

The Misanthrope: Full Text and Introduction (NHB Drama Classics)

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Alceste, the misanthrope, hates all mankind, and despairs of its hypocrisy and falseness. He believes that the world could be perfected if people were more honest with each other. But when his honesty starts to make him enemies, and the target of malicious gossips, it is his world and his life which suffer. He alienates his love, Célimène, and reproaches her coquettish, flirty ways; he is summoned before the court of marshals to defend a candid opinion about Oronte's terrible poetry – a case which he knows he will lose despite the justness of the cause. He begins to realise that the only way to be left out of gossip is to get out of society – but will Célimène go with him, or is she just like everybody else?

Translated and introduced by Stephen Mulrine



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