

## ANTIGONE

(based on the stage play by Sophocles)

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### PAGE ONE

The first page will set the tone for Antigone, by placing the story in context of world events dealing with war, protest, and suffering. It'll be a bit of a non-sequitar. I'm excited to see how people respond.

The task? To redraw (in your own style) some of the most important images in modern history. It needs to be instantly recognizable. I'll send some photos to you.

1 - Chinese student stands in front of a row tanks in Tiananmen Square.

CAPTION: I cannot say of any condition of human life: "This is fixed. This is clearly good or bad."

2 - Jack Ruby shoots Lee Harvey Oswald.

CAPTION: And Fate casts down the happy and unhappy alike.  
No man can foretell his Fate.

3 - An airplane flights toward the South Tower of World Trade Center in New York City. Smoke billows from the damaged North Tower.

CAPTION: Who can say that a man is still alive when his life's joy fails? He is a walking dead man.

4 - One student grieves over another student, shot dead by a stray bullet at Kent State.

CAPTION: Grant him rich; let him live like a king in his great house. If his pleasure is gone, I would not give so much as the shadow of smoke for all he owns.

### PAGES TWO AND THREE - TITLE PAGE

Two page spread. The vacant ruins of a once-great Greek city, lots of columns and fallen buildings. Leave open sky along the top half of the spread. Vultures circle an area on the



two guns of Polyneices and Eteocles lay at their feet.

Behind the sisters smoke rises off the ground.

CAPTION: Only the sisters Antigone and Ismene remain.

CAPTION: Their uncle Creon, now king, gave Eteocles a hero's funeral, but swore no one shall bury Polyneices, no one mourn for him.

## PAGE FIVE

1- Wide panel. Close on the dead rotting body of Polyneices. Gun shot wound to the head. A vulture in the background investigates the corpse.

CAPTION: His body must lay in the fields, a sweet treasure for carrion birds to find as they search for food.

2 - Wide panel. Along a paved road in the open country, the old prophet Teiresias walks with the help of a young boy. A large hawk flies above them. Teiresias has neither eyes, nor eye sockets. He wears a large sign that reads: WILL PROPHECY FOR FOOD.

TEIRESIAS: Come. We must go to the city.

Creon may learn at last. Yet I fear the cost will be too great.

3 - Wide panel. Completely black.

ANTIGONE (voice over): Ismene, dear sister, the King is not strong enough to stand in my way. I am going to bury Polyneices. Will you come?

## PAGE SIX

1 - Ismene, still in toga, sits in front of a TV. She has a bag of chips in her lap, eating away. She's yelling at the TV. The audience cannot currently see what's on the television screen.

CAPTION: Prologue

ISMENE: Bury him! The new law forbids it.





## PAGE TEN

The panels on page ten are completely silent. Creon's speech is written along a page long vertical panel on the right side of the page.

THE SPEECH: I have made the following decision concerning the sons of Oedipus: Eteocles, who died as a man should die, fighting for his country, is to be buried with full military honors. Polyneices, I say, is to have no burial. No man is to touch him or say the least prayer for him. This is my command, and you can see the wisdom behind it. As long as I am King, no traitor is going to be honored with the loyal man.

- 1 - Close up on the crowd. Several people are clapping and cheering for Creon.
- 2 - The crowd cheers. Arms raised in praise. Creon leaves the podium. Guards follow closely behind.
- 3 - Creon walks off stage with guards behind him. He pulls at his tie.
- 4 - Sentry #1 worriedly approaches Creon. Creon snarls his disgust at the Sentry's presence.

## PAGE ELEVEN

- 1 - As Sentry #1 talks, Creon runs his hand through the Sentry's hair. The Sentry can't help but feel a little uncomfortable in this situation.

SENTRY #1: The dead man-- Polyneices-- new dust on slimy flesh! Someone has given it burial that way, and gone.

- 2 - Close up on Creon. He's holds his rage, ready to explode.

CREON: And the man who dared do this?

- 3 - Creon grabs Sentry #1 by the hair, pulling violently and forcing the Sentry's head back. The Sentry yelps for mercy.

SENTRY #1: I swear I do not know! You must believe me!

4 - The old prophet Teiresias and the young boy continue their journey along a paved road. High in the distant sky, a large hawk flies. This time, they walk through a grassy valley-- grape vines grow wild along the hillside.

TEIRESIAS: O clear intelligence, force beyond all measure! O fate of man, working both good and evil! When the laws are kept, how proudly the city stands!

