

Sophocle's

ANTIGONE

Adapted by
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From the play by
Jean Anouilh

Re-imagined for 5 Actors by
Christopher Scott

Dramatis Personae:

Chorus/ Nurse
Antigone
Ismene/ Messenger
Haemon/ The Guard
Creon

The Royal Palace in Thebes

Chorus

Well, here we are. These people that you see here are about to act out for you the story of Antigone. (He looks at Antigone,) That dark-haired girl sitting by herself, staring straight ahead, seeing nothing, is Antigone. She is thinking. She is thinking that the instant I finish telling you who's who and what's what in this play, she will burst forth as the dark, tense, serious girl, who is about to rise up and face the whole world alone—alone against the world and against Creon, her uncle, the King. Another thing that she is thinking is this: she is going to die. Antigone is young. She would much rather live than die. But there is no help for it. When you are on the side of the gods against the tyrant, of Man against the State, of purity against corruption—when, in short, your name is Antigone, there is only one part you can play; (Chorus turns and looks at her) and she will have to play hers through to the end. Mind you, Antigone doesn't know all these things about herself. I know them because it is my business to know them. That's what a Greek Chorus is for. All that she knows is that Creon won't allow her dead brother to be buried; and that despite Creon, she must bury him. Antigone doesn't think, she acts, she doesn't "reason," she feels. And from the moment the curtain went up, she began to feel that inhuman forces were whirling her out of this world, snatching her away from her sister Ismene-- (*Chorus indicates Ismene*) whom you see smiling at that young man; The young man with Ismene—with the gay and golden Ismene—is Haemon. He is the king's son, Creon's son. Antigone and he are engaged to be married. And, well, here is Haemon expecting to marry Antigone. He won't, of course. That distinguished, powerfully built man sitting lost in thought is Creon, the King. His face is lined. He is tired. He practices the difficult art of a leader of men. In addition I will play the old Nurse, who brought up the two girls. He (*indicating Haemon*) will play the Guard and She (*indicating Ismene*) will play the messenger who will bring the message of death to the Queen who you will not see. That's the lot.

Now for the play.

Oedipus, who was the father of the two girls, Antigone and Ismene, had also two sons, Eteocles and Polynices. After Oedipus died, it was agreed that the two sons should share his throne, each to reign over Thebes in alternate years. But when Eteocles, the elder son, had reigned a full year, and time had come for him to step down, he refused to yield

up the throne to his younger brother, Polynices. There was civil war. Eteocles and Polynices met in combat and killed one another just outside the city walls—and now Creon is King. Creon has issued a solemn edict that Eteocles, on whose side he was, is to be buried with pomp and honors, and that the younger brother, Polynices, is to be left to rot. The vultures and the dogs are to bloat themselves on his carcass. And above all, any person who attempts to give him decent burial will himself be put to death. It is against this blasphemy that Antigone rebels. What is for Creon merely the climax of a political purge, is for her a hideous offense against God and Man. Since time began, men have recoiled with horror from the desecration of the dead. A distant CLOCK strikes four. It is dawn, grey and ashen, in a house asleep. Antigone steals in from out-of-doors. She is carrying her sandals in her hand.

NURSE

Where have you been?

ANTIGONE

Nowhere. It was beautiful the whole world was grey when I went out. And now- you wouldn't recognize it. It's like a postcard: all pink, and green and yellow.

NURSE

It was still pitch black when I got up. I went to your room for I thought you might have flung off your blanket in the middle of the night. You weren't there.

ANTIGONE

The garden was lovely. It was still asleep.

NURSE

You hadn't slept in your bed. I couldn't find you. I went to the back door. You left it half open.

ANTIGONE

The fields were wet. They were waiting for something to happen. The whole world was breathless, waiting. I took off my sandals and slipped into a field.

NURSE

You'll do well to wash your feet before you go back to bed, Miss.

ANTIGONE

I'm not going back to bed.

NURSE

Don't be a fool! Get some sleep!

ANTIGONE

Do you think that if I got up every morning like this, it would be just as thrilling every morning to be the first person out-of-doors?

NURSE

Morning my eye! It was night. It still is. And now, my girl, you'll stop trying to squirm out of this and tell me what you were up to. You went out to meet someone, didn't you?

ANTIGONE

Yes. I went out to meet someone.

NURSE

You have a lover?

ANTIGONE

Yes, Nurse. I have a lover.

NURSE

Well, that's very nice now, isn't it? You, the daughter of a king, running out to meet lovers. But your uncle Creon will hear of this! That, I promise you.

ANTIGONE

(A little weary) Yes. Creon will hear of this.

NURSE

And we'll hear what he has to say when he finds out that you go wandering alone o' nights. Not to mention Haemon. For the girl's engaged! Going to be married! Going to be married, and she hops out of bed at four in the morning to meet somebody else in a field.

ANTIGONE

Please, Nurse, I want to be alone.

NURSE

(Quickly) And if you so much as speak of it, she says she wants to be alone!

ANTIGONE

Nanny, don't scold. This isn't a day when you should be losing your temper.

NURSE

Not scold, indeed! Along with the rest of it, I'm to like it. Didn't I promise your mother? What would she say if she was here? "Old Stupid!" That's what she'd call me. "Old Stupid. Not to know how to keep my little girls pure!"

ANTIGONE

(Puts arm around Nurse) Nanny, dear, don't cry. You'll be able to look Mama in the face when it's your time to see her. She knows why I went out this morning. I'm pure, and I swear that I have no other lover than Haemon. If you like, I'll swear that I shall never have any other lover than Haemon. Save your tears, Nanny; you may still need them. When you cry like that, I become a little girl again; and I mustn't be a little girl today.

(Ismene enters)

ISMENE

Antigone! What are you doing, up at this hour? I've just been to your room.

NURSE

The two of you, now! You're both going mad, to be up before the kitchen fire has been started.

ANTIGONE

Nanny, dear, go away now. Go get me something to eat. It would do me so much good.

NURSE

My poor baby! (Nurse exits)

(A pause.)

ISMENE

Aren't you well?

ANTIGONE

Yes, of course. Just a little tired. Because I got up too early.

ISMENE

I couldn't sleep, either.

ANTIGONE

Ismene, you ought not to go without your beauty sleep.

ISMENE

Don't make fun of me.

