

& THE
TRAGEDIE OF GORBODVC,
whereof three Actes were wrytten by *Thomas*
***Nortone*, and the two lafte by**
***Thomas Sackuyle*.**

¶ Sett forthe as the fame was fhewed before the
***Q VENES* moft excellent Maieftie, in her highnes**
Court of Whitehall, the .xviiij. day of Ianuary,
***Anno Domini*. 1561. By the Gentlemen**
of Thynner Temple in London.

[Illustration]

& IMPRYNTED AT LONDON
in Fleteftrete, at the Signe of the
Faucon by *William Griffith*: And are
to be fold at his Shop in Saincte
Dunftones Churchyarde in
the Weft of *London*.

Anno. 1565. *Septemb*. 22.

¶ Thargument of the Tragedie.

G *O R B O D V C* , king of *Brittaine* , deuided his
Realme in his lyfe time to his Sōnes, *Ferrex*
and *Porrex*. The Sonnes fell to dyuifion and
difcention. The yonger kyled the elder. The Mo=
ther that more dearely loued thelder, for reuenge 5
kyled the yonger . The people moued with the
Crueltie of the facte, rofe in Rebellion and flewe
both father and mother. The Nobilitie affembled
and moft terribly destroyed the Rebelles . And af=
terwardes for want of Iffue of the Prince wher= 10
by the Succeffion of the Crowne became vncer=
tayne. They fell to Ciuill warre in whiche both
they and many of their Iffues were flayne, and the
Lande for a longe tyme almoft defolate and my=
ferablye wafted. 15

[illustration]

<A.i.v>

¶The names of the Speakers.

Gorboduc, kynge of great Brittainye.
Videna, Queene and wife to kynge Gorboduc.
Ferrex, Elder Sonne to kynge Gorboduc.
Porrex, Yonger Sonne to kynge Gorboduc.
Clotyn, Duke of Cornewall.
Fergus, Duke of Albanye.
Mandud, Duke of Leagre.
Gwenard, Duke of Cumperlande.
Eubulus, Secretarie to the kynge Gorboduc.
Arostus, A Counfellow of kynge Gorboduc.
Dordan, A Counfellow affigned by the
kynge to his Eldest Sonne *Ferrex.*
Philander, A Counfellow affigned by the
kynge to his yonger Sonne *Porrex.*
(Both beyng of the olde
(kynge's Counfell before.
*Hermon, A Parafyte remaynyng with *Ferrex.**
*Tyndar, A Parafyte remaynyng with *Porrex.**
Nuntius, A Meffenger of thelder Brothers deth
*Nuntius, A Meffenger of Duke *Fergus**
ryfyng in Armes.
Marcella, A Ladye of the Queenes
priue Chamber.
Chorus, Foure auncient and Sage
men of Brittainye.

<A.ii.r>

¶ The Order of the dōme fhewe before the
firfte Acte ,and the Signification therof.

¶ Firfte the Muficke of Violenze began to playe,
duryng which came in vpon the Stage fixe
wilde men clothed in leaues. Of whom the firft
bare in his necke a Fagot of smal ftickes , which
thei all both feuerallie and together affaied with 5
all their ftrenghes to breake , but it could not be
broken by them. At the length one of them pluc=
ked out one of the ftickes and brake it : And the
reft pluckinge oute all the other ftickes one af=
ter an other did eafelie breake, the fame beyng 10
feuered: which beyng conioyned they had before
attempted in vayne . After they had this done,
they departed the Stage, and the Muficke ceafed
Hereby was signified, that a ftate knit in vnytie
doth continue ftronge againft all force . But be= 15
yng deuyded, is eafely deftroied. As befell vpon
Duke *Gorboduc* deuidinge his Lande to his two
fonnes which he before held in Monarchie. And
vpon the difcention of the Brethrene to whome
it was deuided. 20

<A.ii.v>

of Gorboduc.

Actus primus. Scena prima.

Viden. Ferrex.

Viden.

**T HE filent night that bringes the
quiet pawfe,
From painefull trauailes of the
wearie Daie:
Prolonges my carefull thoughtes
and makes me blame
The flowe *Aurore* that fo for loue or flame
Doth longe delaye to fhewe her bluffhing face, 5
And nowe the Daie renewes my grieffull plainte.**

Ferrex.

**My gracious Lady and mother deare,
Pardon my grieffe, for your fo griued minde
To aske what caufe tormenteth fo your harte.**

Viden.

**So great a wronge and fo vniuft despite , 10
Without all caufe againft all course of kinde .**

Ferrex.

**Suche caufeles wronge and fo vniuft despite,
Maye haue redrefte , or at the leaft reuenge.**

Viden.

**Neither my fonne, fuche is the frowarde will,
The perfon fuche ,fuche my mishap and thyne. 15**

Ferrex.

Myne know I none, but grieffe for your diftreffe:

Viden.

Yes: myne for thyne my fonne: A father? no:

A.ijj.<r>

In

The Tragedie

In kynde a Father, but not in kyndlynes.

Ferrex.

My Father: whie? I knowe nothyng at all,
Wherin I haue misdone vnto his Grace. 20

Viden.

Therefore, the more vnkinde to thee and mee.
For knowyng well (my sonne) the tendre loue
That I haue euer borne and beare to thee,
He greued therat, is not content alone, 25
To spoyle thee of my fight my chieft loye,
But thee, of the birth, right and Heritage
Caufeles, vnkindly and in wrongfull wife,
Against all Lawe and right he will bereaue,
Halfe of his kyngdome he will geue away.

Ferrex.

To whome? 30

Viden.

Euen to *Porrex* his younger sonne
Whose growyng Pride I do fo fore suspecte,
That beyng rayfed to equall Rule with thee,
Mee thinkes I fee his enuious harte to swell
Fyllde with Difdaine and with ambitious Pride
The ende the Goddes do know, whose Aulters I 35
Full oft haue made in vaine of Cattell flayne,
To fende the sacred smoke to Heauens Throne,
For thee my sonne if thinges fo succede,
As nowe my Ielious minde misdemeth fore.

Ferrex.

Madame leaue care and carefull plaint for me. 40
Iust hath my Father ben to euery wight,
His firte vniustice he will not extende

<A.iii.v>

To

of Gorboduc.

To me I trufte,that geue no caufe therof,
My brothers pride fhall hurt him felfe,not mee.

Viden.

So graunt the Goddes: But yet thy father fo 45
Hath firmly fixed his vnmoued mynde
That plaints & praiera can no whit auaille,
For thofe haue I affaied,but euen this daie,
He wyll endeuour to procure affent
Of all his Counfell to his fonde de^uife. 50

Ferrex.

Their Auncestours from race to race haue borne
True fayth to my forefathers and their feede,
I trufte thei eke wyll beare the lyke to me.

Viden.

There refteth all , but if they fayle therof,
And if the ende bringe forth an euyl fucceffe 55
On them and theirs the mifchiefe fhall befall,
And fo I praie the Goddes requite it them,
And fo they will,for fo is wont to bee
When Lordes and trufted Rulers vnder kynges
To pleafe the prefent fancie of the Prince, 60
With wrong tranfpofe the courfe of gouernaunce
Murders , mifchiefe , or ciuyll fworde at length ,
Or mutuall treason,or a iuft reuenge ,
When right fuccedinge Line returnes againe
By *loues* iuft Iudgement and deferued wrathe 65
Bringes them to ciuill and reprochefull death,
And rootes their names & kindredes frō the earth.

Ferrex.

Mother content you,you fhall fee the ende.

A.iiii.<r>

Viden.

The Tragedie

Viden.

The ende?thie ende I feare, *Ioue* ende me firft.

Actus primus. Scena fecunda.

Gorboduc. Arostus. Philander. Eubulus.

Gorboduc.

M Y Lordes whose graue aduife & faithfull aide
Haue long vpheld my Honour & my Realme
And brought me from this age from tender yeres,
Guidynge fo great eftate with great renownme:
Nowe more importeth mee the erft to vfe 5
Your faith and wifdome wherby yet I reigne,
That when by death my liefie and rule shall ceafe,
The kingdome yet maye with vnbroken courfe,
Haue certayne Prince, by whose vndoubted right,
Your wealth and peace, may ftand in quiet ftaie, 10
And eke that thei whome Nature hath preparde,
In time to take my place in Princelie Seate,
While in their Fathers tyme their pliant youth
Yeldes to the frame of fkilfull gouernaunce
Maye fo be taught and trayned in noble Artes, 15
As what their fathers whiche haue reigned before
Haue with great fame deriued downe to them
With honour they maye leaue vnto their feede:
And not be taught for their vnworthie life,
And for their Laweles fwaruyng out of kinde, 20
Worthie to lofe what Lawe aud kind them gaue
But that they may preferue the cōmon peace,
The caufe that firft began and ftill mainteines

<A.4.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The Lyneall courfe of kinges inheritaunce,
For me,for myne,for you, and for the ftate 25
Wherof both I and you haue charge and care.
Thus do I meane to vfe your wonted fayth
To me and myne, and to your natyue Lande,
My Lordes be playne without all wrie respect
Or poyfonous crafte to fpeake in pleafyng wife, 30
Left as the blame of yll fuccedyng things
Shall light on you,fo light the harmes alfo.

Arostus .

Your good acceptaunce fo (moft noble kinge)
Of fuche your faithfulnes as heretofore
We haue employed in dueties to your Grace, 35
And to this Realme whofe worthie head you are,
Well proues that neyther you miftrufte at all,
Nor we fhall nede no boafting wife to fhewe,
Our trueth to you,nor yet our wakefull care
For you,for yours,and for our natiue Lande , 40
Wherfore(O kyng) I fpeake for one as all,
Sithe all as one do beare you egall faith:
Doubt not to vfe their Counfelles and their aides
Whofe honours,goods & lyues are whole auowed
To ferue,to ayde,and to defende your Grace. 45

Gorboduc.

My Lordes I thanke you all.This is the cafe
Ye know,the Gods,who haue the foueraigne care
For kings,for kingdomes,and for cōmen weales,
Gauē me two fonnes in my more luftie Age,
Who nowe in my deceyuyngē yeres are growen 50
Well towardes ryper ftate of minde and ftrength ,
To take in hande fome greater Princely charge,

A.v. <r>

As

The Tragedie

As yet they lyue and spende their hopefull daies,
With me and with their Mother here in Court^e
Their age nowe asketh other place and trade, 55
And myne also doth afke an other chaunge,
Theirs to more trauaile,myne to greater ease:
Whan fatall death shall ende my mortall lyfe,
My purpose is to leaue vnto them twaine
The Realme deuided into two fondrie partes: 60
The one *Ferrex* myne elder sonne shall haue,
The other shall the other *Porrex* rule
That both my purpose may more framelie ftande,
And eke that they may better rule their charge,
I meane forthwith to place them in the fame: 65
That in my life they maye both learne to rule,
And I may loye to see their rulynge well.
This is in forme , what I woulde haue ye wey:
Firfte whether ye allowe my whole deuife,
And thinke it good for me,for them , for you, 70
And for our Countrey ,mother of vs all:
And if ye lyke it and allowe it well,
Than for their guydinge and their gouernaunce,
Shewe forthe fuche meanes of circumftaunce,
As ye thinke meete to be both knowne and kept: 75
Loe,this is all,nowe tell me your aduife.

Arostus.

And this is muche,and asketh great aduife,
But for my parte my foueraigne Lord and kyng
This do I thinke your Maiestie doth knowe,
Howe vnder you in Iuftice and in peace, 80
Great wealth and Honour, long we haue enjoyed
So as we can not feeme with gredie mindes

<A.v.v>

To

of Gorboduc.

