

A TALE OF LOVE, TYRANNY, AND SILVER MONSTERS
ADAPTED FROM THE CLASSICAL WORK ANTIGONE, BY SOPHOCLES
DRAFT 5 - SAMPLE

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CHARACTERS (In order of appearance)

ANTIGONE
POLYNICES
CREON
HAEMON
ISMENE
JOCASTE
OEDIPUS
PILOT BOY
MAN
WOMAN
MAN 2
WOMAN 2
ANNOUNCER
DEBATER #1
DEBATER #2
TIRESIAS
ROYAL GUARD(S)

NOTE

Actors may double up and play multiple characters with the exception of Antigone, Polynices, Creon, and Haemon. Polynices must be played by a man of color. Creon must be played by a white man. Haemon must be played by an actor that is gender queer or non-conforming.

Antigone must be played by a woman of color. A diverse cast is essential as the playwright would be deeply upset otherwise. Everything else is open to interpretation. Nothing is set in stone. Follow your instincts. Have fun.

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A stage is enveloped in darkness amidst the rubble of a once great and incomparable kingdom. The space is littered with old and forgotten pieces of metal, and the smoldering remains of a recently forsaken world. A post-modern junk yard. ANTIGONE lies in the center of the ruins. As she speaks the lights slowly come up and life is breathed into her.

ANTIGONE (V.O.)

Darkness-
I'm breathing for the first time.
Our world splinters and suddenly I snap awake-
Here-
Just as time unravels and starts all over again.
The ominous mechanical ticking.
The pungent stench of melting steel.
The grumbling of the earth beneath my feet-
And a thick cloud of smoke and ash bathing us in pale white.

CREON appears, illuminated.

CREON

I'm sorry, Antigone.

ANTIGONE

Your actions speak louder than your words.

CREON

Let me look at you

ANTIGONE

Your eyes are daggers.

CREON

Don't be angry with me, Antigone. Your pain is my pain.

ANTIGONE

My pain is my own.

CREON

Let me take it all away. Let me love you like an uncle- Let me love you like a father.

ANTIGONE

I have a father. Our true King.

CREON

A King who couldn't save his own people.

ANTIGONE

Let me bury their bodies.

CREON

No.

ANTIGONE

Let me bury my brother Polynices.

CREON

The laws have changed, Antigone. I beg you to follow them.

ANTIGONE

I need to bury him, I need to mourn.

CREON

No.

ANTIGONE

He was your nephew!

CREON

I was his King.

ANTIGONE

Will you not let our people take him home?

CREON

Your people. The band of foolish boys that tried to take my life-

ANTIGONE

We need to bury them!

CREON

They have been buried. Now I beg you, Antigone. I beg you to move forward.

ANTIGONE

And who will see it?

Who will see the burial, Creon?

Who will be there to dig their hands into the ground,

Lay their bodies in the earth.

Who will be there to share my tears?

Our tears?

And who will be there to mourn?

Who will be there to mourn my brother Polynices?
 My heart is broken.
 Shattered.
 Like time itself.
 My body is numb.
 My mind is empty.
 All color has drained from the world,
 Like sap from a tree-
 Sticky with the blood and tears-
 Of a boy who dropped his weapon and threw his hands up in the air-
 Begging-
 Begging to be buried-
 To be remembered.

I speak elegies.
 I weep oceans.
 But until I lay my hands on his bruised skin-
 Until I etch his name in stone-
 Until they hear the sound of his laughter and the whimpering of his tears-
 I will not-
 I will not let his face be forgotten.

Bombs fall from the sky. Time shatters, then rewinds. CREON is gone. ANTIGONE stands alone. A sudden break in time and space. POLYNICES appears behind her.

POLYNICES
 Antigone- You need to get out of here-

ANTIGONE
 The earth is crumbling-

POLYNICES
 I know-

ANTIGONE
 It's split in two.

POLYNICES
 I know.
 Dad is dead.
 Oedipus the King is dead. (a pause)

ANTIGONE
 What?

POLYNICES

He died.

ANTIGONE

How?

POLYNICES

He was betrayed.

ANTIGONE

Betrayed by who?

POLYNICES

Fate.

ANTIGONE

Our father is dead.

That can't be true!

POLYNICES

I saw it.

I saw him fall.

