

{ornament}

THE  
Tragedie of Gorbo=  
duc , *whereof three Actes were writ-*  
ten by *Thomas Norton* ,and the two laft by  
*Thomas Sackuyle.*

Set forth as the fame was fhewed before the Queenes  
moft excellent Maiefty,in her highnes Court of  
Whitehall,by the Gentlemen of  
the Inner Temple.

{ornament}

AT L O N D O N,  
Printed by *Edward Allde* for *Iohn*  
Perrin, and are to be fold in Paules Church-  
*yard, at the figne of the Angell.*  
1 5 9 0.

<A.i.v>

## ¶ The Argument of the Tragedie.

G     *O R B O D V C*, king of Brytaine, deuided his Realme  
in his life time to his Sonnes, Ferrex and Porrex . The  
Sonnes fell to deuifion and diffention . The yonger killed  
the elder . The mother that more dearely loued the elder,  
5     for reuenge killed the yonger. The people moued with the crueltie  
of the fact, rose in rebellion and flewe both father and mother. The  
Nobilitie affembled, and moft terribly deftroied the Rebels. And  
afterwards for want of Iffue of the Prince, whereby the fuccefsi-  
on of the Crowne became vncertaine, they fell to Ciuill warre, in  
10     which both they and many of their Iffues were flaine , and the  
lande for a long time almoft defolate and miferably wafted.

### ¶ The names of the Speakers.

*Gorboduc*, king of great Brytaine.

*Videna*, Queene and wife to king *Gorboduc*.

*Ferrex*, Elder Sonne to king *Gorboduc*.

*Porrex*, Yonger Sonne to king *Gorboduc*.

*Clotyn*, Duke of *Cornewall*, { *Mandud*, Duke of  
*Fergus*, Duke of *Albany*. { *Leagre*.

*Gwenard*, Duke of *Cumberlande*.

*Eubulus*, Secretarie to the king *Gorboduc*.

*Aroftus*, A Counfellow of king *Gorboduc*.

*Dordan*, A Counfellow afsigned by the king to  
his eldeft Sonne *Ferrex*.

*Philander*, A counfellow afsigned by the king  
to his yonger Sonne *Porrex*.

Both being of the old kings counfell before.

*Hermon*, A Parafite remaining with *Ferrex*.

*Tyndar*, A Parafite remaining with *Porrex*.

*Nuntius*, A meffenger of the elder brothers death.

*Nuntius*, A meffenger of Duke *Fergus* rifing in Armes.

*Marcella*, A Lady of the Queenes priuy chamber.

*Chorus*, Foure auncient and fage men of *Brytaine*.

A.ij.<r>

¶ The

¶ The Order of the dumbe shewe  
*before the first Act, and the signi-  
fication therof.*

¶ Firft the Mufike of Violenze began to play , du-  
ring which came in vpon the Stage fix wilde men,  
clothed in leaues . Of whome the firft bare on his  
necke a fagot of fmall ftickes, which they all both  
feuerallye and together affayed with all their 5  
ftrengths to breake , but it could not be broken by  
them. At the length one of them pulled out one of  
the ftickes and brake it : And the reft plucking out  
all the other ftickes one after another , did eafilie  
breake the fame beyng feuered, which being con- 10  
ioyned, they had before attempted in vaine. After  
they had this done, they departed the ftage, and the  
Mufike ceafed. Hereby was fignified, that a ftate  
knit in vnitie dooth continue ftrong againft all  
force, but being deuided, is eafily deftroyed. As be- 15  
fell vpon Duke Gorboduc, deuiding his Lande to  
his two fonnes which he before helde in Monar-  
chie. And vpon the diffention of the brethren to  
whom it was deuided.

<A.ii.v>

The

# ¶ The Tragedie of *Gorboduc*.

Actus primus. Scena prima.

*Viden. Ferrex.*

- T He filent night that brings the quiet pause, *Viden.*  
From painefull trauailes of the wearie Daye:  
Prolongs my carefull thoughtes & makes me blame  
The flowe Aurora that fo for loue or shame  
Dooth long delay to fheue her blufhing face,  
5 And now the day renewes my grieffull plainte.  
My gracious Lady and Mother déere, *Ferrex.*  
Pardon my gréeffe for your fo greeued minde  
To afke what caufe tormenteth fo your hart.  
So great a wronge and fo vniuft despite, *Viden.*  
10 Without all caufe againft all courfe of kinde.  
Such caufeleeffe wrong and fo vniuft despite, *Ferrex.*  
May haue redrefse, or at the leaft reuenge.  
Neither my Sonne, fuch is the froward will, *Viden.*  
The perfon fuch, fuch my mishap and thine.  
15 Mine know I none, but gréeffe for your diftreffe: *Ferrex.*  
Yes: mine for thine my Sonne: A father? no: *Viden.*  
In kinde a Father, but not in kindelynes.  
My Father: why? I know nothing at all, *Ferrex.*  
Wherin I haue mifdōne vnto his Grace.  
20 Therfore, the more vnkinde to thée and me, *Viden.*  
For knowing well my (Sonne) the tender loue  
That I haue borne and beare to thée,  
He gréeu'd therat, is not content alone,  
To fpoyle thée of my fight my cheefest loye,  
25 But thée, of thy birth=right and Heritage  
Caufeleeffe, vnkindely and in wrongfull wife,  
Againft all Law and right he will bereaue,  
Halfe of his kingdome he will giue away.  
To whome? *Ferrex.*  
Euen to Porrex his younger Sonne *Viden.*  
30 Whose growing Pride I dō fo fore fufpect,  
That being raifed to equall rule with thée,

<A.iii.r>

Me

## The Tragedye

	<p><b>Me thinkes I fee his enuious hart to fwell,</b>  <b>Filde with difdaine and with ambitious pride,</b>  <b>The end the Gods doe knowe, whose Aulters I</b>  <b>Full oft haue made in vaine of Cattell flaine,</b>  <b>To fend the facred smoake to heauens Throne,</b>  <b>For thee my Sonne if thinges so succéede,</b>  <b>As now my Ielious minde misdeemeth fore.</b></p>	35
<i>Ferrex.</i>	<p><b>Madam leaue care and carefull plainte for me,</b>  <b>Iust hath my Father béene to euery wight,</b>  <b>His firste vniustice he will not extend</b>  <b>To me I trust, that giue no cause therof,</b>  <b>My Brothers pride shall hurt him selfe not me.</b></p>	40
<i>Viden.</i>	<p><b>So graunt the Gods: But yet thy Father so</b>  <b>Hath firmly fixed his vnmoued minde</b>  <b>That plaintes and praiers can no whit auaille,</b>  <b>For those haue I affaied, but euen this daye,</b>  <b>He will endeuour to procure affent,</b>  <b>Of all his Counsell to his fonde deuife.</b></p>	45
<i>Ferrex.</i>	<p><b>Their Auncestours from race to race haue borne</b>  <b>True faith to my forefathers and their féede,</b>  <b>I trust they eke will beare the like to me.</b></p>	50
<i>Viden.</i>	<p><b>There resteth all, but if they faile therof,</b>  <b>And if the end bring forth an euill successe</b>  <b>On them and theirs the mischéeffe shall befall,</b>  <b>And so I praie the Gods requit it them,</b>  <b>And so they will, for so is wont to be</b>  <b>When Lordes and trusted Rulers vnder Kinges</b>  <b>To please the present fancy of the Prince,</b>  <b>With wrong transpore the course of gouernaunce</b>  <b>Murders, mischéeffe, or ciuill Swoord at length,</b>  <b>Or mutuall treason, or a iust reuenge,</b>  <b>When right succéeding Line returnes againe</b>  <b>By Ioues iust Iudgement and deserued wrath</b>  <b>Bringes them to ciuill and reprochfull death,</b>  <b>And rootes their names and Kinreds from the earth.</b></p>	55
<i>Ferrex.</i>	<p><b>Mother content you, you shall see the end.</b></p>	60
<i>Viden.</i>	<p><b>The end: thy ende I feare, Ioue end me first.</b></p>	65

<A.iii.v>

Actus

of Gorboduc.

Actus primus      Scena fecundus.

*Gorboduc. Aroftus. Philander. Eubulus.*

**M    Y Lords whose graue aduife and faithfull aide,  
          Haue long vphelde my honour and my Realme,  
And brought me from this age and tender yeeres,  
Guiding fo great eftate with great renowne:**

*Gorboduc.*

- 5    Now more importeth me the erft to vfe  
Your faith and wifdome wherby yet I raigne,  
That when by death my life and rule fhall ceafe,  
The Kingdome yet maye with vnbroken courfe,  
Haue certaine Prince,by whose vndoubted right,  
10    Your wealth and peace may ftand at quiet ftay,  
And eke that they whom Nature hath preparde,  
In time to take my place in Princely Seate,  
While in their fathers time their pliant youth,  
Yéeldes to the frame of fkilfull gouernaunce  
15    Maye fo be taught and trained in noble Artes,  
As what their Fathers which haue raignde before,  
Haue with great fame deriued downe to them  
With honour they may leaue vnto their féede:  
And not be taught for their vnwoorthy life,  
20    And for their laweleffe fwaruing out of kinde,  
Woorthy to loofe what Law and kind them gaue  
But that they may preferue the common peace,  
The caufe that firft began and ftill maintaines,  
The Lineall courfe of Kinges enheritaunce,  
25    For me,for mine,for you,and for the ftate  
Wherof both I and you haue charge and care.  
Thus dœ I meane to vfe your woonted faith  
To me and mine,and to your natie Land,  
My Lordes be plaine without all wrye respect  
30    Or poyfons craft to fpeake in pleafing wife,  
Leaft as the blame of ill fuccéeding thinges  
Shall light on you,fo light the harmes alfo.**

**Your good acceptaunce fo (moft noble King)**

*Aroftus.*

<A.iv.r>

**Of**

## The Tragedye

Of fuch your faithfulnes as héertofofe  
We haue employed in dueties to your Grace, 35  
And to this Realme whofe wóorthy head you are,  
Well proues that neither you miftruft at all,  
Nor we fhall néede no boafing wife to fhew,  
Our trueth to you,nor yet our wakefull care  
For you,for yours,and for our natieue land, 40  
Wherfore (O King) I fpeake for one as all,  
Sith all as one dō beare you egall faith:  
Doubt not to vfe their counfailes and their aides  
Whofe honors,gōods and liues are whole auowed,  
To ferue, to aide,and to defend your grace. 45

*Gorboduc.* My Lordes I thank you all. This is the cafe  
Ye know,the Gods, who haue the foueraigne care,  
For Kings,for Kingdomes,and for common weales,  
Gauē me two Sonnes in my more lufty Age,  
Who now in my deceiuing yéeres are growen 50  
Well towards riper ftate of minde and ftrengh,  
To take in hand fome greater Princely charge,  
As yet they liue and fpend their hopefull daies,  
With me and with their Mother héere in Court:  
Their age now afketh other place and trade, 55  
And mine alfo dōth afke an other change,  
Theirs to more trauaile,mine to greater eafe:  
Whan fatall death fhall end my mortall life,  
My purpofe is to leaue betwéene them twaine  
The Realme deuided into two fundry partes: 60  
The one, Ferrex mine elder fonne fhall haue,  
The other,fhall the other Porrex rule  
That both my purpofe may more firmly ftand,  
And eke that they may better rule their charge,  
I meane fōrthwith to place them in the fame: 65  
That in my life they maye both learne to rule,  
And I may ioy to fée their ruling well.  
This is in fumme, what I woulde haue you wey:  
Firft whether ye allowe my whole deuice,  
And think it gōod for me,for them, for you, 70

<A.iv.v>

And



of Gorboduc.

And for our Country, mother of vs all :

And if ye like it, and allowe it well,

Than for their guiding and their gouernance,

Shew foorth such meanes of circumftance,

75 As ye thinke méete to be both knowne and kept:

Loe, this is all, now tell me your aduife.

