

*LATE EVENING. The scene comes in on the GILBERT household. The TV is on playing sports in the background, while PAIGE sets up a board game.*

PAIGE

Hey, I'm almost ready to go in here, are you and Cole coming?

DAD

*(from another room)* Cole is grabbing some water; I'll get his attention. *(A microwave dings)*

COLE

I can hear you!

*Microwave door opens*

PAIGE

Hearing aids tonight?

*Microwave door closes*

COLE

*Walking into the same room as PAIGE and DAD.*

I want my hands free to text while we play.

PAIGE

Is it a girl?

COLE

Shut up.

PAIGE

Oooooooh!

DAD

Children. Lemme turn off the TV though if you're using the hearing aids.

*DAD turns off the TV.*

PAIGE

I'm right though!

COLE

You already know I went to prom with Lauren.

PAIGE

Cute hearing girl, yeah.

COLE

You haven't even met her!

PAIGE

Not officially but I saw her say goodbye to you

DAD

Have I played this game before?

COLE

It's Settlers of Catan, dad, we played it on my birthday last year.

DAD

Oh yeah! I won too.

PAIGE

Yeah, somehow. So I'm bringing my A game this time; don't get comfortable. Cole, why don't you go first?

COLE

Don't mind if I do. Hey, dad, if I want to build a road, do I have to get approval from your office first?

DAD

Har har. ...yes, and the application process is three to eight weeks.

COLE

Three to Eight?! That's such a wide range.

DAD

You're preaching to the choir. *Sighs*. Don't get a job in government, kids.

COLE

I don't plan to.

PAIGE

*At the same time*

Too late.

PAIGE

How are things over at the office?

DAD

Oh you know, it never really changes. One of the racquet clubs in town wants to move its clubhouse, but the only place it could go is within fifty yards of wetlands. They're taking it to the zoning board of appeals, and I've got to come up with a compelling reason why the clubhouse should stay where it is.

COLE

Making enemies, dad?

DAD

Unfortunately, our membership application to the Highbridge Racquet Club isn't looking hopeful.

COLE

What even are wetlands and why can't you build that close to them?

DAD

It's a rare ecosystem that houses dozens of endangered or otherwise threatened species. We don't typically allow anyone to build within fifty yards of what we deem "wetlands" to protect the ecosystem from unintended consequences of construction. ...If that's a six, I get stone from that, right?

COLE

Yes, but it's technically "ore."

PAIGE

Only cops call it "ore." It's stone.

COLE

Does Detective Wilson call it ore?

PAIGE

If I ever play catan with him, I'll let you know.

DAD

I'd like to buy a devo card.

COLE

Don't dodge the question, Paige. What are you doing with him?

PAIGE

I'm trying to find mom!

DAD

Cole, leave it. Your sister isn't doing anything dangerous.

(Pointed)...right?

PAIGE

No, of course not. I just think that he could use some help is all, now that I've seen all the bureaucracy that goes into solving a case. And he's been listening to me, more importantly. He could have just told me to get lost.

COLE

That's what I'm here for.

PAIGE

Exactly!

COLE

It just seems weird to me.

PAIGE

Oh, it's weird, but unlike you, I don't have anything else to do.

COLE

Just for the record, I am worried.

DAD

Nobody's trying to say you're not, Cole. We're all worried out of our minds. Paige just doesn't have school or a full time job.

COLE

Yeah... I just wish I could be doing more.

PAIGE

Well if Detective Wilson ever needs another body, I'll send him your way.

COLE

Word choice, P.

PAIGE

What do you mean?

COLE

A body? I have much more to offer.

PAIGE

We'll see how this game goes.

COLE

Maybe I'll find another way of helping.

DAD

I like that! Think outside the box. *Tapping on the board.* Also think about where you're going to move the robber.

PAIGE

Cole, have you applied to any colleges?

COLE

I'm moving him... here. Paige, I'll be taking a card from you.

PAIGE

Just don't take my wood. And answer the question.

COLE

It's too early to actually apply, and I don't plan on applying anywhere early action anyway, so I've got a while.

PAIGE

Will you apply to Gallaudet?

COLE

I will, but I'm not sure I want to go to a deaf school. I've been doing fine here, besides, I don't know if I want to be in DC, but who knows? I haven't visited yet; maybe I'll love it.

DAD

That's fair. DC can be a weird place, but your mother and I really liked it.

PAIGE

Where else are you thinking?

COLE

Well, it's kinda hard because I don't know what I want to study, so I'm not picking for a program; it's just a shot in the dark.

PAIGE

Yeah, but are you really excited about anywhere? Like a place?

COLE

I don't know, with everything going on, it's hard to get excited.

DAD

Come on, Cole, you can still be excited about school.

COLE

Well, I want to apply to Kenyon. College town, new surroundings,  
still decently close, though.

PAIGE

Any other city schools?

COLE

I was thinking about applying to NYU.

PAIGE/DAD

Why?

COLE

Yeah, I just thought it would be, like, a meme.

PAIGE

Save your creativity. Apply to Columbia if you want to be in New  
York.

DAD

Listen to your sister. I'm not spending money on joke applications.

