

Creon Haemon.

Haemon Father.

Creon I expect you've heard. About Antigone. About the sentence that's been passed. Haemon - I need to know that I have your support.

Haemon You always said that duty is the most important thing. You always said that if you had to choose between your family and Thebes, you'd choose Thebes. And I respected that...

Creon You've learned well, Haemon. And you've repayed me well. There's nothing makes a man more proud than seeing himself reflected in his son, and knowing his son and he see eye to eye in everything.

I knew Antigone meant nothing to you. No point throwing away a brilliant career just for a woman. And for a woman like her, too, so certain that she's always right, so always wanting her own way, so making you feel guilty all the time, so sanctimonious. Can you imagine going to bed with *that*? You'd get more pleasure from a corpse. And that's what she'll be, when Thebes has carried out its sentence, when it's cut out the cancer that's Antigone.

I couldn't help her if I wanted to. I couldn't bend the rules because she's family. Where would it stop? How could I govern then? The people would accuse us of employing double standards. They'd lose respect. I'd lose authority. Haemon, it would lead to anarchy.

We have a duty, Haemon, you and I. Our duty is to Thebes. We must uphold the laws.

Haemon Your case is faultless, father. But not everyone agrees. Father, your advisors are afraid of you. They're afraid of telling you what you don't want to hear.

But I've heard them in the shadows, in the darkness - muttering. I've heard them calling her a heroine, a martyr. I've heard them saying her execution is a crime. The people are against it, father. They admire her for her sense of duty to her brother, because she didn't leave his corpse to rot, for dogs and crows, but buried him despite the danger. The mood out in the streets is dangerous.

The strongest men must sometimes take advice, and strength is not the same as stubbornness. Please - reconsider, father. If you listen to the people now, they will respect you, and you'll govern in the future with their full consent.

Creon What do you know about government? What experience have you of politics?

Haemon But if I'm talking sense...

Creon What? Let the anarchists make the laws?

Haemon You know I don't mean that.

Creon So what's Antigone if not an anarchist?

Haemon The people don't agree.

Creon The people do not rule. I do.

Haemon And you think *I*'m politically naive.

Creon Whose judgement am I to rely on, if not my own?

Haemon You're not infallible!

Creon Maybe, but the ultimate authority is mine.

Haemon Yes, for today perhaps.

Creon You're in her pocket, aren't you? You're on her side.

Haemon I'm on *your* side. That's what I'm telling you.

Creon Don't lie to me. You're choosing to support her rather than the law.

Haemon Only because you're choosing to set yourself *above* the law.

Creon How dare you speak to me like that?

Haemon I'm speaking for *your* good and mine and Thebes - and, yes!, Antigone's!

Creon You'll never marry her. You know she's going to die.

Haemon Well, she won't die alone.

Creon A threat? It's come to that?

Haemon There's no point talking to you.

Creon No, because you've nothing to say.

Haemon If you were not my father...

Creon Shall I get her here now, so you can witness her execution?

Haemon Goodbye, father. I won't trouble you again. You have your duty; you have Thebes. Goodbye, father.

Exit Haemon