And this is much, and asketh great aduife,

*Aroftus.*

But for my part, my Soueraigne Lord and king,

This doe I thinke your Maieftie dooth know,

80 How vnder you in Iuftice and in peace,

Great wealth and honour long we haue enioyed,

So as we can not feeme with greedie minds

To wifh for chaunge of prince or gouernance,

But if ye like your purpofe and deuife,

85 Our liking muft be déemed to proceede,

Of rightfull reafon, and of heedfull care,

Not for our felues, but for our common ftate:

Sith our owne ftate dooth néed no better chaunge,

I thinke in all, as earft your Grace hath faide,

90 Firft when you fhall vnloade your aged minde,

Of heauie care and troubles manifolde,

And lay the fame vpon my Lords your fonnes,

Whofe growing yéeres may beare the burden long,

And long I pray the Gods to graunt it fo:

95 And in your life while you fhall fo behold

Their rule, their vertues, and their noble déedes,

Such as their kind behighteth to vs all,

Great be the profits that fhall grow thereof,

Your age in quiet fhall the longer laft,

100 Your lafting age fhall be their longer ftate,

For cares of kings, that rule as you haue rulde,

For publike welth, and not for priuate ioy,

Doo wafte mans life and haften crooked age,

With furrowed face, and with enféebled lims,

105 To draw on créeping Death a fwifter pace.

They two yet yong fhall beare the partie reigne

With greater eafe than one now olde alone

B.<i.r>

Can

## The Tragedye

Can welde the whole,for whom much harder is  
With leffened ftrength the doubled weight to beare  
Your eye,your counfell,and the graue regard 110  
Of fathers, yea of fuch a fathers name,  
Now at beginning of their fundred reigne,  
When it is hazard of their whole fucceffe,  
Shall bridle fo their force of youthfull heates,  
And fo reftraine the rage of infolence, 115  
Which moft affailes the yong and noble minds,  
And fo fhall guide and traine in tempred ftay  
Their yet greene bending wits with reuerent awe,  
And now inurde with vertues at the firft,  
Cuftome (O king) fhall bringe delightfulness 120  
By vfe of vertue, vice fhall grow in hate,  
But if you fo difpofe it,that the day  
Which ends your life,shall firft begin the reigne,  
Great is the perill,what fhall be the ende,  
When fuch beginning of fuche liberties 125  
Voide of fuch ftates as in your life dō lie,  
Shall leaue them to free random of their will  
An open pray to traiterous flatterie,  
The greateft peftilence of noble youth:  
Whiche perill fhall be pafte,if in your life 130  
Their tempred youth with aged fathers awe  
Be brought in vre of fkilfull ftayednes,  
And in your life their liues difpofed fo,  
Shall length your noble life in ioyfulness:  
Thus thinke I that your grace hath wifely thought 135  
And that your tender care of common weale  
Hath bred this thought,fo to deuide your Lande,  
And plant your fonnes to beare the prefent rule  
While you yet liue to fee their ruling well,  
That you may longer liue by ioy therein. 140  
What further meanes behouefull are and meete  
At greater leifure may your grace deuife,  
When all haue faid,and when we be agreed  
If this be beft to parte the Realme in twaine,

<B.i.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

145 And place your fonnes in present gouernment,  
Whereof as I haue plainely said my minde,  
So would I heare the rest of all my Lordes.

In part I thinke as hath bene faide before,  
In part againe my mind is otherwife,

*Philander.*

150 As for deuiding of this realme in twaine,  
And lotting out the fame in egall partes,  
To either of my Lords your Graces fonnes,  
That thinke I best for this your realmes behoefe,  
For profite and aduancement of your fonnes,

155 And for your comfort and your honour eke:  
But so to place them while your life doth last,  
To yeeld to them your royall gouernance,  
to be aboue them onely in the name  
Of father, not in kingly state also,

160 I thinke not good for you, for them, nor vs,  
this kingdome since the bloody ciuill field  
Where Morgan flaine did yeeld his conquered part  
Vnto his Cōfens fword in Cumberland,  
Conteineth all that whilome did suffise

165 three noble fonnes of your forefather Brute,  
So your two fonnes it may also suffise,  
the more the stronger, if they gree in one:  
the smaller compasse that the realme dooth holde,  
the easier is the fway thereof to welde,  
170 the neerer iustice to the wronged poore,  
the smaller charge, and yet inough for one.

And when the Region is deuided so  
that brethren be the Lords of either part,  
Such strength dooth nature knit betwene them both

175 In fundry bodies by conioyned loue,  
that not as two, but one of doubled force,  
Each is to other as a sure defence,  
the noblenes and glorie of the one  
Dooth sharpe the courage of the others mind,

180 With vertuous enuie to contend for praise,  
And such an eagernes hath nature made,

B.ij.<.r>

Betwene

## The Tragedye

Betweene the brethren of one fathers féede,  
As an vnkindly wrong it féemes to be,  
To throw the other subiect vnder féete  
Of him, whose péere he is by courfe of kind, 185  
And nature that did make this egalnes,  
Oft fore pineth at fo great a wrong,  
That oft fhe raifeth vp a grudging gréeffe,  
In yonger brethren at the elders ftate:  
Wherby both towns and kingdoms haue été rafed 190  
And famous ftocks of royall blood deftroied:  
The Brother that fhould be the brothers aide  
And haue a wakefull care for his defence,  
Gapes for his death,& blames the lingering yeres,  
That brings not fôorth his ende with fafter courfe, 195  
And oft impacient of fo long delayes,  
With hatefull flaugh ter he prefents the fates  
And kéepes a iuft reward for brothers blood,  
With endleffe vengeance on his ftocke for aye:  
Such mifcheefes heere are wifely mette withall: 200  
If egall ftate maye nourifhe egall loue,  
Where none hath caufe to grudge at others good,  
But now the head to ftoupe beneath them both,  
Ne kind,ne reafon,ne good order beares,  
And oft it hath été feene, that where Nature 205  
Hath éténe preuerted in difordered wife,  
When fathers ceafe to know that they fhould rule,  
And children ceafe to know they fhould obey,  
And often our vnkindly tendernes,  
Is mother of vnkindly ftubbornes: 210  
I fpeake not this in enuie or reproch,  
As if I grudged the glorie of your fonnes,  
Whofe honour I beféech the Gods to increafe:  
Nor yet as if I thought there did remaine,  
So filthie cankers in their noble breftes, 215  
Whom I esteeme(which is their greateft praife)  
Vndoubted children of fo good a king,  
Onely I meane to fhew my certaine Rules,

<B.ii.v>

Which

of Gorboduc.

Which kinde hath graft within the minde of man,  
220 That Nature hath her order and her course,  
Which (being broken) dooth corrupt the state  
Of mindes and thinges euen in the best of all.  
My Lordes your Sonnes may learne to rule of you,  
Your owne example in your noble Courte,  
225 Is fittest guider of their youthfull yéeres,  
If you desire to féeke some present ioye  
By fight of their well ruling in your life,  
Sée them obey, so shall you fee them rule,  
Who so obeyeth not with humblenes  
230 Will rule with outrage and with infolence,  
Long may they rule I doo beseech the Gods,  
But long may they learne ere they begin to rule  
If kinde and faies would suffer I would wifh  
Them aged Princes and immortall Kinges:  
235 Wherefore most noble King I will affent,  
Between your sonnes that you deuide your Realm,  
And as in kinde, so match them in degree  
But while the Gods prolong your royall life  
Prolong your reigne, for therto liue you heere,  
240 And therefore haue the Gods so longe forborne  
To ioyne you to themselues, that still you might  
Be Prince and Father of our Common weale:  
They when they see your Children ripe to rule  
Will make them roome, and will remoue you hence  
245 That yours in right ensuing of your life  
May rightly honour your mortall name.

Your wonted true regarde of faithfull hartes,  
Makes me (O King) the bolder to presume  
To speake what I conceiue within my breft,  
250 Although the fame doo not agree at all  
With that which other heere my Lords haue said  
Nor which your selfe haue féemed best to like,  
Pardon I craue, and that my wordes be deemde  
to flowe from hartly zeale vnto your grace,  
255 And to the safetie of your Common weale:

*Eubulus*

B.iiij.<r>

To

## The Tragedye

To parte your Realme vnto my Lords your Sonnes  
I think not good for you,ne yet for them,  
But woerft of all,for this our natue Land:  
For with one Land,one fingle rule is best:  
Deuided Regions doo make deuided hartes, 260  
But Peace preferues the Countrey and the Prince,  
Such is in man the greedy minde to raigne,  
So great is his desire to climbe alofte,  
In worldly Stage the stateliest partes to beare,  
that faith and iustice and all kindly loue, 265  
Doo yeelde vnto desire of Soueraigntie:  
Where egall ftate doth raife an egall hope  
to winne the thing that either wold atteine,  
Your grace remembreth how in paffed yeeres,  
the mighty Brute,first Prince of all this Lande, 270  
Poffessed the fame and ruled it well in one,  
He thinking that the compasse did suffice  
For his three Sonnes thrée Kingdomes eke to make  
Cut it in three, as you would now in twaine:  
But how much Brutish blood hath fithence been spilt 275  
to ioyne againe the fundred vntie?  
What Princes flaine before their timely honour?  
What waste of townes and people in the Land?  
What treasons heaped on murders and on spoiles?  
Whose iust reuenge euen yet is scarsely ceased, 280  
Ruthefull remembraunce is yet had in minde:  
the Gods forbyd the like to chaunce againe.  
And you (O King)giue not the cause thereof:  
My Lord Ferrex your elder Sonne,perhappes  
whome kinde and custome giues a rightfull hope 285  
to be your Heire and to succede your Reigne,  
Shall think that he dooth suffer greater wrong  
then he perchaunce will beare,if power ferue:  
Porrex the yonger so vnpaied in ftate,  
Perhaps in courage will be raied also, 290  
If Flattery then which failes not to affaile  
the tender mindes of yet vnkilfull youth,

<B.iii.v>

In

of Gorboduc.

In one fhall kinde and encrease difdaine:

If/ Enuie in the others hart enflame,

295 This fire fhall wafte their loue,their liues,their land,  
And ruthefull ruine fhall deftroy them both.

I wifh not this(O King)fo to befall

But feare the thing,that I do moft abhorre,

Giue no beginning to fo dreadfull end,

300 Kéepe them in order and obedience:

And let them both by now obeying you,

Learne fuch behauour as befeemes their ftate,

The Elder mildenes in his gouernaunce,

the yonger, a yeelding contentednes:

305 And keepe them neere vnto your prefence ftill,  
that they reftreined by the awe of you,

May liue in compaffe of well tempred ftaie,

And paffe the perilles of their youthfull yeeres.

Your aged life drawes on to feebler time,

310 Wherin you fhall leffe able be to beare

the trauailes that in youth you haue fufteined,

Both in your perfons and your Realmes defence,

If planting now your Sonnes in further partes,

You fend them funder from your prefent reach,

315 Leffe fhall you know how they themfelues demaund  
traiterous corrupters of their pliant youth,

Shall haue vnfpied a much more free acceffe,

And of ambition and inflamed difdaine,

Shall arme the one,the other,or them both

320 to cyuill warre,or to vfurping pride.

Late fhall you rue,that you ne recked before:

Good is I graunt of all to hope the beft,

But not to liue ftill dreadles of the woorft.

So truft the one that the other be forfeene,

325 Arme not vnfkilfulnes with princely power

But you that longe haue wifely ruled the reignes,

Of Royaltie within your noble Realme,

So holde them,while the Gods for our auailles,

Shall ftretch the threed of your prolonged daies.

<B.iv.r>

T∞

## The Tragedye

Too foone he clamme, into the flaming Carte 330  
 Whose want of skill did fet the earth on fire,  
 Time and example of your noble Grace,  
 Shall teache your Sonnes both to obey and rule:  
 When time hath taught them, time shall make them pace  
 the place that now is full: and so I pray 335  
 Long it remaine, to comfort of vs all.

