

ACT ONE

The CHORUS is standing on stage, in loose groups of one and two. They are waiting for the audience to sit. Some do vocal exercises (preferably the most difficult and dramatic scales and tones) others do physical exercise. Others again are making final adjustments to their costumes. The musicians on stage or in the pit are also preparing.

All of the characters will emerge from the chorus and return to the chorus, literally and metaphorically, and all will remain on stage all of the time – along the sides or along the back. Everyone on stage is making this performance.

There is an air of concentration and expectation. They are waiting for the audience to sit so they can begin.

The lights dim.

And...

CHORUS ONE

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

It begins with a girl

It begins with a bull

It begins with a god

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

It begins with a daughter

It begins with a father

It begins with a war

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

CHORUS ONE

It begins with a betrayal

It begins with a rape

It begins with a sacrifice

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

How does it all begin?

It begins with loss

It begins with death

It begins with the end

A beautiful young girl Europa was gathering flowers by the edge of the sea, when she was surrounded by a herd of bulls. The largest of the bulls was dazzling white, and his small horns flashed like jewels, and was none other than the Zeus, the king of the gods and the god of the sky and of thunder. Europa did not fear the white bull and she brought him a garland of flowers. The white bull lowered his horns and Europa climbed on to his back. The white bull ran towards the sea and dived into the waves. Europa grasped a horn with one hand, and with the other hand, she held the hem of her tunic tight against her breast. Behind her the tunic billowed out like a purple sail in the wind. The white bull rode through the waves, taking Europa farther and farther away from her home.

The CHORUS disperses leaving ISMENE alone on stage.

ISMENE

It begins with loss.

It begins with death

It begins with the end.

ACT ONE

Scene One

Outside the walls of the city.

ANTIGONE is gazing out across an empty plain. ISMENE approaches her – she has been looking for her.

ISMENE

Antigone, where have you been?

Kreon has sent me to find you.

ANTIGONE

I was walking in the market.

People were dancing and singing.

A new day. A new day. A new day.

ISMENE

You must come back to the palace.

The war in Argos is over.

ANTIGONE hugs her sister.

ANTIGONE

A new day. A new day. A new day.

I wish our brothers were here to see this day.

What is wrong, Ismene?

ISMENE

Have you not heard Kreon's orders?

Eteokles will be buried alone without his brother.

There will be no funeral for Polyneikes

The Elders have denounced him as a traitor to Thebes.

Kreon has ordered his body to be left outside the city walls.

ANTIGONE

Why is Kreon harming our family?

We have lost so much already.

ISMENE

He says it is his duty and his duty comes before his family.

Come back to the palace. Kreon is waiting for us.

I am afraid of what will happen to us.

ANTIGONE

Don't be afraid, Ismene.

We have nothing to fear.

Where is Polyneikes' body now?

ISMENE

Hush, Antigone.

The guards will hear you.

Kreon has forbidden anyone to see the body

ANTIGONE

Where is Polyneikes' body?

ISMENE

You cannot see Polyneikes. No one can see the body.

ANTIGONE

Kreon is ashamed of us.

He is ashamed of our family.

ISMENE

He will not change his order for you or for me.

Anyone who approaches the body is to be arrested and executed.

ANTIGONE

He is our baby brother, Ismene

We have a right to see him.

We are his sisters.

ISMENE

Please, Antigone.

Come home with me.

It is too dangerous.

ANTIGONE

Tell me, Ismene.

Don't be afraid, little sister.

Where is Polyneikes' body?

ISMENE

Kreons' guards will be looking for us.

This is not the time for defiance or dissent.

Forget Polyneikes. Forget Polyneikes.

ANTIGONE

We have to remember our baby brother.

Tomorrow all Thebes will bury Eteokles

but today we will bury Polyneikes.

We will bury him with our own hands.

ISMENE

Kreon will execute us if we disobey his orders.

He will execute us if we defy his authority.

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes is my brother and my family.
I will bury him alone if you won't help me.
Tell me where Polyneikes' body is.

ISMENE

I am not as brave as you.
I love you. I loved our brothers.
But I will not die for you or for them.

ANTIGONE

Tell me where Polyneikes' body is.

ISMENE

He lies on a small hill near the West Gate.
Five guards watch over him.
Do not let them see you Antigone.
They have orders to arrest and execute
anyone who approaches the body.
Be careful. Be careful.

ANTIGONE exits. ISMENE watches her leave.

ISMENE

I miss our brothers too, Antigone.
I am just not as brave as you.
Forgive me. Forgive me. Forgive me.

ISMENE exits.

Scene Two

Outside the Palace. KREON steps forward, flanked by two GUARDS, and addresses a large crowd of Thebans.

KREON

Today, my fellow citizens, we have prevailed.
 Today, my fellow citizens, the war in Argos is over.
 We accepted no outcome but victory.
 We have overcome the grave dangers to our country.
 We have passed through this time of great peril.
 Our purpose was sure and we have prevailed.

Shouting and cheering.

In this war we fought for the cause of liberty, and for the peace of the world.
 The Armies of Thebes army have faced our enemy with skill and bravery.
 Their courage and sacrifice have made this day possible.
 Because of them, our nation is more secure.
 Because of them, our enemy has fallen.
 Our army has taken control of Sikyon and Corinth.
 Soon Argos and Mycenae will fall.
 My son Megareus will lead our armies to certain victory.

Shouting and cheering

Our brave soldiers will be coming home as soon as their work is done.
 Some good men and brave sons will not be coming home.
 Every life is a loss to our army, to our nation, and to our families.
 I declare tomorrow to be a national day of mourning.
 Tomorrow we will bury Eteokles, a brave son of Thebes.
 Tomorrow we will remember all our brave sons who gave their lives.
 We will never forget their service and their sacrifice
 We will never forget all our true and faithful sons.
 My fellow citizens, we have prevailed

KREON exits, flanked by GUARDS.

The CHORUS gathers onstage as before.

CHORUS ONE

Agenor, the son of Poseidon the god of the sea, loved his daughter Europa best of all his children. After Zeus had abducted his daughter, Agenor sent his four sons Kadmos, Phoenix, Cilix and Thasus to search for Europa, telling them not to return home until she was found. Each one took a different road in search of her, founding city after city along their way.

Europa was never found and Agenor's sons never returned home.

Phoenix settled in the land that became Phoenicia.

Cilix settled in the land that became Cilicia,

Thasus settled on the island that became Thasos.

Only Kadmos continued searching for Europa. He travelled through many lands to seek help from the oracle at Delphi. The oracle told him to end his search for his sister and to found instead a new city. The oracle told him to follow a young cow until she lay down on the ground and died, and there to build a new city. Pelagaon, the king of Phocis, gave Kadmos a young cow which he followed to the land of Boeotia where she lay down on the ground and died. Kadmos sacrificed the young cow to Athena, the daughter of Zeus and the goddess of Wisdom, and settled there. Kadmos settled in the land that became Kadmeia, that we now call Thebes.

Scene Three

Inside the place. The Elders of Thebes are awaiting the arrival of Kreon – who is delivering a speech to the people of Thebes. They listen to the shouting and cheering.

ELDER ONE

Listen to the people celebrating.
A new day. A new day. A new day.

ELDER TWO

All Thebes celebrates Kreon's great victory in Argos.
He has defended the homeland and defeated the Argive threat.

ELDER THREE

He will unite the House Of Thebes and defeat our enemies at home.
He will make Thebes a great nation once again.

ELDER ONE

With our victory in Argos, we will control all her iron mines and trade routes.

ELDER TWO

We have secured enough iron to supply all our needs for generations to come.

ELDER THREE

Other nations will fear our victory in Argos.

ELDER ONE

We must increase the size of our armies.

ELDER TWO

With Argive iron, we can build better war machines.

ELDER FOUR

Our armies cannot fight another war.

ELDER THREE

We can achieve victory with decisive force.

ELDER FIVE

We have lost too many Theban men in Argos.

ELDER THREE

We must defend our homeland whatever the cost.

ELDER FOUR

Thebes is now a city of old men, grieving women, and fatherless children.
We have no more men to send to war.

ELDER THREE

Did you hear Kreon's speech?
The war in Argos is over.

ELDER TWO

Our armies will soon be home.

ELDER FOUR

The war is over but the fighting continues.

ELDER FIVE

Only five of Argos' cities have surrendered.

ELDER TWO

Our armies have razed two to the ground.

ELDER THREE

Did you hear Kreon's speech?
Sikyon and Corinth have fallen.

ELDER FIVE

I heard Kreon's speech.
Argos and Mycenae still stand.

ELDER ONE

And our armies will prevail.
Victory is certain.

ELDER TWO

Every day our armies mount fierce attacks on Argos and Mycenae.

ELDER FOUR

Every night they collect the Theban wounded and dead below the walls of the cities.

ELDER THREE

Argos and Mycenae will soon fall.
They cannot hold out forever.

ELDER ONE

We control most of the cities and roads.

ELDER TWO

The war in Argos is over.

ELDER FOUR

So Kreon says.

ELDER TWO

The war in Argos is over.

ELDER FIVE

But when will the peace begin?

But when will the peace begin?

Enter KREON.

KREON

Gentlemen, the war in Argos is over.

Our purpose was true and we have prevailed.

Listen how Thebes celebrates our great victory.

The ELDERS applaud – except for ELDERS FOUR & FIVE.

ELDER FOUR

Argos and Mycenae still stand.

KREON

Our military forces will prevail.

We must defend the homeland.

We must defend the peace.

ELDER FOUR

The Argive people do not want our peace

The fighting continues street by street in Sikyon.

KREON

In this war we fight for the cause of liberty.

We will accept no outcome but victory.

ELDER FOUR

The number of Theban dead and wounded grows.

Too many will not return home.

ELDER ONE

We must defend the homeland.

ELDER TWO

We must protect our nation.

ELDER THREE

We must secure our future.

ELDER FOUR

We are paying too high a price for Argive iron with Theban blood.

ELDER ONE

With iron we can re-build our nation.

