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*The Cambridge Introduction to
Tragedy*

Tragedy is the art form created to confront the most difficult experiences we face: death, loss, injustice, thwarted passion, despair. From ancient Greek theatre up to the most recent plays, playwrights have found, in tragic drama, a means to seek explanation for disaster. But tragedy is also a word we continually encounter in the media, to denote an event which is simply devastating in its emotional power. This introduction explores the relationship between tragic experience and tragic representation. After giving an overview of the tragic theatre canon – including chapters on the Greeks, Shakespeare, Ibsen and Chekhov, American tragedy and post-colonial drama – it also looks at the contribution which philosophers have brought to this subject, before ranging across other art forms and areas of debate. The book is unique in its chronological range, and brings a wide spectrum of examples, from both literature and life, into the discussion of this emotional and frequently controversial subject.

JENNIFER WALLACE is Fellow, Lecturer and Director of Studies in English at Peterhouse, University of Cambridge.

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