

# *@*ANTIGONE

By  
Chuck Roe

## @ANTIGONE

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*Dedicated to Kristy Roe and Melissa Danforth. Thank you, Kristy, for your constant support and devotion. Thank you, Melissa, for the idea to bring Antigone to the modern age.*

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### **Productions**

@Antigone has been produced for the Texas UIL One Act Play competition at Timberview High School directed by Melissa Danforth & Samantha Dunaway and Mansfield High School directed by Kirk Corley, Altraniecia Starr, and Sherry Wright.

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## SCENE 1

*The silhouetted scene opens with the battle between POLYNEICES and ETEOCLES: A group of protesters with picket signs are grouped together. Guards come in and scuffle with protesters. The scene becomes violent with a couple of people getting killed. Polyneices picks up a gun from one of the dead guards and points it at Eteocles. Eteocles pulls his gun on Polyneices. They are stalemate for a moment. A shadowed figure (CREON) in the back raises a gun in the air and fires, followed immediately by the double gun shots of the brothers. Both brothers fall dead. Camera flashes go off immediately following and reporters arrive on the scene.*

**REPORTER 1.** Breaking news-- Our leader Eteocles has been assassinated. *(IMAGE: Website- ETEOCLES ASSASSINATED!)*

**REPORTER 2.** He has been killed in battle. *(IMAGE: Social Media Post @government agency- city mourns loss of great leader.)*

**INFLUENCER 1.** What started out as a peaceful protest quickly turned into a riot! *(IMAGE: Social Media Post @protestgroup- POLYNEICES KILLED BY BROTHER; Social Media Post @protester- Down with the government.)*

**INFLUENCER 2.** The authorities attacked the protesters. Many people on both sides were killed. *(IMAGE: Website Banner- HUNDREDS KILLED- MANY MORE INJURED. The silhouetted scene now shows CREON taking the oath of office.)*

**REPORTER 3.** Second in command, Madam Creon, is immediately sworn in as the President and she swiftly takes action against further protests. *(IMAGE: Website- CREON BECOMES PRESIDENT; IMAGE: Website- CREON TAKES OATH OF OFFICE.)*

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**INFLUENCER 3.** As if our city wasn't in enough turmoil with this civil war, what is going to happen now? (*IMAGE: One draped coffin.*

*ANTIGONE and ISMENE rush in.*)

**ANTIGONE.** Ismene, sister! You would think we've suffered enough. Our family is cursed. We've grieved so much and now— Have you seen the news? The edict of Madam President Creon?

**ISMENE.** I haven't heard a thing. I know that we, two sisters, have lost our two brothers. A double death in a single hour and I know that our one brother's demonstrators have all run away or died with him. I've heard nothing else.

**ANTIGONE.** I didn't think so. That's why I wanted to speak to you directly, instead of messaging. We have to do something.

**ISMENE.** What are you talking about?

**ANTIGONE.** Listen, Ismene. Creon has honored our brother, Eteocles, in the media and given him a presidential funeral and that's as it should be. But Polyneices--? They both loved this country and died because of that devotion to her. They say Creon has sworn that no one shall honor him in any way. NO ONE MOURN FOR HIM-- in any form or media! He will be an open target for vicious reporters and haters to smear and slander!! That is what they say and our new leader is coming here to announce it publicly. The punishment for defiance--- Death and the same abandonment. There it is and now you can prove what you are-- A true sister or a traitor to your family.

**ISMENE.** What does that mean? Have you lost your mind? What can I do?

**ANTIGONE.** You must decide if you will support me or not.

**ISMENE.** I don't understand. Help you what?

**ANTIGONE.** I'm going to honor him. I'm going to post a tribute.

**ISMENE.** On your social media? Madam Creon has forbidden it.

**ANTIGONE.** He is my brother. And he is your brother, too.

**ISMENE.** But, this is dangerous! What will Creon do?

**ANTIGONE.** She is not enough to stand in my way.

**ISMENE.** (*Gasps.*) Our father died, the villain of a perverse story. Death by his own hand. And our mother also, His step mother and wife- the same woman, hanged herself. And now our two brothers die-- each killed by the

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other's shot. Only we are left, but sister, think how much more terrible it would be-- Our deaths, our fate, if we defy Creon and do what she has forbidden! We are only commoners now. We cannot fight her power and influence, Antigone. She's made this law. We must give in to it. I beg the dead to forgive me, but I am helpless. I must yield. She controls the media.... She controls everything. I think this is dangerous business. We would be ruined.

