

"THREE UTILITIES"

by

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FADE IN:

INT. CAFE -- NOON.

1

DAN, 28, sits in jeans and T-shirt with his father, SEAN, sixties and dressed in a shirt, tie, slacks and a janitor's jacket. Dan is writing on paper, while Sean leans over and gives instructions.

SEAN

There are three houses, right?

DAN

Got it.

SEAN

Number, them Dan.

DAN

I know which ones are which, dad.

Dan numbers three boxes.

SEAN

You have three utilities as well, though.

DAN

And what are they?

SEAN

They're what you pay for as well as rent.

DAN

Dad, I know that. Which utilities are you talking about?

SEAN

Gas, Water and Electric.

Dan draws G, W and E boxes underneath his three houses.

SEAN

You're very short with your old pa, you know.

DAN

I got my height from you.

SEAN

There's no need to be facetious, you got that from your mother.

DAN

Along with my good looks.

SEAN

Are you doing this puzzle or not?

DAN

If you'd tell me what to do instead mourning the loss of respect for elders.

SEAN

You're an uppity little shit!

DAN

Dad!... The puzzle. A retarded monkey could have worked it out by now!

Sean gives up.

SEAN

You have to connect all three utilities to each house by drawing a line for each connection. None of the lines can cross. Easy-peasy-lemon-squeezy.

DAN

Alright.

He gets to work. He's barely started when Sean pipes up.

SEAN

You won't get it.

DAN

(Without
looking up)

Thanks for the vote of confidence.

SEAN

No, I know you think you're clever son. It's impossible, though.

DAN

Somebody actually told you this?

SEAN

No, I've never seen anyone
beat it. I'm telling you, you
won't get it.

DAN

Don't be so sure.

SEAN

You won't. Bobby Kaczmarek
from 13c nearly busted a blood
vessel he got so frustrated.

INT. SUNSHINE HOUSE LOBBY -- MORNING.

2

Sean's friend BOBBY, 69, is plunging a pen into a page
littered with failed attempts at the puzzle. Sean is sitting
across from him, his body bouncing lightly as he tries to
stifle laughter.

BOBBY

Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh fuck!

He puts the paper to his teeth, rips it apart, and throws it
right into an ongoing game of shuffleboard.

INT. CAFE -- NOON.

3

Dan is staring at his dad.

DAN

Over a puzzle?

SEAN

Give it time son. It'll annoy
the shit out of you, too...
eventually.

DAN

We'll see,...

He moves his pen around the paper. There are no more
connections to make.

DAN

...ah come on!

Sean cracks a self-satisfied smirk.

SEAN

I told you. But you wouldn't
listen to your old pa.

DAN
Give me a chance, I've only
tried once.

He draws out his houses and utilities again.

DAN
No, there's a way to do this,
I know there is.

SEAN
Whatever you say son. You'll
be making a lot of old men
very happy if you get it.

DAN
There it is...

He finishes up one line and is stuck again.

DAN
...shit!

SEAN
There's a way to it, then?

DAN
Yes, very funny dad...

He fails again.

DAN (CONT)
Crap! Close but no cigar. Who
wants gas AND electricity
anyway? That's just overkill
in my opinion.

Dan stares at the paper.

SEAN
Are you ready to admit it's
impossible?

DAN
After
(looks at watch)
five minutes, no way. I just
need a couple more...
(A double take)
Sorry Dad, gotta go.

Dan slides everything off the table into his bag and sprints
off, Sean shouting after...

SEAN
Whatever you want, son.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE -- EVENING.

4

Dan enters and slumps into an armchair. His wife, KATHRYN, a heavily pregnant 27, is cooking dinner in the kitchen. She brings him a glass of lemonade.

KATHRYN
Hi sweetheart. How was your day?

DAN
Long.

She returns to the kitchen while Dan stares into the middle distance.

DAN
Saw dad today.

KATHRYN (OS)
Oh yeah? Any better than usual?

DAN
Worse.

KATHRYN (OS)
I'm sorry, honey.

DAN
He actually made an idiot out of me with a puzzle.

A pause.

DAN
He has to be right about everything.

KATHRYN (OS)
I know, baby.

DAN
There's nothing I can do right.

Kathryn comes and sits on the arm of the chair and rubs Dan's shoulders. Dan is oblivious.

DAN
That's how he ran mom into the ground, you know. His ego was too important.

(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)
 He just couldn't stop and
 realise he had a wife and kids
 to take care of.

Silence. Dan's face gathers resolve.

DAN
 I'll find an answer.

KATHRYN
 What's that?

DAN
 I'll find an answer!

He runs to the door with a crazy look in his eye. Kathryn follows him, looking both worried and excited.

KATHRYN
 An answer for what?

DAN
 The puzzle...This is it, this
 is where I show the old fart
 that I'm better than he thinks.
 I'll find a solution to this
 puzzle and shove it up his ass.

He runs out, then back in again for a kiss before finally leaving.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE -- DAY.

5

Dan is explaining the puzzle to THE OWNER, with pen and paper.

DAN
 ...and three utilities.
 Connect each utility to each
 house and don't cross the lines.

The owner shakes his head.

DAN
 Never heard of it? Here...
 (He puts the
 paper in the
 owner's shirt pocket)
 ...work hard, I'll be in
 tomorrow.

Dan leaves with some groceries and meets Kathryn outside.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY.

6

They walk along the lot.

KATHRYN

Any luck?

DAN

You kidding? I'm not sure he
can tie his own shoelaces.

KATHRYN

How many people have you shown
it to?

DAN

Since last night? Ten...
Pretty much everyone I meet.

KATHRYN

And nothing?

DAN

Not a even a sniff.

KATHRYN

Won't you let me help you?

DAN

I think you have enough to
worry about.

They stop at their car.

KATHRYN

Where to now?

DAN

Can you drop me off at Cafe
Colombo? I have to meet Paschal.

KATHRYN

Dan! That's it! Why not ask
Paschal? He knows everything.

They get in.

DAN

That's the problem. I'll
mention it and he'll say "Oh
that's easy" and blurt out the
answer.

He starts the car, seeming upset.

DAN
I have to find it for myself
babe, or what's the point?

They drive off.

INT. CAFE COLOMBO -- DAY.

7

Dan is scribbling on a scrap of paper, looking pensive.
PASCHAL, a well-dressed 30, arrives without a sound and
stands briefly.

PASCHAL
Writing your list for Santa?

Dan jumps, pockets the paper and smartens his clothing.
Paschal sits down.

PASCHAL
There's only 'naughty' and
'nice'. He doesn't have a
'fuckwit' category.

DAN
Ha ha, you're late.

PASCHAL
Fashionably, unlike some I
could mention. You look a
little disheveled.

DAN
Had some things on my mind.

PASCHAL
Kathryn says you had a bit of
a run in with the old boy.

DAN
When were you talking to Kathryn?

A young, pretty and disinterested waitress, ASHLEY, comes
and pours Paschal a coffee. She throws a scrap of paper down.

ASHLEY
Couldn't find it.

Dan pockets the scrap immediately, looking nervous.

DAN
That's OK.

PASCHAL
Couldn't find what?

DAN
That's all thanks.

Ashley shrugs and leaves.

PASCHAL
What was that about?

DAN
Asked her to write down the ingredients of the chile. On a bit of a health kick lately.

PASCHAL
I wouldn't bother, the chile stinks here... Kathryn's my friend too, don't forget. She says you and your dad had a fight of sorts.

DAN
Exaggeration. We had a misunderstanding. Kathryn doesn't know what she's talking about.

PASCHAL
I don't get it Dan. She thinks the world of you. She says you've taken on some personal crusade she can't tell me about and you won't let her help you with.

DAN
See what I mean? Exaggeration. Personal crusade!?

PASCHAL
Well thank you for being coy.

INT. SEAN'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT -- AFTERNOON.

8

Sean's place is tidy, but covered in dollar store junk he hordes. He enters the main room with Dan and Kathryn in tow.

SEAN
Where'd you park the car?

DAN
It's fine dad.

SEAN
In front or in back?

DAN
Dad, the car is fine.

SEAN
They're thieving bastards
around here Dan.

A pause, Kathryn distracts Sean.

KATHRYN
Where to today Sean?

SEAN
Well I was thinking of a hike
along Taylor's Falls, but
considering your condition...

KATHRYN
I'm not in a wheelchair Sean.

SEAN
If you say so...alright, I'll
just do my checks and we'll be
off.

Sean points at each outlet.

SEAN
Off, off, off,... off, off, off.

Dan rolls his eyes.

EXT. SEAN'S APARTMENT COMPLEX -- AFTERNOON.

9

They walk toward the car.

SEAN
Busy lately?

DAN
Not much. Kathryn and I are
just working away at the rec
center.

SEAN
Shouldn't you be taking it
easy, Kathryn?

No answer.

DAN
So I've been working on that
puzzle.

SEAN

Puzzle?

DAN

The three utilities.

SEAN

You surprise me, I thought you'd have given that up long ago.

DAN

I can stick with things when I want to.

SEAN

Well, I knew that...but you know there's no solution.

DAN

I think there might be.

SEAN

Not a hope.

DAN

Gonna try anyway.

SEAN

We'll see.

Dan stops walking.

DAN

Dad, will you give me a chance?

A pause. Dan and Sean exchange stares.

SEAN

Dan, there's no solution. There's literally no way to solve it. Just leave it be...

Dan looks like he's about to accept that he's right.

SEAN

...and accept that I'm right.

Dan's pissed.

DAN

Dad, I'm going to find a solution.

SEAN

Suit yourself, waste even more time.

KATHRYN

What's that supposed to mean Sean?

SEAN

Nothing, shall we go?

He starts to move, but they stare.

SEAN

Look, I'll not keep you two long. Just run me up to Walgreens. Then I'll walk home.

DAN shrugs and moves towards the car.

DAN

Walgreen's it is. What do you need?

SEAN

Painkillers.

DAN

What ever you want, dad.

EXT. OUTSIDE ANTE-NATAL CLINIC -- DAY.

10

Kathryn is supported by Paschal's arm as they stroll along the sidewalk.

KATHRYN

Thanks for this. Dan was busy.

PASCHAL

With what, that he couldn't pick up his own wife?

KATHRYN

Can't say.

PASCHAL

Come on! The same thing? Are you going to tell me what it is?

KATHRYN

Can't...

Kathryn brings her fingers to her temple in a mock salute and smiles.

KATHRYN (CONT)

Wife's honor.

Paschal rolls his eyes.

PASCHAL

He's lucky to have you.

KATHRYN

Tell HIM that.

PASCHAL

I tell him everytime I see the
twit! Doesn't he realise he
has a life?

KATHRYN

You know Dan. When it comes to
his dad, he has somewhat of a
bee in his bonnet.

PASCHAL

More like a poker up his ass.
What did his dad do?

KATHRYN

I'm not sure if it was one
major thing or just a way of
relating to him. I think Dan
gets pissed when Sean pretends
like he knows everything...It
pisses ME off. It's hard to
say, Dan doesn't talk about it
much.

They've reached Paschal's car. He walks around to the
driver's side.

PASCHAL

Tight-lipped asshole!

KATHRYN

Like I said, you know Dan.

They've smile across the roof and get in.

KATHRYN

I have to admit, though, it's
been tough. He's gone all the
time. I feel like I'm losing
my husband to gas, water and
electricity.

Paschal turns to Kathryn, bewildered.

PASCHAL

What?

KATHRYN

Nevermind.

Paschal turns to the wheel, pulls a frown and shakes his head briefly before driving off.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY.

11

Dan is talking to a LIBRARIAN with pen and paper in hand.

DAN

And that's as far as I can get.
Will you keep trying for me?

The librarian shrugs. Dan picks up a stack of books and papers.

DAN

Cheers. And thanks for all the books. Maybe there's an answer in here.

