Fathers are central to the drama of Shakespeare’s time: they are revered, even sacred, yet they are also flawed human beings who feature as obstacles in plays of all genres. In *Problem Fathers in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama*, Tom MacFaul examines how fathers are paradoxical and almost anomalous characters on the English Renaissance stage. Starting as figures of confident authority in early Elizabethan drama, their scope for action becomes gradually more restricted, until by late Jacobean drama they have accepted the limitations of their power. MacFaul argues that this process points towards a crisis of patriarchal authority in wider contemporary culture. While Shakespeare’s plays provide a key insight into these shifts, this book explores the dramatic culture of the period more widely to present the ways in which Shakespeare’s work differed from that of his contemporaries, while both sharing and informing their artistic and ideological preoccupations.

**Tom MacFaul** is Fellow and Departmental Lecturer in English at Merton College, University of Oxford. He is the author of *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (2007), *Poetry and Paternity in Renaissance England* (2010), and many articles on Renaissance poetry and drama. He is also the co-editor of *Tottel’s Miscellany* (2011) with Amanda Holton.
PROBLEM FATHERS IN SHAKESPEARE AND RENAISSANCE DRAMA

TOM MACFAUL
For Sally
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Acknowledgements

This book began with a lengthy reading project – a chronological survey of all surviving Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. I am particularly grateful to the staff of the English Faculty Library in Oxford for granting me special loans which enabled the relatively swift completion of that reading. I have also had very useful conversations with many colleagues at Oxford about the progress of the project, including Richard McCabe, Emma Smith, Laurie Maguire, David Norbrook, Jonathan Thacker, Steven Gunn, Helen Moore, John Pitcher, and Glenn Black. Thanks are due to John Lee and attendees at the University of Bristol Renaissance Graduate seminar, where I presented some of my ideas as the first draft of the book was completed. Sarah Stanton at Cambridge University Press has been a model of patience as this book went through its various revisions; the anonymous readers for the Press were insightful and very helpful, giving me valuable advice on pruning what had threatened to become rather an unwieldy book; thanks also to Fleur Jones and Christina Sarigiannidou for seeing the book through the press, and to Chris Jackson for his careful copy-editing. I am grateful to Merton College for a research grant covering the cost of the index. Amy Waite gave invaluable assistance in checking quotations. Most of all, I would like to offer heartfelt thanks to my undergraduate students over the years, particularly at Corpus Christi and Merton Colleges: their fresh and imaginatively engaged perspectives on the great literature of the past is a constant reminder of the real audience for our scholarly endeavours.