

Audition Workshop Pack – Proof – Sunday 16th November 2025 – 1pm at Roomfield Baptist Church

Extracts for - *Catherine and Robert*

Need to know:

- The auditions will take the form of a workshop where extracts will be run multiple times with differing combinations of auditionees. It may not be the case that every possible combination will be seen in every extract due to time constraints of the audition process.
- You are not required to have learnt these extracts but a familiarisation with them would be strongly encouraged ahead of the audition.
- Should you be successful you will need to become a member of TAODS if you are not already a member.
- You must be able to commit to rehearsals up to 3 times a week. This will comprise of two weekday evenings (tbc) and Sunday afternoons. The Sunday rehearsals will not begin immediately but you will be required once they begin.
- You must be available on the following dates. Thursday 5th, Friday 6th, Sunday 8th and Monday 9th March 2026 – These comprise the technical and dress rehearsals. It may be that one of these dates is not required but this can only be confirmed closer to the date. You must also obviously be available 10th – 14th March 2026.
- Please note that we will not be able to provide detailed individual feedback following the auditions

Catherine and Robert – Extract 1

ROBERT: I thought she was coming in.

CATHERINE: Not till tomorrow.

(*Beat.*)

ROBERT: My advice, if you find yourself awake late at night, is to sit down and do some mathematics.

CATHERINE: Oh please.

ROBERT: We could do some together.

CATHERINE: No.

ROBERT: Why not?

CATHERINE: I can't think of anything worse. You sure you don't want any?

ROBERT: Yeah, thanks. You used to love it.

CATHERINE: Not anymore.

ROBERT: You knew what a prime number was before you could read.

CATHERINE: Well now I've forgotten.

ROBERT: (*Hard*) Don't waste your talent, Catherine.

(*Beat.*)

CATHERINE: I knew you'd say something like that.

ROBERT: I realize you've had a difficult time.

CATHERINE: Thanks.

ROBERT: That's not an excuse. Don't be lazy.

CATHERINE: I haven't been lazy, I've been taking care of you.

ROBERT: Kid, I've seen you. You sleep till noon, you eat junk, you don't work, the dishes pile up in the sink. If you go out it's to buy magazines. You come back with a stack of magazines this high—I don't know how you read that crap. And those are the good days. Some days you don't get up, you don't get out of bed.

CATHERINE: Those are the good days.

ROBERT: Bullshit. Those days are lost. You threw them away. And you'll never know what else you threw away with them—the work you lost, the ideas you didn't have, discov-

eries you never made because you were moping in your bed at four in the afternoon. (*Beat.*) You know I'm right. (*Beat.*)

CATHERINE: I've lost a few days.

ROBERT: How many?

CATHERINE: Oh, I don't know.

ROBERT: I bet you do.

CATHERINE: What?

ROBERT: I bet you count.

CATHERINE: Knock it off.

ROBERT: Well do you know or don't you?

CATHERINE: I don't.

ROBERT: Of course you do. How many days have you lost?

CATHERINE: A month. Around a month.

ROBERT: Exactly.

CATHERINE: Goddamn it, I don't—

ROBERT: *How many?*

CATHERINE: Thirty-three days.

ROBERT: Exactly?

CATHERINE: I don't know.

ROBERT: Be precise, for Chrissake.

CATHERINE: I slept till noon today.

ROBERT: Call it thirty-three and a quarter days.

CATHERINE: Yes, all right.

ROBERT: You're kidding!

CATHERINE: No.

ROBERT: Amazing number!

CATHERINE: It's a depressing fucking number.

ROBERT: Catherine, if every day you say you've lost were a year, it would be a very interesting fucking number.

CATHERINE: Thirty-three and a quarter years is not interesting.

ROBERT: Stop it. You know exactly what I mean.

CATHERINE: (*Conceding*) 1729 weeks.

ROBERT: 1729. Great number. The smallest number expressible—

CATHERINE: —expressible as the sum of two cubes in two different ways.

ROBERT: 12 cubed plus 1 cubed equals 1729.

CATHERINE: And 10 cubed plus 9 cubed. Yes, we've got it, thank you.

ROBERT: You see? Even your depression is mathematical. Stop moping and get to work. The kind of potential you have—

CATHERINE: I haven't done anything good.

