

SIMPLIFIED DIALOGUE BETWEEN ANTIGONE AND CREON

Sophocles' *Antigone*

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Creon (King and uncle of Antigone)

Antigone (Sister of dead brothers Polynieces and Eteocles)

Chorus leader (leader of a group of actors)

Guard

Ismene (Younger sister of Antigone, Polynieces and Eteocles)

DIALOGUE:

CREON: You there—you with your head bent to the ground! Did you bury your brother?

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

CREON: Don't beat around the bush. Did you know about my law to prevent funeral rites to be given to Polyneices?

ANTIGONE: Yes. Everyone knew it.

CREON: And yet you dared to break my laws?

ANTIGONE: Of course, because you are just a human. **You think you're God** The laws that you made are not the same as eternal, divine laws. **Since I will die one day, I do not fear your man-made decrees and threats of death. With so much misery around me, death seems sweet.** But allowing my brother to lie dead in the streets, that's what's bitter to me.

You think I'm a fool, but your law is more foolish than I am!

CHORUS LEADER: This girl is just as stubborn as her father Oedipus – even when it gets her into trouble!

CREON [to the Chorus Leader]: She is prideful and disrespectful! Doesn't she know that even wills of iron break?!

This girl broke our laws and even brags about it! She has to be punished. Does she think that she is the man, and not me?! I don't care whether she's my sister's daughter.

Her sister is also involved. Go and get her!

[Exit attendants into the palace to fetch Ismene]

Your sister's treachery will be found out. I despise people who do evil and then try to act as if their crimes are heroic.

ANTIGONE: Then, take me and kill me — what more do you want?

CREON: Nothing more. Your death is all that I want.

ANTIGONE: Well then hurry up. I hate listening to you. But the only praise that I sought is to give my brother a proper burial. Everyone in Thebes thinks the same, except they are afraid to tell you the truth. Now that you're king, you think you can say and do whatever you please.

CREON: You're the only one in Thebes that thinks that.

ANTIGONE: The people all agree with me, but keep their mouths shut.

CREON: Your views are different than theirs — aren't you ashamed of yourself?

ANTIGONE: No—there's nothing shameful in doing what is right.

CREON: Your brother took the side of the enemy.

ANTIGONE: Yes—but both my brothers are from the same mother and father.

CREON: Why honour one brother while insulting the other? The one who actually deserves respect!

ANTIGONE: His dead body doesn't change what happened.

CREON: You're wrong. You show respect to a wicked man.

ANTIGONE: But he was the brother of the one you honour.

CREON: Because he was trying to destroy this country—while your other brother died defending it.

ANTIGONE: That's true, but in death we are all equal and our bodies deserve to be treated with respect.

CREON: A good man doesn't respect a bad man.

ANTIGONE: How do you know? In the next world to come, the laws are different.

CREON: An enemy can never be a friend, not even in death.

ANTIGONE: I'm not like you. My nature is to love. I cannot hate.

CREON: If you love the dead so much, then, go and join them!
No woman is going to tell me what to do — no, no— not while I'm still alive.

[Enter two attendants from the house bringing Ismene to Creon]

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