

Sir David Lyndsay, *The Dreme*
(Extract)

The poem is addressed to the young King James V, written about 1526 when he was 14 years old. The poet, in a dream, meets Lady Remembrance, who takes him on a tour of the whole universe, finally, after some 800 lines, reaching Lyndsay's home country of Scotland.

Full text in *Sir David Lyndsay: Selected Poems*, ed Janet Hadley Williams. Glasgow: ASLS, 2000. This extract begins at line 785.

1	<p>Quhen this lufesum lady Rememberance All this foresaid had gart me understand, I prayit hir, of hir benevolence, To schaw to me the countre of Scotland. 'Weill, sonne' (scho said), 'that sall I tak on hand.' So, suddanlie scho brocht me, in certane, Ewin juste abone the braid yle of Bertane,</p>	<p><i>lovely made</i></p> <p><i>show she, shall, take she, brought Directly above, broad, isle of Britain Western sea</i></p>
8	<p>Quhilk standis northwest, in the Occiane see, And devydit in famous regionis two, The south part, Ingland, ane full ryche countre, Scotland, be north, with mony ylis mo. Be west Ingland, Yriland doith stand, also, Quhose properteis I wyll nocht tak on hand To schaw at lenth, bot only of Scotland.</p>	<p><i>many more islands to the West of, Ireland</i></p> <p><i>show at length</i></p>
OF THE REALME OF SCOTLAND.		
15	<p>Quhilk, efter my sempyll Intandiment, And as Remymbrance did to me report, I sall declare the suith and verrayment, As I best can, and in to termes schort. Quharfor, effecteouslie I yow exhorte, Quhowbeit my wrytting be nocht tyll auance, Yit, quhare I faill, excuse myne Ignorance.</p>	<p><i>simple understanding</i></p> <p><i>shall, truth briefly earnestly Although, is not to be praised</i></p>
22	<p>Quhen that I had oversene this regioun, The quhilk, of nature, is boith gude and fair, I did propone ane lytill questioun, Beseikand hir the sam for to declare. 'Quhat is the cause our boundis bene so bair?' Quod I: 'Or quhat dois mufe our miserie? Or quhareof dois proceid our povertie?'</p>	<p><i>propose Beseeking, same lands, bare cause</i></p>
29	<p>'For, throw the supporte of your hie prudence, Off Scotland I persave the properteis, And, als, considderis, be experience, Off this countre the gret commoditeis. First, the haboundance of fyschis in our seis,</p>	<p><i>great wisdom perceive also, by advantages abundance, seas</i></p>

	And fructuall montanis for our bestiall; And, for our cornis, mony lusty vaill;	<i>fertile mountains, cattle fine valleys</i>
36	‘The ryche ryveris, plesand and proffitabyll; The lustie loochis, with fysche of sindry kyndis; Hountyng, halkyng, for nobyllis conuenabyll; Forrestis full of da, ra, hartis, and hyndis; The fresche fontanis, quhose holesum cristel strandis Refreschis so the fair fluriste grene medis: So laik we no thyng that to nature nedis.	<i>fine lochs, fish, various kinds hunting, hawking, suitable does, roe deer, harts, hinds wholesome, crystal, streams flourishing, meadows lack, is necessary to nature</i>
43	‘Off euery mettell we have the ryche mynis, Baith gold, syluer, and stonis precious. Howbeit we want the spyces and the wynis, Or uther strange fructis delycious, We have als gude, and more neidfull for ws. Meit, drynk, fyre, clathis, thar mycht be gart abound, Quhilkis ellis is nocht in al the Mapamound;	<i>metal, mines Both Although, lack fruits as good, desirable for us Food, clothes, could be made plentiful, more than in the whole world</i>
50	‘More fairer peple, nor of gretar ingyne, Nor of more strenth gret dedis tyll indure. Quharefor, I pray yow that ye wald defyne The principall cause quharefor we ar so pure; For I marvell gretlie, I yow assure, Considerand the peple and the ground, That ryches suld nocht in this realme redound.’	<i>inventiveness to undertake explain why we are so poor should, be plentiful</i>
57	‘My Sonne’, scho said, ‘by my discretioun, I sall mak answeir, as I understand. I say to the, under confessioun, The falt is nocht, I dar weill tak on hand, Nother in to the peple nor the land. As for the land, it lakis na uther thing Bot laubour and the pepyllis gouernyng.’	<i>judgement under the seal of confession fault, dare well assert Neither needs no work, government of the people</i>
64	‘Than quharein lyis our inprosperitie?’ Quod I. ‘I pray yow hartfullie, Madame, Ye wald declare to me the veritie; Or quho sall beir of our barrat the blame? For, be my treuth, to se I thynk gret schame So plesand peple, and so fair ane land, And so few verteous dedis tane on hand.’	<i>lies, lack of prosperity heartily would bear, distress on my honour, see taken in hand</i>
71	Quod scho: ‘I sall, efter my jugement, Declare sum causis, in to generall, And, in to termes schorte, schaw myne intent, And, syne, transcend more in to speciall. So, this is myne conclusioun fynall: Wantyng of justice, polycie, and peace,	<i>show some general reasons briefly, show what I mean move to more particular issues Lack, policy</i>

