



The Throne of Labdacus: A Poem

By Gjertrud Schnackenberg

Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 112 pages. Dimensions: 8.3in. x 5.5in. x 0.4in. Winner of the 2001 Los Angeles Times Book Prize in Poetry. A New York Times Book Review Notable Book of 2000. The first warning passing through Thebes--As small a soundAs a housefly alighting from PersiaAnd stamping its foot on a moundWhere the palace once was;As small a moth chewing threadIn the tyrants robe;As small as the cresting of redIn the rim of an injured eye; as smallAs the sound of a human conceivedA compelling, lyric telling of the story of Oedipus, and of what happens outside the play, in the experience of the god who is its presiding oracle: Apollo, the god of poetry, music, and healing. Given the task of setting the Sophocles text to music, the god is woven reluctantly into its world of riddles, unanswered questions, partially disclosed objects, and ambiguous second-hand reports--a world where the gods, as much as humans, are subject to the binding claims of fate and necessity. Gjertrud Schnackenberg draws upon ancient fragments and allusions to Oedipus and upon folk-tales about the origin of the Greek alphabet to present a vision of the tragedys essential unknowability, where...

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