Creon, listen to the prophet. You stand once more on the edge of fate.

## PAGE TWELVE

1 - The ever-defiant Antigone stands before Creon. Sentry #2 stands behind Antigone. Sentry #2 looks weak and fragile, a sharp contrast from the two imposing figures of Antigone and Creon.

CAPTION: Scene Two

SENTRY #2: Here is the one who did it! We caught her in the very act of burying him.

2 - Close on Creon.

CREON: But this is Antigone!

3 - Close on the defiant face of Antigone.

SENTRY #2 (off panel): She was burying him, I tell you!

4 - Creon leans in close to Antigone. The two stare each other down.

CREON: Do you confess this thing?

ANTIGONE: I do. I deny nothing.

5 - Creon slaps Antigone hard across the face.

## PAGE THIRTEEN





2 - Creon holds back Antigone, who still reaches out-- hoping to stop the guards from arresting her Ismene.

ANTIGONE:                    Then I beg you: kill *me*.

3 - Move closer on the struggling Antigone, still being restrained.

ANTIGONE:                    This talking is great weariness. Your words are distasteful to me, and I am sure that mine seem so to you.

4 - Move even closer-- close on her face.

ANTIGONE:                    All these men here would praise me were their lips not frozen shut with fear of you.

#### PAGE FIFTEEN

1 - One guard escorts Ismene into the room with an automatic rifle pointed to her back. Ismene's face is tear-stained with mascara. Creon doesn't even bother to look at her. Instead, he casually looks at his hand, examining his fingernails.

CREON:                        You too, Ismene...

2 - Close on Creon. He's still casually examining his fingernails.

CREON:                        Snake in my ordered house, sucking my blood stealthily-- and all the time I never knew these two sisters were aiming at my throne!

3 - Close on Ismene. She's trying to be brave, but she's deeply terrified of what's she's chosen to do.

CREON (off panel):        Ismene, do you confess your share in this crime, or deny it? Answer me.

ISMENE:                      Yes, if she will let me say so. I am guilty.

4 - In the foreground (on the left), Antigone looks at Ismene who stands in the background (on the right). Everyone has disappeared it's just the two of them in this silent moment. Surreal surroundings-- thin streams of smoke come up from the ground.

PAGE SIXTEEN

1 - Large panel. Everything has disappeared. The background is all billowing smoke. Antigone and Ismene now stand intimately close to each other.

ANTIGONE: No, Ismene. You have no right to say so. You would not help me, and I will not have you help me.

ISMENE: But now I know what you meant. I am here to join you, to take my share of punishment.

2 - Extreme close up on Ismene's eyes.

CAPTION (Ismene): I want to die with you.

3 - Back in Creon's throne room, everything has returned. The guards viciously beat up Antigone. As Ismene watches in terror.

ISMENE: NO!!!

4 - Ismene pulls on the stoic Creon, begging. In the background, the guards continue their abuse.

ISMENE (to Creon): How could I go on living without her?

CREON: You are. She is already dead.

ISMENE: But your own son's bride!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

1 - Close on Haimon. He's pissed off.

CAPTION: Scene three

HAIMON: It is not reason never to yield to reason! She should have all the honor we can give her!

2 - Pull back. Haimon stands in front of his father Creon. The two are alone in the throne room. Creon sits in an office swivel chair. Desk nearby.

CREON: You consider it right for a man of my years and experience to go to school to a boy? The State is the King.

HAIMON: Yes, if the State is a desert.

3 - Close on Creon. He looks away, smiling. He casually gestures in the direction of his son Haimon (off panel).

CREON: This boy, it seems, has sold out to a woman. You'll never marry her while she lives.

4 - Close on the old prophet Teiresias and the young boy continue their journey.

TEIRESIAS: I have seen this gathering sorrow. So lately this last flower of Oedipus's line drank the sunlight, but now a passionate word and a handful of dust have closed up all its beauty.

## PAGE EIGHTEEN

1 - Wide panel. Haimon pulls out a revolver. He levels it at a calm Creon.

HAIMON: Then she must die-- but her death will cause another.

CREON: Is this a threat?

2 - Close up of Haimon's finger pulling the trigger of the gun. This panel should be a small box that overlaps panels 1 and 3.

SFX: Click.

3 - Wide panel. Same shot as panel 1. Father and son stare each other down. Silently. The gun pointed at Creon. Nothing happened. The gun was unloaded.

4 - Wide panel. Creon's POV: Staring down the barrel of a gun held by his desperate son Haimon.

