

CHAPTER 7

Enter Ophelia Playing on a Lute

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Let us consider the following stage direction, from the Q1 version of *Hamlet* (1603):

*Enter Ophelia playing on a Lute, and her hair down, singing.*¹

The version of the stage direction in Q2 (1604) is the blunt *Enter Ophelia* while the 1623 Folio text offers, instead, *Enter Ophelia distracted*.² The stage direction in F defines Ophelia as mad: Henry Cockeram's 1623 *English Dictionarie* defines "distracted" as "mad, out of his wits."³ But the lute in Q1 emphasizes her status as a proper, well-educated young woman. The lute was the instrument of choice among well-brought-up girls in the early modern period (another option was the aptly named virginal), and it symbolizes the different perspective on Ophelia's character that is evident throughout Q1: she is more accomplished, more forthright and expressive, than the Ophelia that is familiar to us from the Q2 and F versions of the play.

As Harley Granville-Barker observed, "Modern Ophelias have an ineffective habit of drifting vaguely about the stage. A lute is at least an admirable anchor."⁴ As the Q1 lute anchors Ophelia, it also allows her performance of madness to play off dramatically against an image, and an implied history, of skilful, educated girlhood. While *haire down singing* is usually understood in the context of other stage directions for hair that convey madness, such as "loose," "disheveled," or "about her ears," young, unmarried women are also typically represented with their "haire down," signaling their maidenhood.⁵ A classic example of this is the famous Coronation Portrait of Elizabeth I,

roughly contemporaneous with *Hamlet*, which depicts the Virgin Queen, retrospectively, with long, loose tresses. When the Q1 Ofelia plays a lute, she conveys an image of accomplishment, performance, and control that serves as a powerful counterpoint to her emotional state: Alan C. Dessen describes the prop as adding to “a spectator’s sense of harmony violated.”⁶ In Q2 and F, by contrast, Ophelia’s songs are unaccompanied and frequently interrupted, contributing to a more pathetic image of Ophelia’s psychic disintegration.

The Q1 *Hamlet* has received a great deal of interest since its rediscovery in 1823. As Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, the editors of the recent Arden Three *Hamlet* state, “the majority of twentieth century scholars have argued that, despite its being printed after Q1, Q2 records a text which pre-dates the text of Q1.”⁷ Recent scholarship has called attention to, as well as called into question, the different performance contexts that its title page advertises in the city and at Oxford and Cambridge, and it has reflected upon the alternative perspective that Q1 offers on *Hamlet*: one that is more actively focused upon revenge and is less philosophically meditative.⁸ Kathleen Irace proposes that the Q1 *Hamlet* “was printed from a script reconstructed from memories of performances linked to F and adapted at the same time—by members of Shakespeare’s own company on tour.”⁹ While many questions concerning the relationship of Q1, Q2, and F remain unresolved, this chapter examines the Q1 stage direction as an early example of Ophelia’s afterlife and proposes that Ofelia’s lute in Q1 implies a substantial reconsideration of her character, conjuring a “backstory” of domestic order and musical accomplishment, as well as the conflicting aims of female sexual power and daughterly duty which, unresolved and thwarted, lead to suicide. The lute, thus, places Ofelia on a razor’s edge, emphasizing the complexity of her character and predicament. Without a lute, by contrast, the Ophelia of Q2 and F seems more resolutely mad and her trajectory more emphatically tragic.

A Girl with a Lute

With its rounded silhouette and quiet notes, the lute evokes not only the calming, civilizing power of the lyre of Orpheus, but also the feminine ideals of gentility and decorum.¹⁰ By playing the lute, well-born young women acquired and displayed an admired skill that was highly valued in marriage negotiations. Shakespeare frequently associates lutes with girls or young women. King Lear is thinking of the connection between the lute and ideal, obedient daughters when he describes Cordelia’s voice as, essentially, a lute: “soft / Gentle, and low, an excellent / Thing in woman” (5.3.272–73).¹¹ In *Henry IV, Part One*, the Welsh language, usually regarded as barbarous

noise, is as harmonious as a lute played by a queen when it is spoken by the Welsh princess to the rebel Mortimer: “thy tongue / Makes Welsh as sweet as ditties highly penned, / Sung by a fair queen in a summer’s bow’r / With ravishing division, to her lute” (3.1.205–08). Mortimer’s words about the Welsh princess may serve, as well, as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, who was proud of her Welsh roots, and who was depicted playing the lute in a famous miniature by Nicholas Hilliard.