ROBERT: You're young. You've got time.

CATHERINE: I do?

ROBERT: Yes.

CATHERINE: By the time you were my age you were famous.

ROBERT: By the time I was your age I'd already done my best work.

(Beat.)

CATHERINE: What about after?

ROBERT: After what?

CATHERINE: After you got sick.

ROBERT: What about it?

CATHERINE: You couldn't work then.

ROBERT: No, if anything I was sharper.

CATHERINE: *(She can't help it: she laughs.)* Dad.

ROBERT: I was. Hey, it's true. The clarity—that was the amazing thing. No doubts.

CATHERINE: You were happy?

ROBERT: Yeah, I was busy.

CATHERINE: Not the same thing.

ROBERT: I don't see the difference. I knew what I wanted to do and I did it.

If I wanted to work a problem all day long, I did it.

If I wanted to look for information—secrets, complex and tantalizing messages—I could find them all around me. In the air. In a pile of fallen leaves some neighbor raked together. In box scores in the paper, written in the steam com-

ing up off a cup of coffee. The whole world was talking to me.

If I just wanted to close my eyes, sit quietly on the porch and listen for the messages, I did that.

It was wonderful.

(Beat.)

CATHERINE: How old were you? When it started.

ROBERT: Mid-twenties. Twenty-three, four. *(Beat.)* Is that what you're worried about?

CATHERINE: I've thought about it.

ROBERT: Just getting a year older means nothing, Catherine.

CATHERINE: It's not just getting older.

ROBERT: It's me.

(Beat.)

CATHERINE: I've thought about it.

ROBERT: Really?

CATHERINE: How could I not?

ROBERT: Well if that's why you're worried you're not keeping up with the medical literature. There are all kinds of factors. It's not simply something you inherit. Just because I went bughouse doesn't mean you will.

CATHERINE: Dad . . .

ROBERT: Listen to me. Life changes fast in your early twenties and it shakes you up. You're feeling down. It's been a bad week. You've had a lousy couple years, no one knows that better than me. But you're gonna be okay.

CATHERINE: Yeah?

ROBERT: Yes. I promise you. Push yourself. Don't read so many magazines. Sit down and get the machinery going and I swear to God you'll feel fine. The simple fact that we can talk about this together is a good sign.

CATHERINE: A good sign?

ROBERT: Yes!

CATHERINE: How could it be a good sign?

ROBERT: Because! Crazy people don't sit around wondering if they're nuts.

CATHERINE: They don't?

ROBERT: Of course not. They've got better things to do. Take it from me. A very good sign that you're crazy is an inability to ask the question "Am I crazy?"

CATHERINE: Even if the answer is yes?

ROBERT: Crazy people don't ask. You see?

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: So if you're asking . . .

CATHERINE: I'm not.

ROBERT: But if you were, it would be a very good sign.

CATHERINE: A good sign . . .

ROBERT: A good sign that you're fine.

CATHERINE: Right.

ROBERT: You see? You've just gotta think these things through. Now come on, what do you say? Let's call it a night; you go up, get some sleep, and then in the morning you can—

CATHERINE: Wait. No.

ROBERT: What's the matter?

CATHERINE: It doesn't work.

ROBERT: Why not?

CATHERINE: It doesn't make sense.

ROBERT: Sure it does.

CATHERINE: No.

ROBERT: Where's the problem?

CATHERINE: The problem is you are crazy!

ROBERT: What difference does that make?

CATHERINE: You admitted— You just told me that you are.

ROBERT: So?

CATHERINE: You said a crazy person would never admit that.

ROBERT: Yeah, but it's . . . Oh. I see.

CATHERINE: So?

ROBERT: It's a point.

CATHERINE: So how can you admit it?

ROBERT: Well. Because I'm also dead. (*Beat.*) Aren't I?

CATHERINE: You died a week ago.

ROBERT: Heart failure. Quick. The funeral's tomorrow.

CATHERINE: That's why Claire's flying in from New York.

ROBERT: Yes.

CATHERINE: You're sitting here. You're giving me advice. You brought me champagne.

ROBERT: Yes.

(*Beat.*)

CATHERINE: Which means . . .

ROBERT: For you?

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: For you, Catherine, my daughter, who I love very much . . .