ELDER TWO

With iron we can defend our freedom

ELDER THREE

With iron we can preserve our way of life.

ELDER FIVE

Without our armies, who will protect us now?

KREON

Gentlemen, please. Gentlemen please.

There are still grave threats to our nation.

Have you forgotten why we had to go war in Argos?

When Polyneikes fled to Argos to raise an army against Thebes,

He threatened the security and freedom of this nation.

Thebes cannot and will not live at the mercy of a traitor.

We took unprecedented measures to defend our homeland.

We have achieved a great victory with decisive force.

Thebes has prevailed. We have prevailed.

We have defeated Polyneikes' enemy forces.

The ELDERS applaud.

KREON

Nevertheless, the enemies of Thebes are not idle, and neither are we.

I have ordered Polyneikes corpse to be displayed unburied outside the walls of the city.

The citizens of Thebes will see how we punish our enemies.

ELDER FIVE

Kreon, you must not do this. Polyneikes is your nephew.

KREON

He *was* my nephew, my sister Iocasta's eldest son.

Now he is an enemy of Thebes.

He threatened the security and the freedom of this country.

ELDER FOUR

Polyneikes should be buried with his brother Eteokles.

They are brothers and the last of the house of Thebes.

KREON

Eteokles sacrificed his life defending this country against Polyneikes

I will not dishonour his memory by burying him with his enemy.

ELDER FIVE

He was a prince of Thebes and a commander in your army.

KREON

He betrayed my family and my country when he went to Argos.
I will show no mercy to any enemy of Thebes.

ELDER FOUR

His sister Antigone is to wed your son Haemon

KREON

My duty to Thebes comes before my family.

ELDER ONE

Polyneikes supporters are plotting against the people of Thebes.

KREON

We must show them our purpose and resolve in defending the homeland.

ELDER THREE

Any supporter of Polyneikes will be the target of Theban justice.

KREON

We will hunt down anyone who threatens the security of nation.

ELDER TWO

We must show them their cause is lost.

ELDER FOUR

Polyneikes is dead.

KREON

Now we must destroy him.

ELDER FIVE

Polyneikes must be buried.

KREON

I have ordered my guards to watch over Polyneikes' corpse.
Anyone approaching the corpse will be arrested and executed.

ELDER ONE

Any supporter of Polyneikes is an enemy of this country.

ELDER TWO

Any supporter of Polyneikes is a threat to our security.

ELDER THREE

We must defend the peace.

We must defend the homeland.

We must do what needs to be done.

A GUARD enters.

GUARD

General, sir!

KREON

What is it?

What are you doing here?

Your orders were to guard the corpse, and to arrest anyone approaching it.

GUARD

There was a disturbance at the site sir.

KREON

What kind of disturbance?

ELDER ONE

Polyneikes' supporters are rioting!

ELDER FOUR

They are protesting against his barbaric treatment.

ELDER TWO

We must contain this rebellion before it spreads.

KREON

Gentlemen, please. Guard, what kind of disturbance?

GUARD

Sir, somebody has disturbed the traitor Polyneikes corpse.

They covered it with dust so the vultures wouldn't see it.

KREON

Who did this?

GUARD

I don't know, sir.

KREON

How did this happen?

GUARD

I don't know, sir.

KREON

Your orders were to guard the corpse, and to arrest anyone approaching it.

GUARD

We were, sir.

KREON

And you saw and heard nothing?

GUARD

We heard nothing and saw nothing.

There were no footprints, sir.

KREON

Could it have been a pack of wild dogs?

GUARD

That's what me and my men hoped at first.

But the dust covered the whole corpse,

According to the burial rites

It was no animal.

KREON

Your duty was to guard the corpse.

GUARD

Sir, yessir.

KREON

You failed to carry out your duty.

GUARD

Sir, nossir.

KREON

You and your men will be arrested and tried for treason.

GUARD

Sir, some women brought us water and told us of your great victory.

We never left our post.

KREON

Guard, you lie.

You were drinking

GUARD

No, sir, it is very hot out there.
The stink of the corpse, sir.
The flies in our mouths, sir.
We looked away for a moment.

KREON

Did someone pay you to look away?

GUARD

No sir.

KREON

Did someone pay you to look away?

GUARD

We are loyal Thebans.
We cannot be bought.
Sir, we found a child's spade.

KREON

A child's spade?

GUARD

Yes, sir. We kept the spade as evidence.
I can go and get it, sir.
We don't think it was a child...

ELDER ONE

It must have been Polyneikes' supporters.

ELDER TWO

They use women and children to achieve their ends.

ELDER THREE

They think a child covering the corpse would be more touching.

ELDER FIVE

We must bury Polyneikes body

ELDER FOUR

It will only cause more dissent and division.

ELDER TWO

We must find his supporters and arrest them.

ELDER ONE

The enemies of Thebes are everywhere.

KREON

Guard, return to you post. Continue your watch.
Tell no one about what has happened
Arrest anyone approaching the corpse.
Failure is not an option for you or your men.
Do you understand, guard?

GUARD

Sir, yes, sir.

GUARD leaves.

KREON

Gentlemen, let us go into the streets.
We must reassure the people about the course of the war
We must remind them what we are fighting for.

ALL leave. Except ELDERS FOUR & FIVE

EDLER FOUR

I have a grave foreboding about this day.

ELDER ONE

All Thebes is celebrating Kreon's great victory.

ELDER FOUR

How long will the Theban people support the war in Argos?
What will happen when the wounded and dead are brought home?

ELDER ONE

The Argives will surrender soon and then our armies will come home.

ELDER FOUR

What if the Argives do not surrender?
What if the fighting goes on?
What if the war comes to Thebes?

ELDER ONE

We are safe here in Thebes.
We have nothing to fear.
The war is over there.

ELDER FOUR

We have everything to fear.

I think a Theban buried Polyneikes.

I fear what Kreon and the Elders will do.

When a Theban is a danger to our freedom.

When a Theban is a threat to our security.

The war is already here.

The war is already here.

ELDERS FOUR & FIVE leave.

Scene Four

A room in the Palace. ISMENE and HAEMON enter.

ISMENE

Haemon?

HAEMON

Ismene, where is Antigone? I have searched everywhere for her.

ISMENE

She went to see the celebrations in the market.

HAEMON

She will hardly see me since I returned from Argos.

ISMENE

She is grieving for Polyneikes and Eteokles.

We both are. We miss our brothers. She most of all.

HAEMON

I must leave for Argos soon.

ISMENE

Kreon said the war is over. All Thebes is celebrating her great victory.

HAEMON

The fighting continues but Argos will surrender soon.

ISMENE

Be careful over there. Antigone has lost so much already.

HAEMON

My father wishes me to wed Antigone before I leave.

ISMENE

We bury Eteokles tomorrow. No bride should wed in black.

HAEMON

I love Antigone but I must obey my father's wishes.

ISMENE

Have you told Antigone of your father's wishes?

HAEMON

I have been searching for her but I cannot find her.

We must wed tomorrow after Eteokles' funeral.

ISMENE

Can you not wait until your return from Argos?

HAEMON

My father believes it will unite our families.
When my father steps aside, Antigone and I will be king and queen.

ISMENE

Will Kreon be my matchmaker too? Am I to wed your brother Megareus?

HAEMON

Our marriages will bring stability and peace to the House Of Thebes.
There will be no more wars over succession.

ISMENE

Will you and Megareus fight one another for the throne like my brothers did?

HAEMON

I love Megareus but I am the elder brother.
The throne is mine by right.

ANTIGONE enters.

ISMENE

Polyneikes loved Eteokles.

ANTIGONE

He was the elder brother. The throne was his by right.

ISMENE

Antigone, forgive me. I am not as brave as you.

ANTIGONE hugs ISMENE.

ANTIGONE

Do not be afraid, Ismene.

ISMENE

I was so afraid for you.

ANTIGONE

I saw Polyneikes, Ismene.
His body was so broken, his face was so bruised. He looked so small and alone
I did not recognize him. I stroked his hair and I kissed his bloody mouth.

HAEMON

What have you done?
My father forbid anyone to see his body.

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes is my brother.
He cannot hurt anyone anymore.

ISMENE

Please, Haemon, do not tell your father.
Antigone is grieving.

HAEMON

I will not tell my father.
You are grieving, Antigone.
You did not intend to defy his command

ANTIGONE

Kreon's command is wrong.
He is my brother and my family.
I had to visit him. I have to defend him.

ISMENE

Hush, Antigone, hush. The guards will hear you.
We must be careful in what we say and do.

ANTIGONE

I am not afraid of Kreon.
I did what was right.

HAEMON

This is not a child's game, Antigone.
We are at war because of your brother's treachery.

ANTIGONE

My brother was not a traitor. My brother was not a traitor.
Your father drove him out of Thebes. He had no choice.

HAEMON

Eteokles refused to give up the throne.
My father had no choice.

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes should have been king.
Your father betrayed Polyneikes.

HAEMON

My father is loyal to Thebes.
I am loyal to Thebes.
Your father was loyal to Thebes.

ANTIGONE

I am loyal to Thebes and I am loyal to my family.

HAEMON

Your brothers were loyal only to their own ambition.

There would have been a civil war between your brothers and their supporters.

My father and the Elders supported Eteokles.

ANTIGONE

Your father drove Thebes in to war with Argos.

HAEMON

Your brother sought sanctuary with an enemy of Thebes.

ANTIGONE

The King of Argos offered Polyneikes sanctuary.

HAEMON

Your brother threatened the security of Thebes.

ISMENE

Stop arguing. Please. Both of you. Stop arguing. Please

ANTIGONE

What is wrong, Ismene?

HAEMON

I apologize, Ismene.

ISMENE

Antigone, Haemon is our friend.

You should treat him with respect.

ANTIGONE

We have known each other since we were small.

We played together as children. He used to pull my hair.

HAEMON

I took no offence.

She is still the same, Ismene.

ANTIGONE

What is wrong Ismene?

