

*Ophelia enters.  
She has a basket or a backpack or a container of small treasures.  
Her flowers.  
Her pens and paper.  
Her wishes.  
She is fidgety.  
There has been much conversion therapy in this place for her.*

**OPHELIA**

Frailty, he called me.  
Frailty became my name.

*She takes out a "Hello my name is" badge and writes "Frailty" on it. Puts it on*

**OPHELIA**

Now they tell me I am a hysteric. They tell me my diet is poor.  
They tell me my mind is failing and my body bleeds because my mother was a whore.  
They say I want to fuck my brother. My father. The Queen.  
They say although I bath myself in rivers of lillies and rosewater that my flesh will still be tainted with his love.  
...Hamlet.  
The prince.

I didn't ask for this.

*Beat. A nervous giggle.*

All I ever wanted was a garden. And a chance to make things grow.  
What's so wrong with that? If God could fill me up like he could...I would spend my life inside a garden.  
Eden would be so perfect this time of year.  
There's rosemary for remembrance and pansies that's for thoughts....there's fennel for you and rue for me, more columbines than violets.

*Beat. Soberly.*

When I talk of flowers the nurses take a bar of soap and scrub my mouth out while the priests grow big and fidgety inside their coats.  
I don't like it here. Inside.  
Everything smells like wet and rock but not like the earth after a rain more like a carcass leaking metallic juice.  
I speak like a green girl, my father said.  
My father....dead.

Won't they let me out anymore? Why won't they let me out to sun and grass and  
and....

Hamlet.

He meant to wreck me - Hamlet. Prince of Denmark meant to wreck me, make me  
rotten like spoiled fruit.

'To a nunnery get thee', he said. 'To a nunnery' and shoved flowers down my throat,  
the garden torn with hands as thin as a pageboy's.

Who stroked my hair once and called it vines of gold.

Whose poetry lined the margins of my prayer books each Sunday now tore my hair  
into fists and called me sinful, weak, dishonest-fair.

And now I am Ophelia: The daddy's girl. The stupid whore. The little brat. The one  
who should have seen it coming.

"Wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them"

Frailty he called me.

Frailty became my name.

And I keep wondering

Does anyone remember who I was,  
before he chose me?

*Enter Gertrude.  
She commands.  
She splits the sea of bodies.  
The chorus form a throne of their bodies.  
She sits.*

**GERTRUDE**

And after a certain age, they stop seeing you as a woman at all, you know.  
You become an epilogue.

A crone.

A bag of bones and sins you never thought you would commit, but then, you never really know how low you would be willing to sink until your back's against the wall and you realize that only *you* are looking out for you.

Learn that now. I say.

If I had had a daughter I would have told her that.

Everything changes when you stop being a girl. Get ready.

Weakness is cute anymore.

Your ignorance has no more purchase

And your lust offends their very construction of age and beauty.

Don't even think about putting on pigtails.

Knee socks.

Letting your tits hang loose.

Everyone tries to sell you your youth back,

And if you're not afraid of aging, they become afraid of you.

They don't know whether they want to fuck you or kill you.

So they split the difference and marry you.

Isn't that the biggest laugh of all.

Men live longer when they're married, did you know that?

Women don't.

We whittle away to worries and appointments and fold-out picture wallets and calendars with other people's birthdays circled on them, never our own.

And the Queen's the most powerful piece on the chessboard.

*Bark of laughter. Harsh.*

What a stupid joke.

And still they tell us that we are the ones who need to "catch a man"

Like he were a butterfly.

Or a good fish

Full of iron and salt.

I never met a man who didn't want to own something before he could start loving it.

But no one tells you that when you're young and dreaming up your future, they just shove a fairy tale down your throat and give you a brood of dolls so that you can practice turning yourself into a plastic mute by the time you're in your twenties.

Women disappear every day and no one talks about it until it makes a hole in a man's life, doesn't it?

Mothers weep for their children on the sides of dusty roads.  
Girls forget the names of their mother's bloodlines  
And somehow along the way we stop existing.

It's a wonder you even know us at all anymore.