The lute’s connotations of courtliness and civility are also evident in *Titus Andronicus*, when Marcus imagines how the sight of Lavinia playing a lute would have had a civilizing effect on her attackers: “O, had the monster seen those lily hands / Tremble like aspen leaves upon a lute / And made the silken strings delight to kiss them, / He would not then have touched them for his life!” (2.5.44–47). The quiet music associated with the lute highlights the violence of Tereus’s sexual crime: opposing the instrument’s association with decorous civility with violent, uncontrolled sexuality. Thus, when Gower the Chorus in *Pericles* describes Marina’s brilliant successes in “music’s letters” (4. Chorus. 8) during her childhood at Tarsus, “Or when to th’ lute / She sung, and made the night bird mute, / That still records with moan” (25–27), he outlines the cultural accomplishments that, mysteriously, allow Marina to protect herself from rape when she is kidnapped by pirates and placed in a brothel. It is not that the princely education she has received in music and letters keeps her isolated from hardship, but it supplies her with the capacity to preserve her welfare.¹²

Shakespeare associates the lute not just with idealized daughters, dutifully preparing for marriage, but also with girls who can take care of themselves. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Baptista behaves like a typical Elizabethan gentleman when he engages Hortensio/Litio to teach his daughters, both of a marriageable age, to sing and play the lute. But Bianca and Katharina each resist, in different ways, the ideals of feminine behavior that the lute implies, thus subverting the practice of traffic in daughters associated with the lute. Katharina does this overtly when she breaks Hortensio’s lute over his head (2.1.148–59). But Bianca more subtly resists the ideals of daughterly obedience when she chooses her own suitor: “I’ll . . . learn my lessons as I please myself” (3.1.19–20). Rebuffing the musical overtures of her lute teacher, Hortensio, in favor of Lucentio/Cambio, Bianca also rejects the paradigmatic pursuit of ideal girlhood predicated upon a classical education, a path of study whose pedagogy was traditionally associated with frequent beatings.¹³ In a play that is, from the outset, concerned with masquerade and disguise, Bianca and Katharina reject the lute, a key prop of girlhood, in ways that are boyish, in different ways. This cheekily highlights their own status as boy actors disguised as girls, while it also makes fun of the

pretentiousness and artificiality of the expectations Baptista places upon his daughters.

For Shakespeare, the lute reflects the contradictions—between action and docility, obedience and defiance, sexuality and innocence, erotic discovery and irrevocable loss—encountered by young girls on the cusp of adulthood. In *Henry VIII*, the unhappy Queen Katherine asks her “wench” to cheer her up by playing the lute: “Take thy lute, wench, my soul grows sad with troubles” (3.1.1). The wench sings the song “Orpheus with his lute,” which contains the following observation: “In sweet music is such art, / Killing care and grief of heart / Fall asleep or, hearing die” (12–14). On the one hand, the lute comforts and consoles lovers; on the other hand, it offers the fullest expression of a broken heart. It represents submission to divine harmony, like Orpheus’s animals, “Everything that heard him play . . . Hung their heads, and then lay by” (9–11) as well as the sublime embrace of death. Just as many portraits of young girls from the period contain lutes (another way of putting it is that so many of paintings of lutes depict a girl playing them), so, too, is Mary Magdalen often painted with a lute, while Venetian courtesans carried lutes to advertise themselves to prospective clients: paintings such as Vermeer’s *The Procuress* (ca.1656) place the lute at the centre of the business deal. In her wonderfully titled chapter, “The Signifying Serpent,” Julia Craig-McFeely observes that the lute is “both an instrument of immense expressive power and a metaphor for sex.”¹⁴ And Sir Thomas Wyatt’s poems attest to the lute’s mutually reinforcing symbolism of courtly performativity, creative power, and sexual energy, especially women’s erotic powers. “Blame Not My Lute” identifies the lute with the obedient woman whose receptivity to his advances he contrasts against the rebuffs of his unkind mistress, while “My Lute Awake” offers an exasperated eleventh-hour message of *carpe diem*.¹⁵

At the court of Henry VII, the lute replaced the harp as the favored courtly instrument, and Henry VII gave all of his children lutes. We have evidence of his daughters’ proficiency. An ambassadorial letter concerning the reception of Philip, King of Castile, at Windsor on January 31, 1506 describes Princess Mary (then ten years old) entertaining her visitors: “And after that my lady Mary had danced two or three dances she . . . played upon the lute and after upon the claregalls; who played very well, and she was of all folks there greatly praised that of her youth in everything she behaved herself so very well.”¹⁶ During her progress northward to Scotland, the fourteen-year-old Margaret played lute for her future husband, James IV. Henry VIII, following his father’s lead, made sure that his children also had lutes. A letter from Catherine of Aragon to Mary reminds her:¹⁷

I will send you two books in Latin: one shall be *De Vita Christi*, with the declaration of the Gospels; and the other the Epistles of Hierome, that he did write always to St. Paula and Eustochium; and in them I trust you shall see good things. And sometimes, for your recreation, use your virginals, or lute, if you have any. But one thing specially I desire you, for the love that you do owe unto God and unto me, to keep your heart with a chaste mind, and your body from all ill and wanton company.

As Catherine's discussion of reading the Gospels and the Life of Christ shifts to her worries about her daughter's chastity, the lute occupies a crucial intermediary position: it is as if the mere mention of the instrument produces grave concerns about the princess's virtue. Then she wistfully doubts that Mary has any access to music at all: "if you have any." Mary's sister, Princess Elizabeth, played the lute while in residence at Hatfield in 1551–52, and a tapestry depicting "The Education of Princess Elizabeth" depicts the young princess with a lute.¹⁸

