

## Excerpt from 'Splendid Productions' Antigone' By Sophocles Adapted by Mal Smith Prologue by Ben Hales

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### Prologue

Enter Clowns 1,2 & 3, preferably in togas

**Clowns**                    *(very slowly and dramatically)*  
Antigone! Antigone! Antigone!  
Tragedy! Tragedy ! Tragedy!

*(wailing)* I know what you're thinking. Curse the Gods! It's a Greek play... the horror! There's going to be togas! And people wailing! *(Wail)* And lengthy sections where people stand still and talk a lot! *(in bad chorus)* maybe a bit where everyone talks together.

OH! I'M GOING TO BE SO BORED!

Antigone! Antigone! Antigone!  
Tragedy! Tragedy ! Tragedy!

Song: '**Antigone: It's a Tragedy**'

**Clowns**                    Antigone, Antigone, Antigone  
It's a tragedy, a tragedy, a tragedy

There's nothing worse than having to see  
A two thousand year old Greek tragedy  
You sit down there and you fear the worst  
People in masks all speaking in verse

It's going to go on for two or three days  
And you can't understand what anyone says  
And you don't really care what the play is about  
You're just praying for a fire alarm so you can get out

**Clown 1**                    Ladies and gentlemen, we present to you the tragedy...

**Clown 2&3**                *(bad chorus)*Tragedy!

**Clown 1**                    ... of Antigone...

**Clown 2&3**                *(bad chorