INTRODUCTION:

THIS PLAY REFLECTS A MODERN RETELLING OF A CLASSICAL GREEK TRAGEDY: "PROMETHEUS BOUND", IN WHICH THE MAIN CHARACTER IS PROMETHEUS (A TITAN, CREATED BEFORE THE BETTER-KNOWN GREEK PANTHEON OFTEN CALLED THE "GODS OF OLYMPUS" HELD POWER OVER THE WORLD OF MEN AND GODS. PROMETHEUS ASSISTED ZEUS, KING OF THE GODS, IN TAKING POWER, ALONG WITH HERA, APHRODITE, HEPHAESTUS, APOLLO, AND OTHERS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF. PROMETHEUS IS KNOWN AS A TRICKSTER AND A CHARMER. HE HAS USED HIS PLACE OF PRIVILEGE WITH CONTACT WITH THE GODS OF OLYMPUS, TO STEAL FIRE, AND SMUGGLED IT OUT TO SAVE THE LIVES OF MORTALS IN PERIL, HE HAS GIVEN IT, ALONG WITH OTHER GIFTS, TO MORTALS, WHO ARE SEEN WITH CONTEMPT BY ZEUS. ZEUS WAS RECENTLY MADE, CHIEF OF THE GODS WITH THE HELP OF THE TITAN PROMETHEUS. PROMETHEUS IS SENTENCED TO BE PUNISHED SEVERELY, DESPITE HIS HISTORY OF ASSISTING OLYMPIANS. THE FORCES OF NATURE SUCH AS POWER, FORCE, AUTHORITY, GATHER ROUND HEPHAESTUS SEE THE JOB IS DONE. PROMETHEUS IS SENTENCED TO BE BOUND TO A ROCK IN TORMENT, BUT WHEN HE REMAINS DEFIANT, ZEUS THREATENS TO PUNISH HIM FURTHER. PROMETHEUS HAS THE ABILITY TO

SEE THE FUTURE AND REFUSES TO SHARE HIS VISIONS WITH ZEUS, WHICH ENRAGES ZEUS. ZEUS CLAIMS TO BE GOD OF JUSTICE BUT PROMETHEUS SEES HIM AS A TYRANT. OUR ZEUS IS NEWLY APPOINTED AS CHANCELLOR OF A MAJOR UNIVERSITY AND TEACHING HOSPITAL. DR HEPHAESTUS IS PROMETHEUS'S OPIOID SUBSTITUTION THERAPY PRESCRIBER. THE CHARACTER "MS ENFORCEMENT KRATOS" TAKES THE PLACE OF THE GREEK CHORUS FIGURES TITLED FORCE AND POWER IN THE ORIGINAL PLAY. SHE REPRESENTS AUTHORITY AND THE WILL OF LAW AS PROMETHEUS'S PROBATION OFFICER. Dr. Hephaestus (ha feh stus) (greek God OF SMITHS, METAL, AND MAKING STUFF), IS THE OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY PRESCRIBER, WHO IS ORDERED TO BIND PROMETHEUS TIGHTLY AND WITHOUT MERCY, TO ENSURE HE REMAINS IN DISCOMFORT FOR ALL TIME. DR HEPHAESTUS RELUCTANTLY DOES HIS DUTY AS ORDERED, AND BINDS PROMETHEUS AS TIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE. THIS PLAY REFLECTS THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF MANY PEOPLE ON OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY- ALTHOUGH IT CAN BE LIFE SAVING, IT MAY MOT MEET PEOPLES NEEDS. SOME PEOPLE ARE PRESSED TO ACCEPT IT RELUCTANTLY, AND FEEL TRAPPED, OTHERS ACCEPT IT EAGERLY, AND EXPERIENCE SIDE EFFECTS, OTHERS ARE AMBIVALENT BUT COME TO FEEL THAT THE DAILY TIE TO A **HUMILIATING TRIP TO THE LOCAL PHARMACY** IS A KIND OF EVERLASTING JAIL- "LIQUID