ANTIGONE

I'm not, truly. This particular morning, seeing how beautiful you are makes everything easier for me. Oh, wasn't I a nasty little beast when we were small? I used to fling mud at you, and put worms down your neck. I can remember tying you to a tree and cutting off your hair. Your beautiful hair! How easy it must be never to be unreasonable with all that smooth silken hair so beautifully set around your head.

ISMENE

(Takes Antigone's hand in hers) Why do you insist upon talking about other things?

ANTIGONE

I am not talking about other things.

ISMENE.

Antigone, I've thought about it a lot.

ANTIGONE

Did you?

ISMENE

I thought about it all night long. Antigone, you're mad.

ANTIGONE

Am I?

ISMENE

We cannot do it.

ANTIGONE

Why not?

ISMENE

Creon will have us put to death.

ANTIGONE

Of course he will. But we are bound to go out and bury our brother. That's the way it is. What do you think we can do to change it?

ISMENE

I don't want to die.

ANTIGONE

I'd prefer not to die, myself.

ISMENE

Listen to me, Antigone. I thought about it all night. I may be younger than you are, but I always think things over, and you don't.

ANTIGONE

Sometimes it is better not to think too much.

ISMENE

I don't agree with you! Oh, I know it's horrible. I know Polynices was cheated out of his rights. That he made war—that Creon took sides against him, and he was killed. And I pity Polynices just as much as you do. But all the same, I sort of see what Uncle Creon means. Uncle Creon is the king now. He has to set an example!

ANTIGONE

Example! Creon orders that our brother rot and putrefy, and be mangled by dogs and birds of prey^ That's an offense against every decent human instinct; against the laws of God and Man. And you talk about examples!

ISMENE

There you go, off on your own again—refusing to pay the slightest heed to anybody. At least you might try to understand!

ANTIGONE

I only understand that a man lies rotting, unburied. And that he is my brother and that he must be buried.

Or

[Understand! The first word I ever heard out of any of you was that word "understand." Why didn't I "understand" that I must not play with water - cold, black, beautiful flowing water-because I'd spill it on the palace tiles. Or with earth, because earth dirties a little girl's frock. Why didn't I "understand" that nice children don't eat out of every dish at once, or give everything in their pockets to beggars; or run in the wind so fast that they fall down; or ask for a drink when they are perspiring; or want to go swimming when it's either too early or too late, merely because they happen to feel like swimming Understand! I don't want to understand. There'll be time to understand when I am old.. if I ever am old. But not now.]

ISMENE

But Creon won't let us bury him. And he is stronger than we are. He is the king. He has made himself King.

ANTIGONE

I am not listening to you.

ISMENE

You must! You know how Creon works. His mob will come running, howling as it runs. A thousand arms will seize our arms. A thousand breaths will breathe into our faces. Like one single pair of eyes, a thousand eyes will stare at us. We'll be dragged to the scaffold for Torture. Surrounded by guards with their idiot faces all. And we shall suffer, we shall feel pain rising in us until it becomes so unbearable that we know it must stop: but it won't stop: it will go on rising and rising, like a screaming voice-

Oh, I can't, I can't, Antigone!

(A pause.)

ANTIGONE

How well you have thought it all out

ISMENE

I thought of it all night long. Didn't you?

ANTIGONE

Oh, yes.

ISMENE

I'm an awful coward, Antigone.

ANTIGONE

So am I. But what has that to do with it?

ISMENE

Don't you want to go on living?

ANTIGONE

Who was always the first out of bed every morning because she loved the touch of the cold morning air on her bare skin? Or the last to bed because nothing less than infinite weariness could wean her from the lingering night?

ISMENE

Antigone! My darling sister!

ANTIGONE

No! For pity's sakes! Don't! You say you've thought it all out. The howling mob: the torture: the fear of death: they've made up your mind for you. Is that it?

ISMENE

Antigone, be reasonable. It's all very well for men to believe in ideas, and die for them. But you are a girl! Antigone, you have everything in the world to make you happy. All you have to do is—reach out for it. You are going to be married; you are young; you are beautiful—

ANTIGONE

I am not beautiful.

ISMENE

Oh, yes, you are! Not the way other girls are. But it's always you that the little tough boys turn to look back at when they pass us in the street. And when you go by, the little girls stop talking: they stare and stare at you, until we've turned a corner.

ANTIGONE

"Little tough boys—little girls."

ISMENE

And what about Haemon?

ANTIGONE

I shall see Haemon this morning. I'll take care of Haemon. Go back to bed Now, Ismene. The sun is coming up! and as you can see, there is nothing I can do today. Our brother Polynices is as well guarded as if he had won the war and were sitting on his throne.

ISMENE

(Turns to her) What are you going to do?

NURSE

(Calls from offstage Left through arch)
Come, my dove. Come to your breakfast.

(Antigone and Ismene glance off in the direction whence came the Nurse's voice.)

ANTIGONE

Please go back to bed.

ISMENE

If I do— promise me you won't leave the house?

ANTIGONE

Very well, then —I promise.

(Ismene exits.)

(Nurse enters)

NURSE

Come along. Breakfast, my dear.

ANTIGONE

I'm not very hungry, Nanny.

NURSE

My darling— Where is your pain?

ANTIGONE

Nowhere. But you must keep me warm and safe, as you used to do when I was little. Oh, Nanny, give me your hand—as if I were sick in bed and you were sitting beside me.

NURSE

My lamb! What is it? What's eating your heart out?

ANTIGONE

Nothing. It's just that I'm not quite strong enough for what I have to do. But nobody but you must know that.

NURSE

Not strong enough for what, my kitten?

ANTIGONE

Nothing. Oh, it's so good that you are here. I can hold your calloused hand to ward off evil. You are very powerful, Nanny.

HAEMON

(Entering)

Antigone!

ANTIGONE

Nanny! Haemon is here. Go inside, please.

(Nurse exits. pause.)

ANTIGONE

Haemon, Haemon! Forgive me for quarreling with you last night. Forgive me for everything. It was all my fault. Oh, I beg you to forgive me.

HAEMON

You know that I've forgiven you. You had hardly slammed the door; your perfume still hung in the room, when I had already forgiven you. You stole that perfume. From whom?

ANTIGONE

Ismene.

HAEMON

And the rouge, and the face powder, and the dress?

ANTIGONE

Ismene.

HAEMON

And. in whose honor did you get yourself up so glamorously?

ANTIGONE

Oh, what a fool I was! To waste a whole evening! A whole, beautiful evening!

HAEMON

We'll have other evenings.

ANTIGONE

Perhaps we won't.