ISMENE

I am so afraid, Antigone.

You must not anger Kreon.

ANTIGONE

What is wrong, Ismene?

ISMENE

We have no one to protect us now.
You must not anger Kreon.

ANTIGONE

What is wrong, Ismene?

ISMENE

Haemon has something to say to you.
Please listen to him, Antigone.

ISMENE kisses her sister, and leaves hurriedly.

ANTIGONE

No.

HAEMON

Antigone, my father.

ANTIGONE

NO

HAEMON

Antigone, listen to me.

ANTIGONE

NO!

HAEMON

My father wants us to wed tomorrow.

ANTIGONE

I cannot wed you.

HAEMON

It is a ceremony for the people.

ANTIGONE

I cannot wed you.

HAEMON

We have loved each other since we were children.

ANTIGONE

Have you forgotten Polyneikes and Eteokles?
I cannot wed you while I weep for my brothers.

HAEMON

I weep for your brothers. They were my friends.
This war has cost us all, Antigone, but we must go on living.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed you while my brother lies rotting in the sand.
I will not wed you because your father commands it.

HAEMON

Forget the past.
Forget my father.
Forget your brothers.
Forget the House Of Thebes.
I want us to wed.
I want you to be my bride.
I want you to be my wife.
I want you to be my queen.
I want every Theban to share in our joy.
I want every Theban to celebrate our union.
We will be their new king and queen.
And together we will build a new kingdom of love.
Tomorrow will be the first day of our reign.

HAEMON kisses ANTIGONE who doesn't respond initially but then unwillingly, passionately does.

ANTIGONE

You are a good man, Haemon
I want to be your bride.
I want to be your wife.
I want to be your queen.
But I cannot wed you.
I cannot forget the past.
I cannot forget my brothers.
I cannot forget my parents.
I will not wed you.

ANTIGONE kisses HAEMON passionately.

ANTIGONE

I have loved you ever since we were children.
 We were king and queen of Thebes.
 Ismene was a beautiful princess.
 Megareus was a brave general.
 We fought Polyneikes and Eteokles in childish battles.
 It didn't matter who lived or who died, who won or lost.
 There would always be another battle for us to fight.
 Now Polyneikes and Eteokles are dead, Haemon
 They killed each other for a glittering throne.
 There will be no more battles for them to fight.

I can never forget the past.
 I will never forgive your father.
 If we wed, I will grow to loathe you.
 If we wed, you will grow to scorn me.
 Ours would be a loveless kingdom of hate.

ANTIGONE turns to leave. HAEMON reaches for her.

HAEMON

I will speak to my father about burying Polyneikes.
 There is nothing to be gained by desecrating his body.

ANTIGONE

Thank you

HAEMON

Somebody has already tried to bury the body.
 My father believes it was one of Polyneikes supporters.
 The street are full of rumours and whispers.

ANTIGONE

It was me. I covered the body with dust.

HAEMON

I know.
 Nobody else would be as foolish or as brave as you.

ANTIGONE

Will you tell your father?

HAEMON

No I will not tell him.
 If we wed tomorrow, then we can persuade him together
 to bury your brother.
 If we wed tomorrow, I can protect you.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed you because I love you.
Not because I fear your father.

HAEMON

Antigone, we have no choice.
The Elders agree with my father.

ANTIGONE

I do not fear the Elders.
I am the daughter of Oedipus. My father feared no man.
Why do you fear your father and his old men?

HAEMON

They fear you.
We are not children anymore.
We must accept our responsibilities.
We must obey my father and the Elders.

ANTIGONE

Even if they are wrong, Haemon?

HAEMON

Even if they are wrong, Antigone.

A GUARD enters.

GUARD

Commander Haemon, sir.
Forgive my interruption.
General Kreon sent me to find you.
He and the Elders are touring the streets.
He would like you to join them.

HAEMON

Thank you, Guard
Tell him I will join him shortly.

GUARD

I am sorry, sir.
He insisted that you come immediately.

HAEMON

Tell him I will join him shortly

GUARD

Sir, the traitor Polyneikes' body has been disturbed.
There are rumours in the streets...
Your father insists that you come immediately.

HAEMON

GET OUT, GUARD!

GUARD hurries out.

ANTIGONE

My brother will always be the traitor Polyneikes.
Who will defend him except me?

HAEMON

I will talk with my father.
He will see reason.

ANTIGONE

Go, Commander Haemon, go.
Your father calls you.

HAEMON

What will I tell him about tomorrow?

ANTIGONE

Tell him I will do my duty.

HAEMON hugs her with joy.

HAEMON

My love, my love, my love.
I knew you were teasing me.
Oh my love, we will be so happy.

ANTIGONE kisses him

ANTIGONE

Forgive me, Haemon

HAEMON leaves

ANTIGONE

Forgive me, my love, forgive me.

ISMENE enters.

ANTIGONE

Were you listening behind the door?

ISMENE

Yes!

ANTIGONE

Did you hear what we said?

ISMENE

Yes!

ISMENE hugs her sister.

ISMENE

I am so happy.

Haemon is a good man.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed him.

ISMENE

But you promised him.

ANTIGONE

I promised him I would do my duty.

My duty to my Polyneikes.

ISMENE

Why are you putting our lives in danger.

Kreon will arrest you and execute both of us.

ANTIGONE

It is the right thing to do.

ISMENE

Our brothers are dead, Antigone.

We are alive.

ANTIGONE

I loved my father and my mother and my brothers.

I want to remember them even if no one else does.

ISMENE

I don't want to die for the dead.

ANTIGONE

I don't want to live in world of fear and lies.
I will not wed Haemon because Kreon says so.
I will not forget my brother because Kreon says so.
I will do what is right because it is right.
I am not afraid to die for what I believe.

ANTIGONE goes to leave.

ISMENE

Antigone, wait.
Stay here with me.
Please.

ANTIGONE kisses her sister. And leaves. ISMENE sinks to the floor and weeps.

The CHORUS gathers on stage, as before.

CHORUS ONE

In Kadmeia, a water dragon, the son of Ares, the god of War, guarded the spring of Dirce. Kadmos' people needed water after the river had run dry. Kadmos sent scouts to the spring of Dirce to find water but the water dragon killed each of them. Kadmos went to the spring and killed the water dragon with a massive stone, or as it is also told, with his hunting spear. Athena told Kadmos to gather the dragon's teeth and to sow them in the ground. From the teeth armed Spartans or "sown men" sprang up ready for battle. Kadmos threw stones among them and they fell upon one another until only five remained standing.

The five Spartans offered to serve Kadmos and to build him a palace. They became the founders of the great families of that city that we now call Thebes.

Ares, the god of war, was angered at the killing of his son, the water snake, and forced Kadmos to serve him for eight years. At the end of eight years, Zeus awarded Kadmos the goddess Harmonia, the daughter of Ares, as his wife. The marriage of Kadmos and Harmonia was divinely ordained. The kingdom of Kadmos and Harmonia was divinely ordained. Harmonia bore Kadmos four daughters, Semele, Ino, Agave, and Autonoe, and a son Polydorus.

The marriage and kingdom of Kadmos and Harmonia prospered but terrible sorrow and loss befell their children of Kadmos and Harmonia.

CHORUS [GUARD]

What befell their daughter Semele?

CHORUS ONE

Semele looked upon the divine form of Zeus and was destroyed by lightning.

CHORUS [KREON]

What befell their daughter Ino?

CHORUS ONE

Ino was driven mad and drowned herself in the sea with her small sons.

CHORUS [ISMENE]

What befell their daughter Agave?

CHORUS ONE

Agave was driven mad and tore her son Pentheus limb from limb

CHORUS [ANTIGONE]

What befell their daughter Autonoe?

CHORUS ONE

Autonoe saw her son Actaeon torn limb from limb by hunting dogs and was driven mad.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

What befell their son Polydorus?

CHORUS ONE

It is not told.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

It is not told?

CHORUS ONE

It is not recorded. After the death of their only son Polydorus, Kadmos and Harmonia fled Thebes. They travelled through many lands before they settled in Illyria, where the people proclaimed Kadmos as their king. Harmonia bore Kadmos a son Illyrion.

CHORUS [TIRESIAS]

What befell their son Illyrion?

CHORUS ONE

Kadmos feared the curse of Ares that had befallen his daughters. He begged the gods to spare Illyrion and offered his life in atonement for killing the water dragon so many years before. The gods accepted his sacrifice and Kadmos began to grow scales and to change in form. Harmonia begged the gods to share her husband's fate. The gods accepted her sacrifice and she too began to grow scales and change in form. The two snakes watched the gods lead their souls to Elysion and afterwards slipped away into the ground.

Scene Five

Inside the Palace. KREON, the ELDERS, and HAEMON.

HAEMON

Father, we should bury Polyneikes' body.
The streets are rife with rumours about his burial.

KREON

I have ordered my Guards to stake the traitor's body to the ground.
He will be an example to all who betray this country in a time of war.

HAEMON

Father, Polyneikes is dead.
We have defeated the Argive forces.
He is no longer a threat to this country.

KREON

My son wants me to change my orders regarding the traitor Polyneikes corpse.
What do you think, gentlemen?

ELDER ONE

He is a symbol for dissent and discontent. He must be destroyed.
Polyneikes dead is more dangerous now than when he was alive.

ELDER FIVE

By desecrating his body in this way, you will make him a martyr.

ELDER FOUR

Already people are whispering about his *divine protector*

KREON

We have always punished traitors. Polyneikes is no different.

ELDER FIVE

He is a son of Oedipus. He was more popular than his brother Eteokles.

ELDER ONE

Have you forgotten that he endangered our freedom?

ELDER THREE

Have you forgotten that he threatened our security?

ELDER FIVE

I remember that you used his presence in Argos to justify going to war.

ELDER TWO

Polyneikes threatened Thebes. Anyone who supports him threatens Thebes.

ELDER THREE

Polyneikes is a traitor. Anyone who supports him is a traitor.