*Gorboduc.* I take your faithfull hartes in thankfull parte  
 But fith I fee no caufe to draw my minde,  
 To feare the nature of my louing Sonnes,  
 Or to misdeeme that Enuie or difdaine, 340  
 Can there woork hate, where nature planteth loue,  
 In one felfe purpofe doo I ftill abide,  
 My loue extendeth egally to both,  
 My Land fuffifeth for them both alfo:  
 Humber fhall parte the Marches of their Realmes : 345  
 The Sotherne parte the elder fhall poffeffe,  
 The Northerne fhall Porrex the yonger rule,  
 In quiet I will paffe mine aged daies,  
 Free from the trauaile and the painefull cares  
 That haften age vpon the woorthieft Kinges. 350  
 But leaft the fraude that ye doo féeme to feare  
 Of flattering tungen, corrupt their tender youth  
 And wrieth them to the waies of youthfull luft,  
 To climbing pride or to reuenging hate,  
 Or to neglecting of their carefull charge 355  
 Lewdelye to liue in wanton rechlefneffe,  
 Or to oppreffing of the rightfull caufe  
 Or not to wreke the wronges doone to the poore,  
 To tread downe trueth or fauour falfe deceite,  
 I meane to ioyne to either of my Sonnes, 360  
 Some one of thofe whose long approued faith,  
 And wifdome tried may well affure my hart:  
 That myning fraude fhall finde no way to creepe,  
 Into their fenced eares with graue aduife:  
 This is the end, and fo I pray you all 365  
 To beare my Sonnes the loue and loyaltie

<B.iv.v>

That



of Gorboduc.

That I haue found within your faithfull brefts.

You,nor your fonnes our fouereigne Lord fhall want *Aroftus.*

Our faith and feruice while our liues dō laft.

When fetled ftay dōth hold the royall throne, *Chorus.*

In ftedefaft place by knowne and doubtles right:

And cheefely when difcent on one alone

Make fingle and vnparted reigne to light.

5 Ech chaunge of courfe vnioints the whole eftate

And yeeldes it thrall to ruine by debate.

The ftrength that knit by laft accord in one

Againft all forreine power of mightie foes,

Could of it felfe defend it felfe alone,

10 Difioyned once,the former force dōth lofe

The fticks,that fundred brake fo fōone in twaine

In fagot bound attempted were in vaine.

Oft tender mind that leades the partiall eye

Of erring parents in their childrens loue,

15 Deftroies the wrongfull loued childe therby:

This dōth the proud fonne of *Apollo* proue,

Who rafhely fet in Chariot of his fire,

Inflamde the parched earth with heauens fire.

And this great king that dōth deuide his Lande,

20 And chaungde the courfe of his defcending crowne,

And yeeldes the raigne into his childrens hand,

From bliffull ftate of ioy and great renowne,

A mirrour fhall become to princes all

To learne to fhunne the caufe of fuch a fall.

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe  
*fhew before the fecond Acte.*

¶ Firft the Mufike of Cornets began to play , during which  
came in vpon the ftage a king accompanied with a num-  
ber of his Nobilitie and Gentlemen. And after he had pla-  
ced himfelfe in a Chaire of eftate prepared for him : there

5 came and kneeled before him a graue and aged Gentle-  
man,and offered vp a Cuppe vnto him of wine in a glaffe,

C.<i.r> which

## The Tragedye

which the king refused . After him comes a braue and luttie yoong Gentleman , and presents the King with a cup Golde filled with poyfon , which the King accepted, and drinking the same , immediately fell downe dead vpon the stage, and so was carryed thence away by his Lordes and Gentlemen , and then the Muficke ceaſed. Heereby was ſignified , that as Glaſſe by nature holdeth no poyfon , but is cleare and may eaſily be ſeenethrough, ne boweth by any arte : So a faithfull Counſellour holdeth no treaſon , but is playne and open , ne yeeldeth to anie vndiſcrete affection , but giueth any wholeſome Counſell , which the ill aduifed Prince refuseth. The delightfull Golde filled with poyfon betokeneth Flatterie, which vnder faire ſeeming of pleaſaunt wordes beareth deadly poyfon , which deſtroyeth the Prince that receyueth it . As befell in the two Brethren , *Ferrex*, and *Porrex* , who refuſing the wholeſome aduiſe of graue Counſellours , credited theſe yoong Paraſites , and brought vnto themſelues death and deſtruction thereby.

Actus ſecundus.      Scena prima.

*Ferrex.   Hermon.   Dordan.*

<i>Ferrex.</i>	<p><b>I Meruaile much what reaſon leade the king My father thus without all my defarte To reauē me halfe the kingdome which by courſe Of lawe and nature ſhould remaine to me.</b></p>	
<i>Hermon.</i>	<p><b>If you with ſtubborne and vntamed pride Had ſtood againſt him in rebellious wife, Or if with grudging minde you had enuyde, So flow a ſliding of his aged yéeres, Or fought before your time to haſte the courſe Of fatall death vpon his Royall head, Or ſtaine your ſtocke with murder of your kinne: Some face of reaſon might perhaps haue ſéemed</b></p>	<p>5       10</p>
	<p><b>&lt;C.i.v&gt;</b></p>	<p><b>To</b></p>

of Gorboduc.

To yéeld fome likely caufe to spoile ye thus.

The wrekefull Gods powre on my curfed heade

*Ferrex.*

15 Eternall plagues and neuer dyinge woes:

The hellifh Prince adiudge my damned Ghoft

To Tantalus thirft,or proude Ixions wheele,

Or cruell Gripe to gnaw my groaning hart

To during torments and vnquenched flames

20 If euer I conceiued fo foule a thought,

To wifh his ende of life,or yet of reigne.

Ne yet your father(O moft noble prince)

*Dordan.*

Did euer thinke fo fowle a thing of you,

For he with more than fathers tender loue

25 While yet the fates dœ lend him life to rule,

(Who long might liue to fée your ruling well)

To you my Lorde,and to his other fonne

Lo he refignes his realme and royaltie,

Which neuer would fo wife a prince haue dœne,

30 If he had once mifdéemde that in your hart

There euer lodged fo vnkind a thought.

But tender loue(my Lord)and fetled truft

Of your good nature,and your noble minde,

Made him to place you thus in royall throne,

35 And now to giue you halfe his Realme to guide,

Yea and that halfe within abounding ftore

Of things that ferue to make a welthie realme,

In ftatelie Cities and in fruitfull foyle,

In temperate breathing of the milder heauen,

40 In things of needefull vfe,which frendly Sea

Transports by traffike from the forraine portes,

In flowing welth,in honour and in force,

Dooth paffe the double value of the part

That Porrex hath allotted to his reigne,

45 Such is your cafe,fuch is your fathers loue.

Ah loue my frends,loue wrongs not whom he loues.

*Ferrex.*

Ne yet he wrongeth you that giueth you

*Dordan.*

So large a reigne ere that the courfe of time

Bring you to kingdome by defcended right,

C.ij.<r>

Which

## The Tragedye

	Which time perhaps might end your time before.	50
<i>Ferrex.</i>	Is this no wrong, say you, to reave from me My native right of halfe so great a Realme, And thus to match his younger sonne with me In egall power, and in as great degree: Yea and what sonne? the sonne whose swelling pride Would neuer yeeld one point of reuerence, When I the elder and apparant heire Stode in the likelihood to possesse the whole, Yea and that sonne which from his childlike age Enueth mine honour, and dooth hate my life,	55          60
<i>Hermon.</i>	Was this not wrong? yea ill aduised wrong, To giue so mad a man so sharpe a sword, To so great perill of so great mishap, Wide open thus to set so large a way.	65
<i>Dordan.</i>	Alas my Lord, what grievous thing is this? That of your brother you can thinke so ill I neuer sawe him utter likely signe Whereby a man might see or once misdeeme Such hate of you, ne such vnyeelding pride: Ill is their counsell, shamefull be their ende, That raising such mistrustfull feare in you, Sowing the seede of such unkindly hate,	70          75
	Trouaile by reason to destroy you both: Wife is your brother and of noble hope, Worthie to weeld a large and mightie realme, So much a stronger friend haue you thereby, Whose strength is your strength, if you agree in one.	80
<i>Hermon.</i>	If nature and the Gods had pinched so Their flowing bountie and their noble gifts Of princely qualities from you my Lord, And powred them all at once in wastfull wife Vpon your fathers younger sonne alone:	85

<C.ii.v>

Would

of Gorboduc.

Would fay that birth should yéeld to woorthines:  
But fith in each goød gift and and Princely Acte,  
Ye are his match,and in the cheefe of all  
90 In mildenes and in fober gouernauce,  
ye far furmount:And fith there is in you  
Suffifing skill and hopefull towardnes,  
to weld the whole and match your elders praife,  
I fee no caufe why ye should loøfe the halfe,  
95 Ne would I wifh you yeelde to fuche a loffe:  
Leaft your milde fufferance of fo great a wrong,  
Be déemed cowardife and fimple dread:  
which fhall giue courage to the fiery head  
Of your yong Brother to inuade the whole,  
100 whiles yet therfore fticks in the peoples minde  
The loathed wrong of your difheritaunce,  
And ere your Brother haue by fetled power,  
By guilefull cloake of an alluring fhowe,  
Got him fome force and fauour in this Realme  
105 And while the noble Quéene your mother liues,  
To woørke and practife all for your auaile  
Attempt redrefse by Armes, and wreak your felf  
Vpon his life that gaineth by your loffe,  
Who now to fhame of you,and gréeffe of vs,  
110 In your owne Kingdome triumphes ouer you:  
Shew now your courage méet for kinglye eftate  
that they which haue auowed to fpend their goøds  
Their landes,their liues & honors in your caufe,  
May be the bolder to maintain your parte  
115 when they dø fée that cowarde feare in you,  
Shall not betray ne faile their faithfull hartes,  
If once the death of Porrex end the ftrife,  
And pay the price of his vfurped Reigne,  
Your mother fhall perfwade the angry King,  
120 the Lords your friends eke fhall appeafe his rage  
For they be wife and well they can forefee,  
That ere long time your aged Fathers death  
will bring a time when you fhall well requite

C.iiij.<r>

Their

## The Tragedye

Their fréendly fauour,or their hatefull spite,  
Yea,or their slacknes to auaunce your caufe, 125  
Wife men d∞ not fo hange on paffing ftate  
Of prefent Princes,cheefely in their age,  
But they will further caft their reaching eye  
To viewe and weigh the times and reignes to come,  
Ne is it likely though the King be wrath, 130  
That he yet will,or that the Realme will beare  
Extreme reuenge vpon his onely Sonne:  
Or if he would,what one is he that dare  
Be minifter to fuch an enterprife.  
And héere you be now placed in your owne 135  
Amid your fréends,your vaffailes and your ftrength  
We fhall defend and kéepe your perfon fafe,  
Till either Counfell turne his tender minde,  
Or age,or forrow ende his weary daies  
But if the feare of Gods and fecret grudge 140  
Of natures Lawe,repining at the fact,  
Withholde your courage from fo great attempte:  
Know ye that luft of kingdomes hath no Lawe,  
The Gods d∞ beare and well allow in Kinges,  
The thinges they abhorre in rafcall routes. 145  
When Kinges on flender quarrels run to warres,  
And then in cruell and vnkindely wife,  
Commaund thefts,rapes,murder of Innocents,  
To fpoyle of townes and reignes of mighty realms  
Think you fuch Princes d∞ fuppreffe themfelues, 150  
Subiect to Lawes of kinde and feare of Gods,  
Yet none offence, but decked with glorious name  
Of noble Conquefts in the handes of Kinges,  
Murders and violent theftes in priuate men,  
Are heinous crimes and full of foule reproche: 155  
But if you like not yet fo hote deuife,  
Ne lift to take fuche vauntage of the time.  
But though with great perill of your ftate,  
You will not be the firft that fhall inuade,  
Affemble yet your force for your defence, 160

<C.iii.v>

And

And for your safetie stand vpon your garde.

O heauen was there euer heard or knowne,

*Dordan.*

So wicked Counfell to a noble Prince?

Let me(my Lord) disclofe vnto your grace

165 This heinous tale,what mischeefe it conteines:

Your Fathers death, your Brothers and your owne,

Your present murder and eternall fham:

Heare me (O King)and fuffer not to finke,

So high a treason in your Princely breft.

170 The mighty Gods forbid that euer I,

*Ferrex.*

Should once conceiue such mischeefe in my hart,

Although my Brother hath bereft my Realme,

And beare perhaps to mee an hatefull minde,

Shall I reuenge it, with his death therfore?