It could be a bad sign.

(*They sit together for a moment. Noise off. HAL enters, semi-hip clothes. He carries a backpack and a jacket, folded. He lets the door go and it bangs shut. CATHERINE sits up with a jolt.*)

CATHERINE: What?

HAL: Oh God, sorry—did I wake you?

CATHERINE: What?

HAL: Were you asleep?

(*Beat. ROBERT is gone.*)

CATHERINE: You scared me, for Chrissake. What are you doing?

HAL: I'm sorry. I didn't realize it had gotten so late. I'm done for the night.

CATHERINE: Good.

HAL: Drinking alone?

(*CATHERINE realizes she is holding the champagne bottle. She puts it down quickly.*)

CATHERINE: Yes.

Catherine and Robert - Extract 2

Act Two

Scene 1

ROBERT *is alone on the porch. He sits quietly, enjoying a drink, the quiet, the September afternoon. A notebook nearby, unopened. He closes his eyes, apparently dozing. It is four years earlier than the events in Act One.* CATHERINE *enters quietly. She stands behind her father for a moment.*

ROBERT: Hello.

CATHERINE: How did you know I was here?

ROBERT: I heard you.

CATHERINE: I thought you were asleep.

ROBERT: On an afternoon like this? No.

CATHERINE: Do you need anything?

ROBERT: No.

CATHERINE: I'm going to the store.

ROBERT: What's for dinner?

CATHERINE: What do you want?

ROBERT: Not spaghetti.

CATHERINE: All right.

ROBERT: Disgusting stuff.

CATHERINE: That's what I was going to make.

ROBERT: I had a feeling. Good thing I spoke up. You make it too much.

CATHERINE: What do you want?

ROBERT: What do you have a taste for?

CATHERINE: Nothing.

ROBERT: Nothing at all?

CATHERINE: I don't care. I thought pasta would be easy.

ROBERT: Pasta, oh God, don't even say the word "pasta." It sounds so hopeless, like surrender: "Pasta would be easy." Yes, yes, it would. Pasta. It doesn't *mean* anything. It's just a euphemism people invented when they got sick of eating spaghetti.

CATHERINE: Dad, what do you want to eat?

ROBERT: I don't know.

CATHERINE: Well I don't know what to get.

ROBERT: I'll shop.

CATHERINE: No.

ROBERT: I'll do it.

CATHERINE: No, Dad, rest.

ROBERT: I wanted to take a walk anyway.

CATHERINE: Are you sure?

ROBERT: Yes. What about a walk to the lake? You and me.

CATHERINE: All right.

ROBERT: I would love to go to the lake. Then on the way home we'll stop at the store, see what jumps out at us.

CATHERINE: It's warm. It would be nice, if you're up for it.

ROBERT: You're damn right I'm up for it. We'll work up an appetite. Give me ten seconds, let me put this stuff away and we're out the door.

CATHERINE: I'm going to school.

(*Beat.*)

ROBERT: When?

CATHERINE: I'm gonna start at Northwestern at the end of the month.

ROBERT: Northwestern?

CATHERINE: They were great about my credits. They're taking

me in as a sophomore. I wasn't sure when to talk to you about it.

ROBERT: Northwestern?

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: What's wrong with Chicago?

CATHERINE: You still teach there. I'm sorry, it's too weird, taking classes in your department.

ROBERT: It's a long drive.

CATHERINE: Not that long, half an hour.

ROBERT: Still, twice a day . . .

CATHERINE: Dad, I'd live there.

(Beat.)

ROBERT: You'd actually want to live in Evanston?

CATHERINE: Yes. I'll still be close. I can come home whenever you want.

You've been well—really well—for almost seven months.

I don't think you need me here every minute of the day.

(Beat.)

ROBERT: This is all a done deal? You're in.

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: You're sure.

CATHERINE: *Yes.*

ROBERT: Who pays for it?

CATHERINE: They're giving me a free ride, Dad. They've been great.

ROBERT: On tuition, sure. What about food, books, clothes, gas, meals out—do you plan to have a social life?

CATHERINE: I don't know.

ROBERT: You gotta pay your own way on dates, at least the early dates, say the first three, otherwise they expect something.

CATHERINE: The money will be fine. Claire's gonna help out.