ELDER FOUR

We are not traitors. We are not traitors

ELDER FIVE

We disagree with your course of action.

ELDER ONE

This is not a time for dissent or debate.

We must present a united front to the people.

KREON

Gentleman, thank you for your views.

I concur with you.

HAEMON

Father.

KREON

I would like to talk to my son alone.

Tomorrow he is to wed my niece Antigone.

I must give him some fatherly advice.

ELDERS bow and leave. KREON turns to his son, and slaps him across the face.

KREON

Don't ever challenge my authority in front of the Elders again.

HAEMON

I apologize, sir.

KREON

You are a commander in the Theban armed forces and you are my son.

I am your commanding officer and your father.

In public you must show loyalty to both of us.

HAEMON

I am sorry, father.

KREON hugs his son.

KREON

Forgive me, Haemon.

These are difficult times.

What did Antigone say?

Will you wed tomorrow?

HAEMON

She says she will do her duty.

KREON

Excellent. Excellent.

Antigone will make a fine queen.

HAEMON

Thank you, father.

KREON

She has Oedipus' courage and Iocasta's beauty.

But she also has her father's stubborn pride and a mind of her own.

HAEMON

We are well matched, father.

KREON

You will have to keep a tight rein on her, Haemon.

Now more than ever.

HAEMON

Antigone will be a loyal and faithful wife.

She will be a good mother to our children.

KREON

You love Antigone and you are loyal her.

You protect and you defend her.

You always have since you were children.

HAEMON

I love her, father.

KREON

Antigone is a dangerous firebrand.

She blazes with an unquenchable fire.

She will scorch you if you do not watch her closely.

She will burn us all if we do not handle her carefully.

Of all my poor sister's children, she is the one I love most.

She is also the one I fear most, more than her brothers.

She could engulf the House of Thebes with the heat of her fire.

HAEMON

She is a woman of passion, father.

KREON

Antigone is a woman of belief.
She believes in the truth of the world.

HAEMON

I don't understand, father.

KREON

She believes in the way the world should be not in the way it is.
This belief will drive her to extremes.
She has the will to achieve those extremes.
She is fearless and therefore dangerous.
If she were a man she would kill us all.

HAEMON

What are you saying, father?
Antigone will not kill you.

KREON

I am teasing you. I am teasing you.
Antigone is a beautiful girl.
She will make you a fine wife and a noble queen.

HAEMON

Thank you father.
May I ask you for a favour?

KREON

If it is in my power to give you.

HAEMON

It is a kind of wedding gift.

KREON

All you have to do is ask.

HAEMON

Bury Polyneikes.

KREON

Bury Polyneikes? Bury Polyneikes?
Did you hear what I said to the Elders?

HAEMON

Father, listen to me. Listen to me.
After our wedding, the people will see Antigone by my side.
Bury Polyneikes, they will see you as a fair and just leader.
They will see the House of Thebes united at last.
They will believe that the war in Argos is finally over.
Support for Polyneikes will dissolve.
Dissent over the war will disappear.
Bury Polyneikes, father.

KREON

You and Antigone are well matched indeed.
Did she tell you say this?

HAEMON

No, father. She is too proud to ask me for help.

KREON

Perhaps you are right about Polyneikes.
I will need to think on it very carefully.

GUARD enters.

GUARD

We have captured the traitor, sir.
We have captured the traitor, sir.

KREON

Traitor? Traitor?
What traitor?

HAEMON

What are you talking about?

GUARD

The traitor who disturbed the traitor Polyneikes' corpse.
The General ordered us to set a trap for the traitor.

HAEMON

Father....

KREON

Did you catch him? Did you catch the insurgent?

GUARD

We cleaned the dirt off the traitor Polyneikes corpse.
Then me and my men hid behind a small hill and waited.

HAEMON

Father...

GUARD

Then we saw the traitor, carrying a small spade.

Then we saw the traitor digging in the dirt and covering the corpse.

KREON

Did you catch the insurgent?

HAEMON

Father...

GUARD

Sir, yes, sir.

KREON

Did you hear, Haemon?

This guard has caught the insurgent who defied my orders.

HAEMON

Father... Antigone...

KREON

Guard, bring in the insurgent.

GUARD

Yes, sir.

The GUARD exits.

KREON

You and Antigone will have your wedding gift.

I will execute the insurgent for defying my orders.

I will bury the traitor Polyneikes' corpse.

The people will see me as a strong and just leader.

HAEMON

Father, I must speak to you about Antigone.

The GUARD returns, leading two other GUARDS with ANTIGONE between them in manacles.

GUARD

Sir, here is the traitor. She refuses to give her name.

We caught her digging with this spade.

The GUARD shows the child's spade.

KREON

What is this? What is this?

GUARD

It's the traitor, sir!

KREON

Release her at once!

GUARD

Sir?

KREON

What are you doing?

GUARD

Sir?

KREON

Release her at once.

She is Antigone, daughter of Oedipus.

HAEMON goes to ANTIGONE and unties her hands.

HAEMON

I apologize for the Guard's actions

ANTIGONE

He was only doing his duty.

KREON

Where were you when they arrested you?

GUARD

She was beside the traitor Polyneikes' corpse.

KREON

What were you doing there?

GUARD

She was digging with her little spade and covering the traitor's corpse with dirt.
She was singing death songs and kissing its head.

KREON

Did you know I had forbidden anyone to approach the body?

ANTIGONE

Ismene told me you orders.

KREON

Do you understand what you are doing, Guard?

She is the daughter of Oedipus.

GUARD

Sir, after the first time it happened, my men and me uncovered the corpse.

The sun was very hot.

When we cleared the dirt away, the corpse smelled bad.

So we hid behind a small mound in the wind.

We thought the body would be safe in the daylight.

We took turns watching the corpse.

The sun grew hotter and the wind dropped.

The corpse smelled worse.

Then I saw her, sir.

Sitting by the corpse, covering it with dirt.

She was singing death songs.

None of us knew how she was there.

None of us saw her approaching the body.

When we approached her, she didn't try to run away.

When we arrested her, she kept on singing her death songs.

Sir, she covered the body with dirt against your orders.

Sir, we caught her in our trap and we arrested her.

KREON

Thank you for your report, guard.

You are dismissed.

GUARD

Sir, yes, sir.

She is the traitor who disturbed the traitor Polyneikes corpse earlier.

HAEMON

Did you see her the first time?

GUARD

No sir. No one else would dare to disobey the General's orders.

We caught her this time. With her little spade.

KREON

Show it to me.

The GUARD hands the small spade to KREON.

KREON

It is a child's spade.
Is it yours, Antigone?

ANTIGONE

It belongs to Eteokles.

KREON

And who owns the other spade that the Guard found earlier?

ANTIGONE

It belongs to Polyneikes.
When they were little boys, they would fight each other with them.
That's why I left them there.

GUARD

Will I get the other spade, sir?

KREON

No. Return to your post.
Send for Ismene.

GUARD

Sir, yes, sir.

The GUARD leaves.

KREON

Did you tell anyone what you were going to do?

ANTIGONE

No.

KREON

Did you know she was going to do this?

ANTIGONE

I did not tell him.

KREON

Did you know she was going to do this?

HAEMON

No, father.

KREON

Would you have told me if you did know?

ANTIGONE
I did not tell him.

KREON
SILENCE!

HAEMON
No, father.

KREON walks quickly over to HAEMON. HAEMON stands his ground.

ANTIGONE
Kreon, I did it alone.
I told no one.
No one helped me.
I did my duty alone.

Enter ISMENE. She sees ANTIGONE and rushes over to her.

ISMENE
Antigone, where have you been?

ANTIGONE
I was doing my duty.

ISMENE
Your duty?

ANTIGONE
My duty to Polyneikes.

ISMENE hugs ANTIGONE.

KREON
Ismene, think carefully before you answer.
Did you know what your sister was doing?

ISMENE looks at ANTIGONE for a long time.

ISMENE
Yes.

ANTIGONE
No.

ISMENE
YES!

ANTIGONE

NO!

She lies.

KREON

Ismene, you will share your sister's punishment.

ISMENE

I am not afraid.

ANTIGONE

She lies, Kreon.

ISMENE

I am not afraid to die, Antigone.

We will die together.

ANTIGONE

No, Ismene.

HAEMON

Neither of you will die.

Father? Father?

KREON

Antigone, did you deliberately defy my order?

ANTIGONE

Yes.

KREON

Do you know the punishment for burying Polyneikes body?

ANTIGONE

Yes. Execution.

KREON

Why did you do it Antigone?

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes has a right to be buried.

KREON

We do not bury traitors.

ANTIGONE

He is not a traitor.

He did not betray Thebes.

You and Eteokles betrayed him.

You denied him his rightful throne.

KREON

He fled to Argos to raise an army against Thebes.

ANTIGONE

You drove him to Argos to find sanctuary.

KREON

Polyneikes was a traitor.

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes was my brother.

You have desecrated his body.

What you did was wrong.

I only did my duty.

KREON

And now you will die for it.

ANTIGONE

YES!

HAEMON

NO!

ISMENE

No.

HAEMON

Father?

You said you would bury Polyneikes after our wedding.

KREON

I told you I would execute the insurgent who buried Polyneikes.

I will not break my word.

HAEMON

Father, I beg you.

We are to be wed tomorrow.

KREON

There will be no wedding tomorrow.

HAEMON

Antigone is to be my wife.
You cannot execute her.

KREON

Cannot? Cannot?
She deliberately defied my authority.
She will not escape the law.

HAEMON

She was burying her brother.

KREON

I will uphold the law.

HAEMON

It is your law.
Father, I beg you.

KREON

It is the law, Haemon.
I must be seen to be just.
I must be seen to be fair.
Antigone is not above the law.

ANTIGONE

I am not above the law. Nor are you, Kreon.

KREON

I serve and obey the law.
I serve and obey the people.
I will do my duty.
Guards, take them away.

The GUARDS approach ANTIGONE and ISMENE. ISMENE begins to weep.

HAEMON

Father, I beg you.
What you are doing is wrong.