And place your fonnnes in prefent gouuernement 145
Whereof as I haue plainely faide my mynde,
So woulde I here the rest of all my Lordes.

Philander.

In parte I thinke as haue ben faide before,
In parte againe my minde is otherwise 150
As for deuidin g of this Realme in twaine

And lotting out the fame in egall partes,
To either of my Lordes your Graces fonnnes,
That thinke I beft for this your Realmes behofe,
For profite and aduauncement of your fonnnes,
And for your comforte and your honour eke : 155

But fo to place them while your life do laft,
To yelde to them your Royall gouernaunce,
To be aboue them onely in the name
Of father,not in kingly ftate alfo,

I thinke not good for you,for them,nor vs, 160
This kingdome fince the bloodie ciuill fielde
Where *Morgan* flaine did yeld his conquered parte

Vnto his Cofyns fworde in *Camberlande*
Conteineth all that whilome did fuffice ,
Three noble fonnnes of your forefather *Brute*, 165

So your two fonnnes,it maye alfo fuffice,
The moe the ftronger ,if thei gree in one:
The fmaller compaffe that the Realme doth holde
The eafier is the fwey therof to welde ,

The nearer Iuftice to the wronged poore , 170
The fmaller charge,and yet ynoughe for one.
And whan the Region is deuided fo

That Brethrene be the Lordes of either parte,
Such ftrength doth nature knit betwene thē both,

<A.vi.r>

In

The Tragedie

In fondrie bodies by conioyned loue 175
That not as two, but one of doubled force,
Eche is to other as a fure defence,
The Noblenes and glorie of the one
Doth sharpe the courage of the others mynde
With vertuous enuie to contende for praife, 180
And fuche an egalnes hath nature made,
Betwene the Brethren of one Fathers feede,
As an vnkindlie wronge it feemes to bee,
To throwe the other Subiect vnder feete
Of him, whose Peere he is by courfe of kinde, 185
And nature that did make this egalnes,
Ofte fo repineth at fo great a wronge,
That ofte she rayfeth vp a grudgyng grieffe,
In yonger Brethren at the elders ftate:
Wherby both townes & kingdomes haue ben rafed 190
And famous ftokes of Royall blood diftroied:
The Brother that fhould be the Brothers aide
And haue a wakefull care for his defence,
Gapes for his death, & blames the lyngering yeres
That brings not forth his ende with fafter courfe 195
And oft impacient of fo longe delays,
With hatefull flaughter he prefentes the fates
And keepes a iuft rewarde for Brothers bloode,
With endles vengeaunce on his ftocke for aye:
Suche mifchiefes here are wifely mette withall: 200
If egall ftate maye nourishe egall loue,
Where none hath caufe to grudge at others good,
But nowe the head to ftoupe beneth them bothe,
Ne kinde, ne reafon, ne good ordre beares,
And oft it hath ben feene, that where Nature 205

<A.vi.v>

Hath

of Gorboduc.

Hath ben preuerted in difordered wife,
When Fathers ceafe to know that thei fhuld rule
And Children ceafe to knowe they fhould obey,
And often our vnkindly tendrenes ,
Is Mother of vnkindly Stubbornes: 210
I fpeake not this in enuie or reproche,
As if I grudged the glorie of your fonnes,
Whofe honour I befeche the Goddes to encreate:
Nor yet as if I thought there did remaine,
So filthie Cankers in their noble breftes, 215
Whome I efteme(which is their greateft praife,
Vndoubted children of fo good a kynge.
Onelie I meane to fhewe my certeine Rules,
Whiche kinde hath graft within the mind of man
That Nature hath her ordre and her courfe, 220
Whiche(being broken) doth corrupt the ftate
Of myndes and thinges euen in the beft of all
My Lordes your fonnes may learne to rule of you
Your owne example in your noble Courte
Is fittest Guyder of their youthfull yeares, 225
If you desire to feeke some prefent Ioye
By fight of their well rulynge in your lyfe,
See them obey, fo fhall you fee them rule,
Who fo obeyeth not with humblenes
Will rule without rage and with infolence 230
Longe maye they rule I do befeche the Goddes,
But longe may they learne ere they begyn to rule
If kinde and fates woulde fuffre I would wiffhe
Them aged Princes and immortall kinges:
Wherfore moft noble kynge I well affent, 235
Betwene your fonnes yt you deuide your Realme,
<A.vii.r> And

The Tragedie

And as in kinde,fo matche them in degree
But while the Goddes prolongue your Royal life
Prolongue your reigne,for therto lyue you here,
And therefore haue the Goddes fo longe forborne 240
To ioyne you to them felues, that ftill you might
Be Prince and father of our cōmon weale:
They when they fe your children ripe to rule
Will make them rounge , & will remoue you hence,
That yours in right enfuyng of your life 245
Maye rightlie honour your mortall name.

Eubulus.

Your wonted true regarde of faithfull hartes,
Makes me(O kinge)the bolder to perfume
To fpeake what I conceiue within my breft,
Althoughe the fame do not agree at all 250
With that whiche other here my Lords haue faid
Nor whiche your felfe haue feemed beft to lyke,
Pardon I craue and that my wordes be deemde
To flowe from hartie zeale vnto your Grace,
And to the fafetie of your cōmon weale: 255
To parte your Realme vnto my Lords your fōnes
I thinke not good for you,ne yet for them,
But worfte of all,for this our Natiue Lande:
For with one Lande,one fingle rule is beft:
Deuided Reignes do make deuided hartes. 260
But Peace preferues the Countrey & the Prince.
Suche is in man the gredie minde to reigne,
So great is his defire to climbe alofte,
In worldly Stage the stateliest partes to beare ,
That faith and Iuftice and all kindly loue, 265
Do yelde vnto defire of Soueraigntie:

<A.vii.v>

Where

of Gorboduc.

Where egall ftate doth raife an egall hope
To winne the thing that either wold attaine
Your grace remembreth howe in paffed yeres
The mightie *Brute*, firft Prince of all this Lande 270
Poffeffed the fame and ruled it well in one,
He thinking that the compaffe did fuffice
For his three fonnes,three kingdoms eke to make
Cut it in three,as you would nowe in twaine:
But how much Brutifh blod hath fithence bē fpilt 275
To ioyne againe the fondred vnitie?
What Princes flaine before their timely honour?
What waft of townes and people in the Lande?
What Treafons heaped on murders & on fpoiles?
Whofe iuft reuenge euen yet is fcarcely ceafed, 280
Ruthefull remembraunce is yet had in minde:
The Gods forbyd the like to chaunce againe
And you(O king)geue not the caufe therof:
My Lorde *Ferrex* your elder fonne, perhappes
Whome kinde and cuftome geues a rightfull hope 285
To be your Heire and to fuccede your Reigne,
Shall thinke that he doth fuffre greater wronge
Than he perchaunce will beare, if power ferue
Porrex the younger fo vnpaifed in ftate,
Perhappes in courage will be raifed alfo, 290
If Flatterie then whiche fayles not to affaile
The tendre mindes of yet vnfkilfull Yout^he,
In one fhall kinde and encreafe difdaine :
And Enuie in the others harte enflame,
This fire fhall wafte their loue,their liues,their 295
And rutheful ruine fhall deftroy them both, (land,
I wiffhe not this (O kyng)fo to befall

B.i. <r>

But

The Tragedie

But feare the thing ,that I do moft abhorre
Geue no beginning to fo dreadfull ende,
Kepe them in order and obedience: 300
And let them both by nowe obeyinge you,
Learne fuche behaiour as befeemes their ftate.
The Older,myldenes in his gouernaunce,
The younger , a yeldyng contentednes:
And kepe them neare vnto your prefence ftill, 305
That they reftreined by the awe of you,
Maye liue in compaffe of well tempred ftate,
And paffe the perilles of their youthfull yeares.
Your aged life drawes on to febler tyme ,
Wherin you fhall leffe able be to beare 310
The trauailes that in youth you haue fuftained
Both in your perfons and your Realmes defence
If planting nowe your fonnes in furdere partes,
You fend them furdere from your prefent reache
Leffe fhall you know how they thē felues demaund 315
Traiterous corrupters of their pliant youthe,
Shall haue vnfpied a muche more free acceffe,
And of ambitien and inflamed difdaine
Shall arme the one , the other , or them bothe
To cyuill warre,or to vfurpinge pride. 320
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 worft.
So trufte the one, that the other be forfene,
Arme not vnkilfulnes with princely power 325
But you that longe haue wifely ruled the reignes
Of royaltie within your noble Realme
So holde them,while the Gods for our auayles
<B.i.v> Shall

of Gorboduc.

Shall stretche the threde of your prolonged daies
To foone he clāme, into the flamyng Carte 330
Whose want of fkyll did fet the earth on fire,
Time and example of your noble Grace,
Shall teache your fonnes both to obey and rule:
Whan time hath taught thē, time shall make thē
The place that nowe is full: and fo I praie (pace 335
Longe it remaine, to comforte of vs all.

Gorboduc.

I take your faithfull hartes in thankfull parte
But fith I see no cause to drawe my minde,
To feare the nature of my louyng fonnes,
Or to misdeme that Enuie or difdaine, 340
Can there worke hate, where nature planteth loue
In one selfe purpose do I still abide,
My loue extendeth egally to bothe,
My Lande suffifeth for them bothe also:
Humber shall parte the Marches of their Realmes: 345
The *Sotherne* parte the elder shall possesse,
The *Northerne* shall *Porrex* the yonger rule,
In quiet I will passe mine aged daies,
Free from the trouaile and the painefull cares
That hasten age vpon the worthiest kinges. 350
But lest the fraude that ye do feeme to feare
Of flatteryng tongues, corrupt their tender youth
And wrieth them to the waies of youthfull luft,
To climyng pride, or to reuengyng hate
Or to neglecting of their carefull charge 355
Lewdely to lyue in wanton recklennesse,
Or to oppreffinge of the rightfull cause

B.ii.<r>

Or

The Tragedie

O^r not to wreke the wronges done to the poore
To treade downe trueth,or fauour falfe deceite
I meane to ioyne to eyther of my fonnes 360
Some one of thofe whose longe approued faith
And wifdome tryed may well affure my harte:
That mynyng fraude fhall finde no way to crepe
Into their fenfed eares with graue aduife:
This is the ende,and fo I praye you all 365
To beare my fonnes the loue and loyaltie
That I haue founde within your faithful breafte.

Arostus.

You,nor your fonnes,our foueraigne Lord fhall
Our faith & feruice while our liues do laft. (want

Chorus.

When fettled ftate doth holde the royall throne,
In ftedfaft place by knowen and doubtles right:
And chiefly whan difcent on one alone
Make fingle and vnparted reigne to light.
Eche change of courfe vnioyntes the whole eftate 5
And yeldes it thrall to r^uyne by debate.

The ftrength that knit by lafte accorde in one
Againft all forrein power of mightie foes,
Could of it felfe defende it felfe alone,
Difioyned once,the former force doth lofe 10
The ftickes,that fondred brake fo foone in twaine
In faggot bounde attempted were in vaine.

Oft tender minde that leades the perciall eye
Of errin ge parentes in their childrens loue,
Deftroies the wrongfull loued childe therby: 15

<B.ii.v>

This

of Gorboduc.

This doth the proude sonne of *Appollo* proue,
Who raffhely fet in Chariot of his fire:
Inflamed the perched earth with heauens fire.

