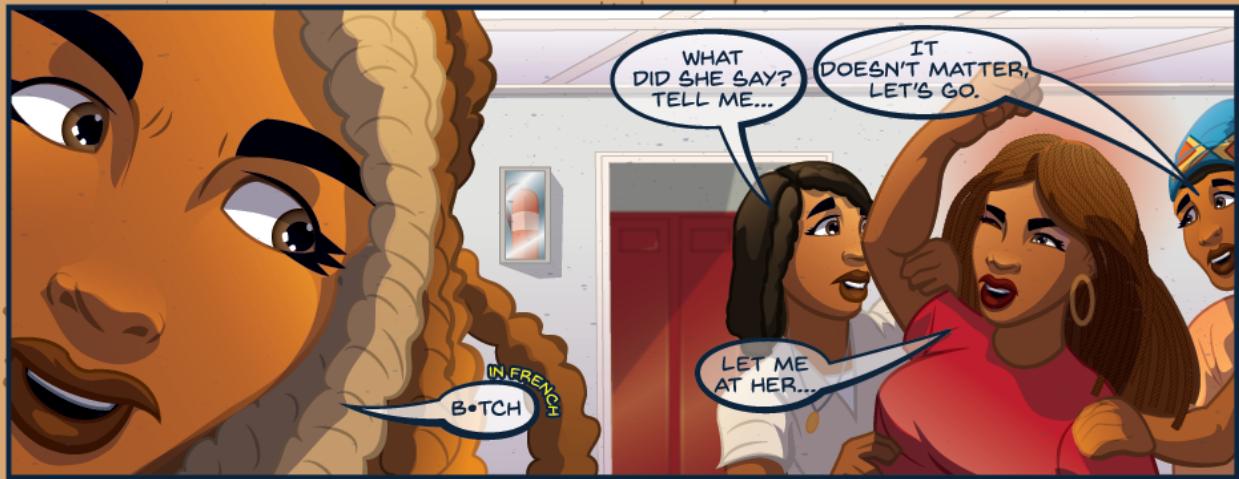
IN SWAHILI
BABA, PLEASE!



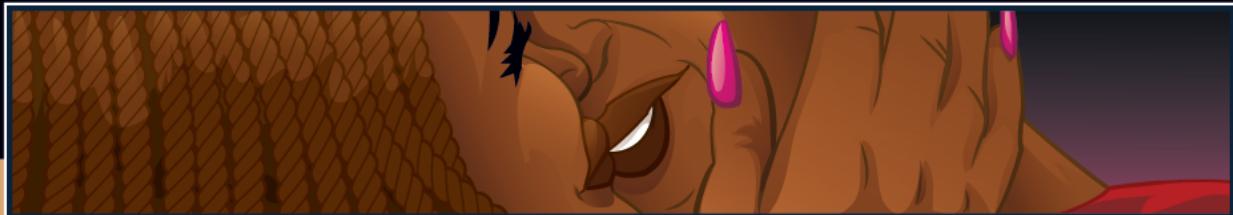
LATER...AT THE
HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA

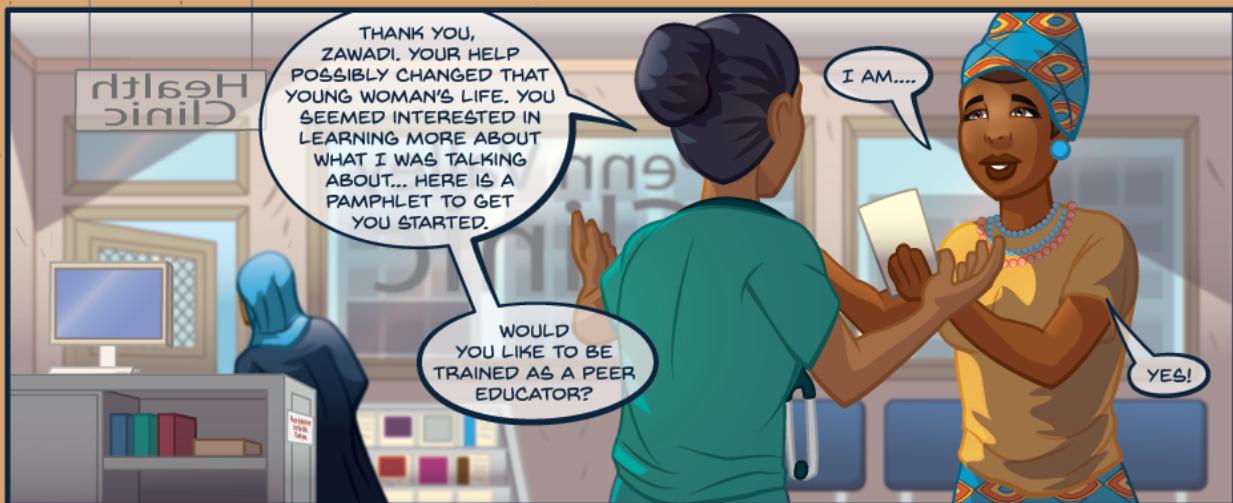
THIS DAY KEEPS GETTING BETTER!
I FOUND SOFIA AND AMINA JAMMING
TO AFRICAN MUSIC AT LUNCHTIME --
REMINDS US ALL OF HOME.











MAMA, YOU WOULD BE SO PROUD! TODAY, I USED MY "GIFT" TO HELP SOMEONE AND IT FELT REAL GOOD. AND MS. CARMEN IS GOING TO START TEACHING ME THINGS I NEED TO KNOW...I FELT LIKE A REAL NURSE...