Although Anne Boleyn was much admired for singing to her own accompaniment on the lute, musical proficiency was also her downfall, bound up as it was in accusations of adultery with Mark Smeaton, a musician of the privy chamber. Catherine Howard also studied the lute as a child, when she was living with her stepgrandmother, the dowager Duchess of Norfolk.¹⁹ At her trial for adultery, the stories of past lovers that emerged included her lute teacher Henry Manno, illustrating the extent to which any reference to the lute as an edifying activity for girls segues swiftly into its seamier associations. We can see these mutually reinforcing associations at work in Robert Burton's comments about lute playing in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which move rapidly from virginity to ravishment: "to this effect the lovely virgin with a melodious ayr upon her golden wired harp or lute . . . plaid and sang, and that transported him beyond himself, and that ravished his heart."²⁰ To use a phrase from Foucault, "We 'Other Victorians'" have built a solid wall between childhood and sexuality. The culture of lute instruction for early modern girls, however, illustrates the extent to which sexuality—in its ideal expression as well as its violent or transgressive forms—occupied a place, along with practicing needlepoint and developing a nice italic hand, among the things girls learned in preparation for adulthood. A lute student would encounter songs about the jilted Ariadne, the coy Daphne, and the sighs of Chloris that would teach her a great deal about love. More than plucking the strings, then, lute instruction constituted a form of serious play: a rehearsal or imaginative preparation for adulthood.

When Ophelia appears with a lute, she is participating in a tremendous cultural vogue for lute playing, as evinced by the efflorescence of songbooks published by John Dowland and others. The lute says to her audience that she is a girl brought up to make an advantageous match, a girl whose education and virtue are managed by her father (whose name in Q1 is Corambis). It implies an entire history and identity: she is a girl who is as educated, capable, accomplished, and self-sufficient as the Marina that Shakespeare later creates in *Pericles*. With her lute, Ophelia sings songs that are perfectly chosen to express her deep feelings, and, when she plays it, Ophelia is given time and space to perform, to express herself, and to be heard. The presence of the lute on the stage also allows the audience to measure the distance between the domestic order and psychological and social power that the lute implies, and Ophelia's miserable emotional state. By contrast, the Q2 and F Ophelia does not have a lute, and her performance is both more jumbled and more subject to interruption. The lute thus reflects the heady combination of innocence and awareness, intelligence and victimhood, that shapes Ophelia as a character. It suggests, as well, possible answers to the questions about Ophelia's virginity, and about the relationship between mourning for her father and heartbreak about Hamlet, that have defined her reception since the play's earliest performances.

Ophelia and Her Lute

The Q1 stage direction, *Enter Ophelia playing on a Lute*, typically appears only in editions of Q1 or in parallel text editions.²¹ Most editors choose the Q2 or F stage direction, and occasionally follow Johnson's emendation: "Enter Horatio with Ophelia distracted." Critical commentary on the Q1 stage direction begins with Collier's oft-quoted observation: "the stage-direction in the quarto, 1603, is curiously minute: 'Enter Ophelia, playing on a lute, and her hair down, singing.' She therefore accompanied herself in her fragments of ballads."²² Noting the precision of the stage direction, Collier suggests that the stage direction brings us closer to Shakespeare's company.²³

Subsequent editorial and critical references to Ophelia's lute reflect the key controversies concerning the legitimacy of the Q1 *Hamlet*. For Harold Jenkins, the stage direction reveals its connection to the theater: "Q1 no doubt records some contemporary staging. The hair down is conventional for madness, but the lute, uncalled for in the text, and incongruous with the ballad snatches Ophelia spontaneously breaks into, looks like an actor's embellishment."²⁴ Jonathan Bate dismisses it as a non-Shakespearean and, therefore, suspect addition: "since it does not derive from Shakespeare's script, I shall set Q1 aside."²⁵ Perhaps in reaction to this tendency to dismiss



Figure 7.1 Helen Mirren with lute. *HAMLET* RSC 1970. Courtesy Donald Cooper Photostage.

the Q1 stage direction, G. R. Hibbard chooses it instead of the F version, *Enter Ophelia, distracted*, in his Oxford edition of *Hamlet*. He even includes a photograph of Ophelia, played by Helen Mirren, with her lute from the 1970 Royal Shakespeare Company production, directed by Trevor Nunn, clearly tying the character to the joy of musical performance.²⁶

Thompson and Taylor also comment approvingly that the lute is closely allied with theatrical tradition: “it is not surprising that it [the lute] has often influenced theatrical tradition” and “some productions even introduce the lute earlier (i.e., in 1.3).”²⁷

The Q1 lute is, of course, associated with what has long been considered a “mangled and corrupted text,” and dubbed, with its infamous “to be, or not to be, aye, there’s the point,” a Bad Quarto.²⁸ With a title page that promotes its association with Shakespeare, however, Q1 has been considered close to Shakespeare’s company ever since its rediscovery in 1823. As Howard Staunton puts it, “the quaint direction of the quarto, 1603, . . . indicates the manner in which the author himself designed that she should appear in this her greatest scene.”²⁹ More recently, scholars have argued for the validity and interest of the so-called Bad Quartos, with Q1 *Hamlet* attracting particular interest for its energy and verve, even for its literary qualities.³⁰ Paul

Menzer locates Q1 *Hamlet* in the contexts of indoor performance, calling attention to the “cartographic” nature of the Q1 title page, which advertises that the play was performed by the Lord Chamberlain’s Men in inns and college halls: “in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford.”³¹ Although we have no records of a performance of Q1 in these locations, Ofelia’s lute in Q1 reinforces the title page’s references to indoor venues: the lute’s quiet sounds are ideal for an indoor venue, while its easy portability would lend itself to a traveling script.³² Hibbard also proposes that the lute was “probably written, among other reasons, to take advantage of the talents of a boy actor with a good singing voice and the ability to play on a lute—the Lucius of Julius Caesar?”³³ Whatever the practical concerns that motivated the creation of Q1, it produces a very different vision, or revision, of the character of Ophelia. The Q1 lute reflects a version of the character that is more competent, more accomplished, more powerful and expressive, than the Ophelia that is familiar to us from the Q2 and F versions of the play.