**ANTIGONE.** If that is what you think, *(pause.)* I don't want your help, even if you offered it now. You've made your choice. You can choose to let those hatemongers post what they want, but I will honor him whenever and however I want- and if I must die, I will lie down with him in death. I will be true to him as he was to me.

You may do what you want, since familial loyalty means nothing to you.

**ISMENE.** He meant the world to me, but I'm not strong to break the law. There is the country to think about.

**ANTIGONE.** The country's good is a sorry excuse. I will honor my brother.

**ISMENE.** Antigone, please. I'm so afraid for you.

**ANTIGONE.** Don't be. You have your own good to think about.

**ISMENE.** *(gets idea.)* Post it anonymously. Create a fake profile. I won't tell anyone. I promise.

**ANTIGONE.** Tell everyone. Report it. Repost it if you dare. If you don't, you'll be dragged into it anyways. They'll say you're just covering up more family secrets like our parents.

**ISMENE.** You're impossible. *(pleading.)* You must not do this.

**ANTIGONE.** Go away, Ismene. Leave us in your cowardice. I'm not afraid to do the right thing and honor my family. If it means consequences, it would not be the worst thing.

**ISMENE.** Do it if you must. You're being stupid, but loyal to those who love you. *(Antigone and Ismene exit.)*

## SCENE 2

*The chorus scene should be a barrage of social media posts while the chorus is speaking.*

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**REPORTER 1.** Our glorious city, Thebes, remains victorious, but scarred. What started as a political protest rally turned violent.

**INFLUENCER 1.** The leader of the protest, Polyneices, roused the crowd with insults to the government leadership, his brother, and promises of a coup.

**REPORTER 2.** Emotions quickly burned with the thought of change and the protesters armed themselves and surrounded the city.

**INFLUENCER 2.** But before one shot was fired or one car could be turned over, the rally was met with resistance. Our city was ready for them and the police, in riot gear, arrived like a dragon.

**REPORTER 3.** The police surrounded the city and clashed with the rioters. In one section of the city, the brothers met in the square, facing each other. Eteocles, our leader, ready to put a stop to these protests.

**INFLUENCER 3.** The brothers talked for just a moment when their anger at this battle and each other erupted into fury. Guns were aimed a shot was fired and both brothers found themselves mortally wounded and fallen in death. (*A crowd gathers around a platform. A camera crew prepares.*)

**ASSISTANT 1.** And we're live in 3... 2... (*points to PRESS SECRETARY.*)

**PRESS SECRETARY.** Thebes remains victorious. The government is still intact and operating. We will move forward and leave this brother war behind us.

So now, our new leader is coming. Madam President Creon of Thebes!! What will we face with Creon at the head of the table? What will her first act as leader be? (*CREON enters.*)

**CREON.** Citizens, in person and online, I have the honor to let you know that our State, which was recently threatened, is safe at last. I am "live" today because I know that I can depend on you. Your devotion to the Leader is absolute; you were loyal to our late ruler and your loyalty was transferred to his children when he died. Unfortunately, as you may have seen, his two sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, have killed each other in a battle, and I, as the next in line, have succeeded to the power of the position. I am aware, of course, that no one in leadership can expect loyalty from their people until she's been proven. However, I must say at the very beginning of my time in office that I firmly believe in what is best



