

ACT 1

SCENE 1 – CHORUS SCENE

C1 Freedom is about choosing what you are responsible for. (Light up on Antigone)

C2 - Not being free of responsibilities; (Light up on Ismene)

C3- Freedom is choosing which responsibilities you are prepared to defend. (Light up on Haemon)

C4 -How exquisite is the human want for permanent happiness (light up on Eurydice)

C5 -and how thin the human imagination becomes trying to achieve it.

C6 - Because a coward with a sword is the most dangerous person in the world. (light up on Creon)

ALL - There is really nothing more to say - except why. But since why is so difficult to handle, we must take refuge in how. (LIGHTS DOWN)

SCENE 1 – CHORUS SCENE VERSION 2

ALL chorus lines to be given out during CHORUS rehearsals. All the ensemble (minus Creon, Antigone, Ismene) will (at some point) be part of the chorus. Creon, Antigone, Ismene, Military Wives/Sergeant may be on stage in character during chorus sections/scenes.

Freedom is about choosing what you are responsible for.

Not being free of responsibilities;

Freedom is choosing which responsibilities you are prepared to defend.

And the function of freedom is to free someone else

They mistook violence for passion, death as honor and recklessness as freedom.

She learnt that freeing yourself was one thing, claiming ownership of that free self was another altogether.

And we learned the vital difference between that which is humane and that which is patriotic.

Everything depends on knowing how much and good is knowing when to stop.

Definitions, though, belong to the definers not the defined.

How exquisite is the human want for permanent happiness and how thin the human imagination becomes trying to achieve it.

After all, what difference does it make if the thing you are scared of is real or not?

And when you fall in love with a city it is forever and it is like forever

But the presence of evil is something to be recognized and triumphed over

Because a coward with a sword is the most dangerous person in the world.

They believed that if you surrendered to the air, you could ride it.

There is really nothing more to say - except why. But since why is so difficult to handle, one must take refuge in how.

SCENE 2 – Antigone and Ismene meet

[Enter Antigone leading Ismene away from the palace]

ANTIGONE: Now, dear Ismene, my own blood sister,
do you have any sense of all the troubles
Zeus keeps bringing on the two of us,
as long as we're alive? All that misery
which stems from Oedipus? There's no suffering,
no shame, no ruin—not one dishonor—
which I have not seen in all the troubles

you and I go through. What's this they're saying now,
something our general has had proclaimed
throughout the city? Do you know of it?
Have you heard? Or have you just missed the news—
dishonors which better fit our enemies
are now being piled up on the ones we love?

ISMENE: I've had no word at all, Antigone,
nothing good or bad about our family,
not since we two lost both our brothers,
killed on the same day by a double blow.
And since the Argive army, just last night,
has gone away, I don't know any more
if I've been lucky or face total ruin.

ANTIGONE: I know that. That's why I brought you here,
outside the gates, so only you can hear.

ISMENE: What is it? The way you look makes it seem

you're thinking of some dark and gloomy news.

ANTIGONE: Look—what's Creon doing with our two brothers?
He's honoring one with a full funeral
and treating the other one disgracefully!
Eteocles, they say, has had his burial
according to our customary rites,
to win him honor with the dead below.
But as for Polyneices, who perished
so miserably, an order has gone out
throughout the city—that's what people say.
He's to have no funeral or lament,
but to be left unburied and unwept,
a sweet treasure for the birds to look at,
for them to feed on to their heart's content.
That's what people say the noble Creon
has announced to you and me—I mean to me—
and now he's coming to proclaim the fact,
to state it clearly to those who have not heard.
For Creon this matter's really serious.
Anyone who acts against the order
will be stoned to death before the city.
Now you know, and you'll quickly demonstrate
whether you are nobly born, or else
a girl unworthy of her splendid ancestors.

ISMENE: Oh my poor sister, if that's what's happening,
what can I say that would be any help
to ease the situation or resolve it?

ANTIGONE: Think whether you will work with me in this
and act together.

ISMENE: In what kind of work? What do you mean?

ANTIGONE: Will you help these hands take up Polyneices' corpse and bury it?

ISMENE: What? You're going to bury Polyneices,
when that's been made a crime for all in Thebes?

ANTIGONE: Yes. I'll do my duty to my brother—
and yours as well, if you're not prepared to.
I won't be caught betraying him.

ISMENE: You're too rash.
Has Creon not expressly banned that act?

ANTIGONE: Yes. But he's got no right to keep me from what's mine.

ISMENE: O dear. Think, Antigone. Consider
how our father died, hated and disgraced,
when those mistakes which his own search revealed
forced him to turn his hand against himself
and stab out both his eyes. Then that woman,
his mother and his wife—her double role—
destroyed her own life in a twisted noose.
Then there's our own two brothers, both butchered
in a single day—that ill-fated pair
with their own hands slaughtered one another
and brought about their common doom.
Now, the two of us are left here quite alone.
Think how we'll die far worse than all the rest,
if we defy the law and move against
the king's decree, against his royal power.
We must remember that by birth we're women,
and, as such, we shouldn't fight with men.
Since those who rule are much more powerful,
we must obey in this and in events
which bring us even harsher agonies.
So I'll ask those underground for pardon—
since I'm being compelled, I will obey
those in control. That's what I'm forced to do.
It makes no sense to try to do too much.

ANTIGONE: I wouldn't urge you to. No. Not even
if you were keen to act. Doing this with you
would bring me no joy. So be what you want
I'll still bury him. It would be fine to die
while doing that. I'll lie there with him,
with a man I love, pure and innocent,
for all my crime. My honors for the dead
must last much longer than for those up here.
I'll lie down there forever. As for you,
well, if you wish, you can show your contempt
for those laws the gods all hold in honor.

Military Wife 1: indeed, A ray of sunlight shines brightly over our most beautiful city, Thebes

Military wife 2: a glowing ray from the sun shines on our golden city. The seven gates of Thebes are secured.

Military Wife 1: the golden light from such a sun drove back and into headlong flight
the white-shield warrior of our enemies

Military wife 2: They who marched here fully armed,

Military wife 1: but were forced back by your sharper powers .

Military Leader 1: yes, Against our land our enemies marched,
They were sent here by the warring claims
of Polyneices. With piercing screams of victory they can upon

our city like
an eagle flying above our land

Military Leader 1: there were hordes of warriors all with
helmets topped with horsehair crests.

Military Leader 2: Standing above our homes,
Our enemy hung around our seven gates,
with threats to swallow us
and spears thirsting to kill our citizens

Military Leader 2: BUT Before they
gorged themselves on Theban blood,
before pine-torch flames
had seized our towers, our fortress crown,

Military Leader 2: our enemy left , driven back in retreat.
Leaving Behind him rings the din of war—

Military wife 2: a glorious victory for the golden city of Thebes.

Military leader 2 : the might and courage of the Theban dragon-snake,
Was simply too difficult for him to overcome.

Military Wife 1: Zeus hates an arrogant boasting tongue.
Seeing them march here in a mighty stream,

Military Wife 2: in all their clanging golden pride,
Zeus hurled his fire and struck the enemy,
up there, on the battlements, and we began to
to scream aloud our victory.

Military Leader 1: but the enemy doubled down and swung, torch still in hand,
and smashed into unyielding earth before our cities gates

Military Leader 2:

But things turned out not as he'd hoped.
The Great war god Ares assisted us—
he smashed them down and doomed them all
to a very different fate.

Military Leader 1: Seven captains at seven gates
paid Zeus their full tribute,

Military wife 2: Zeus the god who turned the battle tide for all but that pair of wretched men,
two brothers

Military Wife 1: who set their conquering spears against each other

Military Wife 2: and then both shared a common death.

Military Leader 2: Now victory with her glorious name
has come, bringing joy to well-armed Thebes.

Military Wife 1: The battle's done—let's strive now to forget

Military wife 2 : with songs and dancing all night long,
Forgetting past strifes and ushering in a new golden era for the city and citizens of Thebes

[The palace doors are thrown open and guards appear at the doors]

Military Leader 1: But here comes Creon, the new king of our land

Military Wife 1: Thanks to the gods,

Military Wife 1: who've brought about our new good fortune.

Military Leader 1: BUT What plan of action does he have in mind?

Military Leader 2: What's made him hold this special meeting,
with his senior, and most trusted, leaders summoned here by a general call?