	Ar cause of thir vnhappynes, allace!	<i>this</i>
78	‘It is deficill ryches tyll incres, Quhare polycie makith no residence, And policey may never have entres, Bot quhare that justice dois delygence To puneis quhare thare may be found offence. Justice may nocht have dominatioun, Bot quhare peace makis habitatioun.’	<i>difficult, wealth, to increase policy, makes entry Except where justice is diligent punish authority Except where peace lives</i>
85	‘Quhat is the cause, that wald I vnderstand, That we sulde want justice and polycie More than dois France, Italie, or England? Madame’, quod I, ‘schaw me the veritie: Sen we haue lawis in to this countre, Quhy want we lawis exersitioun? Quho suld put justice tyll exicutioun?’	<i>would should lack does show me the truth Since, laws lack the application of law should put justice into practice</i>
92	‘Quhare in dois stand our principall remeid? Or quha may mak mendis of this myscheif?’ Quod scho: ‘I fynd the falt in to the heid; For thay in quhome dois ly our hole releif, I fynd thame rute and grund of all our greif. For, quhen the heddis ar nocht delygent, The membris man, on neid, be necligent.	<i>does, remedy who can amend this evil find the fault is at the head does lie, whole relief root and ground heads are not diligent limbs must, necessarily, be deficient</i>
99	‘So, I conclude, the causis principall Off all the trubyll of this natioun Ar in to prencis, in to speciall, The quhilkis hes the gubernatioun, And of the peple dominatioun, Quhose contynewall exersitioun Sulde be in justice exicutioun.	<i>chief causes trouble Are especially in the princes which have the government and rule of the people, whose continual exercise should be in the execution of justice</i>
106	‘For, quhen the sleuthful hird dois sloug and sleip, Taking no cure in kepyng of his floke, Quho wyll go sers amang sic heirdis scheip, May, habyll, fynd mony pure scabbit crok, And goyng wyll at large, withouttin lok. Than Lupis cumis, and Lowrance, in ane lyng, And dois, but reuth, the sely scheip dounthryng.	<i>the lazy shepherd is slothful care, flock search, such a shepherd’s sheep perhaps, poor scabby old ewe wandering about without guard Wolf, Fox, directly without pity, throw down the poor sheep</i>
113	‘Bot the gude hird, walkryfe and delygent, Doith so, that all his flokis ar rewlit rycht, To quhose quhissill all ar obedient. And, geue the wolffis cumis, daye or nycht, Thame to devore, than ar thay put to flycht, Houndit, and slane be thare weill dantit doggis: So ar thay sure, baith yowis, lambis, & hoggis.	<i>good shepherd, wakeful Acts so that, flocks, well guided whose whistle if, come devour, put to flight Pursued, slain by, well-trained safe, ewes, young sheep</i>