And this great king, that doth deuide his land,
And chaunged the course of his discending crowne 20
And yeldes the reigne into his childrens hande
From bliffull ftate of ioye and great renowne,
A Myrrour fhall become to Princes all
To learne to fhunne the caufe of fuche a fall.

¶ The order and fignification of the
dōme fhewe before the fecond Acte.

¶ Firft the Muficke of Cornettes began to playe,
during whiche came in vpon the Stage a kinge
accompanied with a nombre of his Noblytie &
Gentlemen. And after he had placed him felfe in
a Chaire of eftate prepared for him : there came 5
and kneled before him a graue and aged Gentil=
man and offred vp a Cuppe vnto hym of Wyne
in a glaffe, whiche the kyng refused . After him
cōmes a braue and luftie yong Gentleman and
prefentes the king with a Cup of Golde filled wt 10
poifon, which the king accepted, & drinkinge the
fame , immediatly fell down dead vpon y^e ftage, &
fo was carried thence awaye by his Lordes and
Gentlemen , & then the Muficke ceafed . Hereby
was fignified , that as Glaffe by nature holdeth 15
no payfon, but is clere and maye eafely be feene
throughe,ne boweth by any Arte: So a faithfull

B iij. <r> Counfellour

The Tragedie

Counfellour holdeth no treason, but is playne &
open,ne yeldeth to any vndifcrete affection, but
geueth holfome Counfell,whiche the yll aduifed 20
Prince refufeth . The delightfull golde filled w^t
poyfon betokeneth Flattery , whiche vnder faire
feeming of pleafaunt words beareth deadly poy=
fon , which deftroieth the Prince y^t receiueth it.
As befell in the two brethrene *Ferrex* and *Porrex* 25
who refufing the holfome aduife of graue Coun=
fellours, credited thefe yonge Paracites, & brou=
ght to them felues death and deftruction therby.

Actus fecundus. Scena prima.

Ferrex. Hermon. Dordan.

Ferrex.

I Meruaile muche what reafon leade the kynge
My father thus without all my defarte
To reue me halfe y^e kingdome which by courfe
Of lawe and nature fhuld remayne to me.

Hermon.

If you with ftubborne and vntamed pryde 5
Had ftood againft him in rebellious wife ,
Or if with grudging minde you had enuied
So flowe a flidyng of his aged yeres,
Or fought before your time to hafte the courfe
Of fatall death vpon his Royall head, 10
Or ftained your Stocke with murder of your kyn:
Some face of reafon might perhaps haue feemed
To yelde fome likely caufe to spoile ye thus.

<B.iii.v>

Ferrex

of Gorboduc.

Ferrex.

The wrekefull Gods powre on my curfed head,
Eternall plagues and neuer dyinge woes, 15
The Hellifh Prince, adiudge my dampned ghofte
To *Tantalus* thirfte,or proude *Ixi^ons* wheele
Or cruell Gripe to gnawe my growing harte
To durynge tormentes and vnquenched flames
If euer I conceiued fo foule a thought, 20
To wiffhe his ende of life, or yet of reigne.

Dordan.

Ne yet your father(O moft noble Prince)
Did euer thinke fo fowle a thing of you
For he with more than fathers tendre loue
While yet the fates do lende him life to rule, 25
(Who long might lyue to fe your rulynge well)
To you my Lorde,and to his other fonne
Lo he refignes his Realme and Royaltie
Whiche neuer would fo wife a Prince haue done
If he had ones mifdemed that in your harte 30
There euer lodged fo vnkinde a thought.
But tendre loue(my Lorde)and fetled trufte
Of your good nature, and your n^oble minde
Made him to place you thus in Royall throne
And now to geue you half his realme to guide 35
Yea and that halfe within abounding ftore
Of things that ferue to make a welthie Realme
In ftatelie Cities and in frutefull foyle,
In temperate breathing of the milder heauen,
In thinges of nedefull vfe, whiche frendlie Sea 40
Tranfportes by traffike from the forreine Portes,
In flowing wealth,in honour and in force,

B.iiij.<r>

Dothe

The Tragedie

Doth paffe the double value of the parte
That *Porrex* hath allotted to his reigne,
Suche is your eafe , fuche is your fathers loue. 45

Ferrex.

Ah loue,my frendes ,loue wrongs not whom he

Dordan. (loues.

Ne yet he wrongeth you that geueth you
So large a reigne ere that the courfe of tyme
Bringe you to kingdome by difcended right,
Which time perhaps might end your time before. 50

Ferrex.

Is this no wrong ,faie you, to reauue from me
My natiue right to halfe fo great a realme,
And thus to matche his yonger fonne with me
In egall power, and in as great degree:
Yea & what fonne? ye fonne whofe fwellyng pryde 55
Woulde neuer yelde one point of reuerence,
Whan I the Elder and apparaunt heire
Stoode in the likelyhode to poffeffe the whole
Yea and that fonne whiche from his childifhe age
Enuieth myne honour,and doth hate my life, 60
What will he nowe do ? when his pride,his rage,
The mindefull malice of his grudging harte
Is armed with force, with wealth and kingly ftate

Hermon.

Was this not wrong?yea yll aduifed wrong
To giue fo mad a man fo fharpe a fworde, 65
To fo great perill of fo great mifhappe,
Wide open thus to fet fo large a waye.

Dordan.

Alas my Lorde,what griefull thing is this?

<B.iv.v>

That

of Gorboduc.

That of your brother you can thinke fo ill
I neuer fawe him vtter likelie figne 70
Whereby a man might see or once misdeme
Suche hate of you, ne suche vnyeldinge pride
Ill is their counfell, shamefull be their ende ,
That raisinge fuche mistrustfull feare in you,
Sowing the feede of fuche vnkindly hate, 75
Trauaile by reason to deftroy you both:)
Wife is your brother and of noble hope,
Worthie to welde a large and mightie Realme
So muche a stronger frende haue you therby,
Whose strength is your strength, if you gree in one. 80

Hermon.

If nature and the Goddess had pinched fo
Their flowing bountie and their noble giftes
Of Princelie qualities from you my Lorde
And powrde them all at ones in waftfull wife
Vpon your fathers younger sonne alone: 85
Perhappes there be that in your preiudice
Would faie that birth shuld yeld to worthines:
But fithe in eche good gift and Princelie Acte
Ye are his matche, and in the chiefe of all
In mildenes and in fobre gouernauce 90
Ye farre surmount: And fithe there is in you
Sufficing skill and hopefull towardnes
To weld the whole, and match your Elders praife
I see no cause whie ye should loofe the halfe,
Ne wold I wishe you yelde to fuche a loffe: 95
Left your milde sufferaunce of so great a wronge
Be deemed cowardifhe and simple dreade:
Whiche shall geue courage to the fierie head

B.v. <r>

Of

The Tragedie

Of your yonge Brother to inuade the whole,
Whiles yet therfore ftickes in the peoples mynde 100
The lothed wronge of your disheritaunce,
And ere your Brother haue by fettled power,
By guyle full cloke of an allurynge showe,
Got him some force and fauour in this Realme
And while the noble Queene your mother lyues, 105
To worke and practice all for your auaile
Attempt redreffe by Armes, and wreake your felfe
Vpon his life, that gaineth by your loffe,
Who nowe to fhame of you, and grieffe of vs
In your owne kingdome triumphes ouer you: 110
Shew now your courage meete for kingly eftate
That thei which haue auowed to fpēd their goods
Their landes, their liues & honours in your caufe,
Maye be the bolder to mainteine your parte
whan thei do fee that cowarde feare in you, 115
Shall not betraye ne faile their faithfull hartes.
If ones the death of *Porrex* ende the strife,
And paie the price of his vsurped Reigne,
Your Mother shall perfwade the angry kynge,
The Lords your frends eke shall appeafe his rage 120
For thei be wife, and well thei can forfee,
That ere longe time your aged fathers death
will brynge a time when you shall well requite
Their frendlie fauour, or their hatefull spite.
Yea, or their flackenes to auaunce your caufe 125
Wife men do not fo hange on paffyng ftate
Of prefent Princes, chiefly in their age.
But they will further caft their reachinge eye
To viewe and weigh the times & reignes to come

<B.v.v>

Ne

The Tragedie

And for your fafetie ftande vpon your garde.

Dordan.

O heauen was there euer harde or knowen,
So wicked Counfell to a noble Prince?
Let me (my Lorde) difclofe vnto your grace
This heynous tale, what mifchiefe it conteynes: 165
Your fathers death, your brothers and your own^e
your prefent murder and eternall fhame:
Heare me (O king) and fuffre not to finke
So highe a treafon in your Princelie breft.

Ferrex.

The mightie Goddes forbyd that euer I 170
Shuld once conceiue fuche mifchiefe in my harte
Althoughe my Brother hath bereft my Realme
And beare perhappes to me and hatefull minde.
Shall I reuenge it, with his death therefore?
Or fhall I fo deftroy my fathers lyfe 175
That gaue me life? the Gods forbyd I faye,
Ceafe you to fpeake fo any more to me
Ne you my friende with Aunfwere once repeate
So foule a tale, in fcilence let it die:
What Lorde or Subiect fhall haue hope at all 180
That vnder me they fafely fhall enioye
Their goods, their honours, landes and liberties,
With whome, neither one onely brother deare
Ne father dearer, coulde enioye their lyues?
But fitte, I feare my younger brothers rage, 185
And fitte perhappes fome other man may gyue
Some like aduife, to moue his grudging head
At mine eftate: whiche counfell may perchaunce
Take greater force with him, than this with me,

<B.vi.v>

I

of Gorboduc.

I will in secrete fo prepare my felfe, 190
As if his malice or his luft to reigne
Breake forth with Armes or fodeine violence
I may withftande his rage and kepe myn^e owne.

Dordan.

I feare the fatall time now draweth on
When ciuyll hate fhall ende the noble lyne 195
Of famouse *Brute* and of his Royall feede
Great *loue* defende the mifchiefes nowe at hande
O that the Secretaries wife aduife

Had erft ben harde whan he befought the kynge
Not to deuide his lande,nor fende his fonnes 200
To further partes from prefence of his Courte
Ne yet to yelde to them his gouernaunce
Lo fuche are they nowe in the Royall throne
As was rafhe *Phaeton* in *Phebus* Carre

Ne then the fiery ftedes did drawe the flame 205
With wilder randon through the kindled fkies
Then traiterous counsell now will wherle about
The youthfull heads of thefe vnfkilfull kinges,
But I hereof their father will enforme
The reuerence of him perhappes fhall ftaye 210
The growing mifchiefes, while thei yet are grene
If this helpe not,then wo vnto them felues,
The Prince,the people,the deuided lande.

Actus fecundus. Scena fecunda.

Porrex. Tyndar. Philander.

<B.vii.r>

Porrex

The Tragedie

Porrex

A Nd is it thus?And doth he fo prepare
 Against his Brother as his mortall foe?
 And nowe whyle yet his aged father lyues:
Neither regardes he him?nor feares he me?
Warre would he haue?and he fhall haue it fo. 5

Tyndar.