HAEMON

And other quarrels, too. A happy love is full of quarrels.

ANTIGONE

A happy love, yes. Haemon, listen to me.

HAEMON

Yes?

ANTIGONE

And don't laugh at me this morning. Be serious.

HAEMON

I am serious.

ANTIGONE

And hold me tight. Tighter than you have ever held me. I want all your strength to flow into me.

(They embrace closer)

HAEMON

There! With all my strength.

(He kisses her.)

ANTIGONE

Oh, you do love me, don't you? You love me as a woman—as a woman wants to be loved, don't you? Your arms around me aren't lying, are they? Your hands, so warm against my back—they aren't lies? This warmth; this strength that flows through me as I stand so close to you. They aren't lies, are they?

HAEMON

Antigone, my darling—I love you.

(He kisses her again.)

ANTIGONE

I'm not pretty. Ismene is pink and golden. She's like a fruit.

HAEMON

Antigone—!

ANTIGONE

Oh, forgive me, I am ashamed of myself. But this morning, this special morning, I must know. Tell me the truth! I beg you to tell me the truth! When you think of me, when it strikes you suddenly that I am going to belong to you—do you get the sense that—that a great empty space—is being hollowed out inside you; and that there is something inside you that is just—dying?

HAEMON

Yes, I do.

(A pause as they face against one another.)

ANTIGONE

That's the way I feel. (She clings to him for a moment) There! And now I have two things I have to tell you. And when I have told them to you, you must go away instantly, without asking any questions. However strange they may seem to you. However much they may hurt you. Swear that you will!

HAEMON

What are these things that you are going to tell me?

ANTIGONE

Swear, first, that you will go away without a single word. Without so much as looking at me. You hear me, Haemon. Swear, please. It's the last mad wish that you will ever have to grant me.

(A pause.)

HAEMON

I swear it.

ANTIGONE

Thank you. Well, here it is. First, about last night, when I went to your house. You asked me a moment ago why I wore Ismene's dress and rouge. I did it because I was stupid. I wasn't sure that you loved as a woman; and I did it because I wanted you to want me.

HAEMON

Was that the reason? Oh, my poor—

ANTIGONE

No! Wait! That was the reason. And you laughed at me, and we quarreled, and I flung out of the house. The reason why I went to your house last night was that I wanted you to take me. I wanted to be your wife—before.

HAEMON

Antigone—?

ANTIGONE

Haemon! You swore you wouldn't ask a single question. You swore it. As a matter of fact, I'll tell you why. I wanted to be your wife last night because I love you that way very—very strongly. And also—because—I'm going to cause you such a lot of pain. I wanted it also because I shall never—never be able to marry you, never.

HAEMON

Antigone—!

ANTIGONE

Haemon! You took a solemn oath! You swore! Leave me now! Tomorrow the whole thing will be clear to you. Even before tomorrow: this afternoon. Go now. It's the only thing left that you can do for me if you still love me. (A pause Haemon exits) Well, it's over for Haemon, Antigone.

ISMENE

(Enters) I can't sleep. I'm terrified. I'm so afraid that even though it is daylight, you'll still try to bury Polynices. Antigone, you know I love you: you know I want you to be happy. And you remember what he was like. He was our brother, of course. But he's dead; and he never loved us. He was a bad brother. He was like an enemy in this house. He never thought of you: why should you think of him? What if he does have to lie rotting in a field? (Antigone rises; moves toward the arch Right) It's Creon's doing, not ours. Don't try to change things. You can't bury Polynices. I won't let you!

ANTIGONE

You are too late, Ismene. When you first saw me this morning, I had just come in from burying him.

(Antigone exits then Ismene runs out after Antigone)

CHORUS

In the distance, a clock is heard striking one.

(Creon enters)

CREON

A private of the guards, you say? One of those standing over the body? Show him in.

(The Guard, enters salutes.)

GUARD

Private Jonas, Second Battalion.

CREON

What are you doing here?

GUARD

It's like this, Chief. Soon as it happened, we said: 'Got to tell the Chief about this before anybody else spills it. He'll want to know right away.'" So we tossed a coin to see which one would come up and tell you about it. You see, Chief, we thought only one man better come, because after all you don't want to leave the body without a guard. Right? I mean, there's three of us on duty. Guarding the body.

CREON

The body? What's wrong about the body?

GUARD

Chief, I've been seventeen years in the service. Volunteer: two citations. My record's clean. I know my business and I know my place-

CREON

What's the matter with you, man? What are you shaking for?

GUARD

By rights it's the corporal's job, Chief. I've been recommended for a corporal but-

CREON

Stop chattering and tell me why you are here. If anything has gone wrong with that body I'll break all three of you.

GUARD

I was keeping my eye on it. Listen, Chief, I was the first man to see it! Me! They'll tell you. I was the one let out that yell!

CREON

What for? What was the matter?

GUARD

Chief, the body! Somebody had been there and buried him.

CREON

My God, I'll—!

GUARD

It wasn't much, you understand. Just covered over with a little dirt, that's all. But enough to hide it from the buzzards.

CREON

(Looks intently at the Guard,) You are sure that it couldn't have been—a dog, scratching up the Earth?

GUARD

Not a chance, Chief. That's kind of what we hoped it was. But the earth was scattered over the body Just like the priests tell you you should do it. Whoever did that job knew what he was doing, all right.

CREON

Who could have dared?— Was there an indication as to who might have done it?

GUARD

Not a thing, Chief. Maybe we heard a footstep. I can't swear to it. Of course we started right in to search, and the corporal found a shovel, a kid's shovel no bigger than that all rusty and everything. Corporal's got the shovel for you. We thought maybe a kid did it.

CREON

A kid!—I broke the back of the rebellion; but like a snake, it is coming together again...A kid. Look here, you. Who knows about this?

GUARD

Only us three, Chief. We flipped a coin, and I came right over.

CREON

Right. Listen, now. You will continue on duty. When the relief squad comes up, you will tell them to return to barracks. You will uncover the body; keep a sharp watch, and if another attempt is made to give the corpse burial, you will make an arrest and bring the prisoner straight to me. And you will keep your mouths shut about this. Not one word to a human soul. You are all guilty of neglect of duty, and you will be punished; but if the rumor spreads through Thebes that the body received burial, you will be shot—all three of you.

