



# Women and Ghosts

*Kristina Marie Darling*

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## **Women and Ghosts** Kristina Marie Darling

Why is there so much language, so many words I didn't want." Darling's collection interrogates a legacy of literary women that haunt our subconscious through paralleling a female narrator's mental strife alongside Shakespeare's tragic women: Ophelia, Juliet, Desdemona, Cleopatra, and more. Darling follows the trails of blood left on the page to explore violence done to women, both emotionally and physically. Through Darling's innovative forms, she's able to render the classical refreshingly new and chillingly devastating. Her writing, however, hits a more sensitive nerve: the terror of gendered violence and the chafing of powerlessness in womanhood, as her characters "cleave under the weight of my own dress." Yet, power is embedded in Darling's words, sharp and cutting as a razor blade: this is a collection all women should read.

—Anne Champion, author of *Reluctant Mistress* and *The Dark Length Home*

Women and Ghosts is a book for the brokenhearted: "Iced over with sadness," its speaker says (or doesn't), "I can no longer speak." In ghost text stricken from the record, she also says (or doesn't): "I wonder how someone else's life can seem so much my own." She means Desdemona's. Ophelia's. Juliet's. Cleopatra's. Lavinia's. But when I read these words, I think: not theirs, hers — I wonder how her life can seem so much my own. I love this book. I honor it. I cherish it. I lose myself in its tragedies, in the absences and silences of women's lives and I feel less desperate, less anxious, less alone.

—Molly Gaudry, author of *We Take Me Apart* and *Desire: A Haunting*

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