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for the State. I will not tolerate anyone who sets private relationships over public welfare. I need hardly remind you that I would never have any dealings with an enemy of the people. I value friendship as much as the next person; but we must remember that friends made at the risk of ruining our peace are not real friends at all. This is my credo. That is why I have made the following decision concerning these fallen brothers. Eteocles, who died fighting for his country, is to be buried with full military honors, with all the ceremony that is usual when the greatest heroes die. We will build monuments and statues to him. We will celebrate his leadership in every available outlet and media. We will create a special tribute site in his honor where the people can personally post their tributes to our great leader. But his brother Polyneices, who started this protest and came back with lies and violence against his native home; it was his idea was to incite this riot and spill the blood of his brother and attempt to destroy this city—Polyneices, I say, is to have no honors: no person is to mourn him or say the least prayer for him; there will be no kind word posted on any site or media. NO TRIBUTES. The statues that have been erected in the past will be immediately removed and destroyed. If his name is mentioned in any media, it shall only be to denounce him for the traitor and filth that he was. This is my command, and you can see the wisdom behind it. As long as I lead this nation, no traitor is going to be honored with the loyal man. But whoever shows by word and deed that he is on the side of the State,—he shall have my respect while he is living and my reverence when he is dead.

**REPORTER 1.** Is that your will, Madam President?

**CREON.** That is my will. Publish it to everyone, so all will know.

*(IMAGES-All post this on their sites.)* Take care, though, that you do your part.

**INFLUENCER 1.** We won't be able to enforce your decree.

**CREON.** I don't mean that. We have an excellent military.

**REPORTER 2.** Then what do you want us to do?

**CREON.** You will give NO support, bandwidth, nor airtime to anyone who breaks this law.

**INFLUENCER 2.** No one would do that. Only a crazy person would bring that death wish upon themselves.

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**CREON.** A death wish indeed. Yet, money talks, and even the smartest people can sometimes be swayed by a bleeding heart or a handful of cash. *(IMAGE: Sole post honoring Polyneices pops up. Reporters and Influencers gasp and screenshot.)*

**PRESS SECRETARY.** Madam President, we have a problem.

**CREON.** What is it?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** I didn't authorize this. I don't know who posted this. The user information is encrypted. You must not punish me for things that other people have done.

**CREON.** Now would I do something like that? Of course not. What is it?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** It's bad, madam. I don't know how to put it.

**CREON.** Spit it out?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** The dead man--- Polyneices--- online--- someone---

A tribute, ma'am--- Someone has posted a remembrance to him, --- Anonymously on OUR tribute page for Eteocles.

**CREON.** Who would dare do this?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** We don't know yet, Madame President. I swear. Our people are on it. There was no signature, user name, anything. The tribute page was being monitored the whole time. Then, there it popped up. And then everyone began panicking!! Everyone was accusing each other and everyone denying it. We were all ready to swear that we didn't do it. 'Then we all remembered that you needed to be informed. We drew straws and I came up short. I'm just as upset about this as you are. No one likes the bearer of bad news.

**INFLUENCER 3.** Maybe someone is testing you, Madam President.

**CREON.** STOP!! Are you all insane? Testing me!?! This is intolerable!! Who would honor him? How did he make this city great? He tried to challenge the status. Burn down our traditions. Yes, and the whole State and its laws with it! No, even now- from the very moment I took over there have been people who have whispered together, stiff-necked traitors, putting their heads together, scheming against me in alleys. Find that man, bring him here to me, or your death will be the least of your problems: You did take down the post, right?

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**PRESS SECRETARY.** (*hesitating.*) Taking down the post will destroy any leads we have to finding the culprit.

**CREON.** As long as that post remains online—I look like a fool.

**PRESS SECRETARY.** May I give you some advice as your press secretary?

**CREON.** Your very voice distresses me.

**PRESS SECRETARY.** Are you sure that it is my voice, and not your conscience?

**CREON.** WHAT!!!!??

**PRESS SECRETARY.** It is not what I say, but what has been done, that hurts you.

**CREON.** You talk too much.

**PRESS SECRETARY.** Maybe, but I've done nothing.

**CREON.** Your brazen quips may be entertaining now; but unless you bring me that person, no one will be laughing in the end. Do you understand me? (*Exit Creon into the Palace.*)

**PRESS SECRETARY.** “Bring me that person” —! I'd like nothing better than bringing her the culprit! But bring them or not, you have seen the last of me here. At any rate, I am out of here! (*Exit Press Secretary.*)

### SCENE 3

*This chorus scene should be a barrage of IMAGES of social media posts about the anonymous poster and what they think will be the punishment while the chorus is speaking.*

**INFLUENCER 1.** The world is filled with many wonders, but man controls them all. Man can navigate seas, bend the soil to his will, tame the beasts and even conquer the air and space.

