

ACT ONE

3 EXT. SMITH HOUSE - FRONT YARD - MORNING 3

4 INT. SMITH HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING 4

Abigail descends the stairs, humming.

5 INT. SMITH HOUSE - PARLOR - CONTINUOUS 5

She plops on the couch and begins to read.

Mrs. Smith enters.

MRS. SMITH

Close it.

ABIGAIL

Mother--

MRS. SMITH

There's work to be done and you
know it.

Abigail puts the book on the coffee table and spins. Mrs.
Smith walks to the coat closet by the front door.

ABIGAIL

I think I'll ride later. It's a
beautiful day... Elizabeth is
beautiful, too.

Mrs. Smith rummages through the closet.

MRS. SMITH

Yes. We're spending the day with
your sister.

She removes her coat and hat and proceeds to put them on.

MRS. SMITH (CONT'D)

She'll need some help with the
housework while she recovers.

ABIGAIL

I can't wait until I'm a mother.

Mrs. Smith pulls gloves from her coat pocket and puts them
on.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SMITH

Well, you have awhile yet.

ABIGAIL

Maybe not.

Mrs. Smith tucks the end of her gloves into her sleeve.

MRS. SMITH

You're eighteen, dear. Give yourself another few years. And find a husband first.

ABIGAIL

I have.

She stops spinning and looks up at her mother with delight.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

John proposed!

Mrs. Smith stops adjusting her gloves. She meets Abigail's gaze.

MRS. SMITH

You are not marrying him.

Abigail stands from the spinning wheel. She dares Mrs. Smith to say another line. Mrs. Smith sighs. She walks to the couch and motions for Abigail to join her. She joins her, but she's already irritated with what she knows is coming.

MRS. SMITH (CONT'D)

Doesn't it bother you that he started to court you weeks after Hannah left him? And Hannah must've told you he met her while he was pursuing your cousin Ester.

ABIGAIL

So? Half this town is a Quincy! We could name it after us if we wanted to!

MRS. SMITH

I know you love him; I like him too! But he has no money, no breeding, no power, no reputation--

ABIGAIL

He could afford Harvard.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. SMITH

--until he builds one himself. I need to make sure you're well-cared for. You're worth so much more than a glorified wallet and resume.

ABIGAIL

What are you doing?

MRS. SMITH

Um, Abigail...

ABIGAIL

No, seriously, what are you doing?

MRS. SMITH

Abigail, this isn't your line.

Mrs. Smith stands and motions for a script. Abigail stands.

ABIGAIL

I'm Abigail Adams, one of the most famous first ladies of all time. They know I'm going to marry him.

Mrs. Smith receives a script from a disembodied hand at the edge of the screen. She walks back to Abigail and shows her the open script.

MRS. SMITH

See? I say "wallet and resume" and you say--

Abigail plucks the script from her hands and tosses it into the fireplace.

ABIGAIL

This is a biopic. A biographical picture. This is history. So, Melody Rose, great creator and master of the pen-slash-keyboard, would you stop playing these "twists" up for dramatic effect? Oh my God--the Japanese lost World War Two?! The Europeans colonized Africa?! Jesus... DIED?! And the rom-com satire got old. Move. On.

Abigail snaps her fingers. She takes a new script from another disembodied hand at the edge of the screen. Abigail sits on the couch with this new script and, with her quill and ink, begins to annotate and revise it.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED: "Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

5

Mrs. Smith, standing next to her, looks over Abigail's shoulder to read what she's writing.

MRS. SMITH

What are you doing?

ABIGAIL

Rewriting the episode.

MRS. SMITH

But... this one establishes a season plot! Beyond the rom-com!

Abigail stands and hands the script back to Mrs. Smith.

ABIGAIL

It is now about me grappling with the effect of your doubts, simultaneously exploring why colonial America favored marriages of convenience over love marriages, and the pros and cons of both.

She pats Mrs. Smith on the shoulder.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I left the subplots intact... mostly.

Mrs. Smith thumbs through it.

MRS. SMITH

This is way too put together for the time you had to write it.

ABIGAIL

I'm Abigail Adams.

She motions to roll to the cameraman.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Can we take it again?

THE FIRST AMERICAN SITCOM
"Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

7.

OPENING CREDITS 2

RICHARD (O.C.)
Nabby, you really shouldn't--

OPENING THEME SONG

A disembodied hand holds up a clapper board:
Production: The First American Sitcom
Director: Abigail Smith Adams-to-be
Cameraman: Braintree & Weymouth, Massachusetts
Date: Summer, 1763
Scene: 1
Take: 04

ABIGAIL (O.C.)
"Much Ado About Something," take
four. Action!