SCENE 3 B – CREON ENTERS

[Enter Creon from the palace. He addresses the assembled elders]

CREON: Men (looks at wives discouragingly) after much tossing of our ship of state,
the gods have safely set things right again.
Of all the citizens I've summoned you,
because I know how well you showed respect
for the eternal power of the throne,
first with Laius and again with Oedipus,
once he restored our city.

Military Leader 1:

When he died,
we stood by his children, firm in our loyalty

Creon: Now his sons have perished in a single day,
killing each other with their own two hands,
a double slaughter, stained with brother's blood.
And so I have the throne, all royal power,
for I'm the one most closely linked by blood
to those who have been killed. It's impossible
to really know a man, to know his soul,
his mind and will, before one witnesses
his skill in governing and making laws.

For me, a man who rules the entire state
and does not take the best advice there is,
but through fear keeps his mouth forever shut,
such a man is the very worst of men—

Military Leader 2:
and always will be.

Creon: And a man who thinks
more highly of a friend than of his country,
well, he means nothing to me.

Military Leader 2: Let Zeus know,
the god who always watches everything,

Creon:
I would not stay silent if I saw disaster
moving here against the citizens,
a threat to their security.

Military leaders: Anyone
who acts against the state, is our enemy,

Creon: For I know well
our country is a ship which keeps us safe,
and only when it sails its proper course
do we make friends. These are the principles
I'll use in order to protect our state.
That's why I've announced to all citizens
my orders for the sons of Oedipus—

Military Leader 2: Eteocles, who perished in the fight
to save our city, the best and bravest
of our spearmen?

Creon: will have his burial,
with all those purifying rituals
which accompany the noblest corpses,
as they move below. As for his brother—
that Polyneices,

Military Leader 2: who returned from exile,
eager to wipe out in all-consuming fire
his ancestral city and its native gods,
keen to seize upon his family's blood
and lead men into slavery—

Creon : for him,
the proclamation in the state declares
he'll have no burial mound, no funeral rites,
and no lament.

Military Wife 1: He'll be left unburied?

Creon: his body there for birds and dogs to eat,

Military Leader 1: a clear reminder of his shameful fate.

Creon: That's my decision. For I'll never act
to respect an evil man with honors
in preference to a man who's acted well.
Anyone who's well disposed towards our state,
alive or dead, that man I will respect.

Military Leader 2: if that's your will

Military Leader 1: for this city's friends and enemies,

Military Leader 2: it seems to us you now control all laws
concerning those who've died and us as well—
the ones who are still living.

CREON: See to it then,
and act as guardians of what's been proclaimed.

Military Wife 2: Give that task to younger men to deal with. So that in satisfying the King's
wish they may prove their honor and virtue to your reign?

CREON: There are other men assigned to oversee the corpse.

Military Leader 1? Then what remains that you would have us do?

CREON: Don't yield to those who contravene my orders.

Military Leader 2: No one is such a fool that he loves death.

CREON: Yes, that will be his full reward, indeed.
And yet men have often been destroyed
because they hoped to profit in some way.

SCENE 3 C – MESSENGER ARRIVES

SCENE 3 C – MESSENGER ARRIVES [Enter a guard led into the scene by EURYDICE (Grace, we have written some lines for you at the end of the scene), coming towards the palace]

Messenger: My lord, I can't say I've come out of breath
by running here, making my feet move fast.
Many times I stopped to think things over—
and then I'd turn around, retrace my steps.
My mind was saying many things to me,
"You fool, why go to where you know for sure
your punishment awaits?"——"

Military Leader 2 1: And now, poor man,
why are you hesitating yet again?

Military Leader 1:
If we finds this out from someone else,
how will you escape being hurt?

Messenger: Such matters
kept my mind preoccupied. And so I went,
slowly and reluctantly, and thus made
a short road turn into a lengthy one.
But then the view that I should come to you
won out.

Creon: If what I have to say is nothing,
say it nonetheless.

Messenger: For I've come here
clinging to the hope that I'll not suffer
anything that's not part of my destiny.

CREON: What's happening that's made you so upset?

Messenger: I want to tell you first about myself.
I did not do it. And I didn't see
the one who did. So it would be unjust
if I should come to grief.

CREON: You hedge so much.
Clearly you have news of something ominous.

Messenger: Yes. Strange things that make me pause a lot.

CREON: Why not say it and then go—just leave.

Messenger: All right, I'll tell you. It's about the corpse.
Someone has buried it and disappeared,
after spreading thirsty dust onto the flesh
and undertaking all appropriate rites.

CREON: What are you saying? What man would dare this?

Messenger: I don't know. There was no sign of digging,
no marks of any pick axe or a mattock.
The ground was dry and hard and very smooth,
without a wheel track. Whoever did it
left no trace. When the first man on day watch
revealed it to us, we were all amazed.
The corpse was hidden, but not in a tomb.
It was lightly covered up with dirt,
as if someone wanted to avert a curse.

Military Leader 1: There was no trace of a wild animal
or dogs who'd come to rip the corpse apart?

Messenger: Then the words flew round among us all,
with every guard accusing someone else.
We were about to fight, to come to blows—
no one was there to put a stop to it.
Every one of us was responsible,
but none of us was clearly in the wrong.
In our defense we pleaded ignorance.
Then we each stated we were quite prepared
to pick up red-hot iron, walk through flames,
or swear by all the gods that we'd not done it,
we'd no idea how the act was planned,
or how it had been carried out. At last,
when all our searching had proved useless,
one man spoke up, and his words forced us all
to drop our faces to the ground in fear.

Military Leader 1: you couldn't see things working out for us,
whether we agreed or disagreed with him?

Messenger: He said we must report this act to Creon—
we must not hide it. And his view prevailed.

Creon: And you were the unlucky man who won the prize,
the luck of the draw.

Messenger: That's why I'm now here,
not of my own free will or by your choice.
I know that—for no one likes a messenger
who comes bearing unwelcome news with him.

Military Leader 1: My lord, I've been wondering for some time now—
could this act not be something from the gods?

CREON: Stop now—before what you're about to say
enrages me completely and reveals
that you're not only old but stupid, too.
No one can tolerate what you've just said,
when you claim gods might care about this corpse.
Would they pay extraordinary honors
and bury as a man who'd served them well
someone who came to burn their offerings,
their pillared temples, to torch their lands
and scatter all its laws? Or do you see
gods paying respect to evil men?

Military Leader 2: No, no.

Creon:
For quite a while some people in the town
have secretly been muttering against me.
They don't agree with what I have decreed.
They shake their heads and have not kept their necks
under my yoke, as they are duty bound to do
if they were men who are content with me.

Military Leader 1: We well know that these guards were led astray—
such men urged them to carry out this act
for money.

Military Leader 2: To foster evil actions,
to make them commonplace among all men,

Creon: nothing is as powerful as money.
It destroys cities, driving men from home.
Money trains and twists the minds in worthy men,
so they then undertake disgraceful acts.

Military Leader 1: Money teaches men to live as scoundrels,
familiar with every profane enterprise.

Creon: But those who carry out such acts for cash
sooner or later see how for their crimes
they pay the penalty. For if great Zeus
still has my respect, then understand this—
I swear to you on oath—unless you find
the one whose hands really buried him,
unless you bring him here before my eyes,
then death for you will never be enough.
No, not before you're hung up still alive
and you confess to this gross, violent act.
That way you'll understand in future days,
when there's a profit to be gained from theft,

you'll learn that it's not good to be in love
with every kind of monetary gain.
You'll know more men are ruined than are saved
when they earn profits from dishonest schemes.

Messenger: Do I have your permission to speak now,
or do I just turn around and go away?

CREON: But I find your voice so irritating—
don't you realize that?

Messenger: Where does it hurt?
Is it in your ears or in your mind?

CREON: Why try to question where I feel my pain?

Messenger: The man who did it—he upsets your mind.
I offend your ears.

CREON: My, my, it's clear to see
that it's natural for you to chatter on.

Messenger: Perhaps. But I never did this.

CREON: This and more—
you sold your life for silver.

Messenger: How strange and sad
when the one who sorts this out gets it all wrong.

CREON: Well, enjoy your sophisticated views.
But if you don't reveal to me who did this,
you'll just confirm how much your treasonous gains
have made you suffer.

Messenger: How sad and strange
When the one who sorts this out gets it all wrong.

Creon: (losing his temper maybe even physically intimidating the guard)
Who is king in Thebes?! You – or I?
Creon is king! No citizen will disobey him!
No citizen will contest his will! His word is law!