ROBERT: When did you talk to Claire?

CATHERINE: I don't know, a couple weeks ago.

ROBERT: You talk to her before you talk to me?

CATHERINE: There were a lot of details to work out. She was great, she offered to take care of all the expenses.

ROBERT: This is a big step. A different *city*—

CATHERINE: It's not even a long-distance phone call.

ROBERT: It's a huge place. They're serious up there. I mean serious. Yeah the football's a disaster but the math guys don't kid around. You haven't been in school. You sure you're ready? You can get buried up there.

CATHERINE: I'll be all right.

ROBERT: You're way behind.

CATHERINE: I know.

ROBERT: A year, at least.

CATHERINE: Thank you, *I know*. Look, I don't know if this is a good idea. I don't know if I can handle the work. I don't know if I can handle *any* of it.

ROBERT: For Chrissake, Catherine, you should have talked to me.

CATHERINE: Dad. Listen. If you ever . . . if for any reason it ever turned out that you needed me here full-time again—

ROBERT: *I won't*. That's not—

CATHERINE: I can always take a semester off, or—

ROBERT: No. Stop it. I just—the end of the *month*? Why didn't you say something before?

CATHERINE: Dad, come on. It took a while to set this up, and until recently, until very recently, you weren't—

ROBERT: You just said yourself I've been fine.

CATHERINE: Yes, but I didn't know—I *hoped*, but I didn't *know*, no one knew if this would last. I told myself to wait until I was sure about you. That you were feeling okay again. Consistently okay.

ROBERT: So I'm to take this conversation as a vote of confidence? I'm honored.

Catherine and Robert – Extract 3

ROBERT: Well I'm sorry, Catherine, but it's a question of priorities, and work takes priority, you know that.

CATHERINE: You're working?

ROBERT: Goddamnit, I am working! I say "I"—The machinery. The machinery is working. Catherine, it's on full-blast. All the cylinders are firing, I'm on fire. That's why I came out here, to cool off. I haven't felt like this for years.

CATHERINE: You're kidding.

ROBERT: No!

CATHERINE: I don't believe it.

ROBERT: I don't believe it either! But it's true. It started about a week ago. I woke up, came downstairs, made a cup of coffee, and before I could pour in the milk it was like someone turned the *light* on in my head.

CATHERINE: Really?

ROBERT: Not the light, the whole *power grid*. I *lit up*, and it's like no time has passed since I was twenty-one.

CATHERINE: You're kidding!

ROBERT: No! I'm back! I'm back in touch with the source—the font, the—whatever the source of my creativity was all those years ago. I'm in contact with it again. I'm *sitting* on it. It's a geyser and I'm shooting right up into the air on top of it.

CATHERINE: My God.

ROBERT: I'm not talking about divine inspiration. It's not funneling down into my head and onto the page. It'll take *work* to shape these things; I'm not saying it won't be a tremendous amount of work. It *will* be a tremendous amount of work. It's not going to be easy. But the raw material is there. It's like I've been driving in traffic and now the lanes are opening up before me and I can *accelerate*. I see whole landscapes—places for the work to go, new techniques, revolutionary possibilities. I'm going to get whole branches of

the profession talking to each other. I—I'm sorry, I'm being rude. How's school?

CATHERINE: (*Taken aback*) Fine.

ROBERT: You're working hard?

CATHERINE: Sure.

ROBERT: Faculty treating you all right?

CATHERINE: Yes. Dad—

ROBERT: Made any friends?

CATHERINE: Of course. I—

ROBERT: Dating?

CATHERINE: Dad, hold on.

ROBERT: No details necessary if you don't want to provide them. I'm just interested.

CATHERINE: School's great. I want to talk about what you're doing.

ROBERT: Great, let's talk.

CATHERINE: This work.

ROBERT: Yes.

CATHERINE: (*Indicating the notebooks*) Is it here?

ROBERT: Part of it, yes.

CATHERINE: Can I see it?

ROBERT: It's all at a very early stage.

CATHERINE: I don't mind.

ROBERT: Nothing's actually complete, to be honest. It's all in progress. I think we're talking years.

CATHERINE: That's okay. I don't care. Just let me see anything.

ROBERT: You really want to?

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: You're genuinely interested.

