

Ismene enters skenê.

CHORUS LEADER

Here comes Ismene by the gates,
raining sisterly tears.

A cloud over her brows
mars her flushed face,
drenching her fair cheeks.

530

KREON

You, lurking like a viper in my house,
secretly draining me – I did not know
I fed double ruin and revolutions against the throne.
Tell me, will you confess that you shared
in this burial, or will you swear you know nothing?

535

ISMENE

I did the deed, if she consents;
I join her and bear the blame.

ANTIGONE

But Justice will not allow you;
you weren't willing and I didn't share the deed.

ISMENE

In your sea of troubles, I'm not ashamed
to make myself a shipmate in your suffering.

540

ANTIGONE

Hades and those below witnessed whose deed it was.
I do not love kin who are kin only in words.

ISMENE

My sister, no! Don't deny me the honor

to die with you and to sanctify our dead.

545

ANTIGONE

Don't share my death nor claim for yourself
what you did not touch. It's enough that I die.

ISMENE

How can life be dear to me, abandoned by you?

ANTIGONE

Ask Kreon. He's the one you care about.

ISMENE

Why hurt me, when it doesn't help you?

550

ANTIGONE

If I mock, I mock you in grief.

ISMENE

Then how may I still help you, even now?

ANTIGONE

Save yourself. I don't begrudge you an escape.

ISMENE

Oimoi, miserable me! Am I to fail in your death, too?

ANTIGONE

You chose to live and I to die.

555

ISMENE

But not with my thoughts unspoken.

ANTIGONE

Your thoughts seemed right to one side, mine to the other.

ISMENE

Yet for both of us the fault is equal.

ANTIGONE

Be brave! You live, but my soul died
long ago, so that I might help the dead.

560

KREON

One of these girls, I tell you, has just now shown
that she's as crazy as the other has been from birth.

ISMENE

My king, not even innate sense
remains for those with bad fortune.

KREON

Yours left when you chose to do bad deeds with her.

565

ISMENE

What life is left for me alone, without her?

KREON

Do not speak of her; she no longer exists.

ISMENE

Will you kill the bride of your own son?

KREON

There are other fields to plow.

ISMENE

Not as good a fit for him as she.

570

KREON

I hate bad wives for sons.

ISMENE

Dearest Haemon, how your father dishonors you!

KREON

You and that marriage cause too much grief!

ISMENE

Will you really rob your son of her?

KREON

Hades will stop the marriage for me.

575

ISMENE

It is decided, it seems, that she dies.

KREON

Decided by both you and me. No more delays.

Escort them inside, servants. From now on,
they must be women and not freely roam.

Even the bold flee when they see Hades
looming over their life.

580

Two servants escort Antigone and Ismene, exit skenê.

Third Song

CHORUS

Blest are those whose lives have not tasted evils.

But for those whose house
has been shaken by a god,
no blight is lacking.

585

It imbues the generations,
as when a wave
swept by Thracian gales
runs over the darkness of the depths,