



Prometheus Bound (New York Review Books Classics)

Aeschylus

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Prometheus Bound (New York Review Books Classics) Aeschylus

Prometheus Bound is the starkest and strangest of the classic Greek tragedies, a play in which god and man are presented as radically, irreconcilably at odds. It begins with the shock of hammer blows as the Titan Prometheus is shackled to a rock in the Caucasus. This is his punishment for giving the gift of fire to humankind and for thwarting Zeus's decision to exterminate the human race. Prometheus's pain is unceasing, but he refuses to recant his commitment to humanity, to whom he has also brought the knowledge of writing, mathematics, medicine, and architecture. He hints that he knows how Zeus will be brought low in the future, but when Hermes demands that Prometheus divulge his secret, he refuses and is sent spinning into the abyss by a divine thunderbolt.

To whom does humanity look for guidance: to the supreme deity or to the rebel Titan? What law controls the cosmos? *Prometheus Bound*, one of the great poetic achievements of the ancient world, appears here in a splendid new translation by Joel Agee that does full justice to the harsh and keening music of the original Greek.

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