Our father went mad.

He tore out his own eyes.

So Creon took his crown.

And fire rained down from the sky

So I took up arms.

I stormed the gates.

Antigone, you need to run. Run before the war gets to us- before they come for you!

ANTIGONE

No. I can't lose you.

You're my brother, I can't lose you!

POLYNICES

It's too late. You've already lost me. I'm gone-

ANTIGONE

Your hands bloodied, bound tightly behind your back.

Bruises covering your flesh.

A fallen warrior, kneeling before his own blood and kin-

A boy who was already on his knees,

Hands in the air in surrender.

Drowning in his own humility-

To be struck down.

The world turned to ash, the earth opened up and silver monsters the color of burnt steel buried

us in fire.
The sky was-

POLYNICES
The color of warm milk.
Of splotted ink on fresh newspaper.
The fur of a dark animal.

ANTIGONE
When we were kids, we would see the world.

POLYNICES
Because it was ours to see.

ANTIGONE
And then it came crashing down.

POLYNICES
Because of our father's eyes-

ANTIGONE
Because of the blood that ran through him.

POLYNICES
He tried to keep us together, Antigone. He tried to keep us safe.

ANTIGONE
Our father-
The King-
He failed.
A man who loved his people
A man who raised his children hoping that they would never feel the earth quake with the
thunder of war.
A good man who knew how to rule-
Not with tyranny, but with grace.
I will follow you, Polynices.
I will charge into the rubble and the ash.
I will find you-
And I will bring you home.

*ANTIGONE abruptly travels through space and time. CREON, dressed in a full piece suite,
speaks to a crowd.*

CREON
I am deeply deeply touched by the love, bravery, and sacrifice that all of our young men and
women have devoted to this brand new nation. Every corner of the public and private sector has

been ravished by absolute greed, a misguided understanding of our ideals, and an inability to demonstrate bold and patriotic leadership. We must work to bind up the wounds of a suffering world - to build an abiding peace, a peace rooted in justice and in law.

Think of our families. Our children. The danger that our former leaders allow them to be placed in. And yet here we stand with those that still vehemently oppose us. They do not have the wishes and desires that we do. They value only anarchy and civil unrest. They wish to question the authority of our brave servicemen and send them home to their wives and children in body-bags, not in uniforms. Freedom is never more than one generation from extinction.

ANTIGONE

Where are the bodies!?! Where are the bodies of those that were killed by the fire!?!?

CREON

And so, as we arm ourselves against this axis of evil, I'll say now and forever that I will fight for you. I will advocate for you, I will build a better, more advanced world, and by God I will instill within the hearts and minds of all of our youth, a bright beacon of hope. My palace- that city on the hill- will forever be open and building towards a bright new future- a more perfect union. But in order to achieve that goal I will confront our enemies with the full force of every power that I possess. Rest assured, we will speak loudly and carry a big stick! The might of our combined struggles- our combined voices have never failed us, and so shall I bring us into this new millennia- this new epoch of time with pride, with love, and with humility. Thank you and God bless!

Thunderous applause. CREON begins to exit. ANTIGONE approaches. Music and fanfare drowns them both out. CREON smiles, waves, and is quickly escorted away.

ANTIGONE.

Where are they?

Where are their bodies!?!?

We will not stand for your rule any longer, Creon!

We will flood the streets.

We will shatter the floor beneath your feet.

We will charge head first into the face of tyranny with our arms locked together and you-

You-

Creon-

Will feel the Earth tremble.

The world disintegrates around ANTIGONE. An empty loading dock. The sound of trucks, engines, and exhaust. A man slowly approaches her. He leans over, smells her.

HAEMON

Is this what people do nowadays? Sniff car fumes to get high?

ANTIGONE

What did you say?

HAEMON

The exhaust. Are you trying to get stoned?

ANTIGONE

Fuck off.

HAEMON

I'm serious!

ANTIGONE

It's a quiet place to be alone. Well- It was. (a pause)

HAEMON

My name's Haemon.

ANTIGONE

I'm-

HAEMON

Antigone-

ANTIGONE

How do you know that?

HAEMON

We're destined to fall in love, remember?

ANTIGONE

No, I'm not destined for anything.

HAEMON

Sure you are. We all are-

ANTIGONE

I'm sorry, I don't know you-

HAEMON

You and me, we're destined to fall in love.

