

Acts In Scene

"Antigone"

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Beam of the sun, fairest light that ever dawned on
Thebe of the seven gates
Thou hast shone forth at last, eye of golden day
Arise above Dirce's streams!
The warrior of the white shield,
Who came from Argos in his panoply,
Hath been stirred by thee
To headlong flight

For seven captains at seven gates,
Matched against seven
Left the tribute of their panoplies to
Zeus who turns the battle
Save those two of cruel fate, who,
Born of one sire and one mother,
Set against each other their twain conquering spears,
And are sharers in a common death.

Leave him unburied, a corpse
For birds and dogs to eat,

No stroke of pickaxe was seen there,
No earth thrown up by mattock;
The ground was hard and dry,
Unbroken, without track of wheels;
The doer was one who had left no trace
The corpse-some one hath just given it burial,
And gone away
I have come, though 'tis in breach of my sworn oath,
Bringing this maid;
Who was taken showing grace to the dead.

And thou didst indeed dare to transgress that law?!

I avow it; I make no denial!

And hide her living, in rocky vault
And there, praying to Hades,
The only god whom she worships,
Perchance she will obtain release from death
Or else will learn, at last, though late,
That it is lost labour to revere the dead.

See me, citizens of my fatherland,
Setting forth on my last way,

Looking my last on the sunlight
That is for me no more;
Hades who gives sleep to all
Leads me living to Acheron's shore
And thou holy ground of Thebe
Whose chariots are many;
And by what laws I pass to the rock-closed prison
Of my strange tomb, ah me unhappy!
Who have no home on the earth or in the shades,
No home with the living or with the dead.
Tomb, bridal-chamber,
Eternal prison in the cavened rock,
Whither go to find mine own
O city of my fathers in the land of Thebe!
See what I suffer, and from whom,
Because I feared to cast away the fear Of Heaven!

(Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness;
And reverence towards the gods must be inviolate.
Great words of prideful men
Are ever punished
With great blows, and, in old age,
Teach the chastened to be wise.)

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