I fawe my felfe the great prepared ftore
Of Horfe,of Armours and of weapons there,
Ne brynge I to my Lorde reported tales
Without the ground of feene and ferched trouthe
Loe secrete quarrelles ronne about his Courte 10
To bringe the name of you my Lorde in hate
Eche man almoft can nowe debate the caufe
And afke a reason of fo great a wronge,
While he fo noble and fo wife a Prince,
Is as vnworthie reft his Heritage. 15
And whie the kinge miflead by craftie meanes
Deuided thus his lande from courfe of right.
The wifer forte holde downe their grieffull heades
Eche man withdrawes from talke and companie,
Of thofe that haue ben knowen to fauour you, 20
To hide the mifchiefe of their meaninge there.
Rumours are fpred of your preparynge here.
The Rafcall nombres of the vnfkilfull forte
Are filled with monfterous tales of you and yours
In fecrete I was counfailed by my friendes 25
To haft me thence, and brought you as you know
Letters from thofe,that both can truely tell
And would not write vnleffe they knewe it well.

<B.vii.v>

Philander.

of Gorboduc.

Philander.

My Lorde, yet ere you nowe vnkindely warre,
Sende to your Brother to demaunde the caufe. 30
Perhappes fome trayterous tale s haue filled his
w^t falfe reports againft your noble grace: (eares
Which once difclofed fhall ende the growing ftrife
That els not ftaied with wife foresight in time
Shall hazarde both your kingdomes & your lyues: 35
Sende to your father eke, he fhall appea^e
Your kindled mindes, and rid you of this feare.

Por^rex.

Ridde me of feare? I feare him not at all:
Ne will to him, ne to my father fende
If daunger were for one to tarye there 40
Thinke ye it fafely to retourne againe.
In mifchiefes fuche as *Ferrex* nowe intendes
The w^onted courteous Lawes to Meffengers
Are not obserued, whiche in iuft warre they vse.
Shall I fo hazarde any one of myne? 45
Shall I betraie my truftie friende to hym?
That hath difclofed his treafon vnto me?
Let him entreate that feares, I feare him not:
Or fhall I to the kinge my father fende?
Yea and fende nowe while fuche a mother lyues 50
That loues my Brother and that hateth mee?
Shall I geue leafure by my fonde delayes
To *Ferrex* to opprefse me at vnware?
I will not, but I will inuade his Realme
And feeke the Traitour Prince within his Court 55
Mifchiefe for mifchiefe is a due rewarde.
His wretched head fhall paie the worthie pryce

<B.viii.r>

Of

The Tragedie

Of this his Treafon and his hate to me
Shall I abide,entreate and fende and praie?
And holde my yelden throate to Traitours knife? 60
While I with valiaunt minde & conquering force
Might rid my felfe of foes:and winne a Realme,
Yet rather when I haue the wretches head,
Than to the king my father will I fende,
The booteles cafe may yet appeafe his wrath: 65
If not I will defend me as I maye.

Philander.

Loe here the ende of thefe two youthfull kings
The fathers deth,the reigne of their two realmes
O moft vnhappy ftate of Counfellours
That light on fo vnhappy Lordes and times 70
That neither can their good aduife be harde,
Yet muft thei beare the blames of yll fucceffe
But I will to the king their father hafte
Ere this mifchiefe come to that likely ende ,
That if the mindefull wrath of wrekefull Gods 75
Since mightie *Iliions* fall not yet appeafed
With thefe poore remnant of the *Troians* name
Haue not determinedlie vnmoued fate
Out of this Realme to rafe the *Brutifh* Line
By good aduife, by awe of fathers name 80
By force of wifer Lordes,this kindled hate
Maye yet be quentched, ere it confume vs all.

Chorus.

Whan youth not bridled with a guyding ftaie
Is left to randon of their owne delight (fraie,
And welds whole Realmes,by force of foueraigne

<B.viii.v>

Great

of Gorboduc.

Great is the daunger of vnmaiftred might
Left skilles rage throwe downe with headlong fal 5
Their lands,their ftates,their liues,them felues &
(all.

When growing pride doth fil the fwelling breft
And gredy luft doth raife the clymbynge minde
Oh hardlie maye the perill be repreft,
Ne feare of angrie Goddes , ne Lawes kinde , 10
Ne Countrie care can fiered hartes reftrayne
Whan force hath armed Enuie and difdaine.

Whan kinges of forefet wyll neglecte the rede,
Of beft aduife,and yelde to pleafinge tales
That do their fanfies noyfome humour feede 15
Ne reason, nor regarde of right auailles
Succedinge heapes of plagues fhall teache to late
To learne the mifchiefes of mifguydinge ftate.

Fowle fall the Traitour falfe that vndermines
The loue of Brethrene to deftroie them bothe 20
Wo to the Prince, that pliant eare enclynes,
And yeldes his minde to poyfonous tale, y^t floweth
From flatteryng mouth , & wo to wretched lande
That wafts it felfe with ciuyll fworde in hande.
Loe , thus it is poyfon in golde to take , 25
And holfome drinke in homely Cuppe forfake.

¶ The order and fignification of the
dōme fhewe before the thirde Act.

¶ Firfte the Muficke of Fluites began to plave,
C i. <r> duringe

The Tragedie

during which came in vpon the Stage a compa=
nye of Mourners all clad in blacke betokening
Death and forowe to enfue vpon the yll aduifed
mifgouernement and difcention of Bretherne, 5
as befel vpon the Murder of *Ferrex* by his younger
Brother . After the Mourners had paffed thryfe
about the ftage, thei departed, and than the Mu=
ficke ceafed.

Actus tertius. Scena prima.

Gorboduc. Eubulus. Arostus. Philander. Nuntius.

Gorboduc.

O Cruell fates, O mindfull wrath of Goddes,
whofe vègeaunce neither *Simois* ftreined ftrea=
Flowing w^t blood of *Troian* Princes flaine (mes
Nor *Phrygian* fieldes made rancke w^t Corpfes dead
Of *Afian* kynges and Lordes can yet appeafe, 5
Ne flaughter of vnhappy *Pryams* race
Nor *Ilions* fall made leuell with the foile,
Can yet fuffice:but ftill continued rage,
Purfue our lyues ,and from the fartheft Seas
Doth chaft the iffues of diftroyed *Troye*: 10
Oh no man happie,tyll his ende be feene,
If any flowyng wealth and feemyng loye
In prefent yeres might make a happy wight,
Happie was *Hecuba* the wofulleft wretche
That euer lyued to make a Myrrour of 15
And happie *Pryam* with his noble fonnes,
And happie I till nowe. Alas, I fee

<C.i.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

And feele my moft vnhappy wretchednes:
Beholde my Lordes,reade ye this Letter here
Loe it containes the ruyne of our Realme 20
If timelie speede prouide not haftie helpe
Yet (O ye Goddes)if euer wofull kyng
Might moue you kings of kinges , wreke it on me
And on my Sonnes,not on this giltles Realme.
Sende down your wafting flames from wrathful 25
To reue me & my fōnes the hateful breath (fkies
Reade,reade my Lordes:this is the matter whie
I called ye nowe to haue your good aduyfe.

¶ : The Letter from *Dordan* the
Counfellour of the elder Prince.

Eubulus readeth the Letter.

M Y foueraigne Lord, what I am loth to write
But loth am to see , that I am forced 30
By Letters nowe to make you vnderftande
My Lord *Ferrex* your eldft fonne miflead
By Traitours framde of yong vntempred wittes
Affembleth force againft your yonger fonne ,
Ne can my Counfell yet withdrawe the heate 35
And furyous panges of his enflamed head:
Difdaine(faieth he)of his inheritauce
Armes him to wreke the great pretended wronge
With ciuyll fword vpon his Brothers life,
If prefent helpe do not refraine this rage 40
Thi flame will waft your fōnes,your land & you.

Your Maiefties faithfull and moft
humble Subiecte *Dordan*,

C.ii.<r>

Arostus

The Tragedie

Arostus.

O King, appeafe your grieffe & ftaie your plaint
Great is the matter and a wofull cafe 45
But timely knowledge maye bringe timely
Sende for thē both vnto your prefence here (help
The reuerence of your honour age and ftate
Your graue aduife, the awe of fathers name
Shall quickelie knit againe this broken peece: 50
And if in either of my Lordes your fonnes
Be fuche vntamed and vnyelding pride
As will not bende vnto your noble Heftes.
If *Ferrex* the elder fonne can beare no peere,
Or *Porrex* not content, aspires to more 55
Then you him gaue, aboue his Natiue right:
Ioyne with the iufter fide, fo fhall you force
Them to agree: and holde the Lande in ftaie.

Eubulus.

What meaneth this? Loe yonder cōmes in haft
Philander from my Lord your younger fonne. 60

Gorboduc.

The Goddes fende ioyfull newes.

Philander.

The mightie *Ioue*

Preferue your Maieftie, O noble kinge.

Gorboduc.

Philander, welcome: But how doth my fonne?

Philander.

Your fonne, fir, lyues and healthie I him left:
But yet (O kinge) this want of luftfull health 65
Could not be half fo griefefull to your Grace,
As thefe moft wretched tidynges that I brynge.

<C.ii.v>

Gorboduc

of Gorboduc.

Gorboduc.

O heuens yet more?no ende of woes to me?

Philander.

Tyndar,O kyng,came lately from the Courte

Of Ferrex , to my Lorde your yonger fonne, 70

And made reporte of great prepared ftore

Of warre,and faith that it is whollie ment

Against Porrex for highe difdaine that he

Lyues nowe a kynge and egall in degree

With him,that claimeth to fuccede the whole. 75

As by due title of difcendinge right

Porrex is nowe fo fet on flamyng fire,

Partely with kindled rage of cruell wrathe,

Partely with hope to gaine a Realme therby,

That he in hafte prepareth to inuade 80

His Brothers Lande,and with vnkindely warre

Threatens the murder of your elder fonne,

Ne coulde I him perfwade that firft he fould

Sende to his Brother to demaunde the caufe,

Nor yet to you to ftaie his hatefull ftrife. 85

Wherfore fithere no more I can be harde,

I come my felfe nowe to enforme your Grace:

And to befeche you,as you loue the liefie

And fafetie of your Children and your Realme,

Nowe to emploie your wif^dome and your force 90

To ftaie this mifchiefe ere it be to late.

Gorboduc.

Are thei in Armes? would he not fende for me?

Is this the honour of a Fathers name?

In vaine we trauaile to affwage their mindes

As if their hartes whome neither Brothers loue 95

C.iii.<r>

Nor

The Tragedie

Nor Fathers awe,nor kingdomes care can moue
Our Coufels could withdrawe from ragyng heat
loue flaye them both,and ende the curfed Lyne
For though perhappes feare of fuch mightie force
As I my Lords,ioyned with your noble Aides 100
Maye yet raife,shall repress their prefent heate,
The secrete grudge and malyce will remayne
The fire not quentched, but kept in clofe restraint
Fead ftill within, breakes forth with double flame
Their death and mine muft peaze the angrie gods 105

Philander.

Yelde not, O king , fo muche to weake dispaier
Your fonnes yet lyue,and long I truft , they shall:
Yf fates had taken you from earthly life
Before begynning of this ciuyll ftrife:
Perhaps your fonnes in their vnmaiftered youth, 110
Lofe from regarde of any lyuyng wight,
Wolde ronne on headlonge, with vnbridled Race
To their owne death and ruine of this Realme.
But fith the Gods that haue the care for kinges,
Of thinges and times difpofe the order fo 115
That in your life this kindled flame breakes forth
While yet your lyfe, your wifdome & your power,
Maye ftaie the growing mifchiefe,and repress
The fierie blaze of their inkindled heate
It feemes,and fo ye ought to deeme therof, 120
That louyng *loue* hath tempred fo the time
Of this debate to happen in your daies
That you yet lyuyng maye the fame appeaze,
And adde it to the glorie of your latter age
And they your fonnes maye learne to liue in peace 125

<C.iii.v>

Beware

of Gorboduc.