GUARD

Chief, we never told nobody, I swear we didn't. Anyhow, I've been up here. Suppose my pals spilled it to the relief; I couldn't have been with them and here, too. That wouldn't be my fault, if they talked. Chief, I've got two kids. You're my witness, Chief, it couldn't have been me. I was here with you. I've got a witness. If anybody talked, it couldn't have been me! I was—

CREON

Clear out! If the story doesn't get round, you won't be shot. (Guard salutes, turns and exits) A child!

(Creon exits)

(A pause. The Chorus enters)

CHORUS

And now the spring is wound up tight! It will uncoil of itself. That is what is so convenient in tragedy. You don't need to lift a finger. The machine is in perfect order: it has been oiled ever since time began, and it runs without friction. Death, treason, and sorrow, are on the march; and they move in the wake of storm, of tears, of stillness. Tragedy is clean, it is firm it is flawless. In a tragedy, nothing is in doubt and everyone's destiny is known. That makes for tranquility. Tragedy is restful; and the reason is that hope, that foul, deceitful thing, has no part in it. There isn't any hope. You're trapped. The whole sky has fallen on you, and all you can do about it is to shout.

(GUARD and ANTIGONE in cuffs enter)

The play is on. Antigone has been caught. For the first time in her life, Antigone is going to be able to be herself. (Chorus exits)

GUARD

Come on, now, Miss, give it a rest. The Chief will be here in a minute and you can tell him about it. All I know is my orders.

ANTIGONE

You are hurting me. Take your dirty hands off me.

GUARD

Dirty hands, eh ? And what about stiffs, and dirt, and such like. You wasn't afraid to touch them, were you? "your dirty hands." Take a look at your own dirty hands!

ANTIGONE

Let me go. I won't run away. My father was King Oedipus. I am Antigone.

GUARD

Oedipus' little girl! What do you know about that?

(Creon enters)

CREON

Antigone! What is this? (to guard) Take off those handcuffs! What is this?

GUARD

Acting on your orders, we made the arrest, and brought the party in.

CREON

Where did these men find you?

GUARD

Right by the body.

CREON

What were you doing near your brothers body? You know what my orders were.

GUARD

What was she doing? Chief, that's why we brought her in. She was digging up the dirt with her nails. She was trying to cover up the body all over again.

CREON

Is this true?

ANTIGONE

Yes, it is true.

CREON

And was it you who covered the body the first time? In the night?

ANTIGONE

Yes, it was. With a toy shovel we used to take to the seashore when we were children. It was Polynices' own shovel: he had cut his name in the handle. That was why I left it with him. But the guard took it away; so the next time, I had to do it with my hands.

GUARD

Chief, she was clawing away like a wild animal.

CREON

You will wait outside.

GUARD

Do I put the cuffs back on her, Chief?

CREON

No. (The Guard salutes and exits) Had you told anybody what you meant to do?

ANTIGONE

No.

CREON

Did you meet anyone on your way—coming or going?

ANTIGONE

No, nobody.

CREON

You're quite sure of that?

ANTIGONE

Quite sure.

CREON

Very well. Now listen to me. You will go straight to your room. When you get there, you will go to bed. You will say that you are not well and that you have not been out since yesterday. Your nurse will tell the same story. And I'll dispose of those men.

ANTIGONE

Uncle Creon, there's no reason to kill those guards. You must know that I'll do it all over again tonight.

CREON

Why did you try to bury your brother?

ANTIGONE

I owed it to him.

CREON

I had forbidden it.

ANTIGONE

I owed it to him. Those who are not buried wander eternally and find no rest. Everybody knows that. I owed it to him to unlock the house of the dead in which my father and my mother are waiting to welcome him. Polynices has earned his rest.

CREON

Polynices was a rebel and a traitor, and you know it.

ANTIGONE

He was my brother.

CREON

You heard my edict. It was proclaimed throughout Thebes. You read my edict. It was posted up on the city walls.

ANTIGONE

Yes.

CREON

You know the punishment I decreed for any person who attempted to give him burial.

ANTIGONE

Yes, I know the punishment.

CREON

Did you by any chance act on the assumption that a daughter of Oedipus was above the law?

ANTIGONE

I did not act on that assumption.

CREON

Because if you had acted on that assumption, Antigone, you would have been deeply wrong. Nobody has a more sacred obligation to obey the law than those who make the law. You are a daughter of law-makers, a daughter of kings. You must observe the law.

ANTIGONE

Had I been a scullery maid washing my dishes when that law was read aloud to me, I should have scrubbed the greasy water from my arms and gone out in my apron to bury my brother.

CREON

What nonsense! If you had been a scullery maid, there would have been no doubt in your mind about the seriousness of that edict. You would have known that it meant death; and you would have been satisfied to weep for your brother in your kitchen. But you! You thought that because you come of the royal line, because you were my niece and were going to marry my son, I shouldn't dare have you killed.

ANTIGONE

You are mistaken. I never doubted for an instant that you would have me put to death.

CREON

The pride of Oedipus! Oedipus and his head-strong pride all over again. I can see your father in you—and I believe you. Of course you thought that I should have you killed! Proud as you are, it seemed to you a natural climax in your existence. Your father was like that. For him, as for you,

human happiness was meaningless ; and mere human misery was not enough to satisfy his passion for torment. You come of people for whom the human vestment is a kind of straitjacket: it cracks at the seams: You spend your lives wriggling to get out of it. Nothing less than a cosy tea-party with death and destiny will quench your thirst. Hand you over to be killed! I have other plans for you. You're going to marry Haemon, and you're going to give him a sturdy boy. Let me assure you that Thebes needs that boy a good deal more than it needs your death. Now, you will go straight to your room and do as you have been told; and not a word about this to anybody. And don't annihilate me with those eyes. I know that you think I am a brute, and I'm sure you must consider me very prosaic. But the fact is, I have always been fond of you, stubborn though you always were. Don't forget that the first doll you ever had came from me. (A pause. Antigone says nothing, rises and exits) Where are you going?

ANTIGONE

(Stops) You know very well where I am going.

CREON

What sort of game are you playing ?

ANTIGONE

I am not playing games.

CREON

Antigone, don't you realize that if apart from those guards—a single soul finds out what you have tried to do, it will be impossible for me to avoid putting you to death? There is still a chance that I can save you; but only if you keep this to yourself and give up your crazy purpose. Five minutes more, and it will be too late.

ANTIGONE

I must go out and bury my brother. Those men have uncovered him.

CREON

What good will it do? You know that there are other men standing guard over Polynice's body. And even if you did cover him over with earth again, the earth would again be removed.