Although Q1 is radically edited, as Kathleen Irace observes, the part of Ofelia increases as a percentage of the whole in this version.³⁴ Throughout Ofelia’s mad scene, Q1 places heavy emphasis upon her status as “young” and a “poor maid” (13.7–8, 14, and elsewhere), underscoring the connection between girls and lutes in the period. In Q2 and F she is, by contrast, a “pretty lady” and a “sweet lady” (4.5.27, 41).³⁵ In Q1, Ofelia’s mad scene resembles a lute concert, performed by a girl in private for family and friends. Her first song reworks the popular ballad “Walsingham,” which concerns a long-lost girl.³⁶ The original “Walsingham” asks: while on pilgrimage to Walsingham, did you encounter my “true love”? Ofelia turns this song about a lost girl, the transience of desire, and the fickleness of women, into a song of mourning for the loss of a loved one whose identity moves, artfully and obscurely, between a “true love” (13.15) and her dead father, “he is dead and gone, Lady” (23).³⁷ As she replaces the girl in the song with her own lost love objects, Ofelia transforms a song that reflects upon desirable, elusive girlhood into one of mourning and abjection, offering a nutshell version of her own trajectory through the play.

Ofelia adds her own paradigmatic expression of loss and mourning to what is already a very gendered song. Traditionally, “Walsingham” refers to a pilgrimage site that was founded when the Virgin appeared to an Anglo-Norman widow, Richeldis de Faverches, and asked her to build a model of the Holy Family’s house.³⁸ By Elizabeth’s time, the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and the priory and abbey built around it had been destroyed, and the song served as a means of commemorating it as well as all that was lost in medieval English culture in the aftermath of the Reformation.

The originary vision of Richeldis de Faverches, whose status as a widow with an only son resembles that of Gertrude, recalls the medieval Catholic Anglo-Norman culture that many Reformers sought to replace with the idealized vision of an Anglo-Saxon church. As the lost girl, widow, and virgin in the “Walsingham” song symbolize a lost and suppressed, as well as female-identified culture, Ophelia’s performance of the song situates her on the Catholic side of the Reformation controversy that Stephen Greenblatt and others have seen played out through *Hamlet*.³⁹ Ophelia’s version of the song even invokes the image of a religious pilgrim, with his: “cockle hat, and his staff/ And his sandal shoon” (17-18).⁴⁰ By adapting this song that is ostensibly about a lost girl but that also symbolizes other cultural losses, Ophelia channels her own feelings of loss and bereavement.

After she finishes this first song, Ophelia is invited by the King (who is not called Claudius in this version) to comment and clarify: “How is’t with you, sweet Ophelia?” (13.26). Her reply, “it grieves me to see how they laid him in the cold ground. I could not choose but weep” (28–9), makes it perfectly clear that she is grieving for her father, although the theme of erotic or romantic loss present in the original version of Ophelia’s song, as well as in the ambiguities of her own version of it, imply that her disappointment with Hamlet contributes to her misery. It is significant that no one in Q1 has the temerity to interrupt Ophelia, whom we can imagine, in contemporary terms, as a folk singer, with a prepared play list and some remarks for the audience. In historical terms, she is a dutiful girl performing the lute in a private venue—among family and friends, in the restricted confines of the court. The actor playing Ophelia offers his audience access to the kind of performance that took place only in the private rooms of the wealthy and royal. This may help us to explain why the lute appears in a version of the play that its title page associates with elite venues in the City of London and Oxbridge.

Whereas in Q2 and F, the Queen interrupts Ophelia, after her first stanza, with the rather obtuse question, “what imports this song?” (4.5.27), in Q1, Ophelia gets to sing the whole song. The Q1 Ophelia also sings a version of “Walsingham” which progresses more logically from the description of her “true love,” to the details about the “shroud” and the “grave,” to the recognition that “he is dead and gone” (13.24). In Q2 and F, by contrast, Ophelia’s last stanza (which is the middle stanza in Q1) begins, “White his shroud as the mountain snow” (4.5.36), as the Queen continues to interrupt. This Ophelia is treated with less respect by the other characters, not as a performer with a song to sing, but instead as an object to be examined—as the Queen says to the King, “Alas, look here, my lord” (37). Ophelia then launches into the now-famous non sequiturs that proclaim her

madness, such as “the owl was a baker’s daughter” (42–43). In Q2 and F, this line functions as rather obscure response to the King’s question, “How do you, pretty lady?” (41). When Ofelia speaks this line in Q1, however, it appears later, when she is offering herbs and flowers to her audience (13.85), and it makes sense, not as a self-description, but as a response to those who are refusing her offerings, just as, according to the old story, the Baker’s Daughter refused Jesus. This passage reflects a logic of revision or adaptation that takes more emphatically mad and jumbled moments in Q2 and F, and translates them, smoothes them out, into the more sensible lines and dialogue in Q1.