**INFLUENCER 2.** Man also controls many things simply with words. Some speak and the world jumps at their commands. When words and man clash, disaster is very close at hand, but even with all his power and control, man cannot conquer death.

**INFLUENCER 3.** Even though the royal family abounds with power and intelligence, not every member works for the common good. When the

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laws are kept, how proudly our city stands! When the laws are broken, what happens to our city then? We've seen the results of that. Never may this way of anarchy be welcomed in our city. We should never be sympathetic to those who want to destroy us. Do not rest in peace.

*(Enter Press Secretary and Guards leading Antigone through paparazzi.)*

**REPORTER 1.** Breaking news. Antigone, the sister to the former leader and his assassin brother has been taken into custody? No word on why.

We'll keep you up to date. *(IMAGE- Antigone walking with Guards- ANTIGONE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, etc.)*

**GUARD.** Here is the person. We caught her in the act. Where is Madam Creon? *(Enter Creon.)*

**CREON.** What's happened? Why are you back so soon?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** Madam President, this is the person who posted the tribute. She is the guilty one. We caught her trying to post another. Take her, question her, judge her if you want. I am done with this whole thing.

**CREON.** But this is Antigone! Why have you brought her here?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** She is the anonymous poster. I swear!

**CREON.** Is this the truth?

**PRESS SECRETARY.** We caught her trying to do it again. Can I speak freely?

**CREON.** The details. Now!

**PRESS SECRETARY.** After you were so angry about leaving the post up. We went back and deleted it from the site. Our technicians were able to trace the IP address to the computer that was used, so we monitored that computer. We did not falter in our watch. Suddenly, she appeared. When she saw the post had been removed from the site, she shrieked and cried and cursed the people responsible and then she began typing through her tears. She was so blinded by her sorrow, she did not hear us approach her as she pressed the key to post the tribute again. When she was aware of our presence, she was not afraid-- not even when we charged her with the act that you forbade. She denied nothing. I am glad that we've discovered the person responsible for the crime for it means that I am absolved of the responsibility. I am saddened that it means even more tragedy to this family and our city.

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**CREON.** And you, Antigone. You with your head hanging—do you confess this thing?

**ANTIGONE.** I do. I deny nothing.

**CREON.** *(To Press Secretary.)* You may go. *(Exit Press Secretary.)* *(To Antigone.)* Please, tell me that you had not heard my decision.... My proclamation on this matter.

**ANTIGONE.** It was everywhere-- On every media outlet, on every social platform. How could I help hearing it?

**CREON.** And yet you dared to defy the order?

**ANTIGONE.** I dared. It was not a divine proclamation. Your... edict was strong. But all your power and control is weak against love and human decency. You may be able to control most people's actions, but you cannot control their emotions and their loyalties. I knew I would die eventually, regardless of your commands. If I must die now, before it is my time, it won't be a hardship. Can anyone living, as my life is now, with evil all around me, think death is a threat? My death is of no consequence, but if I had left my brother-- left to the shame and humiliation with no one to support him... I would be miserable. Now I will not be. *(Creon snorts in disgust.)* You smirk... You think I'm a fool. That's okay. It may well be that a fool convict me of being foolish. *(IMAGES: Media Posts about Antigone's actions pop up.)*

**REPORTER 1.** It appears that the Oedipus pride and stubbornness is not only found in the males of the clan.

**INFLUENCER 3.** Antigone, the headstrong daughter, even with all her private schooling and privileges has never learned to yield and submit to others. *(All eyes and cameras are on Creon.)*

**CREON.** She has much to learn. The inflexible heart breaks first, the toughest iron cracks first, and the wildest horses bend their necks at the pull of the smallest curb.

This girl is guilty of a double insolence, Breaking the given laws and boasting of it.

**INFLUENCER 2.** Who is right in this situation? She? *(IMAGE: Antigone's mugshot.)* if this crime goes without punishment? Or She? *(IMAGE: Creon's Presidential Headshot.)* If she is executed? *(IMAGE-Creon vs. Antigone Post.)*

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**CREON.** Sister's child or not... (*a thought.*) Maybe the other sister too. Go, arrest Ismene. I'm sure she's a part of this. Bring her here. These plots in the dark that creep out into the light are one thing, But now- this. This is blatant boasting of anarchy!!