Dan walks out through the revolving exit just as his dad is coming in. Dan notices but keeps his head down.

EXT. LIBRARY -- DAY.

12

Dan exits and makes a break for it. Sean comes charging out straight away.

SEAN

Dan!

Dan turns and fakes surprise.

DAN

Dad! What are you doing here?

SEAN

Well,... getting books...
(Gestures to
the library)
of course.

DAN

Yeah, of course.

They look at each other.

Sean's eyes drop to Dan's books.

SEAN
What do you have there?

A pause.

DAN
Books.

SEAN
I can see that. What kind of books?

DAN
I'm really late, Dad.

He starts to walk.

SEAN
Dan?

DAN
Yes?

SEAN
You all right?

DAN
Yeah.

He moves again, this time dropping a sheet. Sean picks it up and has a look.

Realization dawns as Dan reaches the bottom of the steps.

SEAN
You little shit!

Dan stops in his tracks, he closes his eyes for a moment, before turning to face Sean with an insincere smile.

DAN
What was that?

SEAN
You little shit, you've been researching that puzzle.

DAN
I was trying to...

SEAN

Despite what I told you.
Despite your own father
telling you there was no
solution, you're now trying to
go behind my back and prove me
wrong.

Dan stands up straight.

DAN

And if I was?

Sean's eyes thin.

SEAN

Fine! Two can play at that game.

DAN

Whatever you want, dad.

SEAN

You're damn right whatever I
want. We'll see who's right!

He spins toward the door.

DAN

Dad!

Sean spins around, exasperated.

SEAN

What?

Dan points to Sean's hand.

DAN

My worksheet.

Sean looks at his hand. A little embarrassed, he stomps down
the steps and reluctantly hands the paper over.

DAN

Thanks.

Sean whips around in silence and stomps back. Dan watches
him until he starts into the revolving door.

Dan launches up the steps and jams REVOLUTIONARY MATHEMATICS
in the door, as Sean is halfway through. Sean gets stuck and
looks around, bewildered. He notices Dan with a frightened
look on his face.

Sean's face crinkles up and goes red. They exchange looks.

Dan takes off like a pre-schooler who stole some candy, leaving Sean to rattle the door in frustration and try to get someone's attention.

MONTAGE:

13

A) Dan exits a building with the sign MINNESOTA CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL MATHEMATICS and finds...

...his tires have been let down.

He stares for a moment before throwing his books down.

B) Sean comes out of the library to find his bike chained to a lamppost and the wheels bent up.

A sheet of paper reads: LOVE YOU.

Sean sneers and shakes his head.

C) Kathryn is at the gas stove at home, looking at the pot of soup she is stirring.

D) Dan is pouring over books in an empty corner of a library.

He gets up and walks into the stacks, reading labels with his finger.

Sean appears and runs off with Dan's books.

E) Kathryn's head rises and she looks at the sink of dirty dishes filling with water and bubbles.

F) Sean is in the aisle of a textbook store. He makes a selection and moves on.

Dan's head swings around the corner and he carefully approaches Sean from the back.

Sean makes a purchase and moves toward the door, absent-mindedly reading one of his books.

Dan slips up behind and drops a little notebook into Sean's bag.

Sean triggers the alarms as he is leaving and is grabbed by the security guard.

Dan slips out and turns to do a little victory dance in front of Sean, who sees him and makes a bolt for him.

Dan skips down the mall as Sean tries to escape from the guard and grab him.

G) Dan is trying to take books from the library when the librarian shakes her head at him.

As Dan shrugs, she turns the monitor to show him a screen alert saying BOOK ALERT: REVOLUTIONARY MATHEMATICS. NO BORROWING UNTIL RETURNED.

Dan mouths an expletive.

H) The lights flicker above Kathryn. She looks up at the bulb. then around the kitchen, before she drops her forlorn face back to the pot.

INT. CAFE COLOMBO -- DAY.

14

The puzzle again. Dan, looking a little more disheveled, is scribbling over it when Paschal arrives, looking suave.

PASCHAL

You are not still at that shit?

DAN

What shit?