Guard leaves

SCENE 3 D – Eurydice tries to calm Creon

Eurydice:

Is Creon master of his temper?
Forgive my husband – he thinks the state
A battlefield, its instruments his weapons.
He would do better to recall the dignities of his office,
And arrange his face to show a statesman's countenance.

Creon: Eurydice. Don't forget the obedience you owe me –
Obedience twice, as I am your king and you are my wife.
Don't forget your station – you are a woman.
I'll take no instruction from you.

Eurydice: My noble husband, whom I obey in all things,
Should remember his own loyalty – he is the king,
The first servant of the city. The first servant of the king is his will;
He should master it. His emotions should not contest with his reason;
They should be ruled by it, or he is a poor king indeed.

Creon: Enough of this! Mind your next words, my queen,
For our marriage will not shield you from consequence of law
If they are treasonous – I'll bring the full penalty upon you
For your insubordination. Do you think you can speak to your king like this?

Eurydice: Husband – you cannot frighten me.
I remember your tender nature, the gentleness of your love.
You may bluster, proclaim your greatness, quell the revolt
Of those morals with which the gods endowed you.
I am not deceived. I know you as you are, my husband.
If I speak, it is for the sake of our city and for your own sake,
To steer you from wrong. As you love our city,
And as we love each other, be guided by me.

Creon storms out.

Eurydice: Citizens, do not think too harshly of my husband.
The mantle of the state rests upon him,
But his heart is true; and if he will neither hear nor heed
The counsel of those who wish him well,
His conscience will see him right.

Eurydice exits

Military Wife 1: Well, I hope the traitor who gave burial rights to Eteocles is found.

Military Wife 2: That would be best, for all involved. And my just return our city to its full glory

Military Leader 1: But whether caught or not—
and that's something sheer chance will bring about—
you won't that guard coming here again

Military Leader 2: This time, against all hope and expectation,
He is still unhurt. He owes the gods great thanks for that.

[Exit]

SCENE 4 – CHORUS INTERLUDE -----*MEN !*

MIA WALKING AMONG THE MEN IN SPOT

CHORUS: (CREON CENTRE spot)

There are many strange and wonderful things,
but nothing more strangely wonderful than man.

He's taught himself speech and swift thought,
so resourceful in all he does.

There's no event his skill cannot confront—
other than death—that alone he cannot shun,

The qualities of his skills
bring dreams beyond his imagination
and lead him on,
sometimes to evil and sometimes to good.

If he treats others with respect
and honors justice and the gods,
he wins high honors in his city.

But when he grows bold and turns to evil
then he has no city.

A man like that— is dangerous beyond imagination.

SCENE 5 ISMENE and ANTIGONE ARGUE

Ismene Your eyes Antigone... they frighten me.

Antigone Frighten you. Better for you to be fearful of your lack of duty!

Ismene Our duty now is to the king. He has issued a decree. We are women. Daughters of the slain. We have to obey and honour the King's rule.

Antigone Our brother will have a burial and I will honour the Gods not man's rule. Love is not simply something to behold, it is something to be done, believe in and uphold.

Ismene So.. I am bound to learn the intricacies of loneliness, of horror, the roar of silence

Antigone In that silence lies an eternity, the death of time and a loneliness so profound and it will be a constant presence for you and those who are not willing to challenge the new king

Ismene There is still time now Antigone. You have to be willing to live. You are free. Nothing and nobody is obliged to save you but you. I loved my family, my brothers... but I love you also

Antigone Love... love is divine only and difficult always

Ismene Love alone protects us from the scariness of things with no names.

Antigone And so it must be. As the stars have written. Devotion and honour.

Ismene Foolishness and outbursts

Antigone There is an innocence in blind admiration of a King; it is found in those to whom it has never occurred that they, too, might be admired some day.

Ismene And when the head is too weak to comply to the rules our our leader, our hearts answer by casting suspicion on the motives behind his objections.

Antigone And a mindless king can persuade brave people to participate in an action by representing it as being more dangerous than it is.

Ismene Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process they do not become monsters.

Antigone I see clearly now

Ismene And when you look long into an abyss also know that the abyss looks into you. Your eyes frighten me Antigone

Antigone Our shortcomings are the eyes with which we see the ideal... the truth...

SCENE 6-

ISMENE

O gods – O, gods, alone. Utterly alone.

Everything I have has been taken from me.

I can bear loss, but to lose the one thing that has made losing bearable –

Antigone!

What about the duty you owe to me?

Your dear sister who has depended upon you since her earliest days, who has loved you always.

Antigone speaks of loyalty

as though it were the simplest thing in the world.

Loyalty? As I am a citizen my loyalty is to the state.

As I am a sister my loyalty is to my slain brothers' dignity –
both brothers, each one crying out against the other,
each the other's murderer. As I am the daughter of a king,
my loyalty is to the honour of my line,
the noble house of Oedipus –
and wasn't my father Oedipus once the state?
Antigone says I owe loyalty to the law of the gods.
The gods have taken from us everything we loved!
Our noble father, our long-suffering mother,
the honour of our city, and now our brothers!
So fast has misery been piled upon misery
that I've scarcely had time to mourn all I've lost.
O, Antigone!
I have only so much loyalty within me,
and what I have left when the city and the dead
have taken their due I give to you.
Father is dead, and Mother,
and Eteocles and Polynices both.
Leave the city to its tyranny
and the dead to their sleep.
Preserve yourself. You are alive!
Pause.
But of course, she isn't – I know my sister,
and if she has decided to die then she is already dead.
Her conviction is stubborn and splendid.
I'd not stand against her for the world –
but to stand with her ...
Pause.
But I must find the courage.
I'll not let her face this awful fate alone.

SCENE 7A – Military Wives and Antigone scene

Military Wife 1: What this? I fear some omen from the gods.

Military Wife 2: I can't deny what I see here so clearly—
that young girl there—it's Antigone.

Military Wife 1: Oh you poor girl, daughter of Oedipus,
child of a such a father, so unfortunate,
what's going on?

Military Wife 2: Surely they've not brought you here
because you've disobeyed the royal laws,
because they've caught you acting foolishly?

Antigone	I acted as I saw fit. I honored my brother and his life.
Military Wife 1	And for such a foolish act... they will surely take yours!
Antigone	Then I shall die as I lived. In truth and with honor!
Military Wife 2	You act out of stubbornness and fail to see all that would be granted to you, to us, under the rule of our new king.

Antigone	What benefits me must also benefit all. For I shall never lock myself up in a kingdom of privilege while others merely survive on what is chosen to be given to them!
Military Wife 1	We love and obey our husbands and honor the rule of the king
Military Wife 2	It is what is expected and right
Antigone	It's what is convenient.
Military Wife 1	And what is the other option? To have unchecked outbursts of rage before the gods and become a discarded, dishonoured corpse?
Antigone	Better that than a walking ghost!
Military Wife 2	The vultures will tear you apart
Antigone	Such vultures pale in comparison to the ones seated beside the king!
Military Wife 1	There is no reasoning with her.
Military Wife 2	Pride, which she calls, love has blinded her
Antigone	And yet I see your actions so clearly
Military Wife 1	Creon is our ruler. His power is unmatched - at its peak!
Antigone	It's simply a case of the weak fooling the blind.
Military Wife 2	We know our duty. We know who is the rightful leader.
Military Wife 1	The gods will punish you.
Military Wife 1	But living in their truth could set you free.
Antigone	In your supposed truth, you both now stand - and bask. I prefer the comfort of darkness.
Military Wife 2	In darkness we are all the same
Military Wife 1	It only our loyalty, honor and wisdom that separate us
Antigone	Your eyes deceive you
Military Wife 1	Beyond all manner I obey my husband and love the king

Creon: But there's no joy as great as what we pray for
against all hope.

MESSENGER: And so I have come back,
breaking that oath I swore. I brought this girl,
captured while she was honoring the grave.
This time we did not draw lots. No. This time
I was the lucky man, not someone else.

Military Leader 2: And now, my lord, take her for questioning.
Convict her. Do as you wish.

MESSENGER: As for me,
by rights I'm free and clear of all this trouble.

CREON: This girl here—how did you catch her? And where?

MESSENGER: She was burying that man. Now you know
all there is to know.

CREON: Do you understand
just what you're saying? Are your words the truth?

MESSENGER: We saw this girl giving that dead man's corpse
full burial rites—an act you'd made illegal.
Is what I say simple and clear enough?