HANDCUFFS" IS A TERM OFTEN USED. FREQUENTLY PEOPLE RECEIVING THESE THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS EXPERIENCE UNNEEDED RULES AND RESTRICTIONS, STRICT CHAINS, BASED ON REGULATIONS CREATED OUT OF PROVIDER FEARS AND STIGMA, RATHER THAN NECESSITY. COMMONLY, OPIOID AGONIST THERAPY PROVIDERS ENTIRELY DISMISS THESE CONCERNS, AND IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THIS AUTHOR, TREAT THEM WITH DISREGARD AND CONTEMPT, MOCKING AND LAUGHING AT PATIENT'S CONCERNS, OR DISMISSING THEM AS THE PLEAS OF A DRUG ADDLED BRAIN COMPELLED TO SEEK DRUGS THROUGH DECEPTION. THE PLAY OPENS WITH THE PROTAGONIST SEATED AND INVISIBLE TO THE AUDIENCE EXCEPT FOR THEIR FEET AND LEGS. WHILE ENFORCEMENT-KRATOS AND DR HEPHAESTUS BIND THEM AND BICKER. AFTER THEY LEAVE, IN ACT II, WE SEE PROMETHEUS ALINE. HE IS JOINED BY OCEANID, WHO TAKES THE PLACE OF THE CHORUS OF OCEANIDS, AND THE CHARACTER OCEAN, IN THE ORIGINAL PLAY. PROMETHEUS EXPLAINS HIS REASONS FOR HIS CRIME. IN ACT III THEY ARE IOINED BY HERMES, WHO IS THE MESSENGER GOD, CARRYING ORDERS FROM ZEUS. WHEN PROMETHEUS REMAINS "NONCOMPLIANT", HE IS BANISHED TO HADES TO HAVE HIS INNARDS PECKED OUT DAILY BY A GIANT EAGLE. OUR PROMETHEUS, ADDICTED TO FIRE, AND RECEIVING OAT, IS PUNISHED FOR NONCOMPLIANCE BY BEING KICKED OFF THE

PROGRAM, AND BANISHED TO BE TORMENTED BY A BIRD CALLED HEP C PECKING OUT HIS LIVER. PLEASE NOTE THAT WHILE THE ORIGINAL PLAY WAS WRITTEN IN POETIC FORM, AND MOST TRANSLATIONS FOLLOW THAT TRADITION, THE POETIC FORM IS LIMITED HERE, DUE TO THE NEED FOR CLARITY, BREVITY AND MODERNITY. THIS VERSION OF THE PLAY WAS SHORTENED TO ABOUT ¼ OF THE ORIGINAL IN LENGTH, AS IT WAS WRITTEN FOR PRESENTATION OVER ABOUT 25 MINUTES.

ACT I:

Enter Ms Enforcement Kratos, and Dr Hephaestus. A podium stands on the Stage, covered in a white sheet to Represent medical authority. Behind the Podium, a chair, partially concealed. On the chair, prop legs and shoes stick out. Here, prometheus is represented as the client, but he is voiceless and invisible. Chains are concealed behind the podium, and other restraints.

MS ENFORCEMENT -KRATOS AND DR
HEPHAESTUS STAND FACING A WAY FROM THE
AUDIENCE ON STAGE AS THE INTRODUCTION IS
READ ALOUD BY THE ACTOR WHO WILL PLAY
HERMES LATER. (COSTUMES: LAB COAT AND
MASK FOR DR HEPHAESTUS, BLACK TROUSERS,
BUSINESS JACKET, WHITE OR BLACK SHIRT,
BLACK TROUSERS AND MASK FOR MS.
ENFORCEMENT KRATOS)

MS ENFORCEMENT KRATOS AND DR HEPHAESTUS "ENTER" BY TURNING TO FACE THE AUDIENCE.

Ms. Enforcement Kratos (angrily). Cuff this wrecker of the law. 'Twas they who stole fire and sold it to lowly scofflaws!