175 Or fhall I fo deftroy my Fathers life

That gaue me life,the Gods forbid I fay,

Cease you to speake fo any more to me,

Ne you my fréend with aunfwere once repeate

So foule a tale,in filence let it dye:

180 What Lord or Subiect fhall haue hope at all

That vnder me they safelye shall enioy

Their goods, their honours,lands and liberties,

With whom, neither one onely brother déere

Ne Father déerer,could enioy their liues?

185 But fith, I feare my yonger brothers rage,

And fith perhaps some other man may giue

Some like aduife,to moue his grudging head

At mine estate:which counfell may perchaunce

Take greater force with him,then this with me,

190 I will in fecret fo prepare my felfe,

As if his mallice or his luft to raigne,

Breake forth with Armes or fodeine violence

I may withftand his rage and kéepe mine owne.

I feare the fatall time now draweth on,

*Dordan.*

195 When cyuill hate fhall ende the noble lyne

Of famous Brute and of his royall féede,

Great Ioue defend the mischéefes now at hand,

<C.iv.r>

O that

O that the Secretaries wife aduife  
 Had earft beene heard when he befought the King  
 Not to deuide his land,nor fend his Sonnes 200  
 to further partes from prefence of his Courte,  
 Ne yet to yéelde to them his gouernaunce.  
 Loe fuch are they now in the Royall throne  
 As was that Phaeton in Phœbus Carre  
 Ne then the fiery Steedes did drawe the flame 205  
 With wilder randon through the kindled Skies,  
 Then traiterous counsell now will whirle about,  
 The youthfull heads of thefe vnſkilfull Kinges,  
 But I heereof their Father will enforme,  
 The reuerence of him per haps ſhall ſtay 210  
 the growing miſchéefes, while they yet are greene,  
 If this helpe not, then woe vnto themfelues,  
 The Prince,the people,the deuided Land.

Actus fecundus. Scena fecunda.

*Porrex. Tyndar. Philander.*

*Porrex.* A Nd is it thus?And dooth he fo prepare  
 Againft his Brother as his mortall foe?  
 And now while yet his aged Father liues:  
 Neither regards he him? nor feares he me?  
 Warre would he haue? and he ſhall haue it fo. 5  
*Tyndar.* I ſawe my ſelfe the great prepared ſtore,  
 Of Horfe,of Armour and of weapons there,  
 Ne bring I to my Lorde reported tales,  
 Without the ground of feene and feared troth,  
 Loe ſecret quarrelles runne about his Courte, 10  
 to bring the name of you my Lord in hate  
 Eche man almoſt can now debate the caufe,  
 And afke a reaſon of ſo great a wrong,  
 while he ſo noble and ſo wife a Prince,  
 Is as vnworthy reft his Heritage. 15  
 And why the King miſlead by crafty meanes  
 Deuided thus his Land from courſe of right.

<C.iv.v>

The



of Gorboduc.

The wifer fort holde downe their griefull heads,  
Ech man withdrawes from talke and company  
20 Of thofe that haue béene knowne to fauour you,  
To hide the mifchiefe of their meaninge there.  
Rumors are fpred of your preparynge heere.  
The rafcall numbers of the vnfkilfull fort  
Are filled with monftrous tales of you and yours,  
25 In fecret I was counfailed by my frends  
To haft me thence, and brought you as you knowe  
Letters from thofe that both can truly tell,  
And would not write vnleffe they knew it well.

My Lord,yet ere you now vnkindly warre,  
30 Send to your brother to demaund the caufe:  
Perhaps fome traiterous tales haue filled his eares  
With falfe reports againft your noble Grace:  
Which once difclofde fhall end the growing strife  
That els not ftaide with wife forefight in time,  
35 Shall hazard both your kingdoms and your liues:  
Send to your father eke,he fhall appeafe  
Your kindled minds,and rid you of this feare.

*Philander*

Rid me of feare ? I feare him not at all,  
Ne will to him,ne to my father fend  
40 If daunger were for one to tarrie there,  
Thinke ye it fafely to returne againe,  
In mifchiefes fuch as *Ferrex* now intends,  
The wøonted courteous lawes to meffengers  
Are not obserued,which in iuft warre they vfe,  
45 Shall I fo hazard anie one of mine?  
Shall I betray my truftie frende to him?  
That hath difclofde his treafon vnto me?  
Let him intreat that feares,I feare him not:  
Or fhall I to the king my father fende?  
50 Yea and fende now while fuch a mother liues,  
That loues my brother and that hateth me.  
Shall I giue leysure by my fond delayes  
To *Ferrex* to opprefse me at vnware?  
I will not,but I will inuade his realme

*Porrex.*

D.<i.r>

And

## The Tragedye

And feeke the traitour prince within his court, 55  
Mischiefe for mischiefe is a due reward.

His wretched head fhall pay the worthie price  
Of this his treason and his hate to me,  
Shall I abide,intreat,and fend and pray?  
And holde my yeelden throte to traitours knife? 60

While I with valiant mind and conquering force  
Might rid my felfe of foes, and winne a realme,  
Yet rather when I haue the wretches head,  
Then to the king my father will I fend,  
The booteles cafe may yet appeafe his wrath: 65  
If not I will defend me as I may.

*Philander.* Lo héere the end of thefe two youthfull kings,  
The fathers death,the reigne of their two realms,  
O moft vnhappie ftate of Counfellors,  
That light on fo vnhappie Lords and times, 70

That neither can their good aduife be heard,  
Yet muft they beare the blames of ill fucceffe:  
But I will to the king their father haft,  
Ere this mischeefe come to that likely ende,  
That if the mindefull wrath of wrekefull Gods 75

Since mightie Ilions fall not yet appeafed  
With thefe pøre remnant of the Troians name  
Haue not determinedly vnmooed fate  
Out of this realme to race the Brutifh line  
By good aduife,by awe of fathers name, 80  
By force of wifer Lords,this kindled hate  
May yet be quencht ere it confume vs all.

*Chorus,* When youth not bridled with a guiding ftay,  
Is left to random of their owne delight,  
And welds whole realms by force of fouereigne fray  
Great is the daunger of vnmaiftred might,  
Leaft fkillleffe rage throw downe with headlong fall 5  
their lands,their ftates,their liues,themfelues & all

When growing pride doth fill the fwelling breft,  
And greedie luft doth raife the climbing mind,  
Oh hardly may the perill be repreft,

<D.i.v>

Ne

of Gorboduc.

- 10 Ne feare of angrie Gods,ne Lawes kinde,  
Ne Country care can fired harts refraine  
When force hath armed enuie and difdaine.  
When kings of forefet will neglect the réede,  
Of beft aduife,and yeeld to pleafing tales,  
15 That d∞ their fancies noyfome humour feede,  
Ne reafon,nor regarde of right auailles,  
Succeeding heapes of plagues fhall teach t∞ late  
To learne the mifchiefes of mifguiding ftate.  
Fowle fall the traitour falfe that vndermines  
20 The loue of brethren to deft roy them both,  
Woe to the prince,that pliaunt eare inclines  
And yéeldes his minde to poifenous tale that floweth  
From flattering mouth, and woe to wretched lande  
that wafts it felfe with ciuill fword in hande.  
25 Loe,thus it is poifon in golde to take,  
And wholefome drinke in homely cuppe forfake.

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe  
*fhewe before the third Acte.*

- ¶ Firft the Mufike of Fluites began to play, during which  
came in vppon the Stage a companie of Mourners all clad  
in blacke , betokening Death and forrowe to enfue vpon  
the ill aduifed mifgouernement and diffention of Bre-  
5 thren, as befell vpon the murder of *Ferrex* by his yonger  
brother . After the Mourners had paffed thrife about the  
Stage,they departed,and then the Mufike caufed.

Actus tertius. Scena prima.

*Gorboduc. Eubulus. Aroftus. Philander. Nuntius.*

O Cruell fates,O mindfull wrath of Gods,  
Whofe vengeance neither *Simois* ftreined ftreames  
Flowing with bl∞od of *Troian* princes flaine,  
Nor *Phrygian* fields made ranke with Corpfes dead

*Gorboduc,*

D.ij.<r>

Of

## The Tragedye

Of Afian kings and Lords can yet appease,	5
Ne flaughter of vnhappie Pryams race	
Nor Ilions fall made leuell with the foile,	
Can yet fuffice : but ftill continued rage	
Purfue our liues, and from the fartheft feas	
Dooth chaft the iffues of destroyed Troy:	10
Oh no man happie till his end be feene,	
If any flowing wealth and féeming ioy	
In prefent yéeres might make a happy wight,	
Happie was Hecuba the wofulleft wretch	
That euer liued to make a mirrour of,	15
And happie Pryam with his noble fonnes,	
And happie I till nowe. Alas, I fee	
And feele my moft vnhappie wretchednes:	
Behold my Lords, read ye this Letter heere,	
Lo it conteines the ruine of this realme	20
If timely fpeede prouide not haftie helpe,	
Yet, O ye Gods, if euer wofull king	
Might moue you kings of kings, wreake it on me	
And on my fonnes, not on this gittles realme.	
Send downe your wafting flames from wrathful fkies,	25
To reauue me and my fonnes the hatefull breath.	
Read, read my Lordes : this is the matter why	
I called ye now to haue your good aduife.	

¶ The Letter from *Dordan* the Coun-  
fellow of the elder Prince.

Eubulus readeth the Letter.

M Y Souereigne Lord, what I am loth to write	
But lotheft am to fee, that I am forced	30
By Leters now to make you vnderftand,	
My Lord Ferrex your eldeft fonne mislead	
By traitours framde of yong vntempred wittes,	
Affembleth force againft your yonger fonne,	
Ne can my counfell yet withdraw the heate	35
And furious pangs of his inflamed head:	

<D.ii.v>

Difdaine

of Gorboduc.

**Difdaine(faith he)of his inheritaunce**

**Armes him to wreke the great pretended wrong**

**With cyuill Swoord vpon his Brothers life,**

40 **If prefent helpe doo not restraine this rage**

**This flame wil waſte your ſonnes,your land & you.**

Your Maieſties faithfull and moſt

humble Subiect *Dordan.*

O **King, appeaſe your gréeſe and ſtay your plaint**

*Aroftus.*

45 **Great is the matter and a wofull caſe:**

**But timely knowledge may bring manly help.**

**Send for them both vnto your prefence here,**

**The reuerence of your honour,age,and ſtate,**

**Your graue aduice, the awe of Fathers name**

50 **Shall quickly knit againe this broken peace:**

**And if in either of my Lordes your Sonnes,**

**Be ſuch vntamed and vnyélding pride**

**As will not bend vnto your noble Heſtes.**

**If Ferrex the elder Sonne can beare no peere,**

55 **Or Porrex not content, aſpires to more**

**Then you him gaue aboue his natiue right:**

**Ioyne with the iuſter ſide, ſo ſhall you force**

**Them to agree:and holde the Land in ſtay.**

**What meaneth this?loe yonder comes in haſte,**

*Eubulus.*

60 **Philander from my Lord your yonger Sonne.**

**The Gods ſend ioyfull newes.**

*Gorboduc.*

**The mighty Ioue**

*Philander.*

**Preferue your Maieſtie,O noble King.**

**Philander, welcome: But how dooth my Sonne?**

*Gorboduc.*

**Your ſonne,fir,liues and healthie I him left:**

*Philander.*

65 **But yet (O King)this want of luſtfull health,**

**Could not be halfe ſo greefeſull to your grace,**

**As theſe moſt wretched tidings that I bring.**

**O heauens yet more?no end of woes to me?**

*Gorboduc,*

**Tindar,O King,came lately from the Courte,**

*Philander.*

70 **Of Ferrex, to my Lord your yonger Sonne,**

**And made reporte of great prepared ſtore**

**D.iiij.<r>**

**Of**

## The Tragedye

**Of warre, and faith that it is wholly ment**  
**Against Porrex for high disdaine that he**  
**Liues now a King and egall in degré**  
**With him, that claimeth to succede the whole,** 75  
**As by due title of discending right:**  
**Porrex is now so fet on flaming fier,**  
**Partely with kindled rage of cruell wrath,**  
**Partely with hope to gaine a Realme therby,**  
**That he in haste prepareth to inuade** 80  
**His Brothers Land, and with vnkindely warre**  
**Threatens the murder of your elder Sonne,**  
**Ne could I him perswade that first he should,**  
**Send to his brother to demaund the cause:**  
**Nor yet to you to stay his hatefull strife,** 85  
**Wherefore fith there no more I can be heard,**  
**I come my selfe now to enforme your Grace:**  
**And to beseeche you as you loue the life**  
**And safetie of your Children and your Realme,**  
**Now to employ your wisdom and your force** 90  
**To stay this mischēefe ere it be too late.**

*Gorboduc.* **Are they in Armes? would he not fend for me?**  
**Is this the honour of a Fathers name?**  
**In vaine we trauaile to affwage their minds,**  
**As if their hartes whome neither Brothers loue** 95  
**Nor Fathers awe, nor Kingdomes care can moue**  
**Our counsell could withdrawe from raging heate,**  
**Ioue flaye them both, and end the curfed Line,**  
**For though perhaps feare of such mighty force**  
**As I my Lords, ioyned with your noble aides** 100  
**Maye yet raise, shall expresse their present heate,**  
**The secret grudge and malice will remaine**  
**The fier not quenched, but kept in close restrainte**  
**Fed still within, breakes forth with double flame**  
**Their death and mine must please the angry Gods.** 105

*Philander.* **Yeelde not, O King, so much to weake dispaire,**  
**Your Sonnes yet liue, and long I trust they shall:**  
**If fates had taken you from earthly life,**

<D.iii.v>

Before

of Gorboduc.

