



Philoctetes

Sophocles, William-Alan Landes

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Sophocles' *Philoctetes* is one of the most widely read Greek tragedies today but is a complex and challenging play to interpret. Its representation of Philoctetes as a sufferer of physical and emotional pain gives it remarkable power and intensity. It juxtaposes Homeric and fifth-century institutions and values, explores honor, power and expediency as principles of personal and political life, and represents contrasts and conflicts between innocence and experience, ends and means, and the needs and demands of the individual and those of society. This edition with commentary makes the play accessible to students, teachers, and other readers of Greek literature at all levels. The introduction discusses the main problems of interpretation and gives an account of its reception from antiquity to the present day.

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