CREON: How did you see her, catch her in the act?

MESSENGER: It happened this way. When we got there,
after hearing those awful threats from you,
we swept off all the dust covering the corpse,
so the damp body was completely bare.
Then we sat down on rising ground up wind,
to escape the body's putrid rotting stench.
We traded insults just to stay awake,

Military Leader 1: in case someone was careless on the job.

MESSENGER: That's how we spent the time right up 'til noon,
when the sun's bright circle in the sky
had moved half way and it was burning hot.
Then suddenly a swirling windstorm came,
whipping clouds of dust up from the ground,
filling the plain—some heaven-sent trouble.
In that level place the dirt storm damaged
all the forest growth, and the air around
was filled with dust for miles.

CREON: And you just shut your mouths
and endured this scourge sent from the gods?

Messenger:

Yes, A long time passed. The storm came to an end.
That's when we saw the girl. She was shrieking—
a distressing painful cry, just like a bird
who's seen an empty nest, its fledglings gone.

Creon: That's how she was when she saw the naked corpse?

Messenger:

She screamed out a lament, and then she swore,
calling evil curses down upon the ones
who'd done t his. Then right away her hands
threw on the thirsty dust. She lifted up
a finely made bronze jug and then three times
poured out her tributes to the dead.

Creon: And what happened next?

Messenger:

When we saw that, we rushed up right away
and grabbed her.

Creon: She was not afraid at all?

Guard:

We charged her with her previous offence
as well as this one. She just kept standing there,
denying nothing.

Messenger: You there—you with your face
bent down towards the ground, what do you say?
Do you deny you did this or admit it?

ANTIGONE: I admit I did it. I won't deny that.

CREON: *[to the Guard]*

You're dismissed—go where you want. You're free—
no serious charges made against you.

[Exit the Guard. Creon turns to interrogate Antigone]

SCENE 7C - ANTIGONE and CREON FACE OFF

CREON Tell me briefly—not in some lengthy speech—
 were you aware there was a proclamation
 forbidding what you did?

ANTIGONE: I'd heard of it.
How could I not? It was public knowledge.

CREON: And yet you dared to break those very laws?

ANTIGONE: Yes. Zeus did not announce those laws to me. And Justice living with the gods below sent no such laws for men. I did not think anything which you proclaimed strong enough to let a mortal to override the gods and their unwritten and unchanging laws. They're not just for today or yesterday, but exist forever, and no one knows where they first appeared. So I did not mean to let a fear of any human will lead to my punishment among the gods. I know all too well I'm going to die—how could I not?—it makes no difference what you decree. And if I have to die before my time, well, I count that a gain. When someone has to live the way I do, surrounded by so many evil things, how can she fail to find a benefit in death? And so for me meeting this fate won't bring any pain. But if I'd allowed my own mother's dead son to just lie there, an unburied corpse, then I'd feel distress. What's going on here does not hurt me at all. If you think what I'm doing now is stupid, perhaps I'm being charged with foolishness by someone who's a fool.

Military Leader 1: She's mad. It's clear enough

Military Leader 2: The spirit in this girl is strange and too passionate—

Military Wife 2: her father was the same.

Military Leader 2: She has no sense
of compromise in times of trouble.

CREON:
But you should know the most obdurate wills
are those most prone to break. The strongest iron

tempered in the fire to make it really hard—
that's the kind you see most often shatter.
I'm well aware the most tempestuous horses
are tamed by one small bit. Pride has no place
in anyone who is his neighbor's slave.

Military Leader 1: This girl here was already very insolent
in contravening laws we had proclaimed.

Creon: Here she again displays her proud contempt—
having done the act, she now boasts of it

Military Wife or Leader?: She laughs at what she's done.

Creon: Well, in this case,
if she gets her way and goes unpunished,
then she's the man here, not me. No. She may be
my sister's child, closer to me by blood
than anyone belonging to my house
who worships Zeus in my home,
but she'll not escape my harshest punishment—
her sister, too, whom I accuse as well.
She had an equal part in all their plans
to do this burial. Go summon her here.
**I saw her just now inside the palace,
her mind out of control some kind of fit.**

[Exit attendants into the palace to fetch Ismene]

Military Leader 2: When people hatch their mischief in the dark
their minds often convict them in advance,
betraying their treachery.

CREON How I despise
a person caught committing evil acts
who then desires to glorify the crime.

ANTIGONE: Take me and kill me—what more do you want?

CREON: Me? Nothing. With that I have everything.

ANTIGONE: Then why delay? There's nothing in your words
that I enjoy—may that always be the case!
And what I say displeases you as much.
But where could I gain greater glory
than setting my own brother in his grave?
All those here would confirm this pleases them
if their lips weren't sealed by fear—being king,

Military Wife 1: Ismene's coming. There—right by the door

Military Wife 2: She's crying. How she must love her sister!
From her forehead a cloud casts its shadow
down across her darkly flushing face—

Military Wife 1: and drops its rain onto her lovely cheeks.

SCENE 7D – Ismene arrives

CREON: You there—you snake lurking in my house,
sucking out my life's blood so secretly.
I'd no idea I was nurturing two pests,
who aimed to rise against my throne. Come here.
Tell me this—do you admit you played your part
in this burial, or will you swear an oath
you had no knowledge of it?

ISMENE: I did it—
I admit it, and she'll back me up.
So I bear the guilt as well.

ANTIGONE: No, no—
justice will not allow you to say that.
You didn't want to. I didn't work with you.

ISMENE: But now you're in trouble, I'm not ashamed
of suffering, too, as your companion.

ANTIGONE: Hades and the dead can say who did it—
I don't love a friend whose love is only words.

ISMENE: You're my sister. Don't dishonor me.
Let me respect the dead and die with you.

ANTIGONE: Don't try to share my death or make a claim
to actions which you did not do. I'll die—
and that will be enough.

ISMENE: But if you're gone,
what is there in life for me to love?

ANTIGONE: Ask Creon. He's the one you care about.

ISMENE: Why hurt me like this? It doesn't help you.

ANTIGONE: If I am mocking you, it pains me, too.

ISMENE: Even now is there some way I can help?

ANTIGONE: Save yourself. I won't envy your escape.

ISMENE: I feel so wretched leaving you to die.

ANTIGONE: But you chose life—it was my choice to die.

ISMENE: But not before I'd said those words just now.

ANTIGONE: Some people may approve of how you think—
others will believe my judgment's good.

ISMENE: But the mistake's the same for both of us.

ANTIGONE: Be brave. You're alive. But my spirit died
some time ago so I might help the dead

CREON: I'd say one of these girls has just revealed
how mad she is—the other's been that way
since she was born.

ISMENE: My lord, whatever good sense
people have by birth no longer stays with them
once their lives go wrong—it abandons them.

CREON: In your case, that's true, once you made your choice
to act in evil ways with wicked people.

ISMENE: How could I live alone, without her here?

CREON: Don't speak of her being here. Her life is over.

ISMENE: You're going to kill your own son's **bride**

CREON: Why not? There are other fields for him to plough.

ISMENE: No one will make him a more loving wife
than she will.

CREON: I have no desire my son
should have an evil wife.

ANTIGONE: Dearest Haemon,
how your father wrongs you.

CREON: I've had enough of this—
you and your marriage.

ISMENE: You really want that?
You're going to take her from him?

CREON: No, not me.
Hades is the one who'll stop the marriage.

She must die—that... seems decided on.

Yes—for you and me the matter's closed.

[Creon turns to address his attendants]

No more delay. You ... take them inside.
From this point on they must act like women
and have no liberty to wander off.
Even bold men run when they see Hades
coming close to them to snatch their lives.

ACT 2

SCENE 13 CHORUS:

(light up on Antigone)

She was an offspring of an ancient family

a girl who raced with horses

She lived as if for forever

But suffered a cursed fate.

The power of fate is full of mystery.

There's no evading it, no, not with wealth,

or war, or walls, or sea-beaten ships.

(light up on Creon)

His angry mocking of the Gods.

And the dreadful flower of his rage

slowly withered,

and he would come to know

the Gods mocked his frenzy with his own tongue.

For he had tried to hold in check

A women, inspired by the Gods,

More than that—he'd made the God's angry,
challenging their eternal

And unalterable...

laws.