Before beginning of this cyuill strife:

- 110 Perhaps your Sonnes in their vnmaistered youth,  
Lofe from regarde of any liuing wight,  
Would runne on headlong, with vnbrideled Race  
To their owne death and ruine of this Realme.  
But fith the Gods that haue the care for Kinges,  
115 Of thinges and times difpose the order fo  
That in your life this kindled flame breakes fòrth  
While yet your life, your wifdome and your power,  
May ftay the growing mifcheefe, and repreffe  
The fiery blaze of their vnkindled heate  
120 It feemes, and fo ye ought to deeme therof,  
That louing loue hath tempred fo the time  
Of this debate to happen in your daies  
That you yet liuinge may the fame appeaze,  
And adde it to the glory of your latter age  
125 And they your Sonnes may learne to liue in peace.  
Beware (O King) the greateft harme of all,  
Leaft by your wailefull plaints your haftened death  
Yéelde larger røome vnto their growing rage :  
Preferue your life, the onely hope of ftay:  
130 And if your highnes héerin lift to vfe  
Wifdome or force, counsell or Knightly aide:  
Loe we our perfons, powers and liues are yours,  
Vfe vs till death, O King, we are your owne.  
Loe heere the perrill that was erft forfeene  
135 When you (O King) did firft deuide your Land  
And yeelde your prefent raigne vnto your Sonnes.  
But now (O noble Prince) now is no time  
to waile and plaine, and wafte your wofull life,  
Now is the time for prefent gòd aduice,  
140 Sorrow døth darke the iudgement of the wit  
The hart vnbroken and the courage free  
from feeble faintenes of bøoteles difpaire  
Doth either rife to fafetie or renowne,  
By noble valour of vnuanquifhed minde:  
145 Or yet døth perrifh in more happie forte.

*Eubulus.*

<D.iv.r>

Your

## The Tragedye

Your Grace may fend to either of your Sonnes  
 Some one both wife and noble perfonage,  
 Which with good counsell and with weightye name  
 Of Father shall present before their eyes  
 Your heft, your life, your safetie and their owne, 150  
 The present mischeefe of their deadly strife  
 And in the while, affemble you the force  
 Which your commaundement and the speedy hafte,  
 Of all my Lords héere present can prepare:  
 The terrour of your mighty power shall staye 155  
 The rage of both, or yet of one at leaft.

*Nuntius.* O King the greateft gréepe that euer Prince did  
 The euer wofull meffenger did tell, (heare,  
 That euer wretched Land hath feene before  
 I bring to you. Porrex your yonger Sonne 160  
 With fudden force, inuaded hath the Land  
 That you to Ferrex did alotte to rule:  
 And with his owne moft bloody hand he hath  
 His Brother flaine, and dooth poffeffe his Realme.

*Gorboduc.* O heauens fend down the flames of your reuenge, 165  
 Destroy I fay with flafh of wreakefull fier,  
 The traitour Sonne, and then the wretched fire.  
 But let vs goe, that yet perhaps I may,  
 Dye with reuenge, and peaze the hatefull Gods.

*Chorus.* The luft of Kingdomes knowes no facred faith,  
 No rule of reafon, no regarde of right:  
 No kindly loue, no feare of heauens wrath:  
 But with contempt of Gods, and mans defpite,  
 Through bloody slaughter dooth prepare the waies, 5  
 To fatall Scepter and accursed reigne.  
 The fonnes fo loathes the Fathers lingring daies,  
 Ne dreads his hand in Brothers bloude to ftaine  
 O wretched Prince, ne dooft thou yet recorde,  
 The yet freffe Murthers done within the Lands 10  
 Of thy forefathers, when the cruell Swørd  
 Bereft Morgan his life with Cozins hand?  
 Thus fatall plagues purfue the guiltie race

<D.iv.v>

Whofe



of Gorboduc.

**Whose murderous hand imbrued with giltles bloud**

- 15 **Askes vengeance before the heauens face,  
With endles mischiefes on the curfed brood,  
The wicked child this brings to wofull Sire,  
The mournefull plaints to waft his weary life:  
Thus dœ the cruell flames of ciuill fire**
- 20 **Destroy the parted reigne with hatefull strife.  
And hence døth fpring the well from which døth floe,  
The dead black fstreams of mournings,plaints and woe.**

¶ The Order and fignification of the dumbe  
*fhewe before the fourth Acte.*

- ¶ Firft the Mufike of Howeboies began to playe , during  
which there came foorth from vnder the Stage, as though  
out of Hell three Furies, *Alecto*, *Megera*, and *Ctefiphone*,  
clad in blacke garments fprinkled with bloud and flames,
- 5 their bodies girt with Snakes , their heads fpred with Ser-  
pents in fteed of haire,the one bearing in hir hand a Snake  
the other a whip,and the third a burning firebrand : eche  
driuing before them a King and a Queene , which moo-  
ued by Furies,vnnaturally had flaine their owne children.
- 10 The names of the Kings and Queenes were thefe, *Tanta-  
lus*,*Medea*, *Athamas*, *Ino*, *Cambifes*, *Althea*, after that the  
Furies and thefe had paffed about the Stage thrife,they de-  
parted,and then the Mufike ceafed : heereby was fignified  
the vnnaturall murders to followe, that is to faye, *Porrex*
- 15 flaine by his owne mother . And of King *Gorboduc*, and  
Queene *Viden*,killed by their owne Subiects.

Actus quartus. Scena prima.  
*Viden fola.*

**W Hy fhould I liue and linger foorth my time  
In longer life to double my diftreffe?  
O mée moft wofull wight whome no mishap  
Long ere this day could haue bereaued hence.**

**E.<i.r>**

**Might**

## The Tragedye

Might not these hands by fortune or by fate 5  
Haue pearft this breft and life with iron reft,  
Or in this pallace here where I fo long  
Haue fpent my daies,could not that happie houre  
Once,once haue hapt in which these hugie frames  
With death by fall might haue oppreffed me, 10  
Or fhould not this moft hard and cruell foyle,  
So oft where I haue preft my wretched fteps,  
Sontimes had ruth of myne accurfed life,  
To rend in twaine and fwallow me therein.  
So had my bones poffeffed now in peace 15  
Their happie graue within the clofed ground,  
And greedie wormes had gnawne this pined hart  
Without my feeling paine : fo fhould not now  
This liuing breft remaine the ruthefull tombe  
Wherein my hart yeelden to death is graued: 20  
Nor driery thoughts with pangs of pining grieve  
My dolefull mind hath not afflicted thus.  
O my beloued fonne : O my fwéet child,  
My deare Ferrex,my ioy,my liues delight.  
Is my welbeloued fonne,is my fweet child, 25  
My deare Ferrex,my ioy,my liues delight  
Murdred with cruell death?O hatefull wretch,  
O hainous traitour both to heauen and earth,  
Thou Porrex,thou this damned déed haft wrought,  
Thou Porrex,thou fhalt dearely aby the fame, 30  
Traitour to kinne and kinde,to fire and me,  
To thine owne flefh,and traitour to thy felfe,  
The Gods on thée in hell fhall wreke their wrath,  
And heere in earth this hand fhall take reuenge  
On thée Porrex,thou falfe and caitife wight, 35  
If after bloud fo eager were thy thirft,  
And murderous mind had fo poffeffed thee,  
If fuch hard hart of rocke and ftonie flint  
Liued in thy breft,that nothing els could like  
Thy cruell tyrants thought but death and bloud, 40  
Wild fauage beafts might not the flaughter ferue

<E.i.v>

To

of Gorboduc.

- To féede thy gréedy will, and in the middest  
Of their entrailes to ftaine thy deadly handes  
With blød deferued, and drinke thereof thy fill:  
45 Or if nought els but death and blød of man  
Might pleafe thy luft, could none in Britaine land  
Whofe hart betorne out of his louing breft  
With thine own hand, or worke what death thou wouldft  
Suffife to make a facrifice to appeafe  
50 That deadly minde and murderous thought in thée?  
But he who in the felfe fame wombe was wrapped  
Where thou in difmall houre receiuedft life?  
Or if needes, néedes this hand might flaughter make,  
Mightft thou not haue reacht a mortall wound  
55 And with thy fword haue pierfed this curfed wombe  
That the accursed Porrex brought to light?  
And giuen me a iuft reward therfore.  
So Ferrex, if fweet life might haue enioyed  
And to his aged father comfort brought,  
60 With fome yong fonne in whome they both might liue.  
But wherevnto wafte I this ruthfull fpeech  
To thée that hath thy brothers bloud thus fhed?  
Shall I ftill thinke that from this wombe thou fprøong?  
That I thee bare? or take thee for my fonne?  
65 No traitour, no : I thee refufe for mine,  
Murderer I thee renounce, thou art not mine:  
Neuer, O wretch, this wombe conceiued thee,  
Nor neuer bode I painefull throwes for thee:  
Chaungeling to me thou art, and not my childe,  
70 Nor to no wight that fparke of pittie knewe,  
Rutheles vnkind, monfter of Natures worke,  
Thou neuer fuckt the milke of womans breft,  
But from thy birth the cruell Tigres teates  
Haue nurfed, nor yet of flefh and bloud  
75 Formed is thy hart, but of hard iron wrought.  
And wilde and defert wøds bred thee to life:  
But canft thou hope to fcape my iuft reuenge?  
Or that thefe hands will not be wrekte on thee?

E.ij.<r>

Doeft

## The Tragedye

Dooest thou not knowe that Ferrex mother liues  
That loued him more dearely than her selfe? 80  
And dooth she liue, and is not venged on thee?

Actus quartus.      Scena fecunda.  
*Gorboduc. Aroftus. Eubulus. Porrex. Marcella.*

<p><i>Gorboduc.</i></p>	<p><b>W E meruaile much whereto this lingering staie Falles out so long : Porrex vnto our Court By order of our Letters is returned, And Eubulus receiued from vs by heft At his arriual heere to giue him charge Before our prefence streight to make repaire, And yet we heare no word whereof he staies.</b></p>	<p>5</p>
<p><i>Aroftus.</i></p>	<p><b>Lo where he comes and Eubulus with him.</b></p>	
<p><i>Eubulus.</i></p>	<p><b>According to your highnes heft to me Heere haue I Porrex brought euen in such fort As from his wearied horfe he did alight, For that your Grace did will such haft therein.</b></p>	<p>10</p>
<p><i>Gorboduc.</i></p>	<p><b>We like and praise this speedie will in you To worke the thing that to your charge we gaue. Porrex, if we so farre should fwarue from kinde, And from these bounds which lawes of nature sets, As thou haft done by vile and wretched deede In cruell murder of thy brothers life, Our present hand could stay no longer time, But streight should bath this blade in blood of thee, As iust reuenge of thy detested crime.</b></p>	<p>15</p>
	<p><b>No, we should not offend the lawe of kinde If now this sword of ours did slay thee heere: For thou haft murdered him whose heinous death Euen natures force dooth moue vs to reuenge By blood againe : But iustice forceth vs To measure Death for Death, thy due deferte, Yet fithens thou art our childe, and fith as yet In this hard case what word thou canst alledge For thy defence, by vs hath not bene heard,</b></p>	<p>20</p>
		<p>25</p>
		<p>30</p>

<E.ii.v>

**We**

of Gorboduc.