Beware(O kynge) the greateft harme of all,
Left by your wayleful plaints your haftened death
Yelde larger rounge vnto their growyng rage:
Preferue your lyfe,the onely hope of itaie :
And if your highnes herein lift to vfe 130
Wifdome or force,Counfell or knightly aide:
Loe we our perfons,powers and lyues are yours,
Vfe vs tyll Death , O king, we are your owne.

Eubulus.

Loe here the perill that was erft forfene
When you,(O king)did firft deuide your Lande 135
And yelde your prefent raigne vnto your fonnes.
But nowe (O noble Prince)nowe is no time
To wayle and plaine, and waft your wofull lyfe,
Nowe is the time for prefent good aduife,
Sorowe doth darke the Iudgement of the wytte 140
The Hart vnbroken and the courage free
From feble faintnes of booteles difpaier
Doth either ryfe to fafetie or renowme
By noble valure of vnvanquiffhed minde
Or yet doth perifhe in more happie forte 145
Your Grace maye fende to either of your fonnes
Some one both wife and noble perfonage,
Which with good counfel & with weightie name
Of father fhall prefent before their eyes
Your heft,your liefeyour fafetie and their owne 150
The prefent mifchiefe of their deadlie ftrife
And in the while,affemble you the force
Whiche your Cōmaundement and the fpedie haft
Of all my Lordes here prefent can prepare:
The terrour of your mightie power fhall fteye 155

C.iiii,<r>

The

The Tragedie

The rage of bothe,or yet of one at left.

Nuntius.

O King the greateft griefe that euer Prince dyd
The euer wofull Meffenger did tell, (here
That euer wretched Lande hath fene before
I brynge to you.*Porrex* your yonger fonne 160
With foden force , inuaded hath the lande
That you to *Ferrex* did allotte to rule:
And with his owne moft bloudie hande he hath
His Brother flaine,and doth poffeffe his Realme.

Gorboduc.

O Heauē fend down the flames of your reuenge, 165
Deftroie I faie w^t flaffhe of wrekefull fier
The Traitour fonne, and than the wretched fire:
But let vs go,that yet perhappes I maye
Die with reuenge,and peaze the hatefull gods.

Chorus.

The luft of kingdomes knowes no facred faithe
No rule of Reason,no regarde of right
No kindlie loue,no feare of heauens wrathe:
But with contempt of Goddes, and mans defpite,
Through blodie flaughter doth prepare the waies 5
To fatall Scepter and accurfed reigne.
The fonne fo lothes the fathers lingerynge daies,
Ne dreads his hand in Brothers blode to ftaine
O wretched Prince,ne doeft thou yet recorde
The yet freffhe Murthers done within the Land^e 10
Of thie forefathers, when the cruell fworde
Bereft *Morgan* his liefe with Cofyns hande?
Thus fatall plagues purfue the giltie race
Whofe murderous hand imbrued w^t giltles blood

<C.iv.v>

Afkes

of Gorboduc.

Alkes vengeaunce before the heauens face, 15
With endles mischiefes on the curfed broode.
The wicked childe this bringes to wofull Sier
The mournfull plaintes to waft his wery life:
Thus do the cruell flames of Ciuyll fier
Destroye the parted reigne with hatefull ftrife 20
And hence doth fpring the well frō which doth flo:
The dead black freames of mournings, plaints &
(woe.

¶ The order and fignification of the
dōme fhewe before the fourth Acte.

¶ Firft the Muficke of Howeboies began to plaie,
duringe whiche there came forth from vnder the
Stage,as thoughe out of Hell three Furies. *A-*
lecto, Megera & Ctesiphone clad in blacke garments
fprinkled with bloud & flames, their bodies girt 5
with fnakes,their heds fspread with Serpents in
fteade of heare,the one bearinge in her hande a
Snake,the other a whip, & the thirde a burning
Firebrande:each driuyng before them a kynge
and a Queene, whiche moued by Furies vnna= 10
turallye had flaine their owne Children. The
names of the kinges & Queenes were thefe. *Tantalus, Medea, Athamas, Ino, Cambifes, Althea,* af=
ter that the Furies and thefe had paffed aboute
the Stage thrife, they departed & than the Mu= 15
ficke ceafed:hereby was fignified the vnnaturall
Murders to followe,that is to faie. *Porrex* flaine
by his owne Mother . And of king *Gorboduc* and
Queene *Viden*,killed by their owne Subiectes.

C.v.<r>

Actus

The Tragedie

Actus quartus. Scena prima.

Viden fola.

Viden.

V **Why should I lyue and lynger forth my time
In longer liefie to double my diftreffe?
O me moft wofull wight whome no mishap
Long ere this daie could haue bereued hence.
Mought not these handes by fortune or by fate, 5
Haue perft this breft and life with Iron reft,
Or in this Pallaice here where I fo longe
Haue spent my daies, could not that happie houre
Ones, ones haue hapt i which these hugie frames
With death by fall might haue oppreffed me 10
Or should not this moft hard and cruell foile,
So eft where I haue preft my wretched fteps
Somtyme had ruthe of myne accurfed liefie,
To rende in twaine and fwallowe me therin.
So had my bones poffeffed nowe in peace 15
Their happie graue within the clofed grounde
And greadie wormes had gnawen this pyned hart
Without my feelynge paine: So fhulde not nowe
This luyunge breft remayne the ruthefull tombe
Wherin my hart yelden to death is graued: 20
Nor driery thoughts with panges of pining grieffe
My dolefull minde had not afflicted thus,
O my beloued fonne: O my fwete childe,
My deare *Ferrex*, my loye, my lyues delyght.
Is my welbeloued fonne, is my fweete childe, 25
My deare *Ferrex*, my loye, my lyues delight**

<C.v.v>

Murdered

of Gorboduc.

Murdered with cruell death? O hatefull wretche,
O heynous Traytour bothe to heauen and earth,
Thou *Porrex* , thou this damned dede haft wrought
Thou *Porrex* ,thou shalt dearely aby the fame, 30
Traitor to kinne and kinde,to Sire and me,
To thyne owne fleſhe, and Traitour to thy ſelfe
The Gods on the in hell ſhall wreke their wrath,
And here in earth this hand ſhall take reuenge
On the *Porrex*,thou falſe and caytife wighte, 35
If after blode,ſo eigre were thy thirft
And Murderous minde had ſo poſſeſſed thee,
If ſuche hard hart of Rocke and ſtonie Flint
Lyued in thy breſt,that nothing elles could like
Thy cruell Tyrantes thought but death & bloode 40
Wild ſauage beaſts mought not y^e flaughter ferue
To fede thy gredie will,and in the myddefte
Of their entrailes to ſtaine thy deadlie handes
With blode deſerued,and drinke thereof thy fyll:
Or if nought els but death and bloud of man 45
Mought pleaſe thy luſt,could none in *Bryttain* land
Whoſe hart be torne out of his louyng breſt
With thine owne hand, or work what death thou
Suffice to make a Sacrifice to appeaze (woldeſt
That deadlie minde & murderous thought in the? 50
But he who in the ſelfe fame wombe was wrapped
Where thou in difmall hower receiuedſt life?
Or if nedes,nedes thie hand muſt flaughter make
Moughtſt thou not haue reached a mortall wound
And w^t thy ſworde haue perſed this curſed womb? 55
That the accurſed *Porrex* brought to lyght?
And geuen me a iuſt rewarde therfore.

<C.vi.r>

So

The Tragedie

So *Ferrex*,if fwete life mought haue enioyed
And to his aged father comfort brought,
wt some yong fonne in whom thei both might liue 60
But wherevnto waft I this ruthefull speche?
To the that haft thy brothers bloud thus shed
Shall I ftill think yt from this womb thou fprong?
That I thee bare? or take thee for my fonne?
No Traytour,no: I the refufe for mine, 65
Murderer I thee renounce,thou art not mine:
Neuer, O wretche,this wombe conceued thee,
Nor neuer bode I painefull throwes for thee:
Changeling to me thou art,and not my childe
Nor to no wight,that sparke of pytie knewe, 70
Rutheles,vnkind,Monfter of Natures worke.
Thou neuer fuckte the milke of womans breafte
But from thy birth the cruell Tigres teates
Haue nurfed,nor yet of fleffhe and bloud
Formed is thy hart,but of hard Iron wrought. 75
And wilde and defert woods breade thee to lyfe:
But canft thou hope to scape my iuft reuenge?
Or that thefe handes will not be wrooke on thee?
Doeft thou not knowe that *Ferrex* mother lyues
That loued him more dearelie then her felfe? 80
And doth fhe lyue,and is not venged on thee?

Actus quartus. Scena fecunda.

Gorboduc. Arostus Eubulus. Porrex. Marcella.

Gorboduc.

(ftaie

W E marueyle muche wherto this lingeryng

<C.vi.v>

Falles

of Gorboduc.

Falles out fo longe : *Porrex* vnto our Courte
By order of our Letters is retourned
And *Eubulus* receyued from vs by heft
At his arriuale here to geue him charge 5
Before our prefence freight to make repaire
And yet we haue no worde wherof he ftaies.

Arostus

Loe where he cōmes and *Eubulus* with hym.

Eubulus.

Accordynge to your highnes heft to me
Here haue I *Porrex* brought euen in fuche fort 10
As from his weried Horfe he did alighte ,
For that your Grace did will fuche hafte therein.

Gorboduc.

We like and praife this fpedie wyll in you
To worke the thing that to your charge we gaue
Porrex, if we fo farre fhulde fwarue from kinde, 15
And from thefe bounds which lawes of Nature fets
As thou haft done by vile and wretched deede
In cruell murder of thy Brothers life,
Our prefent hande coulede ftaie no lenger tyme,
But freight fhould bathe this blade in bloud of the 20
As iuft reuenge of thy detefted cryme.
No. we fhuld not offende the lawe of kinde,
If nowe this fworde of ours did flaie thee here:
For thou haft murdered him whose heinous death
Euen Natures force doth moue vs to reuenge 25
By bloud againe: But iuftice forceth vs
To meafure Death for Death , thy due deferte,
Yet fithens thou art our childe , and fithe as yet
In this harde cafe what worde thou canft alledge

<C.vii.r>

For

The Tragedie

For thy defence, by vs hath not ben harde 30
We are content to ftaie our wyll for that
Whiche Iuftice biddes vs prefently to worke:
And geue the leaue to vfe thie fpeache at full
If ought thou haue to laye for thine excufe.

Porrex.

Neither O kyng, I can or wyll denie 35
But that this hande from *Ferrex* lyfe hath reft:
Which fact how much my doleful hart doth waile
Oh would it mought as full appeare to fight
As inwarde grieffe doth powre it forth to me,
So yet perhappes if euer ruthefull hart 40
Melting in teares within a manlie breaft
Throughde depe repentaunce of his bloudie facte
If euer grieffe,if euer wofull man
Might moue regreite with forowe of his fault,
I thinke the torment of my mournefull cafe 45
Knownen to your grace,as I do feele the fame,
Woulde force euen wrath her felfe to pytie mee.
But as the water troubled with the mudde
Shewes not the face whiche els the eye fhulde fee,
Euen fo your Irefull minde with ftirred thought, 50
Can not fo perfectly difcerne my caufe.
But this vnhappe,amongft fo many heapes
I muft content me with , moft wretched man,
That to my felfe I muft referre my woe
In pynnye thoughts of myne accursed facte: 55
Sithens I may not fhewe here my fmalleft grieffe
Suche as it is,and as my breaft endures,
Whiche I efteme the greateft myferie
Of all mishappes that Fortune nowe can fende,

<C.vii.v>

Not

of Gorboduc.