ANTIGONE

I know all that. But that much, at least I can do. And what a person can do, a person should do.

CREON

Tell me, Antigone, do you believe all that hocus-pocus about religious burial? Have you ever listened to the priests of Thebes when they were mumbling their formula? Have you ever watched their dreary sullen faces while they were preparing the dead for burial—skipping half the gestures required by the ritual, swallowing half their words, hustling the dead into their graves out of fear that they might be late for lunch?

ANTIGONE

Yes, I have seen all that.

CREON

And did you never say to yourself as you watched them, that if someone you really loved lay dead under the shuffling, mumbling ministrations of the priests— you would scream aloud and beg the priests to leave the dead in peace?

ANTIGONE

No, Creon. There is God and there are His priests. And they are not the same thing. You are not free to do with men as you wish—not even when they are dead.

CREON

You must want very much to die. You look like a trapped animal.

ANTIGONE

Stop feeling sorry for me. Do as I do. Do your job. But if you are a human being, do it quickly.

CREON

I want to save you, Antigone.

ANTIGONE

You are the king, and you are all powerful. But that you cannot do.

CREON

You think not?

ANTIGONE

Neither save me nor stop me.

CREON

Prideful Antigone!

ANTIGONE

Only this can you do: have me put to death.

CREON

Have you tortured, perhaps?

ANTIGONE

Why should you do that? To see me cry? To hear me beg for mercy?

(A pause.)

CREON

You listen to me. You have cast me for the villain in this little play of yours, and yourself for the heroine. And you know it, But don't you drive me too far!

(He grasps her hand by the wrist. He twists her arm,)

ANTIGONE

Let me go. You are hurting my arm.

CREON

(Gripping her tighter) I will not let you go.

ANTIGONE

(Moans) Oh!—

CREON

I should have done this from the beginning. I was a fool to waste words. I may be your uncle; but we are not a particularly affection ate family. Are we, eh? Are we? (Creon twists her left arm so forcibly that Antigone is wincing with pain) What fun for you, eh ? To be able to laugh in the face of a king who has all the powei in the world ; a man who has done his own killing in his day; who has killed people just as pitiable as you are—and who is still soft enough to go to all this trouble in order to keep you from being killed.

ANTIGONE

Now you are squeezing my arm too tightly. It doesn't hurt any more.

(A pause. Creon stares at her, then drops her arm.)

CREON

I shall save you yet. God knows, I have things enough to do today without wasting my time on an insect like you. But urgent things can wait. I am not going to let politics be the cause of your death. For it is a fact that this whole business is nothing but politics: the mournful shade of Polynices, the decomposing corpse, the sentimental weeping and the hysteria that you mistake for heroism, politics—nothing but politics. Look here. I may be soft, but I'm fastidious. I like things clean, shipshape, well scrubbed. Don't think that I am not just as offended as you are by the thought of that—meat—rotting in the sun. In the evening, when the breeze comes in off the sea, you can smell it in the palace, and it nauseates me. My God! If it was up to me, I should have had your brother buried long ago as a mere matter of public hygiene. But if the feather-headed rabble I govern are to understand what's what, that stench has got to fill the town for a month!

ANTIGONE

You are a loathsome man!

CREON

I agree. My trade forces me to be. We could argue whether I ought or ought not to follow my trade; but once I take on the job, I must do it properly.

ANTIGONE

Why do you do it at all ?

CREON

My dear, I woke up one morning and found myself king of Thebes. God knows, there were other things I loved in life more than power.

ANTIGONE

Then you should have said no.

CREON

Yes— Yes, I could have said no. Only, I felt that it would have been cowardly. I should have been like a workman who turns down a job that has to be done. So I said yes.

ANTIGONE

So much the worse for you, then. I didn't say yes. I can say no to anything I think vile, and I don't have to count the cost. But because you said yes to your lust for power, all that you can do, for all of your crown, your trappings, and your guards—all that you can do is to have me killed.

CREON

Listen to me.

ANTIGONE

If I want to. I don't have to listen to you, if I don't want to. There is nothing you can tell me that I don't know. Whereas, there are a thousand things I can tell you that you don't know. You stand there, drinking in my words. Why is it that you don't call your guards? Ill tell you why. You want to hear me out to the end and that's why.

CREON

You amuse me.

ANTIGONE

Oh, no, I don't. I frighten you. That is why you talk about saving me. Everything would be so much easier if you had a docile, tongue-tied little Antigone living in the palace. But you are going to have to put me to death today, and you know it. And it frightens you.

CREON

Very well. I am afraid, then. Does that satisfy you? I am afraid that if you insist upon it, I shall have to have you killed. And I don't want to.

ANTIGONE

I don't have to do things that I think are wrong. If it comes to that, you didn't really want to leave my brother's body unburied, did you? Say it I Admit that you didn't.

CREON

I have said it already.

ANTIGONE

But you did it just the same. And now, though you don't want to, you are going to have me killed. And you call that being a king!

CREON

Yes, I call that being a king.

ANTIGONE

Poor Creon! My nails are broken, my fingers are bleeding, my arms are covered with the welts left by the paws of your guards—but I am a queen!

CREON

Then why not have pity on me, and live? Isn't your brother's corpse, rotting beneath my windows, payment enough for peace and order in Thebes ?

ANTIGONE

No. You said yes, and made yourself king. Now you will never stop paying.

CREON

But God in Heaven! Won't you try to understand me! I'm trying hard enough to understand you? There had to be one man who said yes. Somebody had to agree to captain the ship. She had sprung a hundred leaks; she was loaded to the waterline with crime, ignorance and poverty. Now do you understand?

ANTIGONE

I am not here to understand these things. I am here because I said no to you.

CREON

It is easy to say no.

ANTIGONE

Not always.

CREON

It is easy to say no. To say yes, you have to sweat and roll up your sleeves and plunge both hands into life up to the elbows. It is easy to say no, even if saying no means death. All you have to do is to sit still and wait. Wait to go on living; wait to be killed. That is the coward's part.

My part is not a heroic one, but I shall play my part: I shall have you put to death. But before I do, I want to make one last appeal. I want to be sure that you know what you are doing as well as I know what I am doing. Do you know what you are dying for, Antigone? Do you know the sordid story to which you are going to sign your name in blood, for all time to come?

ANTIGONE

What story?

CREON

The story of Eteocles and Polynices, the story of your brothers. You think you know that story, but you don't. Nobody in Thebes knows that story but me. And today, I feel, that you have a right to know it, too. It is not a pretty story. You shall see. Do you know what your brother really was ?