We are content to staye our will for that  
Which iustice bids vs presently to woorke:  
And giue thee leaue to vse thy spéech at full  
If ought thou haue to laye for thine excuse.

35 Neither O King, I can or will deny

*Porrex.*

But that this hand from Ferrex life hath reft:  
Which fact how much my dolefull hart dooth waile  
Oh would it mought as full appeare to fight  
As inward gréeffe dooth poure it foorth to me,

40 So yet perhaps if euer ruthefull hart

Melting in teares within a manly breast,  
Through déepe repentance of his bloody fact,  
If euer gréeffe, if euer wofull m<sup>en</sup>  
Might moue regreite with sorow of his faulte,

45 I thinke the torment of my mournfull case

Knownen to your grace, as I doo feele the fame,  
Woulde force euen wrath her selfe to pittie me.  
But as the water troubled with the mudde  
Shewes not the face which els the eye should fee:

50 Euen so your Irefull minde with stirred thought,

Cannot so perfectly discern my cause,  
But this vnhappy, amongst so many heapes  
I must content me with, most wretched man,  
That to my selfe I must referre my woe

55 In pining thoughtes of mine accursed fact:

Sithence I may not shewe héere my smallest gréeffe  
Such as it is, and as my breast endures,  
Which I esteeme the greatest miserie  
Of all mishappes that Fortune now can fend,

60 Not that I rest in hope with plainte and teares

Should purchase life: for to the Gods I clepe  
For true recorde of this my faithfull speech,  
Neuer this hart shall haue the thoughtfull dread  
To dye the death that by your graces doome

65 By iust defarte, shall be pronounced to me:

Nor neuer shall this tongue once spend this spéech,  
Pardon to craue, or feeke by fute to liue:

E.ijj.<r>

I meane

## The Tragedye

I meane not this as though I were not toucht  
 With care of dreadfull death,or that I helde  
 Life in contempt: but that I knowe,the minde 70  
 Stoupes to no dread,although the flesh be fraile,  
 And for my guilte,I yéelde the fame fo great  
 As in my felfe I finde a feare to fue  
 For graunt of life.

*Gorboduc.* In vaine,O wretch thou shewest  
 A wofull hart , Ferrex now lyes in graue, 75  
 Slaine by thy hand.

*Porrex.* Yet this,O Father, heare:

And then I ende: Your Maieftie well knowes,  
 That when my Brother Ferrex and my felfe  
 By your owne heft were ioyned in gouernaunce  
 Of this your Graces Realme of *Brittaine* Land 80

I neuer fought nor trauailed for the fame,  
 Nor by my felfe,or by no freend I wrought,  
 But from your highnes will alone it fprung,  
 Of your moft gracious goodnes bent to me,  
 But how my Brothers hart euen than repined, 85

With fwollen difdaine againft mine egall rule  
 Seeing that Realme,which by difcent fould growe  
 Wholy to him, allotted halfe to me?

Euen in your highneffe Courte he now remaines,  
 And with my Brother then in neereft place 90  
 Who can recorde, what proöfe therof was shewde

And how my Brothers enuious hart appéerde  
 Yet I that iudged it my parte to feeke  
 His fauour and good will, and loth to make  
 Your highneffe know the thing which fould haue brought 95

Gréefe to your Grace,and your offence to him,  
 Hoping by earneft fute fould fone haue wonne,  
 A louing hart within a Brothers breft  
 Wrought in that forte that for a pledge of loue  
 And faithfull hart,he gaue to me his hand. 100

This made me think, that he had banifhed quite  
 All rancour from his thought, and bare to me

<E.iii.v>

Such

of Gorboduc.

Such harty loue, as I did owe to him:

But after once we left your Graces Court

105 And from your highneffe prefence liued aparte,  
This egall rule ftill, ftill did grudge him fo,  
That now thofe enuious fparkes which erft lay rakte  
In liuing Cinders of diffembling breft,  
Kindled fo farre within his hartes difdaine

110 That longer could he not refraine from proffe  
Of fecret practife to depriue my life  
By Poyfons force, and had bereft me fo,  
If mine owne Seruant hired to this fact  
And moued by troth with hate to worke the fame,

115 If time had not bewraied it vnto me:  
When thus I fawe the knot of loue vnknit,  
All honeft League and faithfull promife broke,  
The Lawe of kinde and troth thus rent in twaine,  
His hart on mifcheefe fet, and in his breft

120 Black treafon hid then, then did I difpaire  
That euer time could winne him freend to me,  
Then faw I how he fmiled with flaying Knife  
Wrapped vnder cloake, then faw I deepe deceite  
Lurke in his face and death prepared for me:

125 Euen nature moued me then to holde my life  
More déere to me then his, and bad this hand,  
Since by his life my death muft néedes enfue,  
And by his death my life to be preferued:  
To fhed his bloud, and feeke my fafetie fo,

130 And wifdome willed me without protract  
In fpeedy wife to put the fame in vre.  
Thus haue I tolde the caufe that moued me  
To worke my Brothers death and fo I yeelde  
My life, my death to iudgement of your grace.

135 Oh cruell wight, fhould any caufe preuaile  
To make the ftaine thy handes with brothers blood  
But what of thee we will refolue to doo,  
Shall yet remaine vnknown: Thou in the meane,  
Shalt from our royall prefence banifhed be

*Gorboduc.*

<E.iv.r>

Vntill

## The Tragedye

	Vntill our Princely pleafure furdur fhall	140
	To thee be fhewed, departe therfore our fight	
	Accurfed childe. What cruell deftiny?	
	What froward fate hath fortid vs this chaunce	
	That euen in thofe,where we fhould comfort finde,	
	Where our delight now in our aged daies	145
	Should reft and be,euen there our only gréeffe	
	And deepeft forrowes to abridge our life,	
	Moft pining cares and deadly thoughts d∞ graue.	
<i>Aroftus.</i>	Your Grace fhould now in thefe graue yeeres of yours	
	Haue found ere this the price of mortall loyes,	150
	How fhorte they be,how fading héere in earth	
	How full of change,how brittle our eftate,	
	Of nothing fure,faue only of the Death,	
	To whome both man and all the worlde d∞th owe	
	Their end at laft,neither fhall natures power	155
	In other forte againft your hart preuaile,	
	Then as the naked hand whose ftroke affaies	
	The armed breaft where force d∞th light in vaine.	
<i>Gorboduc.</i>	Many can yeelde right graue and fage aduice	
	Of patient fprite to others wrapped in woe,	160
	And can in fpeech both rule and conquer kinde,	
	Who if by pr∞fe,they might feele natures force,	
	Would fhew themfelues men as they are indeede,	
	Which now will needes be Gods:but what d∞th meane	
	The forry cheere that heere d∞th come?	165
<i>Marcella.</i>	Oh where is ruthe? // where is pittie now?	
	Whether is gentle hart and mercie fled?	
	Are they exiled out of our ftony breaftef	
	Neuer to make returne? is all the worlde	
	Drowned in blood,and funcke in crueltie?	170
	If not in women mercy may be found,	
	If not (alas) within the Mothers breft	
	To her owne childe,to her owne flefh and bloud	
	If ruthe be banifhed thence,if pittie there	
	May haue no place,if there no gentle hart	175
	D∞ liue and dwell,where fhould we feeke it then?	

<E.iv.v>

Madam



of Gorboduc.

Madam ( alas) what meanes your wofull tale?

*Gorboduc.*

O filly woman I,why to this howre,

*Marcella.*

Haue kind and fortune thus deferred my breath?

180 That I should liue to fée this dolefull daye:

Will euer wight beléeue that such hard hart

Could reft within the cruell Mothers breaft,

With her owne hand to flaye her onely Sonne?

But out (alas) thefe eyes behelde the fame,

185 They faw the driery fight, and are become

Moft ruthefull recordes of the bloody fact.

Porrex,alas,is by his Mother flaine,

And with her hand a wofull thing to tell,

While flumbring on his carefull bed he reftes,

190 His hart ftalde in with knife is reft of life.

O Eubulus,oh draw this Swoord of ours,

*Gorboduc,*

And pierce this hart with fpéede, O hatefull light,

O loathfome life,O fweete and welcome Death,

Deere Eubulus woorke this we thee beféeche.

195 Patient your Grace,perhaps he liueth yet,

*Eubulus.*

With wound receiued,but not of certaine death.

O let vs than repaire vnto the place,

*Gorboduc.*

And fee if that Porrex,or thus be flaine.

Alas he liueth not,it is too true,

*Marcella.*

200 That with thefe eyes of him a peereles Prince,

Sonne to a King,and in the flower of youth,

Euen with a twinke a fencelès flock I faw.

O damned deede.

*Aroftus.*

But heare this ruthefull end.

*Marcella.*

The noble Prince pierft with the fodaine wounds

205 Out of his wretched flumber haftilie ftart,

Whofe ftrength now failing ftreight he ouerthrew,

When in the fall his eyes euen now vnclofed

Beheld the Quéene,and cryed to her for helpe,

We then,alas,the Ladies which that time

210 Did there attend, féeing that heinous deede,

And hearing him oft call the wretched name

Of mother,and to crie to her for aide,

F.<i.r>

Whofe

## The Tragedye

Whofe direfull hand gaue him the mortall wound  
Pitieng alas(for nought els could we doo)  
His ruffull ende,ranne to the wofull bed 215  
Dispoyled ftreight his breft,and all we might  
Wiped in vaine with napkins next at hande,  
The fodaine ftreames of bloud that flufhed faft  
Out of the gaping wound : O what a looke,  
O what a ruthfull ftedfaft eye me thought 220  
He fixed vpon my face, which to my death  
Will neuer parte from me, when with a braide  
A déepe fet figh he gaue,and therewithall  
Clafping his hands,to heauen he caft his fight,  
And ftreight pale death preffing within his face 225  
The flying ghofth his mortall corps forfooke.

*Aroftus.* Neuer did age bring forth fo vile a facte.  
O hard and cruell hap,that thus affigned  
Vnto fo worthie a wight fo wretched ende,  
But moft hard cruell hart that could confent 230  
To lend the hatefull deftenies that hande,  
By which, alas,fo heynous crime was wrought,  
O Quéene of Adamant,Omarble breft,  
If not the fauour of his comely face,  
If not his princely cheare and countenance, 235  
His valiaunt actiue armes,his manly breft,  
If not his faire and féemely perfonage,  
His noble limmes in fuch proportion caft,  
As would haue wrapped a filly womans thought.  
If this might not haue moued the bloodie hart, 240  
And that moft cruell hand the wretched weapon  
Euen to let fall,and kift him in the face,  
With teares for ruth to reauue fuch one by death  
Should nature yet confent to flay her fonne?  
O mother , thou to murder thus thy childe, 245  
Euen loue with iuftice muft with lightning flames  
From heauen fend downe fome ftraunge reuenge on thée.  
Ah noble Prince,how oft haue I beheld  
Thee mounted on thy fierce and trampling fteede,

<F.i.v>

Shining

of Gorboduc.

250 Shining in armour bright before the Tilte,  
And with thy mistriffe fléeue tide on thy helme,  
And charge thy staffe to please thy Ladies eye,  
That bowed the head peece of thy frendly foe?  
How oft in armes on horfe to bend the mace,  
255 How oft in armes on foot to breake the fworde,  
Which neuer now these eyes may see againe.

Madame, alas, in vaine these plaints are shed,  
Rather with me depart, and helpe to affwage  
The thoughtfull griefes that in the aged king  
260 Muft needes by nature growe by death of this  
His onely sonne, whome he did hold so deare.

*Aroftus.*

What wight is that which sawe that I did see,  
And could refraine to waile with plaint and teares,  
Not I, alas, that hart is not in me,  
265 But let vs go, for I am greeued anewe,  
To call to minde the wretched fathers woe.