*Dice is rolled.*

PAIGE

I rolled a two. Is anyone built on that?

COLE

I am! Thanks for the sheep

PAIGE

(Sincere) You're welcome. Is that all?

COLE

Well, what do we think about California?

DAD

No one actually likes it out there; they just feel like they have to because they bit the bullet and moved.

*PAIGE laughs*

COLE

Ok, well, maybe I'd like to see for myself.

PAIGE

Maybe we can take a vacation there this summer?

DAD

Paige, it's summer right now, I don't see our family going anywhere.

PAIGE

But you said/

DAD

Don't try to lawyer me on this one, Paige. WHEN your mom comes back, I want us all to stay home together.

COLE

... so we're never going to California?

DAD

That's not what I said either. God, you two are impossible today!

COLE

Then what ARE you saying? I'm confused.

DAD

I'm just saying we can't do a family trip until we find your mom!  
There's no point in a family trip without the full family.

*A beat of silence.*

COLE

That's fair. Sorry.

DAD

It's okay. And if you really want our trip to be to California, I  
won't complain much.

PAIGE

Much.

*A sound of dice being rolled as the atmosphere clears a bit*

DAD

I encourage my children to learn from their mistakes.

COLE

You should have learned to stop me after my last turn. I now have the  
longest road.

DAD

Dang it. I thought I told you there was an application process for  
this?

PAIGE

The zoning board appeals gets the final say on that, apparently.

DAD

Unfortunately, the town does have the power to supersede  
environmental procedures. Most of the time I'm able to talk them

down, but not always. Like that CDC facility out there you keep asking about, Paige.

PAIGE

What?

DAD

Yeah, it's built almost right on top of protected land. I'm not sure why they needed to build it where it is, but everytime they want to so much as put up a fence, my office hears about it. Apparently the exact location is vital to their work.

PAIGE

That's interesting.

COLE

Don't get distracted. I'm predicting my victory in seven turns.

DAD

I was hoping I'd distract you with Paige's conspiracy theories.

PAIGE

They're not... ok, you have to at least admit there's something weird about that place.

COLE

Yes, your life is very spooky. Give me the dice, please.

*(Sound of dice being passed and rolled)*

DAD

In all seriousness, I'm worried you're going to get yourself into trouble. Those people have no sense of humor. I doubt they'd find your investigation endearing.

PAIGE

I already promised you I wouldn't be trespassing.

COLE

Trespassing?! How much crazy talk do I miss when I don't have my hearing aids in? Are you living a full double life in between signing with me?

PAIGE

You weren't around for this conversation; don't worry.

COLE

I'm not upset; I'm making fun of you.

DAD

Har har. It is a bizarre situation, I'll give her that.

PAIGE

Ha!

COLE

Spooky government building being a pain in everyone else's ass?

DAD

Pretty much.

COLE

The government is always weird and cagey, I think you're building this up too much.

PAIGE

That's because you haven't dealt with the employees first hand.

COLE

They're probably just messing with you. If I were a government employee that's what I'd do.

PAIGE

You're not that good an actor.

COLE

Um, you're talking to the LEAD of the middle school musical, AND the senior year class president, I'm great in front of crowds.

DAD

Speaking of school. How's your finance course going, Cole?

COLE

Umm... not great. I got a C/ on the last quiz.

DAD

/Hmm

PAIGE

Could have been worse.

COLE

Yeah, it's just hard to focus these days, you know? Between mom, and college every time I sit down I feel like there's something else I should be doing so nothing ever gets done.

DAD

Well, you can retake it in the second half of the summer or even push it to fall if you need.

COLE

I was expecting you to be a little more upset...

DAD

You're right, though, Cole. It's hard to focus. Obviously I want you to get good grades and get into your top choice school, but we've all got a lot on our plates here. There's a section on college applications to explain extenuating circumstances.

PAIGE

Yeah.

DAD

We've got to look out for each other. You ended last semester solidly.

COLE

Yeah, thanks to all the extensions I got for my English paper. I think I need to get some of my elective credits waived too.

PAIGE

That sounds ok.

COLE

Yeah. But my final for finance is coming up next week and I don't feel ready at all, and god knows I didn't do well on the AP exams-

PAIGE

I can help you study!

COLE

Really?

PAIGE

Yeah, like I said, I haven't had much going on besides helping Benji with the case.

COLE

Oh, first name basis with the cops now, are we?

PAIGE

It's not like that!

DAD

The most important thing here is that you don't let your mother's absence ruin your future. I believe she'll come back soon and when that happens you'll feel pretty silly if you let your grades slip because of it.

COLE

You really think she's coming back?

DAD

Of course I do. If she doesn't walk in through that door on her own, Detective Wilson and Paige will turn her up somewhere.

COLE

Yeah... ok. Thanks.

DAD

You're welcome. I also just got the longest road.

COLE

What?

PAIGE

When?

DAD

I guess I win!