ANTIGONE

Whatever he was, I know that you will say vile things about him.

CREON

A cheap, idiotic thug, that is what he was. A cruel, vicious little glutton. A little beast with just wit enough to drive a car faster and throw more money away than any of his pals. I was with your father one day when Polynices, who had lost a lot of money gambling, asked him to settle the debt; and when your father refused, the boy raised his hand against him and called him a vile name.

ANTIGONE

That's a lie!

CREON

He struck your father in the face with his fist. It was pitiful. Your father sat at his desk with his head in his hands. His nose was bleeding. He was weeping with anguish. And in a corner of your father's study, Polynices stood sneering and lighting a cigarette.

ANTIGONE

That's a lie.

CREON

When did you last see Polynices alive ? When you were twelve years old. Thais true, isn't it?

ANTIGONE

Yes, that's true.

CREON

Now you know why. Oedipus was too chicken-hearted to have the boy locked up. Polynices was allowed to go off and join the Argive army. And as soon as he reached Argos, the attempts upon your father's life began. One after another, men slipped into Thebes from Argos for the purpose of assassinating him, and every killer that we caught, always ended by confessing who had put him up to it, who had paid him to try it. And Polynices wasn't the only one. That is really what I am trying to tell you. I want you to know what went on in the back room, in the smelly kitchen of politics; I want you to know what took place in the wings of this drama in which you are burning to play a part. Yesterday, I gave Eteocles a State funeral, with pomp and honors. Today, Eteocles is a saint and a hero in the eyes of all Thebes. The whole city turned out to bury him. I made a speech myself; and every temple priest was there with an appropriate show of sorrow and solemnity in his stupid face. And military honors were accorded the dead-hero. Well, what else could I have done? People had taken sides in the civil war. Both sides couldn't be wrong: that would have been too much. I couldn't have made them swallow the truth. Two gangsters was more of a-luxury than I could afford. (He pauses for a moment) And yet-this is the whole point of my story. Eteocles, that virtuous brother, was just as rotten as Polynices. That great-hearted son had done his best, too, to procure the assassination of his father. That loyal prince had also offered to sell out Thebes to the highest bidder. Funny, isn't it? Polynices lies rotting in the sun while Eteocles is given a hero's funeral and will be housed in a marble vault. Yet I have absolute proof that everything that Polynices did, Eteocles had plotted to do. They were a pair of assasins-both intent in selling out Thebes, and both intent in selling out each other; and they died like the cheap gangsters they were, over a division of the spoils. Each had been spitted on the other's sword, and the Argive cavalry had trampled them down. There were-mashed-to a pulp, Antigone. I had the prettier of the two carcasses brought in, and gave it a

State funeral; and I left the other to rot. I don't know which is which. And I assure you, I don't care.

ANTIGONE

Why do you tell me all this?

CREON

You hold a treasure in your hands, Antigone —life, I mean. And you were about to throw it away. Would it have been better to let you die a victim to that obscene story? Antigone, go find Haemon and get married quickly. Be happy. Life is not what you think it is. Life is a child playing round your feet, a tool you hold firmly in your grip, a bench you sit down upon in the evening, in your garden. People will tell you that that's not life, that life is something else. They will tell you that because they need your strength and your fire, and they will want to make use of you. Don't listen to them. Believe me when I tell you—the only poor consolation that we have in our old age is to discover that what I have just said to you is true. Life is, perhaps, after all, nothing more than the happiness that you get out of it.

ANTIGONE

Happiness—

CREON

Not much of a word, is it?

ANTIGONE

(Quietly) What kind of happiness do you foresee for me? Paint me the picture of your happy Antigone. What are the unimportant little sins that I shall have to commit before I am allowed to sink my teeth into life and tear happiness from it? Tell me: to whom shall I have to lie? upon whom shall I have to fawn? to whom must I sell myself? Whom do you want me to leave dying, while I turn away my eyes?

CREON

Be quiet.

ANTIGONE

Why do you ask me to be quiet when all I want is to know what I have to do to be happy? You tell me that life is so wonderful: I want to know what I must do in order to be able to say that myself.

CREON

Do you love Haemon?

ANTIGNONE

Yes, I love Haemon. The Haemon I love is hard and young, and faithful and difficult to satisfy, the way I am. But if what I love in Haemon is to be worn away like a stone step by the tread of the thing you call life, the thing you call happiness; if Haemon reaches the point where he stops growing pale with fear when I grow pale, if he stops thinking that I have been killed in an accident when I am five minutes late, if he stops feeling alone on earth when I laugh and he doesn't know why—if he too has to learn to say yes to everything— why no, then, no! I do not love Haemon!

CREON

You don't know what you are talking about!

ANTIGONE

I do know what I am talking about! It is you who can't hear me! I am too far away from you now, talking to you from a kingdom you can't get into, with your preaching, and your politics, and your persuasive logic. I laugh at your smugness, Creon, thinking you could prove me wrong by telling me vile stories about my brothers or alter my purpose with your platitudes about happiness!

CREON

It is your happiness, too.

ANTIGONE

I spit on your idea of happiness! I spit on your idea of life—that life that must go on, come what may. You are all like dogs, that lick everything they smell. You with your promise of a humdrum happiness—provided a person doesn't ask too much of life. If life must be a thing of fear, and lying and compromise; if life cannot be free and incorruptible—then Creon, I choose death!

CREON

Scream on, daughter of Oedipus!

ANTIGONE

Yes! In my father's own voice! We come of a tribe that asks questions; and we ask them remorselessly, to the bitter

end. You have just told me the filthy reasons why you can't bury Polynices. Now tell me why I can't bury him!

CREON

Because it is my order!

ANTIGONE

The order of a coward king who desecrates the dead!

CREON

Be quiet! If you could see how ugly you are, shrieking those words!

ANTIGONE

Yes, I am ugly! Father was ugly, too. But father became beautiful. And do you know when? At the very end. When all his questions had been answered. When he could no longer doubt that he had killed his own father; that he had gone to bed with his own mother. When he was absolutely certain that he had to die if the plague was to be lifted from his people. Then he was at peace; then he could smile, almost; then he became beautiful—Whereas you! Look at yourself, Creon! That glint of fear and suspicion in the corner of your eyes—that crease in the corner of your power-loving mouth. Oh, you said the word a moment ago: the smelly kitchen of politics. That's where you were fathered and whelped—in a filthy kitchen!