Not that I reft in hope with plainte and teares 60
Should purchafe life:for to the Goddes I clepe
For true recorde of this my faithfull fpeache ,
Neuer this harte fhall haue the thoughtfull dreade
To die the death that by your Graces dome
By iuft defarte, fhall be pronounced to mee: 65
Nor neuer fhall this tongue ones fpend this fpeche
Pardon to craue,or feeke by fute to lyue:
I meane not this as though I were not touchde
With care of dreadfull death,or that I helde
Lyfe in contempt:but that I knowe,the mynde 70
Stoupes to no dreade,although the flefh be fraile,
And for my gilt,I yelde the fame fo great
As in my felfe I finde a feare to fue
For graunte of lyfe.

Gorboduc.

In vayne, O wretche thou fheweft
A wofull harte,*Ferrex* nowe lyes in graue, 75
Slaine by thy hande.

Porrex.

Yet this, O father, heare:
And than I ende:Your Maieftie well knowes,
That whan my Brother *Ferrex* and my felfe
By your owne heft were ioyned in gouernaunce
Of this your Graces Realme of *Brittayne* Lande 80
I neuer fought nor trauaylled for the fame,
Nor by my felfe,or by no frende I wrought,
But from your highnes will alone it fpronge ,
Of your moft gracious goodnes bent to me ,
But howe my Brothers hart euen than repined 85
With fwollen difdaine againft mine egal^l rule

<C.viii.r>

Seinge

The Tragedie

Seing that Realme, which by difcent shuld grow
Whollie to him,allotted halfe to me?
Euen in your highnes Court he nowe remaynes,
And with my Brother than in neareft place 90
Who can recorde,what prooffe therof was shewde
And how my brothers enuious hart appearde
Yet I that iudged it my parte to feeke
His fauour and good will,and lothe to make
Your highnes knowe, the thing which shuld haue 95
Grief to your grace,& your offēce to him (brought
Hopyng by earnest fuite shuld foone haue wonne
A louynge hart within a Brothers breft
Wrought in that forte that for a pleadge of loue
And faithfull hart,he gaue to me his hande. 100
This made me thinke,that he had baniffhed quite
All rancour from his thought and bare to me
Suche hartie loue,as I did owe to him:
But after once we left your Graces Court
And from your highnes prefence liued aparte 105
This egall rule ftill,ftill did grudge him fo
That nowe thofe Enuious sparkes which erft lay
In lyuing cinders of diffemblynge breft, (raked
Kindled fo farre within his hartes difdaine
That longer could he not refraine from prooffe 110
Of fecrete practife to depriue me life
By Poyfons force,and had bereft me fo,
If myne owne Seruaunt hired to this fact
And moued by trouthe w^t hate to worke the fame,
In time had not bewraied it vnto mee: 115
Whan thus I fawe the knot of loue vnknitte
All honeft League and faithfull promife broke

<C.viii.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The Lawe of kind and trothe thus rent in twaine
His hart on mifchiefe fet, and in his breft
Blacke treason hid then, then did I difpaier 120
That euer tyme coulde wyne him frende to me
Than fawe I howe he fmyled with flaying knife
Wrapped vnder cloke, then fawe I depe deceite
Lurke in his face and death prepared for mee:
Euen nature moued me than to holde my lyfe 125
More deare to me than his, and bad this hande
Since by his lyfe my death muft nedes enfue,
And by his death my lyfe to be preferued:
To fhed his bloud, and feeke my fafetie fo,
And wifdome willed me without protracte 130
In fpedie wife to put the fame in vre.
Thus haue I tolde the caufe that moued me
To worke my Brothers death and fo I yelde
My lyfe, my death to iudgement of your grace.

Gorboduc.

Oh cruell wight, fhulde any caufe preuaile 135
To make the ftaine thy hands with brothers blod
But what of thee we will refolue to doe
Shal yet remaine vnknown: Thou in the meane
Shalt from our royall prefence banyfhed be
Vntill our Princely pleafure further fhall 140
To the be fhewed, departe therfore our fight
Accurfed childe. What cruell deftenie
What frowarde fate hath forted vs this chaunce
That euen in thofe, where we fhuld comfort find
Where our delight nowe in our aged daies 145
Shulde reft and be, euen there our onelie griefe
And depeft forrowes to abridge our lief,

D.i.<r>

Moft

The Tragedie

Moft pynnyng cares and deadlie thoughts do graue.

Arostus.

(yours

Your Grace shuld now in these graue yeres of
Haue founde ere this the price of mortall loyes, 150
Howe fhorte they be, howe fadyng heare in earth
Howe full of chaunge,howe Brittle our eftate,
Of nothyng fure,faue onely of the Death,
To whome both man and all the worlde doth owe
Their ende at laft,neither shall natures power 155
In other forte againft your harte preuayle,
Than as the naked hande whofe ftroke affayes
The Armed breaft where force doth light in vaine

Gorboduc.

Many can yelde right graue and fage aduife
Of pacient fprite to others wrapped in woe, 160
And can in fpeache both rule and conquere kinde,
Who if by prooffe , they might feele natures force,
Wold fhewe them felues men as thei are in dede,
which now wil nedes be gods: but what doth me=
The fory chere of her that here doth come? (ane 165

Marcella.

Oh where is ruthe?or where is pytie nowe?
Whether is gentle harte and mercie fled?
Are they exiled out of our ftony breafte
Neuer to make retourne?is all the worlde
Drowned in bloode,and foncke in crueltie? 170
If not in women mercie maye be founde
If not(alas)within the mothers breft
To her owne childe,to her owne fleffhe and blood
If ruthe be baniffhed thence,if pytie there
Maye haue no place,if there no gentle harte 175

<D.i.v>

Do

of Gorboduc.

Do lyue and dwell, where shuld we seeke it than?

Gorboduc.

Madame(alas)what meanes your woful tale?

Marcella.

O fillie woman I,why to this howre,
Haue kinde and fortune thus deferred my breath?
That I shuld lyue to see this dolefull daye 180

Will euer wight beleue that suche harde harte
Coulede rest within the cruell mothers breafe,
With her owne hande to flaye her onely sonne?
But out (alas)these eyes behelde the fame,
They sawe the driery fight,and are become 185
Most ruthfull recordes of the bloodie facte.

Porrex,(alas)is by his mother flayne,
And with her hand a wofull thyng to tell,
While flomberinge on his carefull bed he restes
His hart ftalde in with kniefe is rest of life. 190

Gorboduc.

O *Eubulus*, oh drawe this fworde of ours,
And perce this hart with speede, O hatefull light,
O lothfome lief, O fweete and welcome Death,
Dere *Eubulus* worke this we thee befeche. 195

Eubulus.

Patient your Grace , perhappes he liueth yet ,
With wounde receued, but not of certayne death.

Gorboduc.

O let vs than repaier,vnto the place ,
And see if that *Porrex*, or thus be flaine.

Marcella.

Alas he liueth not,it is to true,
That with these eies of him a pereles Prince, 200

D.ii.<r> Sonne

The Tragedie

Sonne to a King, and in the flower of youth,
Euen with a twinke a cenfeles stocke I fawe.

Arostus

O dampned deed.

Marcella.

But heare this ruthefull ende.

The noble Prince perft with the fodeine wounde
Out of his wretched flombre haftelie ftarte 205
Whofe ftrēgth now failyng ftreight he ouerthrew
When in the fall his eyes euen newe vnclofed
Behelde the Quene and cryed to her for helpe
We then, alas, the Ladies whiche that tyme
Did there attende, feynge that heynous deede 210
And hearing him oft call the wretched name
Of mother, and to crie to her for Aide
Whofe direfull hand gaue him the mortal wound
Pitieng, (alas, for nought els could we do)
His ruthefull ende, ranne to the wofull bedde 215
Dispoyled ftreight his breft, and all we might
wyped in vaine with napkyns next at hande,
The fodeine ftreames of blood that flufhed fast
Out of the gaping wounde: O what a looke,
O what a ruthefull stedfast eye me thought 220
He fixed vpon my face, whiche to my deathe
Will neuer parte fro me, when with a braide
A deepe fet fig^he he gaue and therewith all
Clafpinge his handes, to heauen he caft his fight,
And ftreight pale death preffyng within his face 225
The flyinge ghofte his mortall corps forfooke.

Arostus.

Neuer did age bring forth fo vile a facte.

of Gorboduc.

Marcella.

O harde and cruell happe,that thus affigned
Vnto fo worthie a wighte fo wretched ende
But moft harde cruell harte,that coulde confent 230
To lende the hatefnll deftenies that hande
By whiche,alas,fo heynous cryme was wrought,
O Queene of Adamante, O Marble breafte
If not the fauour of his comelie face,
If not his Princelie chere and countenaunce, 235
His valiant Actiue Armes,his manlie breafte.
If not his faier and femelie perfonage
His noble Lymmes in fuche preparacion cafte
As would haue wrapped a fillie womans thought
If this mought not haue moued the bloodie harte 240
And that moft cruell hande the wretched weapon
Euen to let fall,and kifte him in the face,
With teares for ruthe to reauue fuche one by death
Should nature yet confent to flaye her fonne
O mother,thou to murder thus thie childe 245
Euen *loue* with Iuftice muft w^t lightning flames
From heauen fend down fome ftrange reuenge on
Ah noble Prince,how oft haue I beheld (thee.
Thee mounted on thy fierce and traumpling ftede
Shyning in Armour bright before the Tylte 250
And with thy Miftrefse Sleauie tied on thy Helme
And charge thy ftaffe to please thy Ladies eie
That bowed the head peece of thy frendly foe,
Howe oft in Armes on horfe to bende the Mace
Howe oft in Armes on foote to breake the fworde, 255
Whiche neuer nowe thefe eyes may f// againe.

D.iii.<r>

////us

The Tragedie

Arostus.

Madame, alas, in vaine these plaints are fhed,
Rather with me departe and helpe to affwage,
The thoughtfull griefes that in the aged kinge
Muft nedes by nature growe by death of this 260
His onelie fonne, whome he did holde fo deare.

Marcella.

What wight is that whiche fawe that I did fee
And could refraine to waile with plainte & teares
Not I, alas, that harte is not in me,
But let vs goe, for I am greued anewe, 265
To call to minde the wretched fathers woe.

Chorus.

Whan gredie luft in Royall feate to reigne
Hath reft all care of goddess and eke of men,
And cruell hart, wrathe, Treafon and difdaine
Within the ambitious breaft are lodged then
Beholde howe mifchiefe wide her felfe difplaies 5
And with the brothers hande the brother flaies.

When blood thus fhed, doth ftaine this heauens
Crying to *Ioue* for vengeance of the deede, (face
The mightie God euen moueth from his place
With wrathe to wreke, then fendes he forth with 10
The dreadful furies, daughters of y^e night (fpede
With Serpents girt, carying the whip of Ire,
With heare of ftinging fnakes and fhining bright
With flames and blood, and with a brande of fire:
These for reuenge of wretched Murder done 15
Do make the Mother kill her onelie fonne.

<D.iii.v>

Blode

of Gorboduc.

Blood asketh blood,& death muft death requite
loue by his iuft and euerlafting dome
Iuftly hath euer fo requited it
Thefe times before recorde,and tymes to come, 20
Shall finde it true,and fo doth prefent prooffe,
Prefent before our eies for our behoofe.