ANTIGONE

What makes you say that?

HAEMON

I saw it on the news.

ANTIGONE

Fake news. Oh, then it must be true.

HAEMON

I can protect you.

ANTIGONE

I don't need protecting.

HAEMON

I can die for you. (a pause)

ANTIGONE

Haemon. Oh my God. Haemon, is that you?

HAEMON

Yes, Antigone, it's me.

ANTIGONE

Your face- your eyes. All of it is the same just like-
Just like I remember.

HAEMON

And you haven't changed a bit, Antigone.

ANTIGONE

It's been a long time. Years- Months?

HAEMON

Maybe yesterday.

ANTIGONE

Yesterday? No, that's impossible. Yesterday I was-

HAEMON

Antigone, there's hardly a today. How the heck do you suppose there was a yesterday?

ANTIGONE

There has to be. How could I have forgotten?

HAEMON

It's Creon.

My father.

That's what he does.

ANTIGONE

He made me forget-

HAEMON

It's his ultimate weapon.

His white horse which he mounts and rides against the axis of evil.

He could destroy us all in the blink of an eye.

He can make the silver monsters rain down from the clouds.

Or he could make us forget it all to begin with.

He can rewind us by centuries-

Push us forward a millennia-

Erase hundreds of years-

Reinvent the wheel!

Right now, I'm centuries old, Antigone. Or maybe just a few days. Who the hell knows. But what I know is that in this moment, I know you, you know me, and we're in love.

ANTIGONE

I don't think we are, Haemon. At least- not yet.

HAEMON

But-

ANTIGONE

Haemon, we kinda just met.

HAEMON

Oh.

The scene shifts. A stark and clean hall of debate. Two glass podiums are illuminated. The room is suddenly filled with still, morose figures. A sudden mechanical whirring. The world speeds up, as if perfectly crafted for television. An ANNOUNCER sits neatly at a desk. He is projected for all of the world to see.

ANNOUNCER

Good evening everybody, and welcome to the hall of debate. The hall where everything is debated. Today we celebrate our seventh year of uninterrupted broadcast where we have proudly provided our citizens with the opportunity to actively participate in an open discussion. A battle of wits. The pinnacle of absolute democracy. It's all incredibly exciting, isn't it.

Our next topic of discussion is an issue that has been sweeping the headlines for months. As we all know, our nation is the world's sole producer of coal and nuclear energy. Due to the high worldwide demand they remain the only two non-imported products that our great nation produces. However, some propose an expansion of our economy and an unprecedented shift towards the production of crops and green energy. The debate ends tonight, ladies and gentlemen. In the next several moments two faces of the opposing parties will each have ninety

seconds to take their stance and exercise their right to a free and open debate. After each party has spoken, a community of objective civilians will cast their vote and the debate will be complete. No rebuttals, no further discussion. This makes for a more peaceful and efficient society. Let us welcome to the stage, this evening's debaters.

There is a sudden flourish of trumpets. Two debaters enter the hall. They each step up to a separate podium. Like a grade-school speech and debate, DEBATOR #1 speaks quickly and breathlessly. Throughout the speech, ANTIGONE enters, with purpose.

ANNOUNCER

You have ninety seconds on the clock.

DEBATER #1

good evening. our governing entity is the world's largest producer of coal and nuclear energy and our corporations have dominated the market for a millennia. however I am here today to argue that the investment in such resources is harmful to the wellbeing of our people and that a transition to agriculture and green energy will ultimately serve a larger portion of our population. my first contention is that the use of solar panels to grow our crops as opposed to nuclear factories and genetically modified organisms not only leads to fewer outbreaks of disease and mutations but it yields a higher quantity of nutrient rich nourishment with significantly improved dietary quality. contention two is greenhouse emissions. according to a report conducted by the energy efficient global corps a reasonable temperature increase of between one and two-point-seventy-five degrees Celsius would mean that over the next decade the reduction in worldwide precipitation would result in an eighteen to nineteen percent decrease in grain and vegetable crop harvest. this would lead to an increase in the rate of world hunger and raise it from the current thirty-six percent to forty-nine percent. the study offers a solution to introducing-

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentleman we are out of time.

DEBATER #1

What-?