CREON

I order you to shut up! Do you hear me!

ANTIGONE

You order me? Cook! Do you really believe that you can give me orders?

CREON

Antigone! The anteroom is full of people! Do you want them to hear you?

ANTIGONE

Open the doors! Let us make sure that they can hear me!

CREON

By God! You shut up, I tell you!

(Ismene enters)

ISMENE

Antigone!

ANTIGONE

(To Ismene,) You, too? What do you want?

ISMENE

Oh, forgive me, Antigone. I've come back. I'll go with you now.

ANTIGONE

Where will you go with me?

ISMENE

Creon! If you kill her, you'll have to kill me, too. I was with her. I helped her bury Polynices.

ANTIGONE

Oh, no, Ismene! You had your chance to come with me in the black night, creeping on your hands and knees. You had your chance to claw up the earth with your nails and get yourself caught like a thief, as I did. And you refused it.

ISMENE

Not any more. If you die, I don't want to live. I'll do it alone tonight.

ANTIGONE

You hear that, Creon? (She turns toward Creon,) The thing is catching! Who knows but that others will catch the disease from me! What are you waiting for? Call in your guards! Come on, Creon! Show a little courage! It only hurts for a minute! Come on, Cook!

CREON

Guard!

ANTIGONE

(in a great cry of relief) At last, Creon!

CREON

(To the Guard) Take her away!

(Chorus enters. The Guard grasps Antigone by her arm and exits)

ISMENE

Oh, no! Creon!

(Ismene runs out)

CHORUS

You are out of your mind, Creon. What have you done?

CREON

She had to die.

CHORUS

You must not let Antigone die. We shall carry the scar of her death for centuries.

CREON

No man on earth was strong enough to dissuade her. Polynices was a mere pretext.

CHORUS

That is not the truth, Creon—and you know it.

CREON

What do you want me to do for her ? Condemn her to live ?

(He is about to exit when Haemon enters)

HAEMON

Father!

CREON

Forget Antigone, Haemon. Forget her, my dearest boy.

HAEMON

How can you talk like that?

CREON

I did everything I could to save her, Haemon I used every argument. I swear I did. The girl doesn't love you. She could have gone on living for you; but she refused. She wanted it this way: she wanted to die.

HAEMON

Father! They are dragging Antigone away! You've got to stop them!

CREON

I can't stop them. It's too late. Antigone has spoken. I cannot save her now.

HAEMON

You must!

CREON

I cannot.

HAEMON

Recall your edict. Bury Polynices.

CREON

Too late. The law must be obeyed. I can do nothing.

HAEMON

But, Father, you are master in Thebes!

CREON

I am master under the law. Not above the law.

HAEMON

But you made that law yourself, and what you ordained, you can repeal. You cannot let Antigone be taken from me.

CREON

I cannot do anything else, my boy. She must die and you must live.

HAEMON

Live! For what? A life without Antigone? A life in which I am to go on admiring you as you busy yourself about your kingdom; go on admiring you as you make your persuasive speeches and strike your attitudes? Not without Antigone. I love Antigone. She never struck a pose and waited for me to admire her. Mirrors meant nothing to her. She never looked at herself. She looked at me, and expected me to be somebody. And I was—when I was with her. Do you think I am not going after her? I will not live without Antigone !

CREON

Haemon—you will have to resign yourself to life without Antigone. Sooner or later there comes a day of sorrow in each man's life when he must cease to be a child and take up the burden of being a man. That day has come for you.

HAEMON

That giant strength, that courage. That massive god who used to pick me up in his arms and shelter me from shadows and monsters—was that you, Father ? Was it of you I stood in awe ? Was that man you?

CREON

Yes, that was me.

HAEMON

You are not that man today. For if you were, you'd know that your enemies were abroad in every street. You'd know that the people revere those gods that you despise. You cannot put Antigone to death. She will not have been dead an hour, before shame will sit on every Theban forehead and horror will fill every Theban heart. Already the people curse you because you do not bury Polynices. If you kill Antigone, they will hate you!

CREON

Silence! That edict stands!

(Haemon stares at Creon for a moment, then turns and quickly goes out)

CHORUS

Creon, the gods have a way of punishing injustice.

CREON

(contemptuously) The gods!

CHORUS

Creon, that boy is wounded to death.

CREON

(Turns to Chorus) We are all wounded to death.

(The Guard rushes in hurriedly with Antigone in chains)

GUARD

Chief, the people are crowding into the palace!

ANTIGONE

Creon! I don't want to hear them howl anymore! You are going to kill me: let that be enough. I want to be alone until it is over.

CREON

Empty the palace! Guards!

(Creon goes out- leaving ANTIGONE and THE
GUARD alone)

ANTIGONE

(Turns and looks at the Guard)

It's you, is it?

GUARD

What do you mean?

ANTIGONE

The last human face that I shall see. Was it you that
arrested me this morning?

GUARD

Yeah, that was me.

ANTIGONE

You hurt me. There was no need for you to hurt me. Did I
act as if I were trying to escape?

GUARD

Come on now, Miss. It was my business to arrest you! I did
it.

ANTIGONE

How old are you?

GUARD

Thirty-nine.

ANTIGONE

Have you any children?

GUARD

Yeah. Two.

ANTIGONE

Do you love your children?

GUARD

What's that got to do with you?

ANTIGONE

Listen.

GUARD

Yes, Miss.

ANTIGONE

I'm going to die soon. Do you think it hurts to die?

GUARD

How would I know? Of course, if somebody sticks a sabre in your guts and turn it around, it hurts.

ANTIGONE

How are they going to put me to death?

GUARD

Well, I'll tell you. I heard the proclamation, all right. There isn't much that gets away from me. It's seems they don't want to- Wait a minute. How did that go now? (reciting) "In order that our fair city shall not be polluted with her sinful blood, she shall be im-mured-immured." That means they shove you in a cave and wall up the cave.

ANTIGONE

Alive?

GUARD

Yes-

ANTIGONE

O tomb! O bridal bed! Alone!

GUARD

Yep! Outside the southeast gate of the town. In the Caves of Hades. In broad daylight. Some detail, eh, for them that's on the job? First they thought maybe it was a job for the army. Now it looks like it's going to be the Guards. There's an outfit for you! Nothing the Guards can't do. No wonder the army's jealous.

ANTIGONE

A pair of animals.

GUARD

(Looks at her, puzzled) What do you mean, a pair of animals?

