

**GYCIA: A TRAGEDY
IN FIVE ACTS**

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Gycia: A Tragedy in Five Acts by Lewis Morris

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LEWIS MORRIS

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IN FIVE ACTS**

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A TRAGEDY

IN FIVE ACTS

BY

LEWIS MORRIS

M.A.; HONORARY FELLOW OF JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD
KNIGHT OF THE RED CROIX OF SWITZERLAND, ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE following Drama was written with a view to Stage representation, and it is therefore rather as an Acting Play than as a Dramatic Poem that it should be judged by its readers.

It follows as closely as possible the striking story recorded by Constantine Porphyrogenitus in his work, "De Administratione Imperii." Nor has the writer had occasion (except in the death of the heroine) to modify the powerful historical situations and incidents to which it is right to say his attention was first directed by his friend the well-known scholar and critic, Mr. W. Watkiss Lloyd.

The date of the story is circa 970 A. D.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PEOPLE OF BOSPHORUS.

THE KING OF BOSPHORUS.

ASANDER, *Prince of Bosphorus.*

LYSIMACHIUS, *a statesman.*

MEGACLES, *a chamberlain from the Imperial Court of Constantinople.*

Three Courtiers, accompanying Asander and accomplices in the plot.
Soldiers, etc.

PEOPLE OF CHERSON.

LAMACHUS, *Archon of the Republic of Cherson.*

ZETHO, *his successor.*

THEODORUS, *a young noble (brother to Irene), in love with Gycia.*

BARDANES, *first Senator.*

Ambassador to Bosphorus,

The Senators of Cherson.

Two Labourers.

GYCIA, *daughter of Lamachus.*

IRENE, *a lady--her friend, in love with Asander.*

MELISSA, *an elderly lady in waiting on Gycia.*

Child, daughter of the Gaoler.

Citizens, etc.

GYCIA.

ACT I.


SCENE I.—*Bosphorus. The King's palace. The KING, in anxious thought. To him LYSIMACHUS, afterwards ASANDER.*

Enter LYSIMACHUS.

Lys. What ails the King, that thus his brow is bent
By such a load of care ?

King. Lysimachus,
The load of empire lies a weary weight,
On age-worn brains ; tho' skies and seas may smile,
And steadfast favouring Fortune sit serene,

Guiding the helm of State, but well thou knowest—
None better in my realm—through what wild waves,
Quicksands, and rock-fanged straits, our Bosphorus,
Laden with all our love, reels madly on
To shipwreck and to ruin. From the North,
Storm-cloud on storm-cloud issuing volleys forth
Fresh thunderbolts of war. The Emperor
Dallies within his closed seraglios,
Letting his eunuchs waste the might of Rome,
While the fierce Scythian, in a surge of blood,
Bursts on our bare-swept plains. Upon the South,
Our rival Cherson, with a jealous eye,
Waits on our adverse chances, taking joy
Of her republican guile in every check
And buffet envious Fortune deals our State,
Which doth obey a King. Of all our foes
hate and dread these chiefly, for I fear
Lest, when my crown falls from my palsied brow,



My son Asander's youth may prove too weak
To curb these crafty burghers. Speak, I pray thee,
Most trusty servant. Can thy loyal brain
Devise some scheme whereby our dear-loved realm
May break the mesh of Fate?

Lys. Indeed, my liege,
Too well I know our need, and long have tossed
Through sleepless nights, if haply I might find
Some remedy, but that which I have found
Shows worse than the disease.

King. Nay, speak; what is it?
I know how wise thy thought

Lys. My liege, it chances
The Archon Lamachus is old and spent.
He has an only child, a daughter, Gycia,
The treasure of his age, who now blooms forth
In early maidenhood. The girl is fair
As is a morn in springtide; and her father