ANNOUNCER

I think we are all in agreement that a Hall of Debate clause has been broken. It is our privilege to provide our nation with access to free and public debate. However, that right only exists as long as all elements of debate do not infringe upon our governing body's right to preserve and protect the continued peace of our existence.

Boos and jeers fill the crowd.

ANNOUNCER

It is within King Creon's authority to veto any law or platform that he fundamentally disagrees

with. This universal understanding therefore invalidates the argument that we should expand our economy and production of resources.

DEBATER #1

That's bullshit, do you hear me!? That's a load of fucking bullshit!

ANNOUNCER

There are rules to this debate, sir. You know that you may not break them. Profanity will not be tolerated.

ANTIGONE

Then what will be tolerated!? Clearly nothing that involves change.

ANNOUNCER

I'm sorry, but we are not engaging in audience participation at this time!

ANTIGONE

There are costs to Creon's administration. We must not turn a blind eye-!

ANNOUNCER

To participate as a spectator means that you have agreed to the terms of this free and open debate-!

DEBATER #1

Free and open debate? Is that what you call this!? This is tyranny!

ANNOUNCER

If we could please remove this man from the Hall-! Thank you for joining us.

DEBATER #1

People are dying, do you hear that!? They're dying!

DEBATOR #1 is forcefully removed from the debate Hall. The room stirs and grumbles excitedly.

ANTIGONE

Let us hear from him. Let us hear from Creon-!

The crowd grumbles. Mumbles of 'Where's Creon? Let's hear from Creon!'.

ANNOUNCER

I'm afraid that our regularly scheduled programming may not be interrupted-!

ANTIGONE

Let us hear from him! Let him speak to the people!

The crowd grows more agitated. Moments pass. The ANNOUNCER fumbles uncomfortably.

ANNOUNCER

I'm afraid- (a beat) Very well. Next up we have two very special guests joining us who will be discussing the crimes, abuses, and legality of the active rebellion which seeks to tear our great nation apart. To discuss this issue, please welcome to the debate stage Antigone, and King Creon!

Music. Fanfare. ANTIGONE is hustled to the debate stage to endless applause and jeers. CREON enters, clean and fashionable, his hair neatly gelled to the side. The spectators erupt into madness. ANTIGONE is ushered up to one podium, CREON, the other.

ANNOUNCER

Welcome! And a very special thank you to our one true leader, King Creon for making it out to tonight's debate.

CREON

Thank you very much, I am truly honored to be here.

ANNOUNCER

And a very special thank you to Antigone for traveling a great distance to get here. So as I'm sure you all know, mutiny is a terrible offense, especially in this era of peace. But we weren't always a peaceful society. The founders of the rebellion- the first to outwardly oppose King Creon, were rightfully killed for their mutiny. Only the last dying embers of their memory remain and it is on such memories that we base tonight's debate. King Creon, if you would please give us your opening statement. You have ninety seconds on the clock.

CREON

Thank you, Chris. And thank you to everyone in the hall of debate for having me. Tonight, I am here first and foremost not to argue with my opponent, but to instill hope and confidence into my people- our people- that their government is doing everything that it can to ensure their safety. In the last millennia, we have made an outstanding recovery socially, economically, and politically. But only a few short years ago our great kingdom was falling apart. Invaders were taking our jobs, killing our people, and posing a great threat to our national security. When I was given the honor of taking this office, I placed the survival of our people first. Had I not made the choices that I made, we would very likely not all be sitting here today. But my priority has always been order, preservation, and prosperity. When the group of rebels stormed my gates and threatened to take my seat, I only had my country in mind. I knew that unless I finished my job, we would not survive the century. They violated my laws. My necessary laws. And they paid the price- the rightful price. For although they live among us, we must remember that they do

not value peace. They do not value safety. They do not value our ideals. Thank you.

Thunderous applause.

ANNOUNCER

Thank you, King Creon. Now Antigone, let us hear your opening statements. You have thirty seconds on the clock.