PASCHAL

That shit...the deranged scribbling.

DAN

I have things on my mind.

Paschal sits down and waves offscreen.

PASCHAL

Do any of them involve your wife?.. Perchance?

DAN

Of course, since when were you an expert in my family affairs?

PASCHAL

Since you chose to neglect them.

Dan sits back and stares at Paschal.

DAN

Out with it.

A coffee arrives for Paschal, he receives it with a smile.

PASCHAL
Apparently, considering your
recent activities, the word
maniacal would be understatement.

DAN
It's not a big deal.

PASCHAL
How long have I known you for?

DAN
Well that's a difficult one,
there was that interim when...

PASCHAL
Ball-park.

DAN
Ten years.

PASCHAL
Don't I deserve a full account
of your movements over the
past two weeks?

DAN
Packal, I've just been
distracted lately, that's all.

PASCHAL
Bullshit my friend. You look
like crap, Kathryn is upset,
and you won't tell your best
friend what's going on.

Dan looks at the floor and shuffles his feet.

PASCHAL (CONT)
Don't you think it's a bit
selfish when you have all the
things everyone else wants,
and you're still not happy?
(Beat)
You actually have to invent
something to obsess about?

Dan looks like he's been scolded.

DAN
I don't remember asking you
anything about it.

He gets up, lifting a bag overflowing with pieces of scribbled-on paper.

PASCHAL
Where are you going?

DAN
Off to do what I do best
(Beat)
obsess!

Paschal shakes his head as Dan storms out.

INT. LIBRARY -- DAY.

15

Sean is reading up again and is surrounded by repeated attempts at the puzzle. Dan storms in...

DAN
You twisted old bastard!

One or two people look up from their books.

Sean looks around, yet seems nonchalant

SEAN
Shhh! People are reading.

DAN
Fuck em!

Dan sweeps Sean's books off the table with a crash. A lot more people are looking now.

SEAN
I was reading those.

DAN
I get a call today, that says
my WIFE is going into labor,
six weeks early! Do you have
any idea how fucking
frightening that is?

The librarian has approached, looking distressed, but trying to maintain an appearance of calm.

LIBRARIAN
Excuse me?

SEAN
How about when my elevator
seemingly doesn't work and the
stairs are blocked?

DAN

Dad, up until now it's been minor inconveniences, but you've crossed a line.

LIBRARIAN

Excuse me!

SEAN

Minor inconveniences! I was lucky I managed to convince the store that the stolen book was in my bag by mistake!

DAN

Dad, you messed with my family!

LIBRARIAN

EXCUSE ME!

Dan finally looks around.

DAN

What?

LIBRARIAN

We really can't have you two arguing in here.

DAN

I'm having a discussion with my father.

SEAN

No he's not, I've never seen him before.

LIBRARIAN

It's really not allowed.

Ignoring the librarian, Dan turns back to Sean.

DAN

Dad, I'm warning you, if you pull anything that concerns my family again...

SEAN

You'll what?

Dan is about to answer when the librarian pipes up again.

LIBRARIAN

Excuse me?

DAN

WHAT?

She points off screen, and with a shaky voice says...

LIBRARIAN

We have a sign.

Dan looks to a sign that says QUIET PLEASE. He turns back to her.

DAN

So do I.

He gives her the finger and turns back to his father. She thins her lips and walks to her desk.

DAN

I'm telling you dad, don't bring Kathryn, or my kid into this. You've gone too fucking far.

SEAN

You need to calm down.

Dan leans in.

DAN

No, you listen. I intend to take care of my family. Nothing will harm a hair on their heads. I do NOT intend to be a fuck-up like you!

Dan turns to leave.

SEAN

What is that supposed to mean? When have I ever treated you badly?

Dan spins around and the floodgates open.

DAN

Every time you ever got wasted, Dad. Every time you strutted around our house like a little Hitler.

Sean rolls his eyes.

DAN

Everytime you hit mom.

Sean points his finger incredulously.

SEAN

I never hit your mother in the face.

DAN

You see what I mean?!
Minimizing everything. You didn't hit her on the mouth... you weren't as bad as some husbands.

