

Act I Places Call

Scott (Robert) + Jenna (Catherine)

Preshow

Lx 91 & S 5

Curtain Speech (H2H)

Lx 93 & S 7

Scene 1 (Nighttime)

Top of Show B/O

Lx 95 & S 8

VIZ: Catherine Set (After Picking Up Magazine)

Lx 111

ROBERT. Can't sleep?

Lx 113 & S 11

CATHERINE. Jesus, you scared me.

ROBERT. Sorry.

CATHERINE. What are you doing here?

ROBERT. I thought I'd check up on you. Why aren't you in bed?

CATHERINE. Your student is still here. He's up in your study.

ROBERT. He can let himself out.

CATHERINE. I might as well wait up till he's done.

ROBERT. He's not my student anymore. He's teaching now. Bright kid. (Beat.)

CATHERINE. What time is it?

ROBERT. It's almost one.

CATHERINE. Huh.

ROBERT. After midnight...

CATHERINE. So?

ROBERT. So: (He indicates something on the table behind him: a bottle of champagne.) Happy birthday.

CATHERINE. Dad.

ROBERT. Do I ever forget?

CATHERINE. Thank you.

ROBERT. Twenty-five. I can't believe it.

CATHERINE. Neither can I. Should we have it now?

ROBERT. It's up to you.

CATHERINE. Yes.

ROBERT. You want me to open it?

CATHERINE. Let me. Last time you opened a bottle of champagne out here you broke a window.

ROBERT. That was a long time ago. I resent your bringing it up.

CATHERINE. You're lucky you didn't lose an eye. (She opens the bottle)

ROBERT. Twenty-five!

CATHERINE. I feel old.

ROBERT. You're a kid.

CATHERINE. Glasses?

ROBERT. Goddamn it, I forgot the glasses. Do you want me to—

CATHERINE. Nah. (She drinks from the bottle. A long pull. Robert watches her.)

ROBERT. I hope you like it. I wasn't sure what to get you.

CATHERINE. This is the worst champagne I have ever tasted.

ROBERT. I hate I am proud to say I don't know anything about wines. those kind of people who are always talking about "vintages."

CATHERINE. It's not even champagne.

ROBERT. The bottle was the right shape.

CATHERINE. "Great Lakes Vineyards." I didn't know they made wine in Wisconsin.

ROBERT. A girl who's drinking from the bottle shouldn't complain. Don't guzzle it. It's an elegant beverage. Sip.

CATHERINE. (Offering the bottle.) Do you —

ROBERT. No, go ahead.

CATHERINE. You sure?

ROBERT. Yeah. It's your birthday.

CATHERINE. Happy birthday to me.

ROBERT. What are you going to do on your birthday?

CATHERINE. Drink this. Have some.

ROBERT. No. I hope you're not spending your birthday alone.

CATHERINE. I'm not alone.

Viz. Cath X to
bistro table

Lx 114

ROBERT. I don't count.

CATHERINE. Why not?

ROBERT. I'm your old man. Go out with some friends.

CATHERINE. Right.

ROBERT. Your friends aren't taking you out?

CATHERINE. No.

ROBERT. Why not?

CATHERINE. Because in order for your friends to take you out you generally have to have friends.

ROBERT. (Dismissive.) Oh

CATHERINE. It's funny how that works.

ROBERT. You have friends. What about that cute blonde, what was her name?

CATHERINE. What?

ROBERT. She lives over on Ellis Avenue - you used to spend every minute together.

CATHERINE. Cindy Jacobsen?

ROBERT. Cindy Jacobsen!

CATHERINE. That was in third grade, Dad. Her family moved to Florida in 1983.

ROBERT. What about Claire?

CATHERINE. She's not my friend, she's my sister. And she's in New York. And I don't like her.

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

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.) 1,729 weeks.

ROBERT. 1,729. Great number. The smallest number expressible-

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

ROBERT. Twelve cubed plus one cubed equals 1,729.

CATHERINE. And ten cubed plus nine 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

ROBERT. 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 coming 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.

CATHERINE. How old were you? When it started.

ROBERT. Mid-twenties. Twenty-three, four. 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 10 around wondering if they're nuts.