KREON

Silence!

ANTIGONE

Kreon, you have broken the law and lied to the people.
You broke the law when you drove my brother out.
You lied to the people when you attacked Argos.
You broke the law when you desecrated my brother's body.

KREON

You brother betrayed his country.
Your brother betrayed his family.

ANTIGONE

You lied to the people when you said the war was over.
Thousands have lost their lives,
thousands more are maimed and wounded
because of your lies, General.
There was no threat to Thebes from Argos.
There was only your hunger for Argive blood and iron.
You have betrayed your country.
You have betrayed your people.
Now you are betraying your family.

KREON strides over to ANTIGONE and strikes her to the ground. HAEMON rushes over to him and drags him back.

KREON

The pride of Oedipus.
You will die, Antigone.

HAEMON

Father, stop this madness.

KREON pushes him away.

KREON

Will you defy me as well, Haemon?

HAEMON turns and leads ANTIGONE and ISMENE away.

KREON

Guards, follow them. Make sure they do not leave the palace.

The ELDERS arrive just as HAEMON leaves with ANTIGONE and ISMENE.

CHORUS ONE

Laius, the grandson of Polydorus, abducted Chrissypus, the son of Pelops, king of Pelopynesos. The beautiful young boy was playing by the sea when he was approached by Laius in his chariot. Chrissypus did not fear his tutor and climbed onto the chariot. Laius raised his whip and the horses ran towards the mountains. Chrissypus grasped the side of the chariot with one hand, and with the other, he held the hem of his tunic tight against his breast. Behind him the tunic billowed out like a purple sail in the wind. The chariot rode through the fields, taking Chrissypus farther and farther away from his home.

CHORUS [GUARD]

What befell Chryssipus?

CHORUS ONE

Laius brought Chrissypus to Thebes

CHORUS [ISMENE]

What befell Chryssipus?

CHORUS ONE

Laius raped the beautiful young boy.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

What befell Chryssipus?

CHORUS ONE

Chryssipus killed himself with his sword.

CHORUS [KREON]

What befell Laius?

CHORUS ONE

Laius became king of Thebes

CHORUS [ANTIGONE]

What befell Laius?

CHORUS ONE

Laius married Iocasta, daughter of Menokeus.

CHORUS [TIRESIAS]

What befell Laius?

CHORUS ONE

Iocasta bore him a son.

CHORUS ONE

Laius received an oracle from Delphi which foretold that his son would kill his father and wed his mother. Laius ordered his son to be left uncovered on the side of a mountain. It is told that he ordered his son's feet to be pierced. It is told that he ordered his son's feet to be broken. It is told that he ordered his son's feet to be bound. A shepherd from Corinth found the infant and brought him to Polybus, the king of Corinth. Polybus accepted the infant and named him Oedipus.

KREON
Gentlemen

ELDER FIVE
Is it true, Kreon?

ELDER FOUR
Have your Guards arrested Oedipus' daughter?

KREON
Antigone was arrested for disturbing the traitor Polyneikes' corpse.
She defied my orders. She is an insurgent.

ELDER FOUR
She is the daughter of Oedipus.

ELDER FIVE
You must release her at once.

KREON
She is not above the law.

ELDER FIVE
Your guards made a mistake.

KREON
She confessed her crime.

ELDER FIVE
She will wed Haemon tomorrow.

KREON
There will be no wedding.
Antigone will be executed tomorrow.

ELDER FIVE
Executed?

The other ELDERS are stunned.

ELDER ONE
Is this wise, Kreon?

ELDER THREE
There has been enough death in The House Of Thebes.

ELDER TWO
Antigone's execution will only fan the flames of dissent.

KREON

Antigone is an insurgent who defied the law of the state.
Her crime is punishable by death.
She accepts her sentence.

ELDER ONE

Antigone's death will sow division among the people about the war.

ELDER TWO

Antigone will become a martyr like her brother Polyneikes.

ELDER THREE

When the people count the dead and wounded returning home, its discontent will grow.

ELDER TWO

They will forget Eteokles who died defending the nation against his brother's treachery.

ELDER ONE

Polyneikes and Antigone will become heroes.

ELDER TWO

Reconsider your decision to execute.

KREON

Gentlemen, she deliberately defied the law.

ELDER THREE

She was grieving. She lost both her brothers in the war.

KREON

Antigone is not above the law. I cannot make an exception.

ELDER TWO

The people of Thebes will make an exception.
She is the daughter of Oedipus and she is your niece.

ELDER THREE

You are their brilliant General who defeated Argos in the war.
He was their courageous king who suffered great torment to free his people.

KREON

He blinded himself and went begging in the streets with his daughters.

ELDER FIVE

The people of Thebes pitied him.

ELDER ONE

Reconsider your decision.

ELDER THREE

Punish Antigone but do not execute her.

ELDER FOUR

Be strong but merciful with the insurgent.

ELDER ONE

Be firm but fair with your niece.

KREON

What punishment do you propose?

ELDER ONE

Confine her to the palace.

ELDER THREE

Let her wed Haemon.

ELDER TWO

Their wedding will unite the House Of Thebes and end these dangerous divisions.

KREON

This is not appropriate punishment.

She has broken the law.

She has defied my authority.

You insult me.

I will not do it.

ELDER ONE

General Kreon, this is not a request.

KREON

I will not do it.

ELDER THREE

We are the Elders of Thebes.

You serve at our command.

KREON

We are in a state of war. These are perilous times.

I must protect the freedom and security of Thebes at all cost.

Antigone is an insurgent. Her punishment is a military matter.

Thank you for your wise and considered counsel.

ELDER ONE

You cannot take the law into your own hands.

ELDER FIVE

You are not above the law, Kreon.

KREON

No man is above the law. Not even the Elders.

Guards, please take the Elders to the palace for their own protection.

The GUARDS herd the ELDERS off.

GUARD leaves and another GUARD enters with a note

GUARD

General, sir, I have a report from captain Megareus.

KREON

Thank you.

GUARD

Will I wait for your reply?

KREON

Later, guard. Dismissed.

GUARD

Yessir.

GUARD leaves.

KREON

So what is your report, Megareus?

KREON reads

“Heavy casualties” ... “encountering resistance street by street”

“request more equipment” ... “request more supplies”

...”we will overcome”... “victory imminent”

We will overcome.

We will overcome.

Megareus, my brave son.

Victory is the only option.

KREON

Guard!

GUARD runs in.

KREON

Find Tiresias and ask him to join me here.

Tell him we have matters of national security to discuss.

GUARD

Yessir.

GUARD leaves. ANTIGONE enters followed by ISMENE, HAEMON and GUARDS.

HAEMON

Father we must speak with you.

ANTIGONE

I acted alone.

Release Ismene.

She did not know.

I acted alone.

Haemon did not know.

KREON

Take Ismene back to her room, Haemon.

I wish to talk to Antigone alone

HAEMON

What will you do with her?

ISMENE

I want to stay.

KREON

I will do nothing with her.

It is what she will do.

ANTIGONE

Take Ismene to her room, Haemon

Your father and I will talk.

Nothing will happen

KREON'S GUARDS approach HAEMON and ISMENE. They leave.

KREON

I know you acted alone.

The pride of Oedipus.

KREON turns away from her, and goes to his large desk, and looks at some reports.

KREON

These are dangerous times, Antigone.
 We are fighting a war in Argos.
 There is civil unrest in Thebes.
 There is division and dissent.
 Threats from without and within.
 Eteokles state funeral will inspire Thebans to defend their country
 Polyneikes rotting corpse warns them against treason and dissent.
 This is why I buried the body of one in a closed marble tomb.
 This is why I posted guards around the corpse of the other.

ANTIGONE

Polyneikes is not a symbol.
 He is your flesh and blood.

KREON

Antigone, did you see Polyneikes face?

ANTIGONE

I saw his face.
 It was bruised and broken.
 I kissed his bloody mouth.

KREON

In Argos I watched your brothers fight to their deaths
 surrounded by both armies on the plain of Corinth.
 We could hear every strike of their swords.
 They fought for hours under the burning sun.
 We could see the sun glint off their helmets.
 Eteokles fell first, then Polyneikes fell.
 They died in each other's arms.

ANTIGONE

Haemon told me what happened. He was there as well.

KREON

Did Haemon tell you what happened afterwards?

ANTIGONE

The armies attacked one another when my brothers fell.

KREON

Thousand of men and horses crashed together like waves.
 churning the earth with their feet and hooves
 crushing everything beneath.

ANTIGONE begins to weep.

KREON

After we conquered Corinth,
I sent my guards to find your brother's bodies.
The bodies of Polyneikes and Eteokles were crushed and broken.
They were unrecognizable.
Unrecognizable, Antigone.
I ordered them to prepare the least damaged corpse
for a state funeral.
I ordered them to leave the other unburied outside
the walls of Thebes.
I don't know which is Polyneikes' and which is Eteokles.

ANTIGONE

Why are you telling me this?

KREON

What is your duty to Polyneikes now?
It might be Eteokles' body rotting out there in the sun.

ANTIGONE

It does not matter who is lying out there.
If he is my brother, I will still bury him.

KREON

It might be a Theban or an Argive soldier.
What is your duty to the dead now?

ANTIGONE

If he is an Argive soldier, I will still bury him.

KREON

Will you throw away your life for an unknown corpse?

ANTIGONE

I will die for doing what is right.
You have desecrated the dead for your own ends.

KREON

You are a child, Antigone.
The dead are dead.
The dead are dead.

ANTIGONE

How we remember the dead is who we are.
How we remember the past is who we are.
I am the daughter of Oedipus and Iocasta.
I am my father's daughter. I am my brothers' sister.
I am a Theban. I am a woman.
I will remember them all because they are me.

KREON returns to his desk.

KREON

I will release Ismene.

ANTIGONE

Thank you, Kreon.

KREON

Haemon knew what you had done.
He did not tell me.
You have a great power over him.
More than his father.

ANTIGONE

I did not tell him.