(Beat)

No responsibility, no fucking accountability!

SEAN

You have no idea..

Dan interrupts, he's really shouting now, teary-eyed.

DAN

No, because nobody told me. I had to work it all out for myself. I don't care what anyone else did. I'm talking about you.

SECURITY GUARDS have turned up and start to pull Dan away. He complies, barely.

DAN

You've strutted around for the past twenty years like you've done nothing wrong. Well, you screwed up our family, you wretched old bastard and you can stay away from mine!

As Dan is being pulled out the door, Sean, clearly upset, stands up and shouts.

SEAN

Whatever you want, son. You have hurt me this day.

DAN

Fuck you!

EXT. LIBRARY -- DAY.

16

Dan is thrown outside by the security guards.

He shrugs them off and kicks the wall.

He sits down on the steps and cries into his lap.

EXT. CAFE COLOMBO -- DAY.

17

Dan stands outside, looking terrible, his hand on the window, watching Paschal, who is idly chatting-up Ashley inside, and looks as good as ever.

Dan's been absent-mindedly drawing the puzzle in his breath-mark on the glass. He stands for a moment longer, then goes inside.

INT. CAFE COLOMBO -- DAY.

18

Dan drops down in front of Paschal, his hand covers his face and holds up his head. He stares, bleary-eyed, through his fingers, at his friend.

PASCHAL

In the name of all that is
holy, will you tell me what
has been going on?

Without a word, Dan reaches inside his pocket and pulls out a sheet covered with failed attempts at the puzzle. He pushes it across the table.

Paschal looks at it for a second, looks at Dan, then lifts it.

PASCHAL

This is what all the hassle
has been about? The three
utilities puzzle?

Dan's face creaks with a spark of hope.

DAN

You've heard of it?

PASCHAL

Course I have.

DAN

I've been trying to find a
solution, Paschal.

PASCHAL

Well, that's easy...

Dan nods silently, while pinching the bridge of his nose, seemingly trying not to lose it.

PASCHAL

...there is none.

Dan slaps the table and turns away.

DAN
That's what my dad's been saying.

PASCHAL
Well...there is and there isn't.

Dan spins back. Paschal waves to Ashley.

PASCHAL
Ashley! A doughnut please?

DAN
There is and there isn't?

PASCHAL
Give me a sec.

Ashley arrives with an iced doughnut. Paschal nods thanks, takes it and sticks three toothpicks in the top, on one side.

PASCHAL
Houses.

Next are three black beans from his lunch.

PASCHAL
Utilities.

He starts to drag lines in the icing with his knife.

PASCHAL
So, most of the time, people have two lines left before they fail right?

DAN
Sure.

PASCHAL
But, considering you've been making various crazed attempts, you've probably narrowed it down to one line left...

Dan nods, without looking away from the doughnut.

PASCHAL
...with demented regularity, I'm sure.

He finishes scraping and shows the doughnut to Dan, who is becoming more frustrated.

DAN

In a manner of speaking, yes.
Are you going to show me how
to connect the last line?

Paschal drags a line from a toothpick around the outside of the doughnut, underneath and through the hole to connect to a bean.

PASCHAL

This doughnut is pretty much
what mathematicians call a
torus, and it's the only way
to make the final line.

He gives it to Dan, who stares at in bewilderment.

A pause.

Dan suddenly looks annoyed.

DAN

Wait a minute. This isn't the
original puzzle! It's supposed
to be on a flat piece of paper.
What you're suggesting here is
a warp hole or something.

Paschal shakes his head.

PASCHAL

Dan, if you can't find the
solution, change the problem.

Dan simply stares. He hears rubbing on glass and turns around. Kathryn is wiping off the puzzle.

She notices Dan, takes her hand off the glass and gives a small, slow wave. Dan waves back with his doughnut hand as Kathryn turns and waddles toward the door.

PASCHAL

You have a beautiful wife and
a kid on the way.

Dan turns back.

PASCHAL (CONT)

You have a lot going for you,
a lot more than I have.

