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Victoria, Assembly, Aurora Nova
Done with grace and elan ... Victoria.

Victoria knows that she's not 20, but thinks she might be 30. She looks like a floppy little doll, but when she puts on tap shoes, her feet move like greased lightning and she can execute a nifty pas de deux with her wheelchair, her face suffused with grace and her eyes alight with mischief. In her dreams, at least, there's no stopping Victoria – although to us, she is as old as the hills and her mind as cracked as a broken vase that has been carelessly repaired. All day she roams the long white hospital corridors, talking to her own shadow and driving the hospital orderly up the walls.

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Dementia is no laughing matter, but Dulcinea Langfelder's show is a joyous exploration of a ravaged mind. It doesn't underestimate the terrors of the condition or its terrible indignities, but in following Victoria on her day in the hospital, we get a sense of how, by knowing and wanting less, we might all live a great deal more. Unburdened by memory, Victoria lives every single moment as if it was her first. Every second of this show makes you think of Miranda's wondering "brave new world, that has such people in't" – surely one of the most gloriously optimistic lines in the whole of English literature.

This is a wonderfully playful piece of theatre. But its playfulness is grounded in the reality of sickness and old age. Eric Gingras' harassed orderly is no saint, and the reality of Victoria's situation is pointed up when she has to have her nappy changed. It may veer a tad close to sentimentality, but it is a generous piece of work, done with grace and elan.