Drama Essay: Character Analysis

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

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**Introduction**

Sometimes a person loses his/her own self in an attempt to be like another person. David Auburn's *Proof* (2000) is based upon the story of such a girl Catherine. She is lost in the memories of his late father whom she took care of during his last days. He is dead, but Catherine is talking to him frankly in the first act of the play. Catherine feels that she has wasted her life and she cannot get out of the thoughts of her father, she even thinks that she has become another self of her father and she would meet the same fate as he did: madness in later age. She feels that her life would be pettier than her father because she could not become a famous mathematician in her mid-twenties as he did. In fact, Catherine is a Nostalgic girl who never comes out of the thoughts of her father and her past that are probably interconnected, but she appears as a too confusing character that on one hand she seems jealous of her father and at the other afraid of being like him.

**Body**

Catherine is experiencing nostalgia as she appears in the first act. Nostalgia is a mental disease or psychological disorder that keeps a person lost in the memories of the past. Catherine has gone beyond the peripheries of *Stream of Consciousness* because she appears as in proper conversation with her father Robert who is already dead. It is Catherine’s birthday and Robert appears as an alive person coming out of his bedroom. They talk about Catherine’s past when Robert says that she was such a lively girl in her childhood and she recalls them with despair: “Those are the good days” (Auburn, David. 2019). Robert wishes her birthday, but she responds frustrated and dissatisfied with her life because she could not do anything remarkable in mathematics even after 24 years of age: “I haven’t done anything good” (Auburn, David. 2019). This disappointment from herself is because Robert had become a notable mathematician at her age. She rudely talks to Robert and expresses that she is afraid of being like him. She is referring to a kind of mental illness that Robert suffered from during his last days. Moreover, she is disappointed because she could not continue her college studies: “How could I not?” (Auburn, David. 2019). These factors have conditioned her mind in a way that she cannot behave nicely to anyone like her sister Claire and her father's student Hal. She accuses Hal of stealing her father's notebooks and calls the police. She accuses Claire of leaving her alone with sick Robert that caused her studies stopped. She wants to have a different life from her father and she does not like to be insane like him in her old age. Additionally, her desire to become a considerable mathematician does not die. She presents a proof she wrote for her father to Hal and Claire. They do not believe her and she gets more vulnerable. Finally, Hal finds that she has written the proof and he pledges to stay with her for more research on the subject. This incident soothes her very much and she happily agrees with Hal to continue the research.

**Conclusion**

A long company of sick Robert away from college studies had made young Catherine desperate about her future and a nostalgic kind of girl. This conflict does not resolve until she reveals her proof to Hal, and he expresses that he would accompany her in doing more research. It shows that Catherine was a young genius girl, but long idleness and then the flight of her only companion Robert had made her hopeless and nostalgic. Long thoughts of madness were turning her mad, but Hal enters her life to learn about the subject in her company that soothes her very much, thanks to the *proof*.

**References**

#### Auburn, David. (2019). My.fit.edu. Retrieved 3 December 2019, from http://my.fit.edu/~lperdiga/proof.pdf