O happie wight that fuffres not the fnare
Of murderous minde to tangle him in bloode:
And happie he that can in time beware 25
By others harmes and tourne it to his goode
But wo to him that fearing not to offende
Doth ferue his luft,and will not fee the ende.

¶ The order and fignification of the
dōme fhewe before the fifthe Acte.

¶ Firfte the Drommes and Fluites , beganne to
founde,duryng which there came fourth vpon
the Stage a companie of Hargabufiers and of
Armed men all in order of Battaile . Thefe
after their Peeeces difcharged , and that the Ar= 5
med men had three tymes marched aboute the
Stage, departed, and then the Drommes and
Fluits did ceafe.Hereby was fignified tumults,
rebellions , Armes and ciuyll warres to folowe,
as fel in the Realme of great *Brittayne* , which by 10
the fpace of fiftie yeares and more continued in
ciuyll warre betwene the Noblytie after the
death of king *Gorboduc*,& of his Iffues,for wante
D.iiii. of

The Tragedie

of certayne lymitacion in the Succession of the
Crowne,till the time of *Dunwalle Molmutius*, 15
who reduced the Lande to Monarchie.

Actus quintus. Scena prima.

Clotyn. Mandud. Gwenard. Fergus. Eubulus.

Clotyn.

D Id euer age bring forth fuch Tirants hartes
The Brother hath bereft the Brothers lyfe,
The Mother she hath died her cruell handes
In bloud of her owne fonne,and nowe at laft
The people loe forgettyng trouthe and loue, 5
Contemnyng quite both Lawe and loyall harte
Euen they haue flayne their foueraigne Lord and

Mandud. (Quene.

Shall this their trayterous crime vnpunished reft
Euen yet they ceafe not,caryed out with rage,
In their rebellious routes,to threaten ftill 10
A newe bloode shedde vnto the Princes kinne
To flaie them all,and to vproote the race
Both of the kyng and Queene, fo are they moued
With *Porrex* deathe,wherin they falsely charge
The gittles kinge without defarte at all 15
And traiterouflie haue murdered him therfore,
And eke the Queene.

Gwenard.

Shall Subiectes dare with force
To worke reuenge vpon their Princes facte?
Admyt the worft that maye:as fure in this

<D.vi.v>

The

of Gorboduc.

The dede was fowle, the Quene to flaie her fonne 20
Shall yet the Subiecte feeke to take the fworde?
Arife agaynft his Lorde, and flaie his kynge?
O wretched ftate, where thofe rebellious hartes
Are not rent out euen from their lyuyng breafte
And with the bodie throwen vnto the Fowles 25
As Carrion foode, for terrour of the reft.

Fergus.

There can no puniffment be thought to greate
For this fo greuous cryme: let fpede therfore
Be vfed therin for it behoueth fo.

Eubulus.

Ye all my Lordes I fee confent in one 30
And I as one confent with ye in all:
I holde it more than nede with the fharpeft Lawe
To puniffhe the tumultuous bloodie rage
For nothyng more maye fhake the cōmen ftate
Than fufferaunce of Uproares without redrefte 35
Wherby how fome kingdomes of mightie power
After great Conqueftes made, and flōrifhing
In fame and wealth haue ben to ruyne brought
I praie to *Ioue* that we may rather wayle
Suche happe in them than witnes in our felues 40
Eke fullie with the Duke my minde agrees
That no caufe ferues, wherby the Subiect maye
Call to accompt the doynge of his Prince,
Muche leffe in bloode by fworde to worke reuenge
No more then maye the hande cut of the heade, 45
In Acte nor fpeache, no: not in fecrete thoughte
The Subiect maye rebell agaynft his Lorde
Or Iudge of him that fittes in *Ceafars* Seate.

D v. <r>

With

The Tragedie

With grudging mind do damne those Hemiflikes
Though kinges forget to gouerne as they ought, 50
Yet Subiectes must obey as they are bounde :
But nowe my Lordes before ye farther wade
Or spend your speech, what sharp reuenge shall fall
By iustice plague on these rebellious wights
Me thinkes ye rather should first searche the waye 55
By which in time the rage of this uproare
Mought be repressed, & these great tumults ceased
Euen yet the life of *Brittayne* Lande doth hang,
In Traitors Balance of vnegall weight
Thinke not my Lords the death of *Gorboduc* 60
Nor yet *Videnaes* blood will cease their rage:
Euen our owne lyues, our wiues and children,
Our Countrey dearest of all in daunger standes,
Nowe to be spoiled, nowe, nowe made defolate,
And by our felues a conquest too enfue: 65
For geue ones sweye vnto the peoples lusts,
To ruffe forth on, and staye them not in time,
And as the stream that rowleth downe the hylle,
So wil thei headlong runne w^t raging thoughtes
From blood to blood, from mischief vnto moe, 70
To ruine of the Realme, them felues and all
So giddie are the common peoples mindes,
So glad of change, more waueryng than the Sea
Ye see (my Lordes) what strength these Rebelles
What huge nombre is assembled still, (haue, 75
For though the traitorous fact, for which thei rose
Be wrought and done, yet lodge thei still in field
So that howe farre their furies yet will stretch
Great cause we haue to drede, that we may seeke
By present Battaille to repress their power. 80

<D.v.v>

of Gorboduc.

Speede muft we vse to leuie force therefore,
For either they forthwith will mischiefe worke
Or their rebellious roares forthwith will cease:
These violent thinges may haue no lafting loude
Let vs therefore vse this for present helpe 85
Perfwade by gentle fpeache, and offre grace
With gifte of pardon faue vnto the chiefe,
And that vpon condicion that forthewith
They yelde the Captaines of their enterpryse
To beare fuche querdon of their traiterous facte 90
As may be both due vengeance to them felues,
And holosome terrour to posteritie.
This fhall I thinke: flatter the greateft parte
That nowe are holden with defire of home,
Wered in fielde with could of Winters nightes, 95
And fome(no doubt)striken with dread of Lawe
Whan this is ones proclaymed,it fhall make
The Captaines to miftrufte the multitude
Whofe fafetie biddes them to betraye their heads
And fo muche more bycaufe the rafcall routes , 100
In thinges of great and perillous attemptes,
Are neuer truftie to the noble race.
And while we treat & scande on termes of grace,
We fhall both ftaie their furies rage the while,
And eke gaine time,whofe onely helpe fufficeth 105
Withouten warre to vanquiffhe Rebelles power
In the meane while,make you in redynes
Suche bande of Horfemen as ye maye prepare:
Horfemen(you know)are not the Comons strēgth
But are the force and ftore of noble men 110
Wherby the vnchofen and vnarmed forte

<D.vi.r>

Of

The Tragedie

Of fki^aifhe Rebelles,whome none other power
But nombre makes to be of dreadfull force
With fodeyne brunt maye quickly be opprefte
And if this gentle meane of proffered grace 115
With stubborne hartes cannot fo farre auayle
As to affwage their desperate courages.
Than do I wiffhe fuche fllaughter to be made,
As prefent age and eke pofteritie
Maye be adrad with horroure of reuenge, 120
That iuftly than fhall on thefe rebelles fall:
This is my Lordes the fōme of mine aduife.

Clotyn.

Neyther this cafe admittes debate at large,
And though it did:this fpeache that hath ben faide
Hath wel abridged the tale I would haue tolde: 125
Fullie with *Eubulus* do I confente
In all that he hath faide:and if the fame
To you my Lordes,may feeme for beft aduife,
I wiffhe that it fhoulde freight be put in vre.

Mandud.

My Lordes than let vs prefentlie departe 130
And folowe this that lyketh vs fo well.

Fergus.

If euer time to gaine a kingdome here
Were offred man, nowe it is offred mee:
The Realme is reft bothe of their kyng & Quene
The offspringe of the Prince is flaine and dead 135
No iffue nowe remaines,the Heire vnknownen,
The people are in Armes and mutynies
The Nobles thei are bufied howe to ceafe
Thefe great rebellious tumultes and vproars

<D.vi.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

And *Brittayne* Lande nowe deferte left alone 140
Amyd these broyles vncertaine where to reft
Offers her felfe vnto that noble harte
That wyll or dare purfue to beare her Crowne:
Shall I that am the Duke of *Albanye*
Difcended from that Lyne of noble bloode, 145
Whiche hath fo longe flourifhed in worthie fame
Of valiaunt hartes, fuche as in noble Breafts
Of right fhulde reft aboute the bafer forte,
Refufe to aduenture liefte to winne a Crowne,
Whome fhall I finde enemies that will w^tftande 150
My facte herein, if I attempte by Armes
To feeke the Fame nowe in these times of broyle
These Dukes power can hardlie well appeafe
The people that alredie are in Armes.
But if perhappes my force be ones in fielde 155
Is not my ftrengh in power aboute the beft
Of all these Lordes nowe left in *Brittaine* Lande.
And though they fhuld match me w^t power of men
Yet doubtfull is the chaunce of Battailles ioyned
If Victors of the fielde we may departe, 160
Ours is the Scepter than of great *Brittayne*,
If flayne amid the playne this body be
Mine enemies yet fhall not deny me this,
But that I died gyuyng the noble charge
To hazarde life for conquest of a Crowne. 165
Forthwith therefore will I in poftte depart
To *Albanye* and raife in Armour there
All power I can: and here my fecrete friendes,
By fecrete practife fhall follicite ftill,
To feeke to wyne to me the peoples hartes. 170

<D.vii.r>

Actus

The Tragedie

Actus quintus. Scena secunda.

Eubulus. Clotyn. Mandud. Gwenard. Arostus Nuntius.

Eubulus.

O *Ioue*, Howe are these peoples hartes abufde
what blind Furie,thus headlong caries thē?
That though fo many bokes, fo many rolles
Of Auncient time recorde what greuous plagues,
Light on these Rebelles aye and thoughe fo ofte 5
Their eares haue hard their aged fathers tell
What iust rewarde these Traitours ftil receyue.
Yea though them felues haue fene depe death and
By ftrangling cord & flaughter of the fword (blod
To fuche affigned,yet can they not beware: 10
Yet can they not ftaie their rebellious handes,
But fuffring to fowle treafon to diftaine
Their wretched myndes,forget their loyall harte,
Reiecte all trueth and rife againft their Prince,
A ruthefull cafe that thofe, whome duties bounde 15
Whome grafted Lawe by nature trueth and faith
Bounde to preferue their Coūtrei and their king
Borne to defende their Cōmon wealth & Prince,
Euen they fhulde geue confent thus to fubuerte
The *Brittaine Land*,& from the wombehuld bring 20
(O natyue foile)thofe,that will nedes deftroie
And ruyne thee and eke them felues in fine:
For lo,when ones the Duke had offred Grace
Of pardon fweete(the multitude miflead
By traiterous fraude of their vngracious heades) 25
One forte that fawe the daungerous fucceffe

<D.vii.v>

Of

of Gorboduc.

Of stubborne standynge in rebellious warre
And knewe the difference of Princes power
From headles nombre of tumultuous routes,
Whom cōmen Countreies care and priuate feare 30
Taught to repent the terrour of their rage
Laide handes vpon the Capatines of their bande,
And brought them bound vnto the mightie Dukes
An other forte not trustyng yet so well
The trueth of Pardon or miftrustyng more 35
Their owne offence than that thei could conceiue
Such hope of pardon for so foule misdede:
Or for that they their Captaines could not yeld
Who fearinge to be yelded, flead before,
Stale home by scilence of the secrete night, 40
The thirde vnhappie and vnraged forte
Of desperate harts, who stained in Princes blood
From trayterous furour could not be withdrawen
By loue, by lawe, by grace, ne yet by feare,
By proffered lyfe, ne yet by threatened Death, 45
With mindes hopeles of lief, dreadles of Deathe,
Careles of Countrey, and aweles of God:
Stoode bente to fighte as Furies did them moue
With violent death to clofe their traiterous lyfe:
These all by power of Horsfemen were opprest 50
And with reuenging fworde flayne in the fielde,
Or with the strangling Cord hanged on the trees
Where yet the carryen Carcafes do proche
The fruites that Rebelles reape of their vproars,
And of the murder of their sacred Prince, 55
But loe, where do approche the noble Dukes,
By whom these tumults haue ben thus appeafde.