*Marcella.*

When greedie lust in royall feate to reigne  
Hath reft all care of Gods and eke of men,  
And cruell hart, wrath, treason and difdaine  
Within the ambitious breft are lodged then,  
5 Behold how mischief wide her selfe displays,  
And with the brothers hand the brother flayes.

*Chorus.*

When blood thus shed dooth stain this heauens face,  
Crying to Ioue for vengeance of the deede,  
The mightie God euen moueth from his place  
10 With wrath to wreke, then send he forth with speede  
The dreadful furies, daughters of the night,  
With serpents girt, carrying the whip of ire,  
With haire of stinging snakes, and shining bright  
With flames and blood, and with a brand of fire:  
15 These for reuenge of wretched murder done,  
Dooth cause the mother kill her onely sonne.

Bloud asketh blood, and death muft death requite,  
Ioue by his iust and euerlasting doome  
Iustly hath euer so requited it :  
20 These times before record, and times to come

F.ij.<r>

Shall

The Tragedye

Shall find it true, and so dooth present pröfe,  
Present before our eies for our behöfe.

O happie wight that suffers not the fnare  
Of murderous mind to tangle him in blood:  
And happie he that can in time beware  
By others harmes, and turne it to his good.  
But woe to him that fearing not to offend,  
Dooth ferue his luft, and will not fee the end.

25

¶ The Order and signification of the dumbe  
*shewe before the fift Acte.*

¶ Firft the Drummes and Fluites began to founde, dvring  
which there came forth vpon the Stage a companie of  
Harquebufhers and of armed men all in order of battaile.  
Thefe after their peece discharged, and that the armed  
men had three times marched about the Stage, departed, 5  
and then the Drummes and Fluites did ceafe. Heereby  
was signified Tumultes, Rebellions, Armes, and ciuill  
warres to followe, as fell in the Realme of great *Britayne*,  
which by the space of fiftie yeares and more continued  
in ciuill warre betweene the Nobilitie after the death 10  
of King *Gorboduc*, and of his Iffues, for want of cer-  
taine limitation in the fuccefsion of the Crowne, till  
the time of *Dunwallo Molmutius*, who reduced the Land  
to Monarchie.

Actus quintus. Scena prima.

*Clotyn. Mandud. Gwenard. Fergus. Eubulus.*

*Clotyn.* D Id euer age bring forth such tyrants harts,  
The brother hath bereft the brothers life,  
The mother she hath dyde her cruell hands  
In blood of her owne sonne, and now at laft  
The people loe forgetting truth and loue, 5  
Contemning quite both lawe and loyall hart,  
Euen they haue flaine their foueraigne Lord and Quéene.

5

<F.ii.v>

Shall

of Gorboduc.

Shall this their traiterous crime vnpunished reft

*Mandud.*

Euen yet they ceafe not carried out with rage,

10 In their rebellious routes, to threaten still

A new blood fhedde vnto the Princes Kinne

To flaye them all, and to vpröote the race

Both of the King and Quéene, fo are they moued

With Porrex death, wherein they fallfely charge

15 The guilteleffe King without defart at all.

And traiteroufly haue murdered him therfore

And eke the Quéene.

Shall Subiects dare with force

*Gwenard.*

To wörk reuenge vpon their Princes fact?

Admit the wörft that may: as fure in this

20 The déede was foule, the Quéene to flaye her fonne:

Shall yet the Subiect féeke to take the Swöord?

Arife againft his Lord, and flaye his King?

O wretched ftate where thofe rebellious hartes

Are not rent out euen from their liuing breaftef

25 And with the body throwen vnto the Fowles

As Carrion föde, for terrour of the reft.

There can no punifhment be thought too great

*Fergus.*

For this fo gréeuous crime, let fpéede therfore

Be vfed therin for it behoueth fo.

30 Ye all my Lordes I fee confent in one,

*Eubulus.*

And I as one confent with ye in all:

I holde it more then néede with the fharpeft Lawe,

to punifhe the tumultuous bloody rage:

For nothing more may fhake the common ftate,

35 then fufferance of vproares without redrefe:

Wherby how fome Kingdomes of mighty power

After great Conquefts made, and flourifhing

In fame and wealth haue beene to ruine brought,

I pray to Ioue that we may rather waile

40 Such hap in them, then witnes in our felues

Eke fully with the Duke my minde agréés

that no caufe ferues, wherby the Subiect may

Call to account the döinges of his Prince,

F.iiij.<r>

Much

## The Tragedye

Much leffe in blōd by fwoord to woorke reuenge  
No more then may the hand cut of the head, 45  
In Acte nor ſpeech,no: not in ſecret thought  
The Subiect may rebell againſt his Lord  
Or Iudge of him that fits in *Cæſars* Seate.  
With grudging minde dōo damne thoſe Hemiflikes,  
Though Kinges forget to gouerne as they ought, 50  
Yet Subiects muſt obey as they are bound:  
But now my Lordes before ye farder wade  
Or ſpend your ſpéech, what ſharpe reuenge ſhall fall  
By iuſtice plague on theſe rebellious wights,  
Me thinkes ye rather ſhould firſt ſearche the way 55  
By which in time the rage of this vproare,  
Mought be reſſeſſed,and theſe great tumults ceaſed  
Euen yet the life of *Brittaine* Land dōoth hang,  
In Traitors Ballaunce of vnequall weight,  
Think not my Lords the death of Gorboduc 60  
Nor yet Videnæs blood will ceaſe their rage:  
Euen our owne liues,our wiues and Children,  
Our Cuntry déereſt of all in danger ſtandes,  
Now to be ſpoyled,now,now made defolate,  
And by our felues a conqueſt tōo enfue: 65  
For giue once fweye vnto the peoples luſtes,  
To ruſh fōorth on,and ſtaye them not in time,  
And as the ſtreame that rowleth downe the hill,  
So wil they headlong run with raging thoughtes  
From bloud to bloud,from miſchéefe vnto moe, 70  
To ruine of the Realme,themſelues and all,  
So giddie are the common peoples mindes,  
So glad of change,more wauering then the Sea,  
Ye fée(my Lordes)what ſtrength theſe Rebels haue  
What hugie number is aſſembled ſtill, 75  
For though the traiterous fact, for which they roſe,  
Be wrought and dōone,yet lodge they ſtill in féeelde  
So that how farre their furies yet will ſtretch.  
Great cauſe we haue to dread,that we may féeke  
By preſent Battaile to reſſeſſe their power, 80

<F.iii.v>

Spéede

of Gorboduc.

Spée de muft we vfe to leuie force therfore,  
For either they forthwith will mifchéeefe woorke,  
Or their rebellious roares forthwith muft ceafe:  
Thefe violent thinges may haue no lafting londe  
85 Let vs therfore vfe this for prefent helpe.  
Perfwade by gentle fpéech , and offer grace  
With gifte of pardon faue vnto the cheefe.  
And that vpon condicion that forthwith  
They yeelde the Captaines of their enterprife,  
90 To beare fuch guerdon of their traiterous fact  
As may be both due vengeance to themfelues,  
And holefome terrour to pofteritie.  
This fhall I think: flatter the greateft parte,  
That now are holden with defire of home,  
95 Wearied in féelde with colde of Winters nightes,  
And fome(no doubt)ftriken with dread of Lawe  
When this is once proclaimed, it fhall make  
The Captaines to miftruft the multitude,  
Whofe fafetie bids them to betraye their heads,  
100 And fo much more becaufe the rafcall routes,  
In thinges of great and perilous attemptes,  
Are neuer truftie to the noble race.  
And while we treat and ftande on tearmes of grace  
We fhall both ftay their furies rage the while,  
105 And eke gaine time,whofe only helpe fuffifeth  
Withouten warre to vanquifhe Rebells power  
In the meane while,make you in readines,  
Such band of Horfemen as ye maye prepare:  
Horfemen you know, are not the Comons ftrengh  
110 But are the force and ftore of noble men  
Wherby the vnchofen and vnarmed forte  
Of skillifh Rebelles,whome none other power,  
But number makes to be of dreadfull force,  
With foddeine brunt may quickly be oppreft,  
115 And if this gentle meane of proffered grace  
With ftubborne hartes cannot fo farre auaille  
As to affwage their desperate courages:

<F.iv.r>

Then

## The Tragedie

Then doo I wifh fuch flaughter to be made,  
 As present age and eke posteritie  
 May be adrad with horroure of reuenge, 120  
 That iuftly then fhall on thefe Rebelles fall:  
 This is my Lordes the fumme of mine aduife.

*Clotin.* Neither this cafe admittes debate at large,  
 And though it did: this fpéeche that hath béene fayde,  
 Hath well abridged the tale I would haue tolde: 125  
 Fully with Eubulus doo I confent  
 In all that he hath faide: and if the fame  
 To you my Lordes, may féeme for beft aduife,  
 I wifh that it fhould ftraight be put in vre.

*Mandud.* My Lords than let vs prefently departe 130  
 And follow this that liketh vs fo well.

*Fergus.* If euer time to gaine a kingdome héere  
 Were offred man, now it is offred me:  
 The Realme is reft both of their King and Quéene,  
 The offspring of the Prince is flaine and dead, 135  
 No iffue now remaines, the Heire vnknowne,  
 The People are in armes and mutinies,  
 The Nobles they are bufied how to ceafe  
 Thefe great rebellious tumultes and vproares.  
 And *Brittaine* Land now deferte left alone 140

Amid thefe broyles vncertaine where to reft,  
 Offers her felfe vnto that noble hart  
 that will or dare purfue to beare her Crowne:  
 Shall I that am the Duke of *Albanye*  
 Difcended from that line of noble bloud, 145  
 Which hath fo long flourifhed in woorthy fame  
 Of valiant hartes, fuch as in noble Breafte  
 Of right fhould reft aboue the bafer forte,  
 Refufe to aduenture life to winne a Crowne?  
 Whom fhall I finde enemies that will withstand 150  
 My fact héerin, if I attempt by Armes  
 To feeke the Fame now in thefe times of broyle,  
 Thefe Dukes power can hardly well appeafe  
 The people that already are in Armes.

<F.iv.v>

But



of Gorboduc.

- 155 But if perhaps my force be once in field,  
Is not my strength in power aboue the best  
Of all these Lords now left in Britaine land.  
And though they should match me with power of men:  
Yet doubtfull is the chaunce of batailles ioyned,  
160 If victors of the field we may depart,  
Ours is the sceptor then of great Britaine,  
If flaine amid the plaine this bodie be,  
Mine enemies yet fhall not denie me this,  
But that I died giuing the noble charge  
165 To hazard life for conquest of a Crowne.  
Forthwith therefore will I in poft depart  
To *Albanye*,and raife in armour there  
All power I can : and here my secrete frends  
By secrete practife fhall follicite still  
170 To feeke to winne to me the peoples harts.

Actus quintus. Scena fecunda.

*Eubulus.Clotyn.Mandud.Gwenard.Aroftus.Nuntius.*

- O Ioue,how are these peoples harts abufde?  
What blind furie thus headlong carries them?  
That though fo many bookes,fo many rolles  
Of auncient time of record what greeuous plagues  
5 Light on these Rebels aye,and though fo oft  
Their eares haue heard their aged fathers tell  
What iuft reward these traitours still receiue.  
Yea though themfelues haue seene deepe death and bloud  
By ftrangling cord and flaughter of the fword  
10 To fuch affignde,yet can they not beware:  
Yet can they not ftay their rebellious hands,  
But suffering too fowle treason to diftaine  
Their wretched minds,forget their loyall hart,  
Reiect all truth,and rife againft their prince,  
15 A ruthfull cafe, that thofe whom duties bound,  
Whom grafted Lawe by nature,truth and faith  
Bound to preferue their Country and their King,  
Borne to defend their common welth and prince,

*Eubulus.*

G.<i.r>

Euen

## The Tragedye

Euen they should giue consent thus to subuert  
The Britaine land, and from the wombe should bring 20  
(O native foile) those, that will néedes deftroy  
And ruine thee and eke themselues in fine:  
For lo, when once the Duke had offered Grace  
Of pardon fweet (the multitude misfled  
By traiterous fraud of their vngratious heads) 25  
One fort that fawe the daungerous successe  
Of stubborne standing in rebellious warre,  
And knew the difference of princes power,  
From headles number of tumultuous routes,  
Whom common countries care and priuate feare 30  
Taught to repent the terroure of their rage,  
Laid hands vpon the Captaines of their band,  
And brought them bound vnto the mightie Dukes,  
Another fort not trusting yet so well  
The truth of pardon, or mistrusting more 35  
Their owne offence then that they should conceiue  
Such hope of pardon for so fowle misdéede:  
Or for that they their Captaines could not yéeld,  
Who fearing to be yéelded fled before,  
Stole home by filence of the secrete night. 40  
The third vnhappy and vnragd fort  
Of desperate harts, who staid in princes bloud,  
From traiterous furour could not be withdrawne  
By loue, by lawe, by grace ne yet by feare,  
By proffered life, ne yet by threatened death, 45  
With minds hopeles of life, dreadles of death,  
Careles of country, and aweles of God:  
Stode bent to fight as Furies did them moue  
With valiant death to close their traiterous life:  
These all by power of horsemen were opprest, 50  
And with reuenging sword flaine in the field,  
Or with the strangling cord hangd on the trees,  
Where yet the carren Carcafes döo proche  
The fruits that rebels reape of their vproars,  
And of the murder of their sacred prince, 55  
But loe, where döo approach the noble Dukes,

<G.i.v>

By

of Gorboduc.