KREON

You did not have to.
He knows you as I do.

ANTIGONE

He is a good man.

KREON

He is a bad son.
But he loves you.

ANTIGONE

Do not punish him, Kreon.

KREON

I will not punish him.
You have punished him enough.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed him.

KREON

Then you will be executed.

ANTIGONE

I am not afraid of death.

KREON

Are you afraid of life?

If you wed Haemon I will spare your life.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed him.

KREON

Wed Haemon and I will release you.

Do you not love him?

ANTIGONE

I love him but I will not wed him.

KREON

Listen to me carefully, Antigone.

We have a duty to Thebes and her people.

Your wedding will unite our divided House.

You will make a fine queen and Haemon a strong king.

Thebes will become a great nation again.

ANTIGONE

I will not wed Haemon for you or for your ambition.

KREON strikes her.

KREON

FOOL! FOOL!

You are a foolish child who defends insurgents and traitors.

Your selfish pride will destroy you.

I will give you what you want.

GUARD! GUARD!

GUARD rushes in.

GUARD

General?

KREON

Take her away.

GUARD

Sir?

KREON

Prepare her for execution.

GUARD

She is Antigone, daughter of Oedipus.

KREON strides over to the GUARD.

KREON

She is a traitor to Thebes.
Like her brother Polyneikes.
She has defied my orders.
She will be executed.
Do you hear me, guard.
Do you hear me?

GUARD

Sir yes sir.

KREON

Take her away.

ANTIGONE

Kreon, I am not afraid to die.

KREON

It is easy to die, Antigone.
You are afraid of life.
It is much harder to live.
You are a coward.
Like your dead brother.
Take her away.

GUARD leads ANTIGONE away.

KREON

The Pride Of Oedipus?
The Pride Of Oedipus?
Your father blinded himself
Your mother hanged herself.
Your brothers killed one another.
Your blood is poisoned.
You were born to die.
Oh my poor Haemon
Oh my poor son.

CHORUS ONE

Oedipus, son of Laius, received an oracle from Delphi which foretold that he would kill his father and wed his mother. Oedipus feared that he would kill Polybus and he fled the kingdom of Corinth. On the road to Thebes, he was approached by a man in a chariot. The man demanded that Oedipus let him pass on the road. The beautiful young boy was proud and refused. The man raised his whip and the horses ran towards Oedipus. He grasped the chariot with one hand, and with the other, he killed the man with his sword. Oedipus left the man's body uncovered on the side of the road and he climbed into the chariot. He grasped the side of the chariot with one hand and with the other, held the hem of his tunic tight to his breast. Behind him the tunic billowed out like a purple sail in the wind. The chariot rode through the fields, taking Oedipus closer and closer to his home.

A sphinx guarded the mountain pass to Thebes. Travelers could not enter Thebes until they answered her riddle. Travelers could not leave Thebes until they answered her riddle.

CHORUS [GUARD]

What walks on four feet in the morning, two feet in the afternoon and three feet in the evening?

CHORUS ONE

Travelers who answered the riddle of the Sphinx could pass with safety.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

What walks on four feet in the morning, two feet in the afternoon and three feet in the evening?

CHORUS ONE

The Sphinx devoured those who could not answer the riddle. No traveler had ever passed with safety.

CHORUS [ISMENE]

What walks on four feet in the morning, two feet in the afternoon and three feet in the evening?

CHORUS ONE

"A man," answered Oedipus.

CHORUS [ANTIGONE]

A man crawls on four feet in the morning of his life.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

A man walks on two feet in the afternoon of his life.

CHORUS [KREON]

He walks with a stick on three feet in the evening of his life

CHORUS ONE

The Sphinx hurled herself to her death from the top of the mountain. The people of Thebes declared Oedipus as their king and Oedipus wed the widow queen Iocasta. Iocasta bore Oedipus two sons, Polyneikes and Eteokles, and two daughters, Antigone and Ismene.

ENTER TIRESIAS, lead by a CHILD, with GUARD.

TIRESIAS

You sent for me General?

KREON

I need your advice Tiresias, old friend.

TIRESIAS

You are winning the war in Argos?

KREON

The war is over.

TIRESIAS

The fighting goes on.

KREON

We will defeat the Argive forces.

TIRESIAS

They will never surrender.

KREON

They will surrender. They will surrender.

We have destroyed most of their cities and towns.

TIRESIAS

They will fight until they die.

KREON

We will fight them until they are all dead.

TIRESIAS

Will you kill their wives and children?

KREON

We will kill them all to protect Thebes.

TIRESIAS

There was no danger to Thebes before.

There is now. Argos will never surrender.

More and more Theban soldiers will die.

KREON

The people know that we must defend the homeland.

The people know that we must protect our freedom.

TIRESIAS

You were wrong to drive out Polyneikes.
You were wrong to support Eteokles.
You should have banished them both.

KREON

I know you do not support the war.
I had no choice.
I did what had to be done.
I had no choice.
There would have been civil unrest.

TIRESIAS

Not if Haemon married Antigone
And united the House of Thebes.
With a new king and queen.

KREON

I am not a seer, old man.
I cannot see the future as well as you.

TIRESIAS

I am blind, Kreon.
I cannot see anything.
I remember stories.
I am a chronicler.
I record history.

KREON

The past is past.
The dead are dead.
We are living now.
We make the future.

TIRESIAS

I have to remember where I came from
to discover where I am now
To determine where I will go.
If I forget I will lose my way.
The future is inscribed in the past.

KREON

Tomorrow is written today.

TIRESIAS

Today is written yesterday.
Thebes is a story of war.
Its future is filled with blood and death.

KREON

We have enough Argive iron for generations to come.
Thebes will be a great nation once again.

TIRESIAS

How much iron is enough?
How much blood will it cost?

KREON

It is Argive blood.

TIRESIAS

It is Theban blood too.

KREON

Enough of these idle words.
Tonight I will execute Antigone.

TIRESIAS

Are you mad, Kreon?

KREON

Antigone is an insurgent.
She deliberately defied my orders.

TIRESIAS

What orders?

KREON

She tried to bury the traitor Polyneikes' corpse.

TIRESIAS

You are executing Antigone for burying her brother's body?

KREON

Polyneikes is a traitor and Antigone is an insurgent.
We must be vigilant against threats.

TIRESIAS

Why are you executing a *woman*?
For disobeying your orders?
For defending her brother?
For defying your authority?

KREON

Take care, old man.
We are at war. Lives are at risk.
We can not give comfort to our enemies.

TIRESIAS

You cannot kill a woman or a man for burying their dead.

KREON

In war you must to fight the enemy in every way.

TIRESIAS

Antigone is not your enemy.
She is your niece.
You will bring the war home to Thebes
When you treat the people as your enemy.

KREON

The people are not my enemy.
Antigone is an enemy of the people.

TIRESIAS

Antigone is a woman grieving.
She is stubborn and proud.
She is the daughter of Oedipus.
She is not your enemy.
Antigone is right to bury her brother.

KREON

War makes new rights and wrongs.
War makes new rights and wrongs.
Antigone broke the law.
She must be punished.

TIRESIAS

War destroys everything.
Kreon, I beg you. Do not execute her.
Release Antigone.
Let her wed Haemon.
Unite the House of Thebes.

KREON

I will not change my orders.

TIRESIAS

Why are you so cruel, Kreon?
Will her death slake your thirst for blood?
Will you kill Ismene? Then Haemon?
How many more must die to sate your cruelty?

KREON

It is not cruelty but my duty which drives me.
I must defend the homeland from her enemies.

TIRESIAS

Who will defend the homeland from you, Kreon?
Who will protect our freedom from you, Kreon.
War will father more war, and blood will bring forth more blood,
until there is nothing in the end.
And so I have looked back, and I have looked around,
And I have looked ahead and trembled.
I see nothing but blood and death.
Child, take me away from here.

TIRESIAS starts to leave.

KREON

Wait, old man! Wait!
What will I do with the Elders?

TIRESIAS stops.

TIRESIAS

Release them.
Then resign.
Resign.

TIRESIAS leaves

KREON

I will not resign.
I am the defender of Thebes.
I will not resign.

ENTER HAEMON

HAEMON

Father, why have you arrested the Elders?
What have you done?

KREON

I haven't arrested them.

I am accommodating them in the palace for their own protection.

I cannot guarantee their safety in the streets.

HAEMON

They are the Elders of Thebes.

You cannot arrest the Elders

KREON

They appointed me General of the Army to defend Thebes.

I have sworn a sacred oath to protect Thebes from all her enemies.

HAEMON

By arresting anyone who disagrees with you?

What you are doing is dangerous.

What you are doing is wrong.

KREON

In war, there is no right and wrong, only victory and defeat.

I will do what is necessary to defend Thebes.

HAEMON

Father listen to me.

I am your son.

I am not your enemy.

There is unrest in the city.

Antigone buried her brother

so his body would not be devoured

by wild dogs.

The people condemn Polyneikes' treason.

But they approve Antigone's defense of her brother.

Release Antigone. Release the Elders.

KREON

Foolish boy!

Are you Antigone's slave?

Do you crawl and carry for her?

Do you fetch and speak for her?

HAEMON

Better her slave than yours.

KREON slaps HAEMON across the face.

KREON

Your brother Megareus is a better son and soldier.
 He is loyal and brave and obeys orders without question.
 You are weak and fearful, ruled by women and children.
 To be a leader, you must act with certainty.
 People respect strength and purpose.
 People respect authority and force.
 If you waver, they will see weakness.
 If you tremble, they will attack you.
 If you yield, they will kill you.

HAEMON

When did you become so cruel, general?
 When did you become so cruel father?
 Your cruelty has deafened and blinded you.
 You only hear the echo of your own voice.
 You only see the reflection of your own eyes.

KREON

Perhaps you are right.
 I will release the Elders.
 I was too zealous in my duty to protect them.

HAEMON

Forgive my harsh words, father.
 I was doing my duty as your son to speak the truth.