In Q1, the second song that Ofelia performs, “And will he not come again?” (13.31), proceeds quite logically from the first. Ofelia’s playlist thus develops the theme of mourning for her father: “His beard was as white as snow, / All flaxen was his poll. / He is dead, he is gone/ And we cast away moan. / God ha’ mercy on his soul” (13.36–40). This song, not otherwise known, matches the versification of a song called “Go From My Window,” that can be found in a 1595 songbook by George Attowell called “Frauncis New Jigge,” and that appears, along with “Walsingham,” in many manuscript music books.⁴¹ This song also matches the versification of the Jailer’s Daughter’s “For I’ll Cut my Green Coat” in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, underscoring a connection between Ophelia and the Jailer’s Daughter developed in Lois Potter’s chapter in this volume.⁴² The King then responds to Ofelia. He does not interrupt her, but instead offers a contribution that is appropriate to the atmosphere of a private, court performance: “O time, how swiftly runs our joys away! / Content on earth was never certain bred: / Today we laugh and live, tomorrow dead” (13.43–46). The King’s *memento mori* theme reflects, as well, the kinds of mournful songs that girls typically learned to play on their lutes.

Where Ofelia’s second song in Q1 pursues and reinforces the theme of mourning for her dead father, in Q2 and F she moves immediately from “Walsingham” to a song about the loss of romantic love, “Tomorrow is St. Valentine’s Day.” This is not a traditional song: the text is unique to *Hamlet*, and it is a longstanding theatrical practice to sing it to the tune of “Soldier’s Dance.”⁴³ In an oblique way, this song constitutes Ophelia’s answer to Gertrude’s question, “what imports this song?” (4.5.25). Ophelia’s response, “when they ask you what it means, say you this” (46–47), is a love song that offers a transparent gloss on her feelings about Hamlet: “Quoth she, ‘Before you tumbled me, / You promised me to wed.’ / He answers: ‘So would I ha’ done by yonder sun, / An thou hadst not come to my bed” (4.5.62–66). Ophelia expresses her own feelings of rejection and lack of agency through a song in which the girl gives in to the boy’s advances, and

then he abandons her: these feelings of powerlessness are reinforced by the fact that Claudius and Gertrude continually interrupt her.

When the Q1 Ophelia sings, “Tomorrow is St. Valentine’s Day,” however, it is her last song, and she offers a few introductory words that quite lucidly direct her audience to sing the song’s chorus: “I pray now you shall sing ‘a-down’ and you ‘a-down-a’” (13.90). In Q2 and F, these lines appear long before Ophelia actually sings the song (4.5.165), and the song that eventually follows, “And will a’ not come again?” (182) does not require a “wheel” (166) or refrain. In Q1, by contrast, Ophelia frames her song through the identities of the abandoned girl and her lover: “’tis o’ the king’s daughter and the false steward” (13.91). With these words, Ophelia distances and distinguishes herself from the story of the king’s daughter: although she may have been betrayed, just like the girl in the song, Ophelia emphasizes that they are not the same. This leaves us space to consider how Hamlet and Ophelia’s relationship in Q1 is presented in less intimate terms than Q2 and F. Just as girls performing lute songs typically projected themselves into situations of erotic experience and tragic betrayal that they are not likely to have encountered themselves, it is possible that Ophelia is, here, imagining an aspect to her relationship with Hamlet that never got that far. Q1, it seems, does not want us to draw the same conclusions about their relationship as Q2 and F, in which Ophelia more closely identifies with “Tomorrow is St. Valentine’s Day.”

Whereas the Q2 and F Ophelia is more preoccupied with her relationship with Hamlet, the Q1 Ophelia is more focused, at the outset, upon mourning for her father. In Q1, Ophelia leaves the stage after her second song. Then Leartes enters and receives the news of Corambis’s death. When Ophelia returns, and the stage direction reads, *as before*, it is as if her madness has deepened. Here, Leartes produces his famous “document in madness” (13.81) line, and Ophelia offers an abbreviated version of her flower speech that emphasizes her bereavement: “I would ha’ given you some violets, but they all withered when my father died” (83–85). The columbines that appear only in Q2 and F are associated with cuckoldry and sexual betrayal. While Ophelia’s third song in Q1, “Tomorrow is St. Valentine’s Day,” provides an opportunity to expand upon the amorous causes of her sorrow, the effect of this song is that Ophelia is adding, incrementally and intelligently, to the experience of loss expressed by her first two songs. It is as if she is saying to Leartes that it is not just her father, but also Hamlet. We may think of the Q1 Ophelia’s performance, here, as sequential, building up to a greater emotional pitch, whereas the Q2 and F Ophelia offers a more synoptic and consistent expression of madness. In Q1, Ophelia’s program of lute songs is perfectly calibrated to express her complex feelings; in Q2 and F,

by contrast, we have a performance of madness— Ophelia’s songs are interrupted and confused, and she does not so much play to an audience as react to a group of interlocutors.