ANTIGONE

When the winds blow cold, all they need to do is to press close against one another. I am all alone.

GUARD

Say, is there anything you want? I can send out for it, you know.

ANTIGONE

You are very kind. (A pause) Yes, there is something I want. I want you to give someone a letter from me, when I am dead.

GUARD

How's that again? A letter?

ANTIGONE

Yes, I want to write a letter; and I want you to give it to someone for me. (Removes a ring from her finger and holds it out toward him) I'll give you this ring if you will do it.

GUARD

Uh-uh. No can do. Suppose they go through my pockets. I might get six months for a thing like that—Listen, tell you what I'll do. You tell me what you want to say, and I'll write it down in my book. Then afterwards, I'll tear out the pages and give them to the party, see? If it's in my handwriting, it's all right.

ANTIGONE

In your handwriting? Oh, the poor darling! In your handwriting.

GUARD

O.K. It's no skin off my nose.

ANTIGONE

(Quickly) No, keep it, but be quick about it. Time is getting short. Where is your notebook? Ready? (He nods) Write, now. "My darling—"

GUARD

The boy-friend, eh?

ANTIGONE

"My darling. I had to die, and perhaps you will not love me any more—"

GUARD

"—love me any more."

ANTIGONE

"Perhaps you think it would have been simple to accept life—"

GUARD

"—to accept life—"

ANTIGONE

"But it was not for myself. And now, it's all—so dreadful here alone. I am afraid— And those shadows—"

GUARD

Hey, take it easy! How fast do you think I can write?

ANTIGONE

Where are you ?

GUARD

"—dreadful here alone. I am afraid—"

ANTIGONE

No. Scratch that out. Nobody must know that. They have no right to know. It's as if they saw me naked and touched me, after I am dead. Scratch that out. Just write: "Forgive me."

GUARD

I scratch out everything you said there at the end, and I put down, "Forgive me?"

ANTIGONE

Yes. "Forgive me, my darling. You would all have been so happy if it hadn't been for Antigone. I love you." (She murmurs, as Guard writes) No, it wasn't for myself.

GUARD

"—been for Antigone. I love you." Is that all?

ANTIGONE

That's all.

GUARD

You know—that's a funny kind of letter—

ANTIGONE

I know.

GUARD

Now who is it to?

(There is a sudden, sharp roll of drums.
Both Antigone and The Guard rise hurriedly
at the sound of the drums.)

ANTIGONE

But I haven't finished yet—

GUARD

Shut up!

(The The Guard takes Antigone out quickly. The DRUM ROLL rises in a sharp crescendo and ends on a loud note. A pause. The DRUM is heard as from a distance, striking a measured beat, five times. The Chorus enters)

CHORUS

Creon's turn. It is late afternoon.

(The Messenger runs in)

MESSENGER

The Queen— the Queen—! Where is the Queen?

CHORUS

What do you want with the Queen? What have you to tell the Queen ?

MESSENGER

News to break her heart. Antigone had been thrust into the cave. They hadn't finished heaving the last blocks of stone into place, when Creon and the rest heard a sudden moaning from the tomb. A hush fell over us all, for it was not the voice of Antigone. It was Haemon's voice that came forth from the tomb. Everybody looked at Creon; and he howled like a man demented: "Take away the stones! Take away the stones!" The slaves leapt at the wall of stones, and Creon worked with them, sweating and tearing at the blocks with

bleeding hands. Finally a narrow opening was forced, and into it slipped the smallest guard. Antigone had hanged herself by the cord of her robe, by the red and golden twisted cord of her robe. The cord was round her neck like a child's collar. Haemon was on his knees, holding her in his arms and moaning, his face buried in her robe. More stones were removed, and Creon went into the tomb. He tried to raise Haemon to his feet. I could hear him begging Haemon to rise to his feet. Haemon was deaf to his father's voice; till suddenly he stood up of his own accord, his eyes dark and burning. Anguish was in his face. He stared at his father. Then suddenly he struck him—hard in the face, then he pulled out a knife and lunged at his father. Creon leapt out of range. Haemon went on staring at him, his eyes full of contempt—a glance that Creon couldn't escape. The king stood trembling at the far corner of the tomb, and Haemon went on staring. Then, without a word, he stabbed himself and lay down beside Antigone,

(Creon enters)

embracing her in a great pool of blood.

(The Messenger turns and looks at Creon,
then goes)

CREON

I have had them laid out side by side. They are together at last, and at peace. Two lovers on the morrow of their bridal. Their work is done.

CHORUS

But not yours, Creon. You have still one thing to learn. Eurydice, the queen, your wife—

CREON

A good woman.

CHORUS

When the queen was told of her son's death, she waited carefully until she had finished her row, then put down her knitting calmly—as she did everything. She went up to her room and there, Creon, she cut her throat. She is laid out now exactly where you went to her one night when she was still a maiden. Her smile is still the same; one might think she was asleep.

CREON

She, too. They are all asleep. (A pause) It must be good to sleep.

CHORUS

Tomorrow they will sleep sweetly in the earth, Creon. And you will bury them. You who would not bury Polynices today will bury Eurydice and Haemon tomorrow. And Antigone, too. The gods take a hand in every game, Creon. Even in politics.

CREON

The task is there to be done. They say it's dirty work. But if I didn't do it, who would?

CHORUS

Why must dirty work "be done?" (A pause) And now you are alone, Creon.

CREON

Yes, all alone. What time is it?

CHORUS

Five o'clock, Sir.

CREON

What have I on today at five o'clock?

CHORUS

Cabinet meeting, Sir.

CREON

Cabinet meeting. Then we had better get along to it
(Creon exits)

CHORUS

And there we are. All those who were meant to die, have died: those who believed one thing, those who believed the contrary thing, and even those who believed nothing at all, yet were caught up in the web without knowing why. All dead: useless, rotting. Creon was the most rational, the most persuasive of tyrants. But like all tyrants, he refused to distinguish between the things that are Caesar's and the things that are God's. Now and again—in the three thousand years since the first Antigone—other Antigones have arisen like a clarion call to remind men of this distinction. Their cause is always the same—a passionate

belief that moral law exists, and a passionate regard for the sanctity of human dignity. Well, Antigone is calm tonight. She has played her part. A great wave of unrest now settles down upon Thebes, upon the empty palace, upon Creon, who can now begin to long for his own death. Only the Guards are left, and none of this matters to them. It's no skin off their noses. They go on playing cards. Until, the end.

(Chorus exits.)

THE END