Thine own glory, is restricted to prescription by specialists: your specialty is usurped, Dr Hephaestus! They diverted your tool to street addicts.

Sinner! They must pay those Gods they tricked!

Dr. Hephaestus.

Uh... (taken aback by her obvious rage) pleased to meet you again, Ms. Enforcement-Kratos, you are his probation officer? (Pause, warily, he continues) ... I mean, To you the words of Dr Zeus were given? (Ms Enforcement -Kratos picks up the restrains / chains and begins folding them with angry, satisfied manners, plainly relishing the thought that Prometheus will be restrained.)

(Dr Hephaestus continues, sorrowfully) It makes my heart thicken, to isolate and to Sicken someone I worked with of late.

Their work as an advocate was great, and they were one of us- their efforts helped Dr Zeus to overthrow the Old- Kronos and forces and fate- Convicted of trafficking in Fire (speculating, shrugs, as if wondering)-... diverted from their own supply, or perhaps stolen from Dr Zeus's office on the sly?

(Sighs) Thou dreamer all too daring, I shall perform my part as prescribing physician - you will suffer withdrawal...

cry, sweat, and kick your sheets, begging for release.

(Ms Enforcement-Kratos thrusts her hands full of cuffs, restraints, chains at Dr Hephaestus)

Ms Enforcement-Kratos: *(raging)*Chain him tight! No carries! No matter how he fight! You must be wary!

Dr Hephaestus: *(cautiously begins wrapping Prometheus in chains)*

New research indicates that patients are just as happy with Suboxone as with methadone, if they have the chance to receive flexible take home doses early, and increase doses quickly to minimize withdrawal in the first two weeks...

So... I could skip a few of the chains, maybe? (Asked hopefully)

Ms. Enforcement Kratos.

(Furious, frustrated) No! The old way is best. no freedom, no work nor play for this false god!

What is he anyway? Oooh a TITAN! (Mocking) "look at me Titan OG" either you are a God or you aren't. (Scoffs) pfft!

Keep them chained, night and day- they will have no escape to get into mischief! that's the only way! I know flexible, take-home models of care and I don't want them causing trouble. THOSE people do nothing good with free time but problems redouble.

DR. HEPHAESTUS.

(Regretfully) Stay... to this pharmacy chained, dopesick every day, and suffer for your transgression. Dr Zeus won't hear complaints – he wants you to learn a lesson.

MS. ENFORCEMENT KRATOS

(Speaking in a slightly lower voice, as one confiding business gossip between colleagues) He wants to bring in his own team, so his power will be seen...

DR. HEPHAESTUS. Conquerors, all are hard in the early days.

Ms. Enforcement-Kratos. (realizes she is getting distracted, reprimands Dr Hephaestus) What's taking you so long, anyhow? Quit mumbling about "poor Prometheus". I knew this would happen now, allowing the monkeys to run the zoo.

"Community Consultation", and PWLLE making policy- this is what it gives you. Why dost thou not hate this perilous foe Of heaven--er Research and Medicine, who flung Fire to them below?

DR. HEPHAESTUS.

(mildly indignant) Have you no shame or pity? I hate this job, I did not apply. Together, we were on a committee, on harm reduction and safe supply.

MS. Enforcement Kratos.

And see what they do with safe supply- given a brazier they brazenly carry it to mortal mayflies!
You grieve for them - tell me
Why?
Boundaries you seem to lack
if you weep over a seller of Fire and crack.

DR. HEPHAESTUS

It's too hard. Suboxone will keep them tied for all time, a slow smoulder that never warms or cooks or forges beside fire- when well used to it they be,

will never again be free. poor Prometheus....

Ms. Enforcement-Kratos
All ways of life are hard, except to be
Chancellor.

Dr. Hephaestus

Yes. None but Zeus is free.

We are only free, to follow Zeus's policy, -

Ms. Enforcement-Kratos.

SHACKLE THEM UP! TIGHTER!
NO CARRIES! DAILY WITNESS!

HOURLY WITNESS!!