Like Hamlet, then, the Q1 Ofelia retains her wits despite her misery.⁴⁴ Through her lute performance, Ofelia distinguishes between Corambis’s death and losing Hamlet, while suggesting, of course, that she recognizes their common ground. In Q1, Ofelia performs her grief and characters respond to her predicament, not as a symptom of a larger problem, but in and of itself. As Learntes observes: “Grief upon grief/ My father murdered, / My sister thus distracted: / Cursed be his soul that wrought this wicked act (116–18). The Q2 and F Ophelia is, by contrast, entirely immersed in a madness which blurs the losses of her father and lover. This Ophelia is also the object of comments and glosses from others: as Claudius reflects, “poor Ophelia / Divided from herself and her fair judgment, / Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts” (4.5.84–86).⁴⁵ Ophelia’s madness both dehumanizes her and renders her a spectacle, and she serves as an example, for Claudius, of a larger point that he is making about his own troubles: “When sorrows come they come not single spies / But in battalions” (78–79).

Whereas the Q1 Ofelia is a character that holds on to both the shards of her sanity and the respect of others, the Q2 and F Ophelia’s pathetic condition comes to represent a kind of overwhelming female misery or hysteria that Showalter and so many others have read and reflected upon. Gertrude’s famous speech announcing the death of Ophelia, “There is a willow grows askant the brook” (4.7.164–68) describes flowers, weeds, and sodden clothes, but says little about Ophelia herself. She is swamped by botanical lore, “our cold maids do dead men’s fingers call them” (169), and there is the sense, as well, that by drowning she is returning to her natural home: “like a creature native and indued / Unto that element” (177). She is not even named. But Q1 Ofelia is not “like a creature”—and in Gertrude’s speech about her death she occupies a much more central position:

O my lord, the young Ofelia
 Having made a garland of sundry sorts of flowers,
 Sitting upon a willow by a brook,
 The envious sprig broke. Into the brook she fell
 And for awhile her clothes, spread wide abroad,
 Bore the young lady up and there she sat,
 Smiling even mermaid-like ‘twixt heaven and earth,
 Chanting old sundry tunes uncappable

As it were, of her distress. But long it could not be
Till that her clothes, being heavy with their drink,
Dragged the sweet wretch to death.

(15.40–49)

Laertes's reaction to the death of Ophelia in Q2 and F expresses a misogynistic attitude to displaying emotion: "When these are gone, / The woman will be out" (4.7.186–87). Recalling King Lear's "And let not women's weapons, water-drops, Stain my man's cheeks!" (2.4.277), Laertes distances himself from both Ophelia and the female element, water, that drowned her. By contrast, in Q1, Leartes honors his sister: "Too much of water hast thou, Ophelia! / Therefore I will not drown thee in my tears. / Revenge it is must yield this heart relief. / For woe begets woe, and grief hangs on grief" (15.51–54). Of course, in Q2 and F Laertes also says, "Too much of water hast thou" (4.7.183), but he is worried about appearing womanish; the Q1 Leartes is more concerned with avenging his dead sister than with compromising his masculinity by displaying feminine emotion.

These differences in the character of Ophelia emerge early in Q1. When Leartes warns Ophelia about Hamlet, in Q1, he offers some admiring comments about the qualities of her character: ". . . keep aloof, / Lest that he trip thy honour and thy fame" (3. 10–11). The much more embellished version of this speech in Q2 and F emphasizes the loss of Ophelia's virginity, which treats her as a much more passive object: "or your chaste treasure open / To his unmastered importunity" (1.3.30–31). Laertes's treatment of Ophelia here is consistent with the masculinism we found in his reaction to her death, and the scene is often played, as well, as if Laertes has a proprietary, even incestuous, interest in Ophelia's status as virgin. In Q1, we do not find Leartes offering the kind of intensely sexual images we find in Q2 and F, with graphic images of his sister's seduction: "keep you in the rear of your affection / Out of the shot and danger of desire" (33–34) and "the canker galls the infants of the spring, / Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, / And in the morn and liquid dew of youth / Contagious blastments are most imminent" (38–41). Instead, the Q1 Leartes says less and keeps a respectful distance. Significantly, these differences in the character of Ophelia are apparent in her reaction to her father's advice at the end of the scene. In Q2 and F, Ophelia promises her father, "I shall obey" (1.3.135), whereas at the end of the scene in Q1 she says, with greater agency, "I will" (3.73). The "country matters" scene, in Q1, is similarly less bawdy—Q1 reads "contrary" (9.82) and contains no business concerning the nothing that lies between maids' legs (3.2.108–115). This is not to say that there is no

sexual business at all implied in the Q1's "contrary," but that it is much less explicit than in Q2 and F.

The sexually objectified, mad Ophelia of Q2 and F is, in some ways, a more overtly theatrical character than the cool customer that we find in Q1. The Q1 Ophelia's comments on Hamlet's madness, for example, are quite measured: "Such a change in nature, / So great an alteration in a prince" (6.33–34). Q2's and F's Ophelia is, by contrast, histrionic: "O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted" (2.1.72). Whereas Hamlet frightens Ophelia in an enclosed space, "My lord, as I was sewing in my closet" (74), in Q1, she is in a much more public place, less sequestered and potentially transgressive: "walking in the gallery" (6.42). The Q2 and F Ophelia goes on to describe Hamlet "as if he had been loosed out of hell" (2.1.80); in Q1, by contrast, Hamlet is meditative: "he fixed his eyes so steadfast on my face" (6.45). After the nunnery scene, Q1 Ophelia reflects: "O woe is me. / To ha' seen what I have seen, see what I see!" (7.198). To this the Q2 and F Ophelia adds the self-pitying, "And I, of ladies most deject and wretched, / That sucked the honey of his musicked vows . . ." (3.1.154–55).