SCENE 8 – CHORUS - WOMEN

CHORUS: Those who live without knowing evil have happy lives—

for when the gods
shake a house to its foundations,
then inevitable disaster strikes

falling upon whole families,
just as a surging oceans swell

To some, hope, ranging far and wide, brings some comfort

—but then hope can deceive,

It comes upon those who are willfully ignorant

sometimes the gods
lure the mind toward distraction or disaster,

But they live only the briefest time
free of catastrophe.

SCENE 9 – Haemon and Creon + wives and sergeants

Military Wife 1: Here comes Haemon,

Military Wife 2: His only living son. Is he grieving
the fate of Antigone, his bride?

Military Wife 2:
bitter that his marriage hopes are gone?

CREON: We'll soon find out—more accurately
than any prophet here could indicate.

[Enter Haemon from the palace]

My son, have you heard the sentence that's been passed
upon your bride? And have you now come here
angry at your father? Or are you loyal to me,
on my side no matter what I do?

HAEMON: Father, I'm yours. For me your judgments
and the ways you act on them are good—
I shall follow them. I'll not consider

any marriage a greater benefit
than your fine leadership.

CREON: Indeed, my son,
that's how your heart should always be resolved,

Haemon: to stand behind your father's judgment
on every issue.

Creon: That's what men pray for—
obedient children growing up at home
who will pay back their father's enemies,
evil to them for evil done to him,
while honoring his friends as much as he does.

Haemon: And a man who fathers useless children—
what can one say of him except he's bred
troubles for himself, and much to laugh at
for those who fight against him?

Creon: So, my son,
don't you throw good sense aside for pleasure,
for some woman's sake. You understand
how such embraces can turn freezing cold
when an evil woman shares your life at home.

Haemon: What greater wound is there than a false friend?

Creon: So spit this girl out—she's your enemy.
Let her marry someone else in Hades.
Since I caught her clearly disobeying,
the only culprit in the whole city,
I won't perjure myself before the state.
No—I'll kill her.

Haemon: And let her appeal
to Zeus, the god of blood relationships?

Creon:
If I foster any lack of full respect
in my own family, I surely do the same
with those who are not linked to me by blood.

Haemon: The man who acts well with his household
will be found a just man in the city.

Creon:
I'd not trust such a man to govern wisely
or to be content with someone ruling him.
And in the thick of battle at his post

he'll stand firm beside his fellow soldier,
a loyal, brave man.

Haemon: But anyone who's proud
and violates your laws or thinks they'll tell
leaders what to do, a person like that
wins no praise from you?

Creon: No. We must obey
whatever man the city puts in charge,
no matter what the issue—great or small,
just or unjust. For there's no greater evil
than a lack of leadership. That destroys
whole cities, turns households into ruins,
and in war makes soldiers break and run away.
When men succeed, what keeps their lives secure
in almost every case is their obedience.
That's why they must support those in control,
and never let some woman beat us down.
If we must fall from power, let that come
at some man's hand—at least, we won't be called
inferior to any woman.

Military Leader 1: Unless we're being deceived by our old age...

Military Leader 2:
what you've just said seems reasonable to us.

HAEMON: Father, the gods instill good sense in men—
the greatest of all the things which we possess.
I could not find your words somehow not right—
I hope that's something I never learn to do.
But other words might be good, as well

Creon: Because of who you are, you can't perceive
all the things men say or do—or their complaints.

Haemon: AND Your gaze makes citizens afraid—they can't
say anything you would not like to hear.

Creon:
But in the darkness I can hear them talk—
the city is upset about the girl.
They say of all women here she deserves
the worst of deaths for her most devious act.

Military Leader 1: When her own brother died in that slaughter,

Military Leader 2: she did not just leave him there unburied,
to be ripped apart by carrion dogs or birds.

Haemon:

Surely she deserves some golden honor?
That's the dark secret rumor people speak
For me, father, nothing is more valuable
than your well being. For any children,
what could be a greater honor to them
than their father's thriving reputation?

Creon: A father feels the same about his son.

Haemon:

So don't let your mind dwell on just one thought,
that what you say is right and nothing else.
A man who thinks that only he is wise,

Military Leader 1: A man who thinks that only he is wise,

Military Leader 2: that he can speak and think like no one else,

Creon: when such men are exposed, then all can see
their emptiness inside.

Haemon: But for any man,

if he's wise, can see there's nothing shameful
in learning many things, staying flexible.
You notice how in winter floods the trees
which bend before the storm to preserve their twigs.
But the ones who stand against it are destroyed,
root and branch.
So end your anger. Permit yourself to change.
For if I, as a younger man, may state
my views, I'd say it would be for the best
if men by nature understood all things—
if not, and that is usually the case,
when men speak well, it is good to learn from them.

Military Leader 1: My lord, if what he's said is relevant,
it seems appropriate to learn from him,

Military Leader 2: and you too, Haemon, listen to the king.
The things which you both said were excellent.

CREON: And men my age—are we then going to school
to learn what's wise from men as young as him?

HAEMON: There's nothing wrong in that. And if I'm young,
don't think about my age—look at what I do.

CREON: And what you do—does that include this,
honoring those who act against our laws?

HAEMON: I would not encourage anyone
to show respect to evil men.

CREON: And her—
is she not suffering from the same disease?

HAEMON: The people here in Thebes all say the same—
they deny she is.

CREON: So the city now
will instruct me how I am to govern?

HAEMON: Now you're talking like someone far too young.
Don't you see that?

CREON: Am I to rule this land
at someone else's whim or by myself?

HAEMON: A city which belongs to just one man
is no true city.

CREON: According to our laws,
does not the ruler own the city?

HAEMON: By yourself you'd make an excellent king
but in a desert.

CREON: It seems as if this boy
is fighting on the woman's side.

HAEMON: That's true—
if you're the woman. I'm concerned for you.

CREON: You're the worst there is—you set your judgment up
against your father.

HAEMON: No, not when I see
you making a mistake and being unjust.

CREON: Is it a mistake to honor my own rule?

HAEMON: You're not honoring that by trampling on
the gods.

CREON: You foul creature—
you're worse than any woman.

HAEMON: You'll not catch me
giving way to some disgrace.

CREON: But your words
all speak on her behalf.

HAEMON: And yours and mine—
and for the gods below.

CREON: You woman's slave—
don't try to win me over.

HAEMON: What do you want—
to speak and never hear someone reply?

CREON: You'll never marry her while she's alive

HAEMON: Then she'll die—and in her death kill someone else.

CREON: Are you so insolent you threaten me?

HAEMON: Where's the threat in challenging a bad decree?

CREON: You'll regret parading what you think like this—
you—a person with an empty brain!

HAEMON: If you were not my father, I might say
you were not thinking straight.

CREON: Would you, indeed?
Well, then, by Olympus, I'll have you know
you'll be sorry for demeaning me
with all these insults.

[Creon turns to his attendants]

Go bring her out—
that hateful creature, so she can die right here,
with him present, before her bridegroom's eyes.

HAEMON: No. Don't ever hope for that. She'll not die
with me just standing there. And as for you—
your eyes will never see my face again.
So let your rage charge on among your friends
who want to stand by you in this.

[Exit Haemon, running back into the palace]

Military Leader 1: My lord, Haemon left in such a hurry.
He's angry—in a young man at his age

Military Leader 2: the mind turns bitter when he's feeling hurt.

CREON: Let him dream up or carry out great deeds
beyond the power of man, he'll not save these girls—
their fate is sealed.

Military Leader 2 : Are you going to kill them both?

CREON: No—not the one whose hands are clean. You're right.

Military Leader 1: How do you plan to kill Antigone?

CREON: I'll take her on a path no people use,
and hide her in a cavern in the rocks,
while still alive. I'll set out provisions,
as much as piety requires, to make sure
the city is not totally corrupted.

Then she can speak her prayers to Hades,
the only god she worships, for success
avoiding death—or else, at least, she'll learn,
although too late, how it's a waste of time
to work to honor those whom Hades holds.

SCENE 10 – Eurydice, Antigone and the Military wives talk

Eurydice: O Eros, the conqueror in every fight,
Eros, who squanders all men's wealth,
who sleeps at night on girls' soft cheeks,

Military Wife1: and roams across the ocean seas

Military Wife 2: and through the shepherd's hut—
no immortal god escapes from you,

Eurydice: nor any man, who lives but for a day.
And the one whom you possess goes mad.

Military Wife 1: Even in good men Eros twists their minds,
perverting them to their own ruin.