## START WEEK 25

Spring is back in full bloom, with warm weather and endless skies returning after what felt like the longest winter yet. Every class becomes a plea to let us study outside in the courtyard. The half hour we had for lunch was never enough time to enjoy the warmer afternoons. Elise argued quite passionately that our Transcendentalism unit would be more effective with the sun and the grass. Tommy and Ethan seemed to be mostly of the opinion that we shouldn't let good trees waste all their shade, but Ms. Cole realized pretty fast that the boys really just planned on climbing the trees and avoiding last minute preparations for the AP exams. As a result, the clouds taunted us as they drifted over our stuffy desk-filled classrooms, flaunting their freedom as we outlined various literary devices and beautiful imagery we had no way to experience firsthand. It seemed more poignant as a result of every longing glance every one of us sent out the window every few minutes.

Normally, I would have been debating right along with my peers, but I woke up feeling lethargic and queasy. I'd been having

allergies the past few days from the beginning spring blooms, and waved it off as nothing more than a side effect of poor sleeping and being busy in San Diego. The sunshine and distance was in fact exactly what I needed to put the whole event at the compound behind me. Or, as behind me as I can manage while still keeping my guard up for the suit man to suddenly appear. I also allowed myself to be distracted by fun with my cousins and spoiled rotten by my grandparents, who were so proud of me for getting into what they assume is my dream college. It was a nice week and my mysterious "illness" was fortunately written off as a 24 hour bug. But for every good thing I experienced there, I guess karma was waiting for me when I came home.

I wished a groggy good morning to mom, who immediately went to feel my forehead and fuss around me as I made myself cereal. I was in the middle of insisting I was just tired when she called upstairs, and dad came down with the aspirin. I took two in order to appease her before pushing my way out the door and hopping in the car. I can't miss school for a little hay fever. I barely slid into my seat before the final bell rang. Korey asked if I was okay, and Maggie kindly pointed out in Chem that I did not look so great. Again, the chem room is usually cold, so I simply stole Tommy's sweatshirt when I started getting chills and thought nothing of it until lunch. I managed a single bite of my sandwich before the inevitable occurred and I was forced to rush to the nearest bathroom. Sadly, the nearest bathroom to the caf is also the one connected to the locker room, and as soon as I thought I had emptied my stomach, the combined odors of gym socks and about 100 girl's perfumes set me off again.

The door opened slowly, and I saw Maggie and Sarah Marie's shoes tiptoeing towards my pathetic and crumpled form. Elise cannot be around sick people, and gets nauseous even seeing someone throwing up in movies, so Maggie explained that she was collecting my things from my locker and loading them into my car. Clearly this was not allergies, and Sarah Marie pointed out that I had Gov next, and Jones made me ill on a good day. I laughed weakly, but truth be told, I wasn't about to fight her to let me stay. I had felt my bed calling to me for the better part of an hour. Classic of me to *actually* get sick a week after faking it for my parents.

The two girls helped me up and over to the water fountain. At that point, the bell for the end of lunch rang, and the locker room began to fill with the freshman class. Sarah Marie promised she would deliver our excuses so that Maggie could walk me to my car. It was all very impressively organized. Once I got to the car, I thanked Maggie for the help and assured her I could get myself home. She still seemed worried and insisted she would check on me after school and before she had to be back at the theater. The drive was uncomfortable, but I had nothing left to expel, so to speak, and I made it into the driveway without incident. I parked the car, and walked straight in after killing the engine. I left my backpack and supplies in the passenger seat, exhausted by the mere thought of carrying them.

Once inside, I stumbled through the kitchen, taking another dose of aspirin to kill the fever I'm sure I had, before curling up

under a blanket on the couch, wrapped around a pot, just in case. Dad was obviously at the office today, and mom must have been scheduled at the library, because I had the house to myself. I knew if I called mom, she would come home and make me soup like she used to, but I'm old enough to take care of myself until she's home. Plus, I knew she would worry over how sick I've appeared this month anyway.

I turned on the TV to watch some cartoons and fell asleep before the first Scooby-Doo episode was over.

Dad came home first I think, but I didn't hear the garage door open in my sleep. I was gently shaken awake by him and informed that mom was on her way home to take me to the doctor. I knew it was just a bug, so Dr Marlowe wouldn't be able to help much, but I was told no bug lasts this long. To them, I had been sick for over two weeks off and on, so I understand their concern. And to be honest, I didn't have the energy to come up with something better, so I allowed myself to be taken to the family doctor. I was right that he had nothing to add, so mom reluctantly took me back home and let me stay on the couch eating ice chips and apple juice.

[*OUTRO MUSIC*]

This episode of Things Unsaid was written by Joseph Valle Hoag and Julia Duffy. It was directed by J Michael DeAngelis, and edited by Daniel Farrel. Composition by Daniel Farrell. The part of Paige was played by Julia Duffy. The part of Don Gilbert, or Dad, was played by Ace McCarthy. The part of Cole Gilbert was played by Devin Pacheco.

Want to show your support for this show? Tell your friends about Things Unsaid and don't forget to rate and review us on iTunes. Follow us on twitter and instagram @Unsaid Podcast. Interested in advertising on this podcast? Please send all inquiries to one of our social media pages. Thanks for listening.

*{MUSIC FADES}*