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## Oedipus at Colonus

*Sophocles (c. 497/496 BC – c. 406/405 BC)*

### Version 1

Translated by: Francis Storr  
Type: Dramatic reading  
Read by: Cast  
Length: 1 hour 36 minutes  
Language: English  
Genre(s): Drama, tragedy

### Version 2

Translated by: Richard Claverhouse Jebb  
Type: Solo reading  
Read by: Expatriate  
Length: 1 hour 48 minutes  
Language: English  
Genre(s): Drama, tragedy

### Product Formats and Options

Format	Package	Catalog	EAN/UPC	MSLP
MP3 CD	DVD case	DB-1287	0682550991030	\$9.99
MP3 CD	CD jacket	CJ-1287	0682550991733	\$8.99
MP3 CD	Security sleeve	CD-1287	Special order	\$4.99
MP3 download	Zip file	DL-1287	NA	\$3.99

*Oedipus at Colonus* is the second of Sophocles' Theban plays and the last to be written, completed just before his death and never produced during his lifetime. The play describes the last day of the tragic life of Oedipus and is set near Athens in the village of Colonus, Sophocles' birthplace. As always a prophecy lies at the center of the plot: Oedipus will die at a sacred place of the Furies and will be a blessing to the country in which he is laid to rest. The play begins with Antigone leading the aged, blind Oedipus into the sacred grove of the Furies, where the play takes place. The Furies, goddesses who pursue violators of blood

relationships, should be seeking revenge on the man who has committed notorious crimes of patricide and incest. Nevertheless, Oedipus believes he has found his prophesied final resting place, and stands his ground. When his identity is discovered, he appeals for mercy, explaining that his famous crimes were committed unknowingly. He requests sanctuary and a sanctified, secret burial from the king and promises the blessings of the gods and a defense of the city in return. After challenges, trickery, treachery and paradoxes, a thunderstorm signals that his time has come. Oedipus leads the king and his daughters to a secret site in the grove and ritually ends his life, completing a transformation from a disgraced, ragged beggar to a valiant survivor who sets an example of the human ability to persevere against all odds.

**Sophocles** (c. 497/496 BC – c. 406/405 BC) was a Greek playwright whose work, along with that of Aeschylus and Euripides, define the genre of ancient Greek tragedy. He wrote over 120 plays, of which seven survive: *Ajax*, *Antigone*, *Women of Trachis*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Electra*, *Philoctetes*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*. He was the most celebrated Athenian dramatist for five decades, winning more dramatic competitions than his peers: he competed in 30 competitions and won 24; Aeschylus won 13 and Euripides won 4. His most famous works are those featuring *Antigone* and *Oedipus*, known as the Theban plays. He is known for his innovations in dramatic structure and the development of his characters. He was credited by Aristotle with the introduction of scene-painting. His work evolved through three stages. In the first he plainly imitated Aeschylus; during the second his unique style appears; the third shows the revelation of character through natural diction and expression of feelings. Born to a wealthy family in Colonus, Attica, he was highly educated and well connected. During the time of Pericles he served as one of Athens' treasurers and was later elected one of ten generals. His long life spanned a period between the Persian Wars on one end and most of the Peloponnesian War in his old age, during which he served on a commission investigating the loss of Greek forces in an invasion of Sicily. He received many invitations to attend the courts of foreign rulers, all of which he declined.