<p>120</p> <p>127</p>	<p>‘So, I conclude that, throw the necligence Off our infatuate heidis insolent, Is cause of all this realmes indigence, Quhilkis in justice hes nocht bene delygent, Bot to gude counsall inobedient, Havand small ee unto the comoun weill, Bot to thare singulare proffect euerilk deill.</p> <p>‘For, quhen thir wolffis, be oppressioun, The pure peple but piete doith oppres, Than sulde the prencis mak punisioun, And cause tha rebauldis for to mak redres, That ryches mycht be, and policey incret. Bot rycht difficill is to mak remeid, Quhen that the falt is so in to the heid.’</p>	<p><i>foolish, leaders, arrogant poverty Who[ie. the leaders], haven't been But Paying little heed to the common good, but only to their personal profit. these, by poor, without pity should, princes, punish those, ruffians, make redress</i></p> <p><i>remedy fault, head</i></p>
<p>THE COMPLAYNT OF THE COMOUN WEILL OF SCOTLAND.</p>		
<p>134</p> <p>141</p> <p>148</p> <p>155</p>	<p>And, thus as we wer talking to and fro, We saw a boustius berne cum ovir the bent, But hors, on fute, als fast as he mycht go, Quhose rayment wes all raggit, rewin, & rent, With visage leyne, as he had fastit Lent: And fordwart fast his wayis he did advance, With ane rycht malancolious countynance,</p> <p>With scrip on hip, and pyikstaff in his hand, As he had purposit to passe fra hame. Quod I: ‘Gude man, I wald faine vnderstand, Geve that ye plesit, to wyt quhat wer your name.’ Quod he: ‘My Sonne, of that I think gret schame; Bot, sen thow wald of my name have ane feill, Forsuith, thay call me Jhone the Comoun Weill.’</p> <p>‘Schir Commoun Weill, quho hes yow so disgysit?’ Quod I: ‘Or quhat makis yow so miserabyll? I haue marvell to se yow so supprysit, The quhilk that I have sene so honorabyll. To all the warld ye have bene proffitabyll, And weill honorit in everilk natioun: How happinnis, now, your tribulatioun?’</p> <p>‘Allace,’ quod he, ‘Thow seis how it dois stand With me, and quhow I am disherisit Off all my grace, and mon pas of Scotland, And go, afore quhare I was cherisit. Remane I heir, I am bot perysit.</p>	<p><i>rough, man, over the moor Without torn face, lean, fasting for Lent onward, quickly very melancholy appearance</i></p> <p><i>bag, staff intended, travel from home would like to know If, know what is your name I am ashamed since you wish, idea Indeed, John the Commonweal [ie the Common Good] transformed</i></p> <p><i>am amazed, oppressed Whom I have seen</i></p> <p><i>well honoured in every happens</i></p> <p><i>see dispossessed must leave where I was cherished before If I stay here, I am ruined</i></p>

	For thare is few to me that takis tent, That garris me go so raggit, rewin, and rent..... 	<i>pay attention</i> <i>causes me, torn</i>
162	‘Tharefor, adew; I may no langer tarye.’ ‘Fair weill’, quod I, ‘and with Sanct Ihone to borrow.’ Bot, wyt ye weill, my hart was wounder sarye, Quhen Comoun Weill so sopit was in sorrow. Yit, efter the nycht cumis the glaid morrow; ‘Quharefor, I pray yow, schaw me, in certane, Quhen that ye purpose for to cum agane.’	<i>adieu</i> <i>St John keep you safe</i> <i>know, deeply sorry</i> <i>overwhelmed with trouble</i> <i>joyful</i> <i>show</i> <i>intend</i>
169	‘That questioun, it sall be sone desydit,’ Quod he: ‘Thare sall na Scot have confortyng Of me, tyll that I see the countre gydit Be wysedome of ane gude, auld, prudent kyng, Quhilk sall delyte hym maist, abone all thyng, To put justice tyll exicutioun, And on strang tratouris mak puneisioun.	<i>soon decided</i> <i>shall, comfort</i> <i>until I see the country guided</i> <i>By, adult</i> <i>Who, delight, most, above</i> <i>execute justice</i> <i>strong traitors, punish</i>
176	‘Als yit to the I say ane uther thyng: I see, rycht weill, that proverbe is full trew: <i>Woe to the realme that hes ouir young ane king.</i> With that, he turnit his bak, and said adew. Ouer firth and fell rycht fast fra me he flew, Quhose departyng to me was displesand. 	<i>And</i> <i>very well</i> <i>too young</i> <i>wood, hill</i> <i>unpleasing</i>
	Than haistalie I stert out of my dreame, Half in ane fray, and spedalie past hame,	<i>hastily, started</i> <i>in alarm, speedily, home</i>
184	And lychtlie dynit, with lyste and appityte; Syne efter, past in tyll ane Oritore, And tuke my pen, and thare began to wryte All the visioun that I have schawin afore. Schir, of my dreame as now thou gettis no more, Bot I beseik God for to send the grace To rewle thy realme in unitie and peace.	<i>readily dined, pleasure</i> <i>then after, into a private chapel</i> <i>shown before</i> <i>Sire</i> <i>beseech, thee</i>