FASTEN THEIR HANDS TO THE ROCK. Or you will be blamed if the Rules are mocked

DR. HEPHAESTUS.

I fear blame of them who hangeth here...I have ethical concerns.

Ms. Enforcement Kratos.

Don't cry for this loser. Prometheus fought Authority, for Academia, then betrayed Academia too, defied even Doctor Zeus- taken in by Progressive Ideas and defiance of Authority. They shall be bound, and they should be grateful.

DR HEPHAESTUS

Ok I'm done (in disgust, as one speaking of both the chains and the conversation: exit Dr Hephaestus, behind podium actor removes coat and mask, dons scarf and mask for Oceanid character)

Ms. Enforcement-Kratos

(Addresses the invisible Prometheus to berate them) This is what thou gets when thou steals away

The glory that is the God's-

They called thee,

Prometheus—the Forethinker?

ForeThought- that's what you lack- or did

you think Dr Zeus would cut thee slack, when thou decide alone to provide "safe supply" to mortals? (Bitterly, with venom satisfied)

There thou shall stay and take your medicine-every daytake it until you learn, to like it.

END ACT 1 - scene change Oceanid, now in costume, flourishes the Grey sheet, draping it around the podium, dressing it as a rock, the Prometheus chair is moved beside the podium, in view of audience, legs and feet are moved behind the podium out of sight. The former Ms Enforcement Kratos turns from audience and behind podium, dons a black cloak or long coat, and guy Fawkes mask for the character of Prometheus. Slips on the shoes for the Prometheus prop, and slides into the chair opposite the podium, with chains and shackles wrapped round them as convenient.

The figure of Prometheus becomes visible to the audience, wrapped in chains, head bowed as in despair, and speaks:

ACT 2

PROMETHEUS.

(LIFTS HEAD AND ANNOUNCES WITH BITTERNESS)

Sun, sky, world-see

What things, being a God, the Gods have done to me!

Everyone can watch in glee a dopesick God - stuck in misery!

Bring out the popcorn.

Enter Oceanid, peer outreach counsellor

OCEANID.

Oh Prometheus! It is I, Oceanid. I come not to judge, but to comfort. I Bear no grudge- I am a peer outreach worker bringing support.

PROMETHEUS. (ADDRESSES OCEANID SADLY)

They called me a colleague- they worked with me.

Claimed the pedagogy, evidence and dignity would govern all new policy!

Groans.

prohibition will end - I will see victory, For my mortal friends,

the suffering of mortals, the Gods of Olympus University and hospital can not comprehend. Look on my bonds, I say - I cannot rest or stay home, even for a day.

OCEANID.

New management always wants to make people feel their power. Strange hands are upon the helm

Of Olympus; with changes in staff and policy Dr Zeus fortifies his realm.

PROMETHEUS. (GROWING ANGER)

I wish he had just sent me to hell, anything but this.

Here I dwell, impossible to miss, huddled 'gainst this pharm-a-rock people wonder at my troubles and mock... you should hear the neighbours talk!

OCEANID.

Tell us the story?

PROMETHEUS.

When first the Leadership tasted wrath, And strife, between them wound and spun, Many would cast out Kronos but many-anone

Swore Zeus, as Leader, was a no - no. I tried to speak to Authority ...

They listened not to any plea.

So, with Dr. Zeus, I did stand, the community advocates at my command, protesting and issued demands. Until Dr Kronos was sent to accept early retirement, To the gift I brought, this the answer Zeus hath wrought! Is he a judge fair?

For people on the streets, he did not care. He sought to eliminate all public programming designed to assist the homeless and most at risk, and replace them with programs for a new demographic - saying focus on middle class youth was more cost effective and dramatic. Unhappy humans he would see erased, as an unruly inferior waste.

I would not see mortals lying hopeless and prone.

I demanded safe supply - it came to nothing, so I did it alone.

OCEANID.

What medicine for that sickness couldst thou find?

PROMETHEUS.