KREON

Antigone will be executed for her crimes.
 I will not spill her blood.
 She will be walled in a cave in the mountains.
 She will have food and water for one day.
 She will either starve to death or she will take her own life.
 The choice is hers.
 My hands are clean.
 Now you must decide where your loyalty lies.
 With Antigone or with your father.

HAEMON is appalled by his father's words.

HAEMON

Why do you fear her so much?
 She was defending her brother.
 What you are doing is wrong.

KREON

I do not fear her.
 I despise her.
 The Pride of Oedipus.
 Oedipus poisoned my sister.
 Antigone poisons you.
 I will not allow her to poison me.
 She is dangerous.

HAEMON recoils from his father.

HAEMON

Antigone will not poison you father.

KREON

I am protecting you.
 I am defending Thebes.
 The pride of Oedipus is poisonous.
 Oedipus brought plague to the homeland.
 When his horrible crimes were revealed
 He plucked out his eyes with shame.
 My poor sister Iocasta hanged herself.
 Oedipus wandered around the country.
 He begged for alms with his daughter Antigone.
 He displayed his shame for all to see.
 His two sons plunged us into civil war.
 He brought shame to the House of Thebes.
 I will do whatever is necessary to defend my country.
 I will do whatever is necessary to protect my family.
 I will do whatever is necessary to guard you from Antigone.

HAEMON

You are insane.
 You are sick with cruelty and fear.
 The Pride Of Oedipus?
 Oedipus was a great king. He was a wise man.
 The Shame of Kreon.
 Your shame poisons you.
 Antigone is innocent.
 Release her now.

KREON

NO! NO!

HAEMON

I choose Antigone, father.

KREON
GET OUT!

HAEMON
I choose what is right.

KREON
COWARD! GET OUT!

HAEMON leaves.

KREON
GUARD!

GUARD enters.

GUARD
Sir?

KREON
Send in Ismene and ask the Elders to join me here.

GUARD
Yes sir.

KREON
Follow Commander Haemon, and tell me what he does.

GUARD
Sir?

KREON
I am concerned that he might do something rash after Antigone's execution.

GUARD
Yessir.

GUARD leaves.

KREON
All my hope lies with you, Megareus.
Your brother has betrayed me.
Bring me victory.
Bring me victory.

CHORUS ONE

The marriage and kingdom of Oedipus and Iocasta prospered, but a terrible plague descended on the city of Thebes. Oedipus sent Kreon, son of Menokeus, to the Oracle at Delphi. The oracle foretold that the plague would not leave the city of Thebes until the one who had killed King Laius on the road to Thebes many years before was found. Kreon returned to Thebes and told Oedipus what the oracle had foretold. Oedipus began to search for the killer but the seer Tiresias begged him to end his search. The king of Thebes was proud and refused. Tiresias told him that it was Oedipus who had killed king Laius on the road to Thebes many years before. Oedipus did not believe the seer and called for his wife Iocasta. Iocasta, the widow of King Laius, told him that an unknown traveler had killed her husband on the road to Thebes many years before. Oedipus trembled with fear and began to weep. A messenger arrived from Corinth and told the king of Thebes that Polybus, the King of Corinth, was dead. The messenger told the king of Thebes how a shepherd had found an infant on the side of a mountain. The messenger told the king of Thebes that the infant's feet had been broken, pierced and bound. Iocasta trembled with fear and began to weep. The messenger told the king of Thebes that the shepherd had offered the infant to Polybus. The messenger told the King of Thebes that Polybus had accepted the infant. The messenger told the king of Thebes that Polybus had named the infant Oedipus.

CHORUS [KREON]

Oedipus had killed a man on the road to Thebes.

CHORUS [ISMENE]

Iocasta had wed a beautiful young boy.

CHORUS [GUARD]

Oedipus had killed king Laius on the road to Thebes.

CHORUS [TIRESIAS]

Iocasta had wed Oedipus, the king of Thebes.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

Oedipus had killed his father on the road to Thebes.

CHORUS [ANTIGONE]

Iocasta had wed her son.

CHORUS ONE

Iocasta fled the sight of Oedipus and killed herself in the palace. Oedipus followed her and found her broken body. He touched her bruised face and kissed her bloody mouth. He took two pins from her dress and plucked out his eyes. The plague left the city of Thebes.

CHORUS [TIRESIAS]

Eteokles and Polyneikes, the sons of Oedipus, agreed to share the kingdom of Thebes.

CHORUS [ANTIGONE]

Oedipus travelled through the city of Thebes with his daughter Antigone as his guide.

CHORUS [KREON]

Polyneikes ruled Thebes for one year. Eteokles ruled Thebes for one year.

CHORUS [GUARD]

Oedipus travelled through many lands with his daughter Antigone as his guide.

CHORUS [TIRESIAS]

Eteokles denied his brother the kingdom and drove him from the city.

CHORUS [HAEMON]

Oedipus died in the wilderness of Colonnus with his daughter Antigone at his side.

CHORUS [ISMENE]

Polyneikes sought refuge with king Adrastus in Argos.

CHORUS [KREON]

Eteokles went to war in Argos with the armies of Thebes.

CHORUS ONE

Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, returned to Thebes and waited with her sister Ismene for the war in Argos to end. Her brothers fought on the plain of Corinth. Eteokles fell first, then Polyneikes fell. They died in each other's arms. Kreon brought their bodies back to Thebes. He ordered the body of Eteokles to be buried in a marble tomb. He ordered the body of Polyneikes to be left unburied on the side of a hill. Antigone defied Kreon's order and covered her brother's body with dust. She sang death songs and kissed Polyneikes' bloody mouth. She held a child's spade in one hand, and with the other hand she held the hem of her tunic tight against her breast. Behind her the tunic billowed out like a purple sail in the wind.

Enter ISMENE with GUARD

KREON

Have you thought about what you have done?

ISMENE

I am not afraid to die.

KREON

Tell me Antigone acted alone and I will release you.

ISMENE

I am not afraid to die.

KREON

Will you punish Megareus?

Do you not love him?

ISMENE

I am not afraid.

KREON

Of course you are not afraid.

You are the daughter of a king.

ISMENE

I am not afraid.

KREON

Before battle, soldiers are always afraid.

They fight better because they want to live.

Do you want to live, Ismene?

ISMENE

Yes.

KREON

Do you love Megareus?

ISMENE

Yes.

KREON

Did Antigone act alone?

ISMENE

Yes.

KREON

Are you certain?

ISMENE

Yes.

KREON

You will be a loyal wife to Megareus.

One day you will make fine queen to his king.

GUARD enters leading ELDERS. KREON bows on one knee to them, and lowers his head.

KREON

Gentlemen, forgive me.

I offer you my resignation as General of the Armies of Thebes.

I was too zealous in my duty to secure your safety.

In my desire to protect you, I restricted your liberty.

Forgive me, gentlemen.

ELDER ONE

We do not accept resignation, General.

ELDER TWO

In times of war we must all make sacrifices for the greater good.

ELDER THREE

Restrictions to our liberty are the price we must pay to defend our security.

ELDER FOUR

General, will you swear an oath to serve Thebes and the Elders?

KREON

My duty to the homeland comes first.

ELDER FIVE

General, will you swear an oath to protect Thebes and our way of life?

KREON

I am a citizen first, and a soldier second.

ELDER ONE

Kreon, son of Menokeus.

You are a true and loyal son of Thebes.

You have kept the enemy from our gates.

You have restored order and brought us victory.

We thank you.

ELDER FOUR

Do you have news from the front?

KREON

Commander Megareus will launch a final attack on Sythion and Argos.

He requests more reinforcements which I will approve.

With your permission, of course.

We will have superior numbers.

We will prevail.

ELDER THREE

Whatever is necessary general to secure our victory in Argos.

ELDER FOUR

Is that wise? The cost in Theban lives is already high.

KREON

With reinforcements, our victory in Argos will be assured.

ELDER FIVE

You said the war in Argos was over.

KREON

It is.

This offensive will remove the last of the insurgents in Sythion and Argos.

ELDER TWO

General we must be careful not to lose the support of the people.

ELDER FOUR

There is growing unease about the number of men going to war.

KREON

Our new supply of Argive iron will bring trade and wealth.

The people will be too busy counting their money.

This war, which you authorized, will make Thebes a great nation.

Megareus will bring us victory.

Enter ANTIGONE, shaven headed and prison garbed, walking beside HAEMON. A GUARD follows behind.

KREON

Antigone, do you confess your crime?

ANTIGONE

I do.

KREON

Are you aware of the punishment for treason?

ANTIGONE

I am.

ELDER FIVE

General, show some mercy to a daughter of Oedipus.

ELDER FOUR

Spare her life. She is to wed your son tomorrow.

KREON

It is the law, gentlemen. It is the law.

I cannot spare her because she is a daughter of Oedipus.

I cannot spare her because she was to wed my son.

HAEMON

You are General of the armies of Thebes.

KREON

I am under the law. Not against it.

I will not change my orders.

ANTIGONE

I am not afraid to die but spare my sister.

Ismene has nothing to do with this.

ISMENE

No, Antigone, I am not afraid.

We will die together.

ANTIGONE

Are you so afraid of being alone, Ismene?

I won't let you die for me, little sister.

Promise me, Kreon, you will spare her.

ISMENE

I will be safe with you.

I will be safe with you.

ANTIGONE

Promise me, Kreon, you will protect her.

KREON

I will spare Ismene.
I will protect her.
She will wed Megareus.
She will make a fine queen.

ANTIGONE hugs her sobbing sister.

ISMENE

I will cover Polyneikes body with dirt.
I will die with you.

ANTIGONE

No Ismene, you must live.
You are the last child of Oedipus.
You must live. You must remember us.
You must tell our story.
You must tell it to your children.

ISMENE

I don't want to live without you.
I don't want to be alone.

ANTIGONE kisses ISMENE

ANTIGONE

You will never be alone.
I will always be here.

ANTIGONE touches ISMENE'S breast.

ANTIGONE turns to the ELDERS.