ANTIGONE

Thank you. I would like to first redirect the conversation to incorporate a larger and more expansive narrative. One that can speak to the experiences of all our people. My opponent likes to speak of policy, and of law, but what he fails to do is acknowledge our collective memory. Let's not deny simple facts. The bombs fell. They rained down from the sky. They killed our people. And who was responsible-? The man at the podium before us. And when he released those silver monsters and took the throne, was he held accountable? Rather than answering for his crimes, he beat his people down with the fury of a leader that seeks power only to possess it. And when my family-

ANNOUNCER

I'm sorry but your time is up-

ANTIGONE

What? No, you will hear my words-!

ANNOUNCER

Madam, I'm afraid-

CREON

Let the girl speak. I want to put this discussion to rest. Go on. Scramble for your words.

The crowd begins to grow into unrest.

ANTIGONE

Do you truly believe that your words are so absolute-? That nobody could possibly do anything but scramble to-?

CREON

No. But I don't believe that your arguments could possibly stand up to mine. Here on this stage. My stage. The one that my hard work built.

ANTIGONE

Then why don't we get back to the real issues.
To the boys that threw up their hands-
To their bodies which have been buried-

Not in the earth-
But buried where they can never be found.
Where are they, Creon? What have you done to them?

CREON

The simple fact of the matter is that they broke the law-!

ANTIGONE

To punish us is one thing-
But to break us is another-
To erase us-
You must be held accountable-

CREON

For keeping us safe. For keeping our peaceful civilians safe. Yes. I place a priority on those that value law and order- because they see our collective vision for the future-

ANTIGONE

Your future. A future where freedom comes second to obedience.
Erase our minds-
Shoot us in the streets-
Who lives and who dies, Creon?
Who gets to decide-!?
Ladies and gentleman, no man has that power.
And if he does, it is power that is absolute-

ANNOUNCER

Alright. Why don't we redirect the conversation-

CREON

Thank you, Chris. Her words are exaggerations- distractions-

ANTIGONE

And what do we do with absolute power?
We must shut it down!

CREON

That's enough!

ANTIGONE

You can strip us of all that you think we have-
But you will never be able to claim what is mine to claim.

CREON

I have made no effort to claim any ownership over those that-

ANTIGONE

I'm here to let the boys and girls of this generation know-

I am here to scream it from the mountain top--

That we will not-

We will not fall into darkness.

We will not let our minds and hearts fall into disrepair.

This shadow on history will be cast away.

We will witness together-

We will breathe together-

We will demand justice for every boy-

Every girl-

Ever man woman and child that is afraid to walk down the street-

Afraid to speak out against our bold leaders-

Afraid to hold the man in the crown wholly and absolutely responsible -

For the bombs that fell!

The crowd stirs, begins to cheer.

CREON

The bombs that fell were the result of poor and dangerous leadership that preceded my rule.

I cannot emphasize enough the unfortunate predicament that my administration was placed in.

Our State had fallen-

The only reason that we are here today is because of the bombs that fell.

I did what I did to protect all of us. All of our lives. The lives of the people. Because all of our lives matter! Many were hurt but many more were saved-

ANTIGONE

And where did you get this power, Creon? Who gave it to you?

The approval of the people came after you had taken away their ability to make a choice-

CREON

I will not stand here and discuss the needless specificities regarding the circumstances of my approval. I am not a leader that looks to the past- But one that looks to the future!

This girl that stands before you wishes to send us back to the difficult era from which we have recovered.

ANTIGONE

And you wish to make us forget it!

Mark my words-

Mark my words-
 We will not forget!
 We will not forget the silver monsters that fell from the sky.
 It is our duty to protect our children from the fundamental idea that our people-
 Our communities-
 Are not worthy of human decency.

CREON

You know nothing of rules.
 You know nothing of order.
 You can speak of freedom--
 You can speak of my offences-
 But without a government that acts-
 Without my government-
 Without those to boldly make the difficult choices-
 We have no future.

ANTIGONE

We will not be your targets-
 We will not be your cattle-
 We will not allow you to use our shattered bodies as an example.
 We are all your people-
 Not just those that blindly choose to follow and forget.
 The world is watching, Creon!

CREON

Law and order!
 We must have law and order!
 Remove her from my stage!
 I said remove her!

The audience erupts into angry jeers. Shouts of 'Down with Creon!' Complete pandemonium ensues. ROYAL GUARDS enter and escort CREON out of the debate hall. The silver monsters fall from the sky. There are screams. The Earth rumbles; explodes. All that remains is a dull ringing noise. There is a complete blackout.