Blind hopes I planted in their hearts to dwell, hope of harm reduction, of decriminalization, of legalization, housing, and care, given with no expense to spare nor worry about political consequence.

OCEANID.

All this?

PROMETHEUS.

From despair and fear of death I saved them. My vision of the future gave sustenance.

OCEANID.

A blessed thing for miserable lives, though, Is there no end to your stories of woe?

PROMETHEUS.

My only true hope must lie, in the release of safe supply.

It's not just me. Haven't you heard of my friends and allies?

Io or my brother, poor Atlas?

Did you see Io lately?

She is homeless!

OCEANID.

What do you mean? Io? She is another great worker for drug user rights and a powerful advocate for community voices. I heard she was the choice to work for the REB at Olympus University?

PROMETHEUS.

So was she, until Hera from the Finance Department got wind of it and Dr. Zeus pulled out overspent.

OCEANID. (GIVES A THEATRICAL WINK AND A NUDGE, AND REPLIES JOKING)
First time for that.

PROMETHEUS.

Now kicked out of her father's house, Io was Waiting for promised wages. wandering in grief, lost and bereft All the will of Zeus' lies and rages, with an infant trying to grow,
Until she had nothing left,
waiting for pay, from work done long ago.
She couldn't even afford
her psych meds to take,
she was cut off OAT for smoking
AIR to stay awake,
She seeks redress for wrongs accrued
Says hospital should be sued
Now she runs mad and pursued, labeled
Noncompliant because on Zeus'
Promises she was reliant.

OCEANID. (WARNING IN A LOWERED VOICE) Watch what you say, punishment is on the way, when your words reach Dr Zeus.

PROMETHEUS.

Be grateful you shared The plans and deeds I dared, But not my punishment.

OCEANID.

You advocate for others better than for yourself. I will speak for thee. I'm sure Dr Zeus will grant my plea, for you to have less restrictions: my arguments are based in science. Most successful clients be, when they are most happy.

PROMETHEUS.

I thank thee, friend, and bless That heart unfailing in faithfulness. But hold thy peace, And wait in quiet.

OCEANID.

When wrath is stirred, The best medicine is healing words.

PROMETHEUS.

But The time must be chosen with care- you speak now, and we both shall despair.

OCEANID.

I won't seek such punishment. What did you do?

PROMETHEUS.

Who but I lamented lack of mortal thought? Lost until political awareness I wrought-community groups who fought...

OCEANID.

I hear what you are saying. Thou loves mankind so dearly! What is he?

PROMETHEUS (REFLECTING).

'Tis strange..., but the more I helped others, the greater grew my strength, and greater grew my pain.

I speak so you understand,

not to seem vain:

In man's first days, if blood borne infections should hold sway,

no ungulate or herb had they, instead, We're condemned, to waste away, till I taught

of harm reduction whereby a fence is wrought

against disease.

Aye, more than that, 'twas my clarity Sorted the paths of psychotherapy. I was the first to judge of dreams, community guided research, and self esteem:

All that of advocacy and medicine man has, Prometheus gave.

OCEANID. (LIKE AN UNDERSTANDING COUNSELLOR REFLECTING CLIENTS' STATEMENTS)

Deeds that save the mortal coil, help forget our own torment and toil.

I hope thy bonds shall be
Loosed, and thou shalt have power like Dr Zeus.

PROMETHEUS.

I see the future:

I swear that for all pride,

Zeus shall bow his head. There is a grad student

He woos and wins; and winning, shall be hurled

From that throne

Though he seems Bold and Brave Zeus shall learn the difference between a lord and slave!

OCEANID.

You should not utter such things, even under your breath.

PROMETHEUS. (PROUD AND DEFIANT)
How should I fear, for whom is there no death?

OCEANID.

What of grief, for thy mortal friends? Zeus May hasten their untimely ends. There is no pain more torturing, than the suffering for others lost- the comfort of complaint isn't worth the cost.

PROMETHEUS.