Q2 and F also prepare the audience for Ophelia's madness in much greater detail. Gertred in Q1 offers: "But this mischance of old Corambis' death / Hath pierced so the young Ophelia's heart / That she, poor maid, is quite bereft her wits" (13.6–8). We can imagine the more detailed account in Q2 and F, spoken by a Gentleman in Q2, and by Horatio in F, as stage directions: "hems and beats her heart, / Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt / That carry but half sense" (4.5.5–7).⁴⁶ This speech sets up the audience, as well, to expect that Ophelia will not make any sense at all: "Her speech is nothing. / Yet the unshaped use of it doth move / The hearers to collection" (7–9). For the Gentleman in Q2, Ophelia, is not a subject who demands to be heard in her own right, but as a wild, whirling object that the audience, like the Danish court, must judge and manage: "Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them, / Indeed would make one thing there might be thought, / Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily" (11–13).

In Q2 and F, Ophelia is more tragic, more wronged, while in Q1, the lute-playing Ophelia is given greater agency and greater respect. The lute seems to anchor Ophelia, not just literally, as a prop, but also psychologically. We may think of the two versions of this character, then, as reflecting two different forms of theatricality—one that is in charge of her musical performance and the other that is swept away by emotion. The difference between an Ophelia associated with the lute and, hence, with female musical performance, and an Ophelia who is more overtly mad, and thus more stagey, may be the difference between an Elizabethan and a Jacobean vision of the character—we can see the Q1 Ophelia aligned with the performativity

and self-mastery of characters such as Bianca in *The Taming of the Shrew* or Rosalind in *As You Like It*, while the Q2 and F Ophelia finds a place among tragic women such as the Jailer's Daughter in *Two Noble Kinsmen*.

The different perspective on Ophelia symbolized by the lute, and offered by the Q1 *Hamlet*, moves our conceptualization of Ophelia beyond the paradigms of hysteria and passivity traditionally associated with this character, and allows us to associate her, instead, with both the mastery of musical technique and the sangfroid of performance. In future, the story of Ophelia's afterlife may be shaped by greater scholarly attention to the Q1 *Hamlet*, along with more productions of the Q1 *Hamlet*, that will remind readers and audiences of this alternative and compelling vision of the iconic character of Ophelia and, hopefully, shed further light on the circumstances that produced her. While the history of the Q1 *Hamlet* and the circumstances of its performance remain unclear, its alternative vision of Ophelia provides a significant early example of the afterlife of this iconic character.

Notes

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1. My edition of Q1 is *Hamlet. The Texts of 1603 and 1623*. ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. The Arden Shakespeare, Third Series (London: Thompson, 2006) 142. All references to Q1 and F will be to this edition.
2. I use the Q1 spelling of Ophelia when referring to her depiction in Q1. Elsewhere I follow the Q2 and F "Ophelia." My edition of Q2 is *Hamlet* ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. The Arden Shakespeare, Third Series (London: Cengage, 2006) and my edition of F is *Hamlet. The Texts of 1603 and 1623*.
3. Henry Cockerham, *English Dictionarie* (London, 1623).
4. Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, 5 vols. (London: Batsford, 1927–48) 3:137.
5. Alan C. Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 36–37.
6. Dessen, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions* 131.
7. *Hamlet* ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor 81.
8. See *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, ed. Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992) and Paul Menzer, *The Hamlets: Cues, Qs, and Remembered Texts* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 2008).
9. *The First Quarto of Hamlet* ed. Kathleen O. Irace. New Cambridge Shakespeare, The Early Quartos (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 20.
10. On the lute in Renaissance English culture, see Matthew Spring, *The Lute in Britain. A History of the Instrument and its Music* (Oxford: Oxford University