Dan drops his eyes as Paschal leans forward.

PASCHAL
Stop being a prick.

With a vacant look, Dan takes a bite out of the doughnut.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT -- NOON.

19

Sean is watching a nature program on TV. A fully grown lion swipes at a couple of cubs.

TV NARRATOR
As a species, Felix Leo is not partial to infanticide in general, but will kill any cubs that threaten his dominion...

Sean nods knowingly. The doorbell RINGS.

Sean opens the door to reveal Dan, who has a sheepish look on his face. Sean walks back inside, but leaves the door open.

SEAN
Come to shout at me some more?

Dan rolls his eyes and follows Sean into the main room in silence.

DAN
Look, I came to apologize, dad.

Sean turns the TV off and walks into the kitchen.

SEAN
Can't think what for.

Dan takes a deep breath and walks into the kitchen, where Sean is fingering a birdcage containing 3 ZEBRA FINCHES who CHIRP repeatedly.. He doesn't look up at Dan as he tries to compose himself. Dan talks to Sean's back.

DAN
Dad...

SEAN
Dan.

Dan tries again.

DAN
Dad...you're a real shit..

Sean's shoulders drop, but Dan grabs one.

DAN

Dad, please listen to me for once. Please hear me out.

Nothing.

DAN

I'll take that as a yes. Dad... I'm being honest, you drive me up the wall sometimes and it's hard to forget what happened in the past. But, I should know better than to bring it up. I'm sorry for the things I said.

Barely a register on Sean's face.

DAN

Dad, I want us to be OK... and I want you to know my kid
(Beat)
when it finally comes.

Sean picks at the cage for a bit. Dan looks at the back of his head.

Dan drops back a bit to lean on the counter and lowers his eyes.

Sean continues to pick and doesn't turn.

SEAN

Leah might be a nice name.

Dan looks up, questioning.

DAN

For who?

SEAN

The kid, if it's a girl of course..

Realization sweeps across Dan's face.

SEAN

...Leah suited your mother just fine...people used to compliment her on it, all the time.

A tiny smile from Dan. Sean continues to pick.

DAN
Leah sounds like a wonderful
name, Dad.
(Beat)
Whatever you want.

EXT. CAFE COLUMBO -- DAY.

20

Sean and Kathryn are enjoying a coffee on the terrace.

KATHRYN
He threw the books off the table?

Sean laughs.

SEAN
Absolutely! I'm surprised he
never told you this...

Kathryn shakes her head.

SEAN (CONT)
...he even gave the librarian
the finger. Anyway, he let me
have it
(beat)
and he didn't miss and hit the
wall, if you know what I mean?

Kathryn gives a small nod.

SEAN
But, in the end, he came back
and admitted he was wrong, so
that was alright.

Kathryn suppresses a smirk and looks up to see Dan, who's approaching the table with a diaper-bag over one arm and RACHEL, a new-born, in the other. He's rolling his eyes, but stops when Sean turns around.

SEAN
She all cleaned up then?

DAN
Yessir, as fresh as a new-born
baby.

Sean takes Rachel and snuggles her.

SEAN
Shall we go for a walk, Leah?

Kathryn rolls her eyes as if she's done it before.

KATHRYN

Sean, it's Rachel-Leah.

SEAN

I know. It's my special name for her.

Sean gets up and the others follow along behind him.

SEAN

So Dan, did you ever find a solution for that puzzle?

DAN

The three utilities? Didn't I tell you? There is no solution.

SEAN

I won't say I told you so, but...

DAN

Then don't.

SEAN

Well, I was reading about Einstein...

KATHRYN

And?

SEAN

There's 5 houses, right?

DAN

No way!

Dan playfully rushes Sean and takes Rachel from him.

SEAN

Wait a minute!

Kathryn laughs and links Sean's arm dragging him along as he tries in vain to convince Dan. A fade to black as Sean details the new puzzle.

SEAN

No really, there's a different nationality in each house. there all different colors and each one smokes a different cigar, keeps a different pet and drinks a different beverage...

FADE OUT.