Fawn on him?
Let him do His what he ponder,
Is that his fool minion yonder? (*Scoffs*)

END ACT 2 - scene change
(OCEANID DRAWS UP A BLACK SHEET FROM ITS
POSITION ON THE FRONT OF STAGE, FLOURISHES
AS IN LAST SCENE CHANGE, AND LAYS THE
SHEET ACROSS PODIUM)

ACT 3

Enter, HERMES. He alights arrogantly on a chair, previously used by Oceanid, in comfort. Oceanid is discomforted and looks about, as one annoyed.

PROMETHEUS. (With a fake jovial tone)
The slave of Dr. Zeus,
Hermes! (laughs) hey Herpes!

HERMES. (SPEAKING AS A STRICT ENFORCER OF)

Thou wise-guy, bitterer than gall,
Open thine ears and shut thy mouth!
The chancellor commands thee make clear all:

This student whereby
His career goes south,
and how you miss appointments, though
you are fixed to a wall.

Don't give me cryptic words because you're high- everyone knows, addicts and Titans lie.

PROMETHEUS.

Aye, big talk, filled
With boasts, young gods and new in power
fitting a messenger,
for Olympian hosts.
dreaming
throned in an ivory tower
Have I not known
From that height, two monarchs
overthrown,
a third shame shall be shown

Fuck thee right off to thy tasks! Thou shalt wrest

From me no word of thy ask.

HERMES.

The same wind blows through your mouth again - That gale brought you to a harbour of pain!

OCEANID.

Speak not so
when busy and happy clients be,
Do thee not know,
more successful is Opioid agonist therapy?

PROMETHEUS.

Bound in thinking with-drawl, or fat somnolence with nothing to carry hither, better than being you, arse licker.

HERMES.

What blame should I bear?

PROMETHEUS.

My thought is simple. All the gods I hate – Fie!

You, in bliss, mock and trill. (*In a mocking, high pitched voice*)
"All drug users lie,"
yet, Zeus seeks my councils still.
Why do thy seek to make me ill?

HERMES.

I can't listen to you moan, whine, and complain,
Thou hast a chronic relapsing disease
Which cause eternal changes in the brain,

You seek to get drugs with ease, So thou pretend to be in pain. We are required to consult as tokens But addicts always lie, so do the opposite of what you've spoken. I ask again, forget thy mad, manipulative plot,

Accept with ease, and enjoy the nature of thy lot.

PROMETHEUS.

Listen to this fable! To hate the hater is madness? I will be as mad as I am able!

HERMES.

Thou wilt not do as Zeus asks of thee?

PROMETHEUS.

Have no hope, no reliance, that I, for fear Will submit, to be compliant.

HERMES.

Shame!
Thou beastial fight
Like a horse untame
To break thy reins and bite

In thy urine, signs of treachery,
Thou maker of thy ruin, positive for Fire it
be!
If thou yield not, what fate will thou meet?
You will obey,
Or be sent to hells darkened streets.

OCEANID.

Friend, make obedience thy prize! Worse awaits
I beg you to be wise.

PROMETHEUS.

If by those I hate. I be wronged I accept my fate.

HERMES.

These be the words, and this the thought—
twisting in thy brain.
manipulation and rage distraught
What lacketh it of madness plain?
[to Oceanid]
Go,
And bless Thy way. Resources are best redirected to those who will obey.

OCEANID.

With him I am wrought, whatever must be borne,
Was I not taught,
a traitor to scorn?

HERMES.

Remember
When ruin hath ye -You chose this way,
Entangled by your craving,
A fool who won't obey, arrogant beyond saving...

[Hermes exit. Oceanid close to Prometheus

PROMETHEUS.

With Hepatitis I am afflicted- (clasps a bird of prey prop to chest). Mother Earth Sky divine, And strong, Here ye see me – convicted, Was it for my anguish or my wrongs?

!

[A bang of thunder, Prometheus and Oceanid pull the black cloth and wrap it around themselves, collapsing to kneel covered, Prometheus with the eagle on chest]

END ACT 3