- Press, 2001); Linda Phyllis Austern, "Sing Againe Syren: The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature" *Renaissance Quarterly* 42 (1989) 420–48; and Julia Craig McFeely, "The Signifying Serpent: Seduction by Cultural Stereotype in Seventeenth Century England," *Music, Sensation and Sensuality*, ed. Lynda Phyllis Austern (London: Routledge, 2002) 299–320. On women and lutes see also Laurie E. Maguire, "Cultural Control in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *Renaissance Drama* 26 (1995): 83–104.
11. All quotations from Shakespeare are from *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Orgel and A. R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).
 12. For further discussion see my article, "Papa Don't Preach: The Power of Proximity in *Pericles*," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 71.2 (Spring, 2002): 595–622.
 13. She does, of course, and even more perversely, ends up choosing exactly the suitor her father would choose for her. See Patricia Parker, "Construing Gender: Mastering Bianca in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *The Impact of Feminism on Renaissance Scholarship*, ed. Dympna Callaghan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 193–209.
 14. McFeely, "The Signifying Serpent" 300.
 15. Thomas Wyatt, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Ron Rebbholz (London: Penguin, 1988) 129, 144.
 16. *Historia Regis Henrici septimi*, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1858) 288–89. See also the discussion in Spring 52. *Claregalls* does not appear in the *OED*. It is possible that it is a portmanteau word, a corruption of both clavichord and virginals.
 17. Arund. MS. 151, f. 194, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII* vol. 6: 153, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1882) 472.
 18. David Scott, "Elizabeth I as Lutenist," *Lute Society Journal* 18 (1976) 55.
 19. Spring, *The Lute in Britain* 56.
 20. Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy, by Democritus Junior* (1620; London, 1836) 536.
 21. A notable exception is G. R. Hibbard's edition of *Hamlet* (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1987) 298, which uses the Q1 stage direction although the edition follows F throughout.
 22. *The Works of William Shakespeare*, 8 vols, ed. J. Payne Collier (London, 1843) 7:304.
 23. Detailed discussions of the 1603 Quarto may be found in Clark and Wright's (1866), Furness's New Variorum (1877) and the 1892 Cambridge edition. In their *Preface to Hamlet*, Clark and Wright note that it "represents an older play in a transition stage, while it was undergoing a remodeling but had not received more than the first rough touches of the great master's hand" (xii) but the lute stage direction receives no mention.
 24. Harold Jenkins, ed., *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, the Arden Shakespeare, Second Series (New York: Arden, 1982) 348n.
 25. Jonathan Bate, "Shakespeare's Tragedies as Working Scripts," *Critical Survey* 3 (1991): 118–127, 122.

26. G. R. Hibbard, ed., *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 52. *Hamlet*, perf. Helen Mirren, dir. Trevor Nunn, Royal Shakespeare Company, London, 1965.
27. Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet* 374n.
28. *The Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. Rev. Alexander Dyce, 10 vols (London, 1886) 296–97.
29. Howard Staunton, ed., *The Works of William Shakespeare* (London, 1869) 174.
30. See (among others) *The Hamlet First Published (Q1, 1603): Origins, Form, Intertextualities*, ed. Thomas Clayton (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992); Leah S. Marcus, "Bad Taste and Bad *Hamlet*," *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996); Laurie E. Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The "Bad" Quartos and Their Contexts* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996); Peter Stallybrass and Zachary Lesser, "The First Literary *Hamlet* and the Commonplacings of Professional Plays," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.4 (2008): 371–420.
31. Menzer, *The Hamlets* 112.
32. On the stage history of Q1, see Thompson and Taylor, *Hamlet. The Texts of 1603 and 1623*, 12–37. Surprisingly, most recent productions of Q1 do not provide Ophelia with her lute.
33. Hibbard, *Hamlet* 52.
34. Kathleen Irace, "The Origins and Agents of Q1 *Hamlet*" in Clayton, ed. *The Hamlet First Published* 90–122.
35. I am quoting from Q2 throughout. In these scenes, Q2 and F are actually very similar.
36. Ross Duffin, *Shakespeare's Songbook* (New York and London: Norton, 2004) 422–24.
37. Coleridge is very sensitive to this conflation:
O, note the conjunction here of these two thoughts that had never subsisted in disjunction, the love of *Hamlet* and her filial love, with the guileless floating on the surface of her pure imagination of the cautions so lately expressed, and the fears not too delicately avowed, by her father and brother, concerning the dangers to which her honor lay exposed.
Qtd. in *New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, ed. H. H. Furness (Philadelphia, 1877) 3:329.
38. See Susan Signe Morrison, "Waste Space: Pilgrim Badges, Ophelia, and Walsingham Remembered," *Walsingham in Literature and Culture from the Middle Ages to Modernity*, ed. Dominic Janes and Gary Waller (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010) 49–68.
39. See Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).
40. The cockle specifically refers to Santiago de Compostella. Ophelia's description of the dead pilgrim, "at his dead a grass green turf / At his heels a stone," curiously echoes the death of Falstaff in *Henry V*: "his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babbled of green fields . . . then I felt to his knees, and they were cold as any stone" (2.3.16–18).

41. According to Ross Duffin, “Frauncis New Jigge” appears in “more than a dozen lute sources, among the earliest being Folger Library MS V.b.280 (ca. 1590)” (53). “Walsingham” is found in manuscript poetical miscellanies, which were often set to music, such as Folger Library ms v.a.399 and Huntington Library MS HM 198 (423). These facts undermine Jenkins’s and Hibbard’s shared concern that Ophelia’s musical choices are somehow inappropriate for the lute. As Hibbard writes: “Jenkins’ objection that the lute is incongruous with Ophelia’s songs is, in fact, an argument for her using it, since only a madwoman would think of doing so” (298).
42. Duffin, *Shakespeare’s Songbook* 150, 168. “Go From My Window” also appears in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*.
43. Duffin, *Shakespeare’s Songbook* 50, 408.
44. She also reminds us, here, of Constance in *King John*: “I am not mad: I would to heaven I were! / For then, ‘tis like I should forget myself” (3.4.61).
45. Claudius’s use of the term “division” may also be a musical reference. Divisions are fast notes added in to decorate a passage. Juliet also uses this musical term metaphorically: “some say the lark makes sweet division” (3.5.29).
46. In F, see 4.1.4-13.