By whom thefe tumults haue béene thus appeafde.

I thinke the world will now at length beware

*Clotyn.*

And feare to put on armes againft their prince.

60 If not : thofe traiterous harts that dō rebell,

*Mandud*

Let them behold the wide and hugie fields

With bloud and bodie fpred with rebels flaine,

The luftie trees clothed with corpfes dead

That ftrangled with the cord dō hang therein.

65 A iuft reward fuch as all times before

*Aroftus.*

Haue euer lotted to thofe wretched folkes.

But what meanes he that commeth here fo faft?

*Gwenard.*

My Lords ,as dutie and my troth doth mōue,

*Nuntius.*

And of my Country worke and care in me,

70 That if the fpendig of my breath auaile

To dō the feruice that my hart defires,

I would not fhun to imbrace a prefent death,

So haue I now in that wherein I thought

My trauaile might perfourme fome good effect

75 Ventred my life to bring thefe tidings heere.

Fergus the mightie Duke of Albany

Is nowe in armes,and lodgeth in the field

With twentie thoufand men,hither he bends

His fpéedie march,and minds to inuade the crowne,

80 Daily he gathereth ftrength,and fpreads abroad

That to this Realme no certaine heire remaines,

That Britaine land is left without a guide,

That he the fcepter feeke, for nothing els

But to preferue the people and the land

85 Which now remaine as fhippe without a fterne:

Loe this is that which I haue hereto faid.

Is this his faith? and fhall he falfly thus

*Clotyn.*

Abufe the vauntage of vnhappy times?

O wretched Land,if his outrageous pride,

90 His cruell and vntempred wilfulnes,

His déepe diffembling fhewes of falfe pretence

Should once attaine the Crowne of Britaine land,

Let vs my Lords,with timely force refift

The new attempt of this our common foe,

G.ii.<r>

As

## The Tragedye

	As we would quench the flames of common fire.	95
<i>Mandud.</i>	<p>Though we remaine without a certaine prince          To weeld the realme,or guide the wandring rule,          Yet now the common mother of vs all,          Our natiue lande,our country that containes          Our wiues,children,kindred,our felues and all</p>	100
	<p>That euer is or may be deare to man,          Cries vnto vs to helpe our felues and her:          Let vs aduaunce our powers to repreffe          This growing foe of all our liberties.</p>	
<i>Gwenard.</i>	<p>Yea let vs fo my Lords with haftie fpéede,          And ye(O Gods)fende vs the welcome death,          To fhed our bloud in field,and leaue vs not          In lothfome life to linger out our liues,          To fee the hugie heapes of thefe mifhaps,          That now roll downe vpon the wretched lande</p>	110
	<p>Where emptie place of princely gouernaunce,          No certaine ftay now left of doubtles heire,          Thus leaue this guideles realme an open pray          To endleffe ftormes and wafte of ciuill warre.</p>	
	<p>That ye,my Lords,doo fo agré in one          To faue your country from the violent raigne          And wrongfully vfurped tyrannie          Of him that threatens conqueft of you all,          To faue your realme,and in this realme your felues          From forraine thraldome of fo proude a prince,</p>	120
	<p>Much doo I praife,and I befeech the Gods          With happie honour to requite it you.          But,O my Lords,fith now the heauens wrath          Hath reft this lande the iffue of their prince:          Sith of the bodie of our late foueraigne Lord</p>	125
	<p>Remaines no mo,fince the yong kings be flaine,          And of the title of the defcended Crowne          Vncertainly the diuers mindes doo thinke          Euen of the learned forte,and more vncertainlie          Will partiall fancie and affection deeme:</p>	130
	<p>But moft vncertainly will climbing pride          And hope of reigne withdraw from fundrie parts</p>	

<G.ii.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

- The doubtfull right and hopefull luft to reigne,  
When once this noble seruice is atchiued  
135 For *Brittaine* Land the Mother of ye all,  
When once ye haue with armed force reпреft,  
The proud attempts of this *Albanian* Prince,  
That threatens thraldome to your Natiue Land,  
When ye fhall vanquifhers returne from feelde  
140 And finde the Princely ftate an open pray,  
to gréedy luft and to vfurping power,  
Then,then(my Lordes)if euer kindly care  
Of ancient honour of your auncestours,  
Of prefent wealth and nobleffe of your ftokes:  
145 Yea of the liues and fafetie yet to come  
Of your deere wiues,your Children and your felues  
Might moue your noble hartes with gentle ruthe,  
Then, then haue pittie on the torne eftate,  
Then helpe to falue the well neere hopeles fore  
150 Which ye fhall dō if you your felues withholdе  
The fleaing knife from your owne mothers throate,  
Her fhall you faue, and you, and yours in her,  
If ye fhall all with one affent forbearе  
Once to lay hand, or take vnto your felues,  
155 The Crowne by colour of pretended right:  
Or by what other meanes fo euer it be,  
Till firft by common counfell of you all  
In Parliament the Regall Diadem,  
Be fet in certaine place of gouernaunce,  
160 In which your Parliament and in your choife,  
Prefer the right(my Lordes)without respect  
Of ftrength of freendes,or whatfoeuer caufe  
That may fet forward any others parte,  
For right will laft,and wrong can not endure,  
165 Right meane I his or hers,vpon whose name  
The people reft by meane of Natiue line,  
Or by the vertue of fome former Lawe,  
Alreadie made their title to aduaunce:  
Such one(my Lords)let be your chofen King,  
170 Such one fo borne within your natiue Land

G.iiij.<r>

Such

# The Tragedye

Such one preferre, and in no wife admit,  
 The heauie yoake of forreine gouernaunce,  
 Let forreine titles yeelde to Publike wealth,  
 And with that hart wherwith ye now prepare  
 thus to withftand the proude inuading foe, 175  
 With that fame hart(my Lordes)keepe out alfo  
 Vnnaturall thraldome of ftrangers reigne,  
 Ne fuffer you againft the rules of kinde,  
 Your Mother Land to ferue a Forreine Prince,

*Eubulus.* Loe heere the end of Brutus royall Line, 180  
 And loe the entrie to the wofull wrack  
 And vtter ruine of this noble Realme.  
 the royall King, and eke his Sonnes are flaine,  
 No Ruler reftes within the Regall feate:  
 the Heire to whom the Scepter longes, vnknownen: 185  
 that to the force of forreine Princes power,  
 Whome vauntage of your wretched ftate  
 By fodaine Armes to gaine fo riche a Realme,  
 And to the proude and gréedy minde at home  
 Whome blinded luft to reigne leades to aspire, 190  
 Loe *Brittaine* Realme is left an open praye,  
 A prefent fpoyle by Conqueft to enfue,  
 Who feeeth not now how many rifing mindes  
 Doo feed their thoughts, with hope to reach a realme  
 And who will not by force attempt to winne 195  
 So great a gaine that hope perfwades to haue:  
 A fimple colour fhall for title ferue,  
 Who winnes the royall Crown will want no right  
 Nor fuch as fhall difplaye by long difcent  
 A lyniall race to proue him felfe a King, 200  
 In the meane while thefe cyuill armes fhall rage,  
 And thus a thoufand mifchéeses fhall vnfolde  
 And far and néere fspread thee(O *Brittaine* Land)  
 All right and Law fhall ceafe, and he that had,  
 Nothing to daye, to morrow fhall enioy 205  
 Great heapes of good, and he that flowed in wealth,  
 Loe he fhall be reft of life and all,  
 And happieft he that then poffeffeth leath.

<G.iii.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

- The wiues shall suffer rape, the maidens defloured  
210 And Children Fatherles shall weepe and waile:  
With fier and Swoord thy natiue folke shall perishe,  
One Kinfman shall bereaue an others life,  
The Father shall vnwitting flay the Sonne,  
The Sonne shall flea the Sire and know it not:  
215 Women and maidens the cruell Souldiers Swoord  
Shall pearce to death, and fillie Children loe  
That playing in the ftreetes and feeldes are found,  
By violent hand shall clofe their latter day.  
Whome shall the fierce and bloudie Souldier  
220 Referue to life, whome shall he spare from death?  
Euen thou (O wretched Mother) halfe aliue  
Thou shalt beholde thy deere and only Childe  
Slaine with the fwoord while he yet suckes thy breft  
Loe, giltles bloud shall thus eche where be shed:  
225 Thus shall the wafted foyle yeelde forth no fruite  
But dearth and famine shall possesse the Land.  
The Townes shall be consumed and burnt with fier  
The peopled Citties shall waxe defolate,  
And thou (O Brittain Land) whilome in renowne,  
230 Whilome in wealth and fame shalt thus be torne.  
Dismembred thus, and thus be rent in twaine,  
Thus wafted and defaced, spoyled and destroyed:  
These be the fruits your cyuill warres will bring.  
Héerto it comes when Kinges will not consent,  
235 To graue aduise, but follow wilfull will:  
This is the end, when in yong Princes hartes  
Flattery preuailes, and fage rede hath no place:  
These are the plagues, when murder is the meane  
To make new Heires vnto the Royall Crowne.  
240 Thus wreak the Gods when that y<sup>e</sup> mothers wrath  
Nought but the bloud of her own childe may fwage  
These mischeefes springes when rebells will arise,  
To worke reuenge and iudge their Princes fact,  
This, this enfues when noble men doo faile  
245 In loyall troth, and subiectes will be Kinges.  
And this dooth grow, when loe vnto the Prince,

<G.iv.r>

Whome

## The Tragedye

Whome death or fodeyne hap of life bereaues,  
No certaine Heire remaines, fuch certeintie  
As not all only is the rightfull Heire,  
But to the Realme is fo made vnknowne to be 250  
And troth therby vefed in fubiects hartes,  
to owe faith there, where right is knownen to reft  
Alas,in Parliament what hope can be,  
When is of Parliament no hope at all,  
Which though it be affembled by confent, 255  
Yet is it not likely with confent to end:  
While eche one for him felfe or for his fréend  
Againft his foe, fhall trauaile what he may,  
While now the ftate left open to the man,  
That fhall with greateft force inuade the fame, 260  
Shall fill ambitious mindes with gaping hope:  
When will they once with yeelding hartes agree?  
Or in the while, how shall the Realme be vfed?  
No, no: then Parliament fhould haue beene holden,  
And certaine Heires appointed to the Crowne 265  
to ftaye their title of eftablifhed right:  
And plant the people in obedience  
While yet the Prince did liue, whose name and power  
By lawfull Summons and authoritie  
Might make a Parliament to be of force, 270  
And might haue fet the Realme in quiet ftaye:  
But now (O happie man) what fpéedy death  
Depriues of life, ne is enforced to fee  
Thefe hugie mifcheefes and thefe miferies,  
Thefe cyuill warres, thefe murders and thefe wronges, 275  
Of Iuftice, yet muft loue in fine reftore,  
This noble Crowne vnto the lawfull Heire:  
For right will alwaies liue, and rife at length,  
But wrong can neuer take deepe roote to laft.

¶ The ende of the Tragedie of  
King *Gorboduc*.

<G.iv.v>