Eurydice: And provokes these men to family strife.
The bride's desire seen glittering in her eyes—

Military Wife 2: that conquers everything, its power
enthroned beside eternal laws, for there

Eurydice: the goddess Aphrodite works her will,
whose ways are irresistible.

[Antigone enters from the palace with attendants who are taking her away to her execution]

Military Wife 1: When I look at her I forget my place.
I lose restraint and can't hold back my tears—

Eurydice: Antigone going to her bridal room
where all are laid to rest in death.

ANTIGONE: Look at me, my native citizens,
as I go on my final journey,
as I gaze upon the sunlight one last time,
which I'll never see again—for Hades,
who brings all people to their final sleep,
leads me on, while I'm still living
down to the shores of Acheron.
I've not yet had my bridal chant,
nor has any wedding song been sung—
for my marriage is to Acheron.

Eurydice: Surely you carry fame with you and praise,
as you move to the deep home of the dead.

Military Wife 1: You were not stricken by lethal disease
or paid your wages with a sword.

Military Wife 2: No. You were in charge of your own fate.

Military Wife 2: So of all living human beings, you alone
make your way down to Hades still alive.

ANTIGONE: I've heard about a guest of ours,
daughter of Tantalus, from Phrygia—
she went to an excruciating death
in Sipylus, right on the mountain peak.

Military Wife 1: The stone there, just like clinging ivy,
wore her down, and now, so people say,
the snow and rain never leave her there,
as she laments.

Military Wife 2: Below her weeping eyes
her neck is wet with tears.

Antigone: God brings me
to a final rest which most resembles hers.

Eurydice: But Niobe was a goddess, born divine—

Military Wife 1: and we are human beings, a race which dies.

Military Wife 2: But still, you think it's a fine thing for a woman,
once she's dead...

Eurydice: to have it said she shared,
in life and death, the fate of gods.

ANTIGONE: Oh, you are mocking me! Why me—
by our fathers' gods—why do you all,
my own city and the richest of Thebes,
insult me now right to my face,
without waiting for my death?
Well at least I have Dirce's springs,
the holy grounds of Thebes,
a city full of splendid chariots,
to witness how no friends lament for me
as I move on—

Military Wife 1: We see the laws
which lead you to your rock-bound prison,

Military Wife 2: a tomb made just for you.

Antigone: Alas!
In my wretchedness I have no home,

Military Wife 1: not with human beings or corpses,

Military Wife 2: not with the living or the dead.

Eurydice: You pushed your daring to the limit, my child,
and tripped against Justice's high altar—

Military Wife 1: perhaps your agonies are paying back

Military Wife 2: some compensation for your father.

ANTIGONE: Now there you touch on my most painful thought—
my father's destiny—always on my mind,
along with that whole fate which sticks to us,
—the curse

From what kind of parents was I born,
their wretched daughter? I go to them,
unmarried and accursed, an outcast.
Alas, too, for my brother Polyneices,
who made a fatal marriage and then died—
and with that death killed me while still alive.

Eurydice: To be piously devout shows reverence,

Military Wife 1: but powerful men, who in their persons
incorporate authority,

Military Wife 2: cannot bear
anyone to break their rules. Hence, you die
because of your own selfish will.

ANTIGONE: Without lament, without a friend

Eurydice: and with no marriage song,

Antigone: I'm being led
in this miserable state, along my final road.
So wretched that I no longer have the right
to look upon the sun, that sacred eye.

Military Wife 1: But your fate prompts no tears,

Military Wife 2: and no friend mourns.

Creon enters

CREON: Don't you know that no one faced with death
would ever stop the singing and the groans,
if that would help? Take her and shut her up,
as I have ordered, in her tomb's embrace.
And get it done as quickly as you can.
Then leave her there alone, all by herself—
she can sort out whether she wants suicide
or remains alive, buried in a place like that.
As far as she's concerned, we bear no guilt.
But she's lost her place living here with us

All exit here except Eurydice

SCENE 11 – Eurydice's monologue

Grace your monologue will be written at a later date. Emerson and I want to work with in rehearsals and do some 'ad lib' scenes with you so that we can figure out what we all think works naturally for Eurydice to say at this point in time. You may want to consider what she would reflect on at this point?

Some ideas for consideration

Duty – to the king? To her husband?

She is torn between honoring her son or her husband. She knows it going to end badly either way

What can she do now? Speak with Haemon?

HAEMON AND ANTIGONE

Haemon enters.

Antigone: Ismene? Sister, is that you?

Haemon: Ismene's gone away – it's me, your Haemon.

Antigone: Oh.

Pause.

Antigone: I suppose you've come—

Haemon: I've come to say goodbye.

Pause.

Antigone: Well... goodbye.

Pause.

Haemon: There's nothing I can say to my father
that would make him change his mind.

Antigone: I know. This death of mine has been a long time coming.

Pause.

Haemon: Antigone, I wanted to say—

Antigone: Please – don't say anything.
You'll only make me think of what you and I are losing,
and that will weaken my resolve
when I need to be stronger than I've ever been.

She turns away.

Haemon: I wonder, Antigone, did you ever— *(frustrated)*
you know, I really loved you.
I would have been a good husband,
we would have been happy together.
One day we would have ruled over the city,
king and queen, fair and just –
didn't you want that?
We made each other a promise. *(shows his ring)*
Did you ever truly return my love?
And, if you did, how can you have thrown it away
so carelessly?

Antigone: I've done nothing carelessly –
every step that's brought me here, to this sorry place,
I took deliberately, for love and honour, because it was right.

Haemon: So you chose your dead brother over me –
your love for him was greater.

Antigone: Oh, Haemon – sweet prince –
there's no love I can imagine that would move me
more strongly than my duty to the gods.
My love for Polyneices didn't matter, in the end,
though I suppose I loved him as a sister should.
I did as I did to honour my gods –
and though I'd have happily been your bride,
no love I bear for you could have made me disgrace them.
I do not expect that I can make you understand this,
for I don't think there's any principle you'd die for.

Just know that I loved you dearly.
I think, in better times, we might have been happy,
you and I.

They kiss. She removes her ring, and puts it in his hand.

Antigone: Here's a promise I can no longer keep.
Think of me, my dear, when I'm gone.

Exit.

SCENE 12 – Antigone's death monologue

V 1: Her tomb and bridal chamber—

V 2: an eternal hollow dwelling place,

V 3: Persephone has welcomed her
among the dead.

V 4: She is the last one, dying here
the most evil death by far

V 5: Her father will be pleased to see her come

V 6: Her own mother, will welcome her,

V 7: and her dear brother... she washed him clean.

V 8: She arranged his corpse

ANTIGONE: Polyneices

V 9: this is her reward for covering his corpse.

V 10: Was she was right
to honor him?

V 11: What law did she appeal to?

V 12: Her father and mother were hidden away in Hades' house,

V 13: She honoured the Gods.

V 14: And Creon thought that she was in the wrong

V 16 :no wedding and no bridal song, nothing to share
in married life or raising children.

V 17: Instead she goes in sorrow to her grave,
without friends,

V 18: to die while still alive.

ESME:

What holy justice have I violated?
this is something fine among the gods,

if these people here are being unjust
may they endure no greater punishment
than the injustices they're doing to me

I'll never have another love greater than I possess now!

SCENE 13 CHORUS:

(light up on Antigone)

She was an offspring of an ancient family

a girl who raced with horses

She lived as if for forever

But suffered a cursed fate.

The power of fate is full of mystery.

There's no evading it, no, not with wealth,

or war, or walls, or sea-beaten ships.

(light up on Creon)

His angry mocking of the Gods.

And the dreadful flower of his rage

slowly withered,

and he would come to know

the Gods mocked his frenzy with his own tongue.

For he had tried to hold in check

A women, inspired by the Gods,

More than that—he'd made the God's angry,
challenging their eternal

And unalterable...

laws.

Scene 14 – Teiresias

TEIRESIAS: Lords of Thebes, I have walked a common path,

The blind require no guide to find their way.

CREON: What news do you have, old Teiresias?

TEIRESIAS: I'll tell you—and you obey the prophet.

CREON: I've not rejected your advice before.

TEIRESIAS: That's the reason why you've steered the city
on its proper course.

CREON: From my experience
I can confirm the help you give.

TEIRESIAS: Then know this—
your luck is once more on fate's razor edge.

CREON: What? What you've just said makes me nervous.