CATHERINE: Dad, of course!

ROBERT: Of course. It's your field.

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: You know how happy that makes me.

(Beat.)

CATHERINE: Yes.

ROBERT: I think there's enough here to keep me working the rest of my life.

Not just me.

I was starting to imagine I was finished, Catherine. Really finished. Don't get me wrong, I was grateful I could go to my office, have a life, but secretly I was terrified I'd never work again. Did you know that?

CATHERINE: I wondered.

ROBERT: I was absolutely fucking terrified.

Then I remembered something and a part of the terror went away. I remembered you.

Your creative years were just beginning. You'd get your degree, do your own work. You were just getting started. If you hadn't gone into math, that would have been all right. Claire's done well for herself. I'm satisfied with her.

I'm proud of you.

I don't mean to embarrass you. It's part of the reason we have children. We hope they'll survive us, accomplish what we can't.

Now that I'm back in the game I admit I've got another idea, a better one.

CATHERINE: What?

ROBERT: I know you've got your own work. I don't want you to neglect that. You can't neglect it. But I could probably use some help. Work with me. If you want to, if you can work it out with your class schedule and everything else, I could help you with that, make some calls, talk to your teachers . . .

I'm getting ahead of myself.

Well, Jesus, look, enough bullshit. You asked to see something. Let's start with this. I've roughed something out. General outline for a proof. Major result. Important.

It's not finished but you can see where it's going. Let's see.
(*He selects a notebook.*) Here. (*He gives it to CATHERINE. She opens it and reads.*) It's very rough.

(*After a long moment CATHERINE closes the notebook. A beat. She sits down next to ROBERT.*)

CATHERINE: Dad. Let's go inside.

ROBERT: The gaps might make it hard to follow. We can talk it through.

CATHERINE: You're cold. Let's go in.

ROBERT: Maybe we could work on this together. This might be a great place to start. What about it? What do you think? Let's talk it through.

CATHERINE: Not now. I'm cold too. It's really freezing out here. Let's go inside.

ROBERT: I'm telling you it's stifling in there, goddamn it. The radiators. Look, read out the first couple of lines. That's how we start: you read, and we go line by line, out loud, through the argument. See if there's a better way, a shorter way. Let's collaborate.

CATHERINE: No. Come on.

ROBERT: I've been waiting years for this. This is something I want to do. Come on, let's do some work together.

CATHERINE: We can't do it out here. It's freezing cold. I'm taking you in.

ROBERT: Not until we *talk about the proof*.

CATHERINE: No.

ROBERT: *Goddamnit, Catherine, open the goddamn book and read me the lines.*

(*Beat. CATHERINE opens the book. She reads slowly, without inflection.*)

CATHERINE: "Let X equal the quantity of all quantities of X. Let X equal the cold. It is cold in December. The months of cold equal November through February. There are four months of cold and four of heat, leaving four months of in-

determinate temperature. In February it snows. In March the lake is a lake of ice. In September the students come back and the bookstores are full. Let X equal the month of full bookstores. The number of books approaches infinity as the number of months of cold approaches four. I will never be as cold now as I will in the future. The future of cold is infinite. The future of heat is the future of cold. The bookstores are infinite and so are never full except in September . . .” (*She stops reading and slowly closes the book. ROBERT is shivering uncontrollably. She puts her arms around him and helps him to his feet.*) It’s all right. We’ll go inside.

ROBERT: I’m cold.

CATHERINE: We’ll warm you up.

ROBERT: Don’t leave. Please.

CATHERINE: I won’t. Let’s go inside.

fade

Scene 5

The present. A week after the events in Scene 3. CLAIRE on the porch. Coffee in takeout cups. CLAIRE takes a plane ticket out of her purse, checks the itinerary. A moment. CATHERINE enters with bags for travel. CLAIRE gives her a cup of coffee. CATHERINE drinks in silence. Beat.

CATHERINE: Good coffee.

CLAIRE: It’s all right, isn’t it? (*Beat.*) We have a place where we buy all our coffee. They roast it themselves, they have an old roaster down in the basement. You can smell it on the street. Some mornings you can smell it from our place, four stories up. It’s wonderful. “Manhattan’s Best”: some magazine wrote it up. Who knows. But it is very good.