ME (O.C.)
Get. Into. Position.

The disembodied hand claps the clapper board.

END OF OPENING CREDITS 2

THE FIRST AMERICAN SITCOM
"Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

8.

6 INT. SMITH HOUSE - PARLOR - MOMENTS LATER

6

Mrs. Smith and Abigail sit on the couch.

Abigail mouths Mrs. Smith's line as she says it.

MRS. SMITH

By the light of heaven I doth
declare Mr. Adams hereby is using
you for political gain.

She throws Abigail some shade in a glance. Abigail ignores her. She stands in a flourish.

ABIGAIL

Then I shall prove thee wrong!

She takes a few steps, staring at an invisible knife in the corner of the room. She lifts her hand dramatically.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

The bonds of love so pure holdfast
upon my soul.

Her head snaps back to Mrs. Smith.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Thou shalt not take my love from
mine eye's longing!

NEW TAKE.

Abigail and Mrs. Smith sit on the couch. Abigail glares at off-camera me.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

(monotone)

He is not using me. I'll prove it.
I love him.

She raises the middle finger to off-camera me.

8 EXT. SMITH HOUSE - SUNSET

8

9 INT. SMITH HOUSE - ABIGAIL'S BEDROOM - SUNSET

9

Abigail wears an underdress, sleeve-support, and petticoat. She ties a stay [18th century corset] on top of her underdress. Her hair is completely down.

John sits in the bed, in nothing but underwear, watching her dress.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

I'll get permission from your father, don't worry.

ABIGAIL

I know. I'm not.

She bends down and kisses him.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You should get up.

JOHN

(groaning)

For you.

There's a knock at the door. They freak out, miming a debate of what to do. Abigail throws herself on the bed with a book. John jumps out of the window, clothes forgotten. Abigail kicks them under the bed.

JOHN (O.C.) (CONT'D)

My pants!

ABIGAIL

Shh! Enter!

Hannah enters.

HANNAH

Reading, as usual?

ABIGAIL

Yup. Much Ado About Something--
Nothing!

She grins and throws her arms around Hannah.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

Hannah! I can't believe you're here!

HANNAH

I mean, you wrote it in.

ABIGAIL

I'm sure you visited me at some point in real life. Uh... is your husband here?

HANNAH

No. At home.

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED: "Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

9

ABIGAIL

He feels threatened by me, got it.

She glances at the window.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

You... uh... just missed John.

HANNAH

Good.

ABIGAIL

Right... wait for me downstairs. I want to finish getting dressed.

Hannah nods and leaves.

10

EXT. SMITH HOUSE - WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

10

John hides behind the hedge. Abigail sticks her head out of the window to speak to him.

JOHN

Much Ado About Something?

ABIGAIL

Go ahead and make fun of me. You should've waited until after you got your trousers.

She goes back inside. Phoebe enters during John's shout. She freezes when she sees him.

JOHN

Na--ahhhhhh-iyyyy... Abigail has them.

PHOEBE

Yes, sir.

She scurries off. He sighs behind his hedge.

END OF ACT ONE

20

CONTINUED:

"Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

20

21

INT. SMITH HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

21

Phoebe still washes the dishes. But, she's troubled.

John enters. He snatches a glass from the cupboard, slams it down on the counter, and pours himself a full glass of cider.

JOHN

Why are you always here when Jesus
has fun with me?

PHOEBE

I think Miss Abigail wanted to
introduce us.

JOHN

Sounds about right.

John takes a long sip of his cider.

JOHN (CONT'D)

So, what do you think? You had
to've heard it all.

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED: "Much Ado About Something" S1 E4

21

PHOEBE

I don't listen, sir.

JOHN

You're human and you have ears.

Phoebe slows her scrubbing on the plate.

PHOEBE

It's not my place, sir.

JOHN

I don't believe in places.

Phoebe doesn't know whether to believe him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm serious! I'm not trying to
erase the historical me to become
likable. Unlike some people...

John glares off camera.

22

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

22

A sign reads "Animation Studio." People mull around. Many of
the actors frantically try to memorize Abigail's new script.

It's Jefferson, eating and humming "You're a Grand Old Flag."

FREEZE FRAME

An arrow with a ding effect (see: S1 E1 C.O.) that reads:
Thomas Jefferson.

END OF FREEZE FRAME

JEFFERSON

You don't even know me yet!