TEIRESIAS: You'll know—once you hear the tokens of my art.
As I was sitting in my ancient place
receiving omens from the flights of birds
who all come there where I can hear them,
I hear among those birds an unknown cry—
evil, unintelligible, angry screaming.
I knew that they were tearing at each other
with murderous claws. The noisy wings
revealed that all too well. I was afraid.
So right away up on the blazing altar
I set up burnt offerings. But Hephaestus
failed to shine out from the sacrifice—
dark slime poured out onto the embers,
oozing from the thighs, which smoked and spat,
bile was sprayed high up into the air,
and the melting thighs lost all the fat
which they'd been wrapped in. The rites had failed—
there was no prophecy revealed in them.

Creon: These are but the mutterings of the mad!

Military Leader 1: ad lib in rehearsal

Military Leader 2: ad lib in rehearsal

Creon: ad lib in rehearsal

Teiresias:

Our state is sick—

your policies have done this. In the city
our altars and our hearths have been defiled,
all of them, with rotting flesh brought there
by birds and dogs from Oedipus' son,
who lies there miserably dead. The gods
no longer will accept our sacrifice,
our prayers, our thigh bones burned in fire.
No bird will shriek out a clear sign to us,
for they have gorged themselves on fat and blood
from a man who's dead.

Creon: These are but the mutterings of the mad!

Military Leader 1: ad lib in rehearsal

Military Leader 2: ad lib in rehearsal

Creon: ad lib in rehearsal

Teiresias: Consider this, then.

All men make mistakes—that's not uncommon.
But when they do, they're no longer foolish
or subject to bad luck if they try to fix
the evil into which they've fallen,
once they give up their intransigence.
Men who put their stubbornness on show
invite accusations of stupidity.
Make concessions to the dead—don't ever stab
a man who's just been killed. What's the glory
in killing a dead person one more time?
I've been concerned for you. It's good advice.
Learning can be pleasant when a man speaks well,
especially when he seeks your benefit.

CREON: blind fool, you're all like archers shooting at me—

For you all I've now become your target—
even prophets have been aiming at me.
I've long been bought and sold as merchandise
among that tribe. Well, go make your profits.
If it's what you want, then trade with Sardis
for their golden-silver alloy—or for gold
from India, but you'll never hide that corpse
in any grave. Even if Zeus' eagles
should choose to seize his festering body
and take it up, right to the throne Zeus,
not even then would I, in trembling fear
of some defilement, permit that corpse
a burial. For I know well that no man
has the power to pollute the gods.

But, old Teiresias, among human beings
the wisest suffer a disgraceful fall
when, to promote themselves, they use fine words
to spread around abusive insults.

TEIRESIAS: Alas, does any man know or think about . . .

CREON: *[interrupting]* Think what? What sort of pithy common thought
are you about to utter?

TEIRESIAS: *[ignoring the interruption]* . . . how good advice
is valuable—worth more than all possessions.

CREON: I think that's true, as much as foolishness
is what harms us most.

TEIRESIAS: Yet that's the sickness
now infecting you.

CREON: I have no desire
to denigrate a prophet when I speak.

TEIRESIAS: But that's what you are doing, when you claim
my oracles are false.

CREON: The tribe of prophets—
all of them—are fond of money

TEIRESIAS: And kings?
Their tribe loves to benefit dishonestly.

CREON: You know you're speaking of the man who rules you.

TEIRESIAS: I know—thanks to me you saved the city
and now are in control.

CREON: You're a wise prophet,
but you love doing wrong.

TEIRESIAS: You'll force me
to speak of secrets locked inside my heart.

CREON: Do it—just don't speak to benefit yourself.

TEIRESIAS: I don't think that I'll be doing that—
not as far as you're concerned.

CREON: You can be sure
you won't change my mind to make yourself more rich.

TEIRESIAS: Then understand this well—you will not see
the sun race through its cycle many times
before you lose a child of your own loins,
a corpse in payment for these corpses.
You've thrown down to those below someone
from up above—in your arrogance

Creon: These are but the mutterings of the mad!

Military Leader 1: ad lib in rehearsal

Military Leader 2: ad lib in rehearsal

Creon: ad lib in rehearsal

TEIRESIAS: you've moved a living soul into a grave,
leaving here a body owned by gods below-
unburied, dispossessed, unsanctified.
That's no concern of yours or gods above.
In this you violate the ones below.
And so destroying avengers wait for you,
Furies of Hades and the gods, who'll see
you caught up in this very wickedness.
Now see if I speak as someone who's been bribed.

Military Leader 1: ad lib in rehearsal

Military Leader 2: ad lib in rehearsal

Creon: ad lib in rehearsal

Teiresias: It won't be long before in your own house
the men and women all cry out in sorrow,
and cities rise in hate against you—all those
whose mangled soldiers have had burial rites
from dogs, wild animals, or flying birds
who carry the unholy stench back home,
to every city hearth. Like an archer,
I shoot these arrows now into your heart
because you have provoked me. I'm angry—
so my aim is good. You'll not escape their pain

Creon: **Aide2^n at this point you need to gain a sense of perspective and a touch of regret – I am thinking maybe two or three sentences and we can work in these in rehearsals**

Teiresias: I'll leave now so he can vent his rage
on younger men and I'll keep a quieter tongue
and a more temperate mind than he has now.

[Exit Teiresias,]

Military Leader 1: My lord, my lord, such dreadful prophecies—

Military Leader 2: and now she's gone. Since my hair changed color from black to white,

Military Leader 1: WE know here in the city
she's never uttered a false prophecy.

CREON: I know that, too—and it disturbs my mind.
It's dreadful to give way, but to resist
and let destruction hammer down my spirit—
that's a fearful option, too.

Military Leader 1: Son of Menoikeos,
you need to listen to some good advice.

CREON: Tell me what to do. Speak up. I'll do it.

Military Leader 2: Go and release the girl from her rock tomb.
Then prepare a grave for that unburied corpse.

CREON: This is your advice? You think I should concede?

Military Leader 1: Yes, my lord, as fast as possible.
Swift footed injuries sent from the gods

Military Leader 2: hack down those who act imprudently.

CREON: Alas—it's difficult. But I'll give up.
I'll not do what I'd set my heart upon.
It's not right to fight against necessity.

Military Leader 1: Go now and get this done. Don't give the work to other men to do.

CREON: I'll go just as I am.

Come, you servants, each and every one of you.
Come on. Bring axes with you. Go there quickly—
up to the higher ground. I've changed my mind
Since I'm the one who tied her up, I'll go
and set her free myself. Now I'm afraid.
Until one dies the best thing well may be
to follow our established laws.

[Creon and his attendants hurry off stage]

SCENE 16 – Wives and Sergeants chat and then guards come in with bad news

Military Wife 1: All you here... in human life
there's no set place which I would praise or blame

Military Wife 2: The lucky and unlucky rise or fall
by chance day after day—and how these things
are fixed for men no one can prophesy.

Military Leader 1: For Creon, in my view, was once a man
we all looked up to. For he saved the state,
this land of Cadmus, from its enemies.

Military Leader 2: He took control and reigned as its sole king—
and prospered with the birth of noble children.

Military Wife 1: Now all is gone. For when a man has lost
what gives him pleasure, he is not included
among the living—

Military Wife 2: he's a breathing corpse.
Pile up a massive fortune in your home,
if that's what you want—live like a king.

Military Leader 2: If there's no pleasure in it, I'd not give
to any man a vapor's shadow for it,
not compared to human joy.

Military Wife 1: Have you come with news of some fresh trouble
in the house of our king?

Frida : They're dead—

Amilie: and those alive bear the responsibility

Frida: for those who've died.

Military Wife 1: Who did the killing?

Military Wife 2: Who's lying dead? Tell us.

Amilie: Haemon has been killed.

Frida: No stranger shed his blood.

Military Wife1: At his father's hand?

Military Wife 2: Or did he kill himself?

Amilie: By his own hand

Frida: angry at his father for the murder.

Military Leader 1: Teiresias, how your words have proven true!

Military Leader 2: That's how things stand. Consider what comes next.

Military Wife 1: I see Creon's wife, poor Eurydice—

Military Wife 2: she's coming from the house—either by chance,

Military Wife 1: or else she's heard there's news about her son.

[Enter Eurydice from the palace with some attendants]

EURYDICE: Citizens of Thebes, I heard you talking,
as I was walking out, going off to pray,
to ask for help from goddess Pallas.
While I was unfastening the gate,
I heard someone speaking of bad news
about my family. I was terrified.

