

backpack.
HAL. What are you talking about?
CATHERINE. Give it to me.
HAL. You're being a little bit paranoid.
CATHERINE. PARANOID?
HAL. Maybe a little.
CATHERINE. Fuck you, HAL. I KNOW you have one of my notebooks.
HAL. I think you should calm down and think about what you're saying.
CATHERINE. I'm saying you're lying to me and stealing my family's property.
HAL. And I think that sounds paranoid.
CATHERINE. Just because I'm paranoid doesn't mean there isn't something in that backpack.
HAL. You just said yourself there's nothing up there. Didn't you?
CATHERINE. I —
HAL. Didn't you say that?
CATHERINE. Yes.
HAL. So what would I take?
Right? (Beat.)
CATHERINE. You're right.
HAL. Thank you.
CATHERINE. So you don't need to come back.
HAL. (Sighs.) Please. Someone should know for sure whether —
CATHERINE. I LIVED WITH HIM.
I spent my life with him. I fed him. Talked to him. Tried to listen when he talked. Talked to people who weren't there ... Watched him shuffling around like a ghost. A very smelly ghost. He was filthy. I had to make sure he bathed. My own father.
HAL. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have ...
CATHERINE. After my mother died it was just me here. I tried to keep him happy no matter what idiotic project he was doing. He used to read all day. He kept demanding more and more books. I took them out of the library by the carload. We had hundreds upstairs. Then I realized he wasn't reading: He believed aliens were sending him messages through the dewey decimal numbers on the library books. He was trying to work out the code.

HAL. What kind of messages?
CATHERINE. Beautiful mathematics. Answers to everything. The most elegant proofs, perfect proofs, proofs like music.
HAL. Sounds good.
CATHERINE. Plus fashion tips, knock-knock jokes — I mean it was NUTS, okay?
HAL. He was ill. It was a tragedy.
CATHERINE. Later the writing phase: scribbling, nineteen, twenty hours a day ... I ordered him a case of notebooks and he used every one.
I dropped out of school ... I'm glad he's dead.
HAL. I understand why you'd feel that way.
CATHERINE. Fuck you.
HAL. You're right. I can't imagine dealing with that. It must have been awful. I know you —
CATHERINE. You don't know me. I want to be alone. I don't want him around.
HAL. (Confused.) Him? I don't —
CATHERINE. You. I don't want you here.
HAL. Why?
CATHERINE. He's dead.
HAL. But I'm not —
CATHERINE. HE's dead; I don't need any protégés around.
HAL. There will be others.
CATHERINE. What?
HAL. You think I'm the only one? People are already working over his stuff. Someone's gonna read those notebooks.
CATHERINE. I'll do it.
HAL. No, you —
CATHERINE. He's my father, I'll do it.
HAL. You can't.
CATHERINE. Why not?
HAL. You don't have the math. It's all just squiggles on a page. You wouldn't know the good stuff from the junk.
CATHERINE. It's all junk.
HAL. If it's not we can't afford to miss any through carelessness.
CATHERINE. I know mathematics.
HAL. If there were anything up there it would be pretty high-