



Philoctetes

Sophocles

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One of only seven surviving plays written by the great Greek tragedian Sophocles, "Philoctetes" follows the life of a unique and important man through his trials and triumphs. The only man willing to light the funeral pyre of Hercules, Philoctetes is awarded his bow in repayment. Later, as he leaves to fight in the Trojan War, Philoctetes is bitten on the foot by a snake and left behind on the desert island of Lemnos by Odysseus.

When the gods reveal the Greeks' need of Philoctetes and his bow, however, Odysseus employs the honest Neoptolemus to deceive Philoctetes into rejoining the Trojan War. "Philoctetes" is a study of the timeless controversy that often arises between physical strength and morality in the quest for glory.

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