**ANTIGONE.** Creon, what more do you want than my death?

**CREON.** Nothing. That's exactly what I want.

**ANTIGONE.** Then do it. This banter wears me out. Your words are nothing but acid to me and I'm sure that mine are the same to you. And yet it shouldn't be that way. All these onlookers.... The people... the commoners here would praise me for what I've done, if their lips weren't frozen in fear.... Of you. (*All media posts disappear.*) How nice it must be to be the Leader. You are able to say and do whatever you please.

**CREON.** You stand alone in that opinion.

**ANTIGONE.** No, they are with me. They secretly support my boldness. They've all hidden their screenshots of my bravery and they hold their tongues. (*Reporters and Influencers close their devices quickly.*)

**CREON.** Maybe, but you are guilty of the action. They are not.

**ANTIGONE.** There is no guilt in honoring the dead.... My family.

**CREON.** But Eteocles—He was your brother too.

**ANTIGONE.** He was.... He was.

**CREON.** And you insult his memory.

**ANTIGONE.** He would not take this as an insult.

**CREON.** He would! You honor a traitor as much as him.

**ANTIGONE.** He was our brother—traitor or not--- we are still family.

**CREON.** Polyneices made war.... Incited a riot. Eteocles was defending our city.

**ANTIGONE.** Still, there are honors due to the dead.

**CREON.** But not the same honors for the wicked!

**ANTIGONE.** Who can say who was wicked?

**CREON.** An enemy is an enemy, even if they're dead.

**ANTIGONE.** It is my nature to love, not hate.

**CREON.** Then you can join them. If you must have your love. Find it in the grave. (*Papparazzi flashes. IMAGES: Posts about Ismene taken into custody*)

**REPORTER 3.** The other sister, Ismene, is being escorted on to the scene.

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You can tell that she's been crying. Her eyes are puffy and red.

**CREON.** You, Ismene. Do you confess your part in this crime or do you deny it? Answer me.

**ISMENE.** YES! If she will allow me to admit it. I am guilty.

**ANTIGONE.** NO!! You have no right to say so. You would not help me then and I will not allow it now.

**ISMENE.** But I understand now. I am here to join you... to take my share of the punishment.

**ANTIGONE.** Words are cheap when actions are required.

**ISMENE.** You're refusing me? I want to die with you. I must honor him too.

**ANTIGONE.** You won't make my death easier with yours.

**ISMENE.** If you're dead, what will be left for me?

**ANTIGONE.** Ask your leader, Madam President. You're quick to jump to her whims.

**ISMENE.** Is there anything I can do?

**ANTIGONE.** Yes! Save yourself. I won't be mad. People will praise you for your choice. Others will praise me for mine.

**ISMENE.** You may be guilty, but I have guilt too.

**ANTIGONE.** Enough. You are alive. I'm already dead.

**CREON.** (*taking a picture and typing.*) See these girls. One has just lost her mind; the other, apparently has never had much of a mind at all.

#sadsister (*posting IMAGE: a Social Media Post.*)

**ISMENE.** Grief can cause the strongest mind to waver, Madam!

**CREON.** Yours definitely did when you sided with the guilty.

**ISMENE.** How can I go on without her?

**CREON.** You'll manage. She's as good as dead.

**ISMENE.** What about Haemon? She is his fiancé.

**CREON.** There are plenty of others for him. He'll marry NO ONE as wicked as she.

**ISMENE.** (*posting IMAGE: a Social Media Post.*) Oh, Haemon (*IMAGE: @heymon how your mother has wronged you!!*)

**CREON.** ENOUGH!!

**REPORTER 1.** Madam President, so, is it true that you're taking your son's fiancé from him?

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**CREON.** No. Death will do that for me.

**INFLUENCER 1.** Then you are going through with the execution? (*Creon nods. IMAGES: Media posts about the execution.*)

**CREON.** Take them away and guard them well. Braver men that these two have fled to try and escape death. (*Ismene, Antigone, & Guards exit.*)

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