I collapsed, fainting back into the arms
of my attendants. So tell the news again—
I'll listen. I'm no stranger to misfortune.

Frida: Dear lady, we will speak of what we saw, omitting not one detail of the truth.

Amilie: Why should we ease your mind with a limited report which turns out later to be incorrect?

Eurydice: The truth is always best.

Amilie: we went to the plain,
accompanying your husband as his guide.

Frida: Polyneices' corpse, still unlamented,
was lying there, the greatest distance off,

Amilie: torn apart by dogs.

Frida: We prayed to Pluto

Amilie: and to Hecate, goddess of the road,

Frida: for their good will and to restrain their rage

Amilie: We gave the corpse a ritual wash, and burned
what was left of it with fresh-cut branches.

Frida: From far away we heard a voice—a piercing cry.

Amilie: coming from the chamber where we'd put her
without a funeral

Frida: We went to tell our master Creon,
who, as he came near the place,

Amilie: heard the sound,

Frida - an unintelligible scream of sorrow.
He groaned and then spoke out these bitter words

EVERYONE FREEZES AND SIDE LIGHTING AS CREON RUSHES THROUGH
THE TABLEAU

"Has misery made me a prophet now?
And am I traveling along a road
that takes me to the worst of all disasters?
I've just heard the voice of my own son.
You servants, go ahead—get up there fast.
Remove the stones piled in the entrance way,

then stand beside the tomb and look in there
to see if that was Haemon's voice I heard,
of if the gods have been deceiving me."

Amillie Following what our desperate master asked,

Frida: we looked in the furthest corner of the tomb

Amilie: we saw Antigone hanging by the neck,

Frida: held up in a noose— of fine woven linen.

Amilie: Haemon had his arms around her waist—
he was embracing her

Frida: and crying out
in sorrow for the loss of his own bride,
now among the dead

Amilie: and for his horrific marriage bed.

Frida: Creon saw him, let out a fearful groan,

Amilie: then went inside and called out anxiously,

EVERYONE FREEZES AND SIDE LIGHTING AS CREON RUSHES THROUGH
THE TABLEAU

CREON: "You unhappy boy, what have you done?
What are you thinking? Have you lost your mind?"

Answer me? Show me that you hear me.

Stop before it's too late. Don't act out of anger against me!

Stop, there is still time. I was wrong.

Come out, my child—I'm begging you—please come"

Amilie: But the boy just stared at him with savage eyes,

Frida: spat in his face, and without saying a word,
drew his two-edged sword.

Amilie: Creon moved away,

Frida: so the boy's blow failed to strike his father.

Amilie: Angry at himself, the ill-fated lad
right then and there leaned into his own sword,

Frida: driving half the blade between his ribs.

Amilie: While still conscious he embraced the girl
in his weak arms,

Frida: and, as he breathed his last breath,
he coughed up streams of blood on her fair cheek.

Military Wife 1: Now he lies there, corpse on corpse,

Military Wife 2: his marriage
has been fulfilled in chambers of the dead.

Military Leader 1: The unfortunate boy has shown all men
how,

Military Leader 2: of all the evils which afflict mankind,
the most disastrous one is thoughtlessness.

[Eurydice turns and slowly returns into the palace]

Military Wife 1: The queen's gone back.

Military Leader 1: What do you make of that?

Military Leader 2: She left without a word, good or bad.

Military Wife 1: I hope she's gone because she doesn't think it right
to mourn for him in public.

Military Leader 1: Yes, In the home,
surrounded by her servants,

Military leader 2: Quite right, she'll arrange
a period of mourning for the house

Military leader 1: She's discreet and has experience—

Military Leader 2: she won't make mistakes.

Military Wife 1: I'm not sure of that.

Military Wife 2: to me her staying silent was extreme—

Military Wife 1: it seems to point to something ominous,

Military Wife 2: You're right—
excessive silence can be dangerous

Military Wife 1 : We'll go in.

Military Wife 2: We'll find out if she's hiding something secret,

Military Wife 1: deep within her passionate heart.

SCENE 17

Military Leader 2 1: Here is Creon—

Military Leader 1: The king

Military Wife 1: Holding in his arms,
a clear reminder that this evil come

Military Wife 2: not from some stranger, but his own mistakes.

Creon: OOOOOOOO—mistakes made by a foolish mind,
cruel mistakes that bring on death.
You see us here, all in one family—
the killer and the killed.
Oh the profanity of what I planned.
Alas, my son, you died so young—
a death before your time.
OOO . . . OOOO . . . you're dead . . . gone—
not your own foolishness but mine.

Military Leader 1: Alas, it seems you've learned to see what's right—

Military Leader 2: but far too late

CREON: OOOO . . . I've learned it in my pain.
Some god clutching a great weight struck my head,
then hurled me onto paths in wilderness,
throwing down and casting underfoot
what brought me joy.
So sad . . . so sad . . .
the wretched agony of human life.

[The Tiresias: reappears from the palace]

Military Leader 1 : My lord,
what you hold in your arms

Tiresias: : and what you'll see
before too long. Is fate, and the will of the gods

CREON: What's that?
Is there something still more evil than all this?

Military Wife 1: : Your wife is dead—blood mother of that corpse—

Military Wife 2: slaughtered with a sword—her wounds are very new,
poor lady.

CREON: OOO a gathering place for death . . .
no sacrifice can bring this to an end.
Why are you destroying me? You there—
you bringer of this dreadful news, this agony,
what are you saying now? OOOO
You kill a man then kill him once again.
What are you saying, What news?
A slaughter heaped on slaughter—
my wife, alas . . . she's dead?

Tiresias:
No longer is she hidden inside.

CREON: Alas, how miserable I feel—to look upon
this second horror. What remains for me,
what's fate still got in store? I've just held
my own son in my arms, and now I see
right here in front of me another corpse.
Alas for this suffering mother.
Alas, my son.

Military Wife: Stabbed with a sharp sword at the altar,
she let her darkening eyesight fail,

Military Wife 2: Once she had cried out in sorrow
for the glorious fate of the Gods,
and then again
for Haemon, and then, with her last breath,

Military Wife 1: she called out evil things against you,

Creon: the killer

OOO My fear now makes me tremble.
Why won't someone now strike out at me,

pierce my heart with a double bladed sword?
How miserable I am . . . aaiii . . .
how full of misery and pain . . .

Military Leader 1:: By this woman who lies dead you stand charged
with the deaths of both your sons.

CREON: What about her?
How did she die so violently?

Tiresias: She killed herself,
with her own hands she stabbed her belly,
once she heard her son's most sorry fate.

CREON: Alas, for me . . . the guilt for all of this is mine—
it can never be removed from me or passed
to any other mortal man. I, and I alone . . .
I murdered you . . . I speak the truth.
Servants—hurry and lead me off,
get me away from here, for now
what I am in life is nothing.

Tiresias: What you advise is good—if good can come
with all these evils. When we face such things
the less we say the better.

CREON: Let that day come, oh let it come,
the fairest of all destinies for me,
the one which brings on my last day.
Oh, let it come, so that I never see
another dawn.

Military Leader 1: That's something for the times ahead.
We need now to deal with what confronts us here.

Military Leader 2 What's yet to come is the concern of those
whose task it is to deal with it.

CREON: In that prayer
I included everything I most desire.

Teiresias : Pray for nothing.
There's no release for mortal human beings,
not from events which destiny has set.

CREON: Then take this foolish man away from here.
I killed you, my son, without intending to,
and you, as well, my wife. How useless I am now.
I don't know where to look or find support.

Everything I touch goes wrong, and on my head
fate climbs up with its overwhelming load.

FINAL SCENE

CHORUS:

The boasts of arrogant men
bring on great blows of punishment—
From pride we learned...

(ALL) humility

And to hold the Gods in awe

They learned that the most important part of

- Power (Anton leaves)
- Ambition (Ben C leaves)
- Reputation (Military Wives say in unison – then leave)
- Devotion (Haemon leaves)
- Commitment (Ismene leaves)

CREON AND ANTIGONE in SPOT LIGHTS 2 + 4 facing each other)

-Strength (Creon remains)

-Passion (Antigone remains)

(Antigone and Creon deliver the final words of the show! OR some combination?)

..is wisdom

To hold the Gods **in awe**

This is the ulaterable law

END OF AWESOME ARMSTRONG/EMERSON SHOW!

#yay!