



## Ophelia in the Garden

by **Carmelo Militano**

"When down her weedy trophies and herself  
Fell in the weeping brook...  
To muddy death." (*Hamlet* 4.7)

You went mad wearing fennel  
columbines, rue, daisies, and violets  
his "antic disposition" as much a mystery to you as  
it is to us  
his love brief  
his language full of ache and contradiction  
measured poison and purity in the same cup  
unable to face the truth about his lusty mother  
he was a poor detective  
and you the untrustworthy dame in the shadows  
used by all the men in your life  
part of the verdict love  
your eyes must have been sad for a long time  
before you finally recognized your father  
you wore columbines for him  
daisies were for the king  
violets for the prince  
and nothing for the queen  
you had guessed she was the problem  
near the end the duplicity of water was your only  
friend  
you loved its clarity even though you did not  
recognize yourself  
it all felt like a cold dream

when the water slowly pulled you down  
thinking this is how the faithful sun feels at the end  
of the day ▶

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