HAIMON: If you were not my father, I'd say you were perverse.

PAGE NINETEEN

1 - Completely black.

VOICE OVER (no bubble): A small room, still as any grave, enclosed her. Yet she was a princess too.

2 - High angle. We see the back of Antigone, her robe shredded. Her back is cut and bruised. She is on her knees and hunched over. She is chained as a prisoner.

CAPTION: Scene Four

ANTIGONE: O child, child, no power in wealth or war can prevail against untiring Destiny!

3 - Extreme close-up on the bloody, bruised hands of Antigone. Her hands are clasped tightly in prayer.

ANTIGONE: Piteously born, yet she was a princess too.

4 - An extreme close-up on a side view of the lower portion of Antigone's face-- her nose, her mouth, her chin. From here, the audience can gather Antigone's been badly beaten-- with a busted lip, bloody nose, and random bruises.

ANTIGONE: Fate found means to build a tomb like yours for all her joy.

PAGE TWENTY

FULL PAGE SHOT of Antigone, chained and on her knees. The beautiful face of Antigone is no more. She is badly bruised and beaten, swollen eye, busted lip, bloody nose. The more gruesome, the better. Her robe is shredded. Antigone is hearing voices. The text bubbles should float around her... illustrating the growing dementia.

THE VOICES: You walk at last into the underworld.

You laugh at me. Ah friends, friends, and can you not wait until I am dead?

That bridal bed unspeakable, horror of son and mother mingling: their crime, infection of all our family.

I have been a stranger here in my own land.

All my life the blasphemy of my birth has followed me.

Lead me to my vigil where I must have neither love nor lamentation; no song, but silence.

O tomb, vaulted bride-bed in eternal rock, soon I shall be with my own again. And I shall see my father again, and you, mother, and dearest Polyneices.

#### PAGE TWENTY-ONE

1 - Antigone, chained and on her knees. Over her shoulder, we see Creon standing in the far background.

CREON: If dirges and planned lamentations could put off death, men would be singing forever.

2 - Antigone struggles to stand up.

3 - Antigone cannot stand. She falls over clumsily.

4 - Close on Antigone on the ground. She looks up at Creon (off panel). She smiles, defiant to the last.

ANTIGONE: Let us wait no longer.

#### PAGE TWENTY-TWO

1 - The old prophet Teiresias and the young boy (with their backs to the audience) approach the city of Thebes.

CAPTION: Scene Five

2 - Teiresias and the young boy walk past the guards who do nothing but fearfully watch them pass by.

3 - Large panel. Teiresias and the young boy enter into the throne room. Creon sees them enter.

4 - On Teiresias.

TEIRESIAS: Our altars are stained with the corruption of dogs and carrion birds that glut themselves on the corpse of Oedipus's son.

PAGE TWENTY-THREE

1 - Center on Creon. He is a little surprised at the harsh tone Teiresias has taken.

TEIRESIAS: You have brought this new calamity upon us.

2 - Creon gets right in Teiresias's face.

CREON: No, Teiresias. Even if your birds should carry him stinking bit by bit to heaven, I would not yield.

3 - Teiresias gently pushes Creon back to a more comfortable speaking distance.

TEIRESIAS: These are no trifles! All men make mistakes, but a good man yields when he knows his course is wrong, and repairs the evil. The only crime is pride.

4 - Creon grabs Teiresias by the wrist. Creon is offended by Teiresias touching him.

CREON: You forgot yourself! You are speaking to your King.

TEIRESIAS: You are a king because of me.

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

1 - Creon walks away from Teiresias, now behind him.

CREON: Speak. Whatever you say, you will not change my mind.

TEIRESIAS: Then take this, and take it to heart!

2 - Blood splattered on a brick wall. A mysterious silhouetted figure (Creon) touches the wall, examining the blood. I'm referencing the scene on page twenty-nine, panel 2.

TEIRESIAS (voice over): You shall pay back corpse for corpse, flesh of your own flesh. Your house will be full of men and women weeping, and curses will be hurled at you for sons unburied, left to rot.

3 - The young boy and Teiresias leave Creon's throne room. The prophet has left his "Will Prophecy for Food" sign on the floor.

TEIRESIAS: But come, child: lead me home. Let him waste his fine anger upon younger men. Maybe he will learn at last to control a wiser tongue in a better head.

4 - Close on the "Will Prophecy for Food" sign.

#### PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

1 - Creon, alone in his throne room, isolated from everyone, ponders the prophet's words. Stooping over, he picks up the "Will Prophecy for Food" sign.