ANTIGONE

You are not safe. Thebes is not safe.
Kreon's ambition will destroy you all.
The war in Argos will never end.
Kreon has lit a fire that he cannot control.
A fire that will burn down everything in its path,
Consuming cities and towns and villages until it burns itself out.
Nothing will be left in its wake except scorched ruins.
Smoldering bodies and a few survivors.
Nothing of Thebes will be left standing.
I pity the survivors,
what they will see.
What you will see.
I pity you.

I go to join my family.
I will see my father and my mother.
I will see my brothers.
Tell anyone who asks about me
That you saw me escape to my death.

KREON

Do you see the threat she poses to the freedom and security of Thebes?
Guard, take her away.

ANTIGONE turns and leaves.

HAEMON and ISMENE follow her.

KREON

Haemon! Where are you going?

HAEMON

I am leaving.

KREON

You cannot leave.
You will rejoin your brother and secure our victory in Argos.

HAEMON

I will bury Polyneikes and Antigone's bodies and then I will leave.

KREON

You will do your duty as a soldier.
You will join your brother.
That's an order commander.

HAEMON

No sir. I refuse.

KREON

Are you disobeying my orders, commander?

HAEMON

Yes, sir.

KREON

To disobey the orders of a superior officer is an act of insubordination.
Do you know the punishment for insubordination, commander?

HAEMON

Yes sir.

ELDER FIVE
This is madness!

ELDER FOUR
Show some mercy, Kreon.

ELDER ONE
General, Haemon is angry and grieving.

KREON
This is a military matter.
Haemon will be punished for his insubordination.

ELDER TWO
He is your son, General.

KREON
I show no favourites.
Guard, arrest Commander Haemon.

ELDER FOUR
Apologize to your father, Haemon.

HAEMON
Sir, I refuse to obey my father's orders.
I believe he is no longer fit to lead the armies of Thebes in battle.

KREON
Guard! Remove Commander Haemon.
One more word commander, I will have you charged with treason.

HAEMON
Sir, you are unfit to command the armies of Thebes.
You have failed to secure supply lines.
You have failed to adequately arm our soldiers.
He has falsified the numbers of the wounded and the dead

KREON
SILENCE!
Take him away, Guard.

ELDERS
Is this true?
How many are dead?
How many are wounded?
Are we in danger?
Let's us retreat?

KREON

Gentlemen, please.
These are military matters.
My son does not know what he is saying.
He is angry and grieving.

HAEMON

I have seen it with my own eyes.
I have counted the bodies.
I have examined the weapons.

KREON

SILENCE! COWARD! TRAITOR!

KREON strides over to HAEMON and strikes his son repeatedly. The ELDERS are shocked by KREON'S actions.

ELDERS

GENERAL! GENERAL! GENERAL

ELDER FIVE

GUARDS! RESTRAIN HIM!

The GUARDS are confused. Restrain a General?

ELDER FOUR

RESTRAIN HIM!

ELDER FIVE

He is killing his son.

The GUARDS drag KREON off his son's body, and help HAEMON to his feet.

ELDER FIVE

General, your son's allegations are very serious.

KREON

He is lying. Antigone has poisoned him.

HAEMON

Antigone is innocent.

KREON

He is jealous of his brother's success.

ELDER FOUR

Have you lied to us about the progress of the war in Argos?

KREON

I am a soldier. I do my duty.

ELDER FIVE

Have you lied about the numbers of the dead and the wounded?

KREON

I am not a politician. I do not lie.

ELDER ONE

General, answer the question.

KREON

It is difficult to be accurate about the number of dead and wounded in the heat of battle.

ELDER THREE

General, answer the question.

Enter GUARD breathless.

GUARD

GENERAL! GENERAL!

GUARD stops when he sees KREON restrained, surrounded by the ELDERS>

HAEMON

What is it, Guard?

GUARD

The Argive armies have broken through our lines.

HAEMON

What happened?

GUARD

Sir, they launched a final attack at Argos.

They had superior numbers.

We were overrun.

We were ordered to retreat.

KREON

You lie. Megareus would never retreat.

GUARD

Sir?

Commander Megareus is dead.

Your son is dead, sir.

KREON

No.

GUARD

He was separated from his men and surrounded by Argives.
They stabbed and hacked him with their swords.
like wild dogs tearing at his body.
He fought bravely but they brought him down in a pack.

KREON

No. My poor son. No. My poor Megareus.

GUARD

The Argives are driving our armies back, General.
In Corinth, women and children fight us in the streets.
In Mycenae, they burn down their houses so we have nowhere to retreat.
In Sikyon, they throw bricks and stones at us from burned out rooftops.
In Argos, they pour pots and pans of boiling water down on our heads.
The Argives are defending their lairs like animals, slashing and biting.
Our troops fight bravely but they are exhausted.
We cannot fight without more weapons and more supplies
We have been ordered back to the border to defend Thebes.

KREON

My poor Megareus.

ELDERS

What are we to do?
How will we stop the Argives?
How do we defend Thebes?

ELDER FIVE

General, you must defend Thebes.

ELDER ONE

The Argives will invade.

ELDER TWO

They will destroy us all.

KREON

Megareus

ELDER FOUR

GENERAL!

KREON

All is lost. All is lost.
My son is dead.

ELDER FIVE

Commander Haemon, can we defend Thebes?

HAEMON

We can defend the mountain pass.
We can hold the Argives back and sue for peace.

ELDER ONE

We can surrender without bloodshed.

HAEMON

We will not surrender.

ELDER TWO

They will kill us all.

HAEMON

We will negotiate, and end this war.
The King of Argos is a reasonable man.

ELDER FIVE

Go and speak for us.
Rally our armies.
Defend our nation.

HAEMON

Release Antigone.
End her punishment.

ELDER FOUR

We will release her at once.
Guard, release Antigone return her here.

GUARD

Yessir.

KREON

I am still in command.

ELDER FOUR

You are being relieved of your command.
Your son will take command of our armies.

KREON

My son is dead.
Megareus is dead.

ELDER FIVE

Your son Haemon will take command.

KREON

Haemon?
Forgive me, my son.
I did what had to be done.
It will be good to rest.
Such a long day.

KREON is lead away by two GUARDS.

Enter ISMENE

ISMENE

He's gone. He's gone.

HAEMON

Who's gone.

ISMENE

Polyneikes! Polyneikes!
His body is gone!

ELDER ONE

Kreon was right. The insurgents have taken his body.

ELDER TWO

It must have been a pack of wild dogs.

ISMENE

NO!
Polyneikes lives.

ELDER THREE

The poor child has lost her mind.

ISMENE

Haemon, listen to me.
Listen to me.
I went to put some dirt on Polyneikes body.

HAEMON

You must be careful, Ismene.

ISMENE

I wasn't afraid.
Antigone was right.
I had to bury my brother.
When I got there there was nobody.
No guards or anything.
Only one set of footprints.
Walking west.

ELDER ONE

To Argos.

ELDER FOUR

Don't be foolish.

ISMENE

It was Polyneikes.
He lives. He lives.

HAEMON

It must have been wild animals.
Or the heat, Ismene...

ISMENE

No Haemon.
Antigone was right.
She has released him.
He is free.
He is free.

HAEMON

Antigone is free.
The Elders released her.

ISMENE

Polyneikes is free.

Enter GUARDS carrying ANTIGONE'S body.

GUARD

General Haemon, Antigone is dead.
She hanged herself.

HAEMON approaches the body and kisses her tenderly. ISMENE lies on the body and sobs.

HAEMON

Antigone, my brave Antigone
Antigone, my beautiful Antigone.
You took your life to cheat them of your death.
Was it worth it? You are dead and I am alone.
Was it worth it? You are dead and I am alone.

HAEMON puts down her ANTIGONE'S body.

HAEMON

Ismene, I must leave.

ISMENE

Antigone was always so brave.
I was always afraid.

HAEMON

You are brave, Ismene.
You are a daughter of Oedipus.

ISMENE

Are you going back to the war?

HAEMON

I will finish what my father started.
I will end the war and sue for peace.

ISMENE

Is Megareus dead?

HAEMON

Yes.

ISMENE

I will miss him.

HAEMON

I must leave, Ismene.
The commanders await my orders.

ISMENE

Come home quickly, Haemon.

HAEMON

Soon. When the war is over.

ISMENE

When the war is over.

HAEMON

When the war is over.

HAEMON leaves.

ISMENE kisses her sister's face.

ISMENE

Goodbye Antigone.

I will remember you.

Guard, take my sister away.

I will bury her with our mother and our brother.

GUARDS leave with her body.

ELDER FIVE

Ismene, forgive us.

We could not stop Kreon.

Forgive us.

ISMENE

Kreon was a man. Kreon was not a monster.

You made him what he was.

You gave him the authority.

You should have stopped him.

ELDER ONE

We did what needed to be done

We did what we thought was best.

ISMENE

You should have done what was right.

Antigone died because of you.

Thousands of Thebans will die because of you.

I do not forgive you.

I do not forgive you.

ISMENE leaves.

ELDER ONE

She is dangerous.

ELDER TWO

Like her sister.

ELDER THREE

She speaks the truth.

ELDER FOUR

We are old but we are not wise.

ELDER THREE

It is never too late to learn.

ELDER FOUR

It is never enough to live happy and unthinking

ELDER FIVE

We must end the war in Argos.

ELDER FOUR

We must bring home our armies.

We must bring home our wounded and dead.

ELDER ONE

Let the peace begin.

ELDER TWO

Let the peace begin.

ELDER THREE

Let the peace begin.

CHORUS ONE

How does it all end?
How does it all end?
How does it all end?

It ends with a father

It ends with a daughter

It ends with a girl

How does it all end?
How does it all end?
How does it all end?

It ends with a body

It ends with a burial

It ends with a sacrifice

How does it all end?
How does it all end?
How does it all end?

It ends with loss

It ends with death

It ends with war

How does it all end?
How does it all end?
How does it all end?

It ends with a brother

It ends with a sister

It ends with a girl