<D.viii.r>

Clotyn.

The Tragedie

Clotyn.

I thinke the worlde wyll now at length beware
And feare to put on armes agaynft their Prince.

Mandud.

If not: thofe trayterous hartes that dare rebell 60
Let them beholde the wide and hugie fieldes
With bloode & bodie fspread with rebelles flayne,
The luftie trees clothed with corpfes dead
That ftrangled with the corde do hange therin.

Arostus.

A iuft rewarde fuche as all tymes before 65
Haue euer lotted to thofe wretched folks.

Gwenard.

But what meanes he that cōmeth here fo faft.

Nuntius.

My Lords,as duetie and my trouth doth moue
And of my Countrey worke and care in mee
That if the fpendynge of my breath auaille 70
To do the Seruice that my harte defires,
I would not fhunne to imbrace a prefent death,
So haue I nowe in that wherein I thought
My trauayle mought perfourme fome good effecte
Ventred my liefe to bringe thefe tydings here. 75

Fergus the mightie Duke of Albanye

Is nowe in Armes and lodgeth in the fielde
With twentie thoufand men,hether he bendes
His fpedie marche,& minds to inuade the Crowne
Dayly he gathereth ftrength and fspreads abrode 80
That to this Realme no certeine Heire remaines,
That *Brittayne* Lande is left without a guyde,
That he the Scepter feeke,for nothing els

<D.viii.v>

But

of Gorboduc.

But to preferue the people and the Lande
Whiche now remaine as ship without a Sterne 85
Loe this is that whiche I haue hereto faide.

Clotyn.

Is this his fayth?and fhall he falfely thus
Abufe the vauntage of vnhappie times?
O wretched Lande,if his outragious pride,
His cruell and vntempred wilfulnes 90
His deepe diffemblinge fhewes of falfe pretence
Should once attaine the Crowne of *Brittayne* lande
Let vs my Lords,with tymely force refift
The newe attempt of this our cōmon foe
As we would quenche the flames of cōmen fire. 95

Mandud.

Though we remaine without a certayn Prince
To weld the Realme or guide the wandring rule
Yet nowe the cōmen Mother of vs all ,
Our Natiue Lande,our Countrey that conteines
Our wiues,children,kyndred,our felues and all 100
That euer is or maye be deare to man
Cries vnto vs to helpe our felues and her:
Let vs aduaunce our powers to repreffe
This growynge foe of all our liberties.

Gwenard.

Yea let vs fo my Lordes with haftie fpede, 105
And ye (O Goddes)fende vs the welcome death,
To fhed our bloode in fielde and leaue vs not,
In lothefome life to lenger out our lyues
To fee the hugie heapes of thefe vnhappes,
That nowe roll downe vpon the wretched Lande 110
Where emptie place of Princelie gouernaunce

E.i.<r>

No

The Tragedie

No certayne ftaie nowe left of doubtles heire,
Thus leaue this guideleffe Realme an open pray,
To endleffe stormes and waft of ciuyll warre.

Arostus.

That ye (my Lordes)do fo agree in one 115
To faue your Countrey from the violent reigne
And wrongfullie vfurped Tirrannie
Of him that threatens conquest of you all
To faue your realme, & in this realme your felues
From forreyne thraldome of fo proude a Prince, 120
Muche do I praife, and I befeche the Goddes,
With happie honour to requite it you.
But (O my Lords) fithe now the Heauens wrath
Hath reft this Lande the iffue of their Prince:
Sithe of the body of our late foueraine Lorde 125
Remaines no mo, fince the yong kinges be flaine
And of the Title of the difcended Crowne,
Vncerteynly the diuerfe mindes do thinke
Euen of the Learned forte, and more vncertainlye
Will perciall fancie and affection deeme: 130
But moft vncertenlye wyll clymbynge pride
And hope of Reigne withdrawe frō fondrie partes
The doubtfull right and hopefull luft to reigne.
When ones this noble feruice is atchieued
For *Brittayne* Lande the Mother of ye all, 135
When ones ye haue with armed force repreft,
The proude attemptes of this *Albanyan* Prince,
That threatens thraldome to your Natiue Lande,
When ye fhall vanquifhers retourne from fielde
And finde the Princely ftate an open praye, 140
To gredie luft and to vfurping power,

<E.i.v>

Then

of Gorboduc.

Then,then (my Lordes)if euer kindly care
Of auncient Honour of your auncestoures,
Of present wealth and nobleffe of your stockes:
Yea of the lyues and safetie yet to come 145
Of your deare wyues, your children & your felues,
Might moue your noble hartes with gentle ruthe,
Then,then haue pytie on the torne eftate,
Then helpe to falue the well neare hopeles fore
Whiche ye shall do,if ye your felues with holde 150
The fleayng knife from your own mothers throte
Her shall you faue,and you,and yours in her
If ye shall all with one affent forbear
Ones to laye hande or take vnto your felues
The Crowne by colour of pretended right, 155
Or by what other meanes fo euer it be
Tyll first by cōmen counfell of you all
In Parliament the Regall Diademe
Be fet in certayne place of gouernaunce,
In whiche your Parliament and in your choife, 160
Preferre the right(my Lordes,)without respecte
Of strength of frendes,or what fo euer cause
That maye fet forwarde any others parte,
For right will laft ,and wrong can not endure,
Right meane I his or hers,vpon whose name 165
The people rest by meane of Natiue lyne,
Or by the vertue of some former Lawe,
Alreadie made their title to aduaunce:
Suche one (my Lordes)let be your chofen kyng
Suche one fo borne within your Natyue Lande 170
Suche one preferre,and in no wise ad^mitte,
The heaue yoke of forreine gouernaunce,

E.ii.<r>

Let

The Tragedie

Let forreine Titles yelde to Publike wealthe,
And with that hart wherewith ye nowe prepare
Thus to withftande the proude inuadyng foe, 175
With that fame harte(my Lordes)kepe out alfo
Vnnaturall thraldome of ftraungers reigne,
Ne fuffre you againft the rules of kinde
Your Mother Lande to ferue a Forreine Prince.

Eubulus .

¶Loe here the ende of *Brutus* royall Lyne, 180
And loe the entrie to the wofull wracke
And vtter ruyne of this noble Realme.
The royall kinge,and eke his fonnes are flaine,
No Ruler refetes within the Regall Seate :
The Heire,to whō the Scepter longs, vnknownen 185
That to eche 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 gredie minde at home
Whom blinded luft to reigne leads to aspire. 190
Loe *Brittaine* Realme is left an open praye,
A prefent fpoile by Conqueft to enfue,
Who feeth not nowe howe many rifyng mindes
Do feede their thoughts,w^t hope to reach a Realm
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 Royal crown wil want no right
Nor fuche as fhall difplaye by longe difcent
A lyneall race to proue him felfe a kynge, 200
In the meane while thefe ciuyll armes fhall rage,
And thus a thoufande mifchiefes fhall vnfolde

<E.ii.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

And farre & neare fspread thee (O *Brittayne Lande*)
All right and Lawe fhall ceafe,and he that had
Nothyng to daye,to morowe fhall enioye 205
Great heapes of good, & he that flowed in wealth,
Loe he fhall be reft of lyfe and all,
And happieft he that than poffeffeth leaft.
The wyues fhall fuffre rape,the maydes defloured
And children fatherles fhall weepe and wayle: 210
With fire & fworde thy Natiue folke fhall periffhe.
One kinfman fhall bereaue an other life,
The father fhall vnwittyng flaye the fonne ,
The fonne fhall flea the fire and knowe it not :
Women and maides the cruell Souldiours fword 215
Shall perfe to death,and fillie children loe
That playinge in the ftreates & fieldes are founde
By violent hande fhall clofe their latter daye.
Whome fhall the ferce and bloudie Souldiour
Referue to liefе,whome fhall he fpare from death 220
Euen thou(O wretched mother)half alyue
Thou fhalt beholde thy deare and onely childe
Slaine w^t the fworde while he yet fuckes thy brest:
Loe, giltles bloode fhall thus eche where be shed:
Thus fhall the wafted foile yelde forth no fruite 225
But dert h and famyne fhall poffeffe the Lande.
The Townes fhall be confumed & brent with fire,
The peopled Cities fhall ware defolate,
And thou(O *Brittaine Land*) whilom in renowme
Whilome in wealth and fame fhalt thus be torne, 230
Difmembred thus,and thus be rent in twayne,
Thus wafted and defaced, fpoiled and deftroied:
Thefe be the fruits your ciuill warres wil bring.

E.ijj.<r>

Hereto

The Tragedie

Hereto it cōmes when kinges will not confent,
To graue aduife, but folow wilfull wyll : 235
This is the ende, when in yonge Princes hartes
Flattery preuayles, and fage rede hath no place:
Thefe are the plages, when murder is the meane
To make newe Heires vnto the Royall Crowne.
Thus wreke the Gods, whē y^e the mothers wrath 240
Nought but y^e blood of her owne child may fwage.
Thefe mifchiefes fprings whē Rebelles wil arife,
To worke reuenge and iudge their Princes facte:
This, this enfues when noble men do faile
In loyall trouthe, and fubiectes will be kinges. 245
And this doth growe when loe vnto the Prince,
Whome death or fodene happe of liefē bereaues,
No certayne Heire remaines, fuche certentie
As not all onely is the rightfull Heire,
But to the Realme is fo made vnknownen to be 250
And trouthe therby vefted in Subiectes hartes,
To owe faith there, where right is knownen to reft
Alas, in Parliament what hope can bee,
When is of Parliament no hope at all,
Whiche thoughe it be affembled by confent, 255
Yet is it not likely with confent to ende:
While eche one for him felfe, or for his frende
Againft his foe, fhall trauaile what he maye,
While nowe the ftate left open to the man,
That fhall with greateft force inuade the fame, 260
Shall fill ambitious minds with gapynge hope:
When will they ones with yelding harts agree?
Or in the while, howe shall the Realme be vfed?
No, no: then Parliament fhould haue ben holden

<E.iii.v>

And

of Gorboduc.

And certaine Heires appoynted to the Crowne 265
To ftaie their title of eſtabliſhed righte:
And plant the people in obedience
While yet the Prince did liue , whofe name and
By lawfull Sōmons and auctorytie (power
Might make a Parliament to be of force, 270
And might haue fet the ftate in quiet ftaye:
But nowe(O happie man)whome ſpedie death
Depriues of lyfe,ne is enforced to fee
Theſe hugie miſchiefes and theſe miferies,
Theſe ciuyll wars , theſe murders & theſe wrongs 275
Of Iuſtice,yet muſt *loue* in fyne reſtore
This noble Crowne vnto the lawfull Heire:
For right will alwayes liue, and rife at lengthe,
But wronge can neuer take deepe roote to laſt.

¶ The ende of the Tagedie
of Kynge *Gorboduc*.

{illustration}

<E.iv.r>