CREON: I cannot remember that he was ever false. It troubles me. What shall I do?

2 - The Sentry speaks to him from the edge of the room. Creon is surprised. He didn't know someone else was there.

SENTRY #1: Build a tomb for the body of Polyneices and free Antigone from her prison vault.

3 - Creon looks at the lowly sentry. The sentry looks back, unmoved.

4 - Creon bows his head. He gives in.

CREON: I will do it. I will not fight with destiny.

#### PAGE TWENTY-SIX

1 - Outside where Polyneices body lies. Creon and the Sentry stand over the rotting Polyneices. The corpse is even more gruesome than before... parts of the skeleton are clearly visible now among the rotting flesh.

CAPTION: Exodos

CAPTION: I went with Creon to the outer plain where Polyneices was lying. No friends to pity him, his body shredded by dogs.

2 - In the location where Polyneices' body was, they constructed a funeral pyre, now ablaze. The body of Polyneices can barely be seen within the flames. Standing a few yards away, Creon holds a flaming torch. The sentry is on his knees praying to the gods.

CAPTION: We bathed the corpse with holy water, and we brought fresh-broken branches to burn what was left of it.

#### PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

1 - Creon and the Sentry (in the background) run from the funeral pyre (in the foreground) and the billowing smoke.

CAPTION: When we were done, we ran to the vault where Antigone lay on her couch of stone.

2 - Creon and the Sentry stand at the opening of one jail cell. Creon cautiously peers inside.

3 - Creon's POV. Haimon cradles the dead Antigone in his arms. She has a makeshift cloth noose around her neck.

CAPTION: She made a noose of her fine linen veil and hanged herself. Haimon lay beside her. His love lost underground.

4 - Haimon looks up and sees his father Creon. Haimon is furiously angry. Creon is contrite.

#### PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

1 - Still laying next to Antigone, Haimon pulls his gun.

2 - Haimon's POV. Creon is fearful, wide-eyed.

CREON: Son.



3 - Same as panel 2.

SFX:

BANG!

4 - Creon stands before the dead bodies of Antigone and Haimon. Haimon shot himself in the head. The blood is splattered against the wall.

#### PAGE TWENTY-NINE

Small panels running vertically down the middle of the page.

1 - Creon examines closely the blood splattered on the wall. He is in shock, curiously looking at the blood.

2 - Same shot. Creon now places both hands onto the wall, smearing the blood. Grief overcomes him.

3 - Same shot. With hands still on the wall, Creon leans his head against the wall. Eyes closed. Overwhelmed by grief.

#### PAGE THIRTY

1 - Completely black panel.

CREON (voice over):

Can it be true? Is my wife dead?

Has death bred death?

2 - Close on a newspaper, turned sideways, with the headline: HAIMON AND ANTIGONE DEAD! DOUBLE SUICIDE!

3 - Pull back. The paper is held in the dead hand of Eurydice, Creon's wife. She is lying on a couch. Her mouth opened to a dried puddle of vomit. On a nearby pedestal is a large bottom of pills, tipped over. Pills are scattered everywhere. The image should tell the story clearly-- Eurydice killed herself, drug overdose.

CAPTION:

Her last breath was a curse for Haimon's father, Creon, the murderer of her son. She fell, and the dark flowed in through her closing eyes.

PAGE THIRTY-ONE

1 - Extreme close-up of Creon on the ground, a deeply troubled face with tears coming down.

2 - Creon is on the ground of his throne room. He's having a nervous breakdown. His throne room is completely and totally empty.

CREON: O my wife, my son!

3 - Pull back. Creon lies on the ground, in tears. The empty, unforgiving space of the throne room surrounds him.

CREON: I alone am guilty.

4 - Pull pack even further.

CREON (whimpering): Whatever my hands have touched has come to nothing.

PAGE THIRTY-TWO

1 - The vacant ruins of a once-great Greek city, lots of columns and fallen buildings.

CREON (voice over): I look for comfort; my comfort lies here dead.

2 - Another shot of vacant ruins.

CREON (voice over): Fate has brought all my pride to a thought of dust.

3 - Pull back. Another shot of the vacant ruins. We now also see much of the countryside as well. There is a hawk seen soaring in the air (identical to the one in page five, panel 2).

CREON (voice over): There is no happiness where there is no wisdom;  
No wisdom but in submission to the gods.  
Big words are always punished,  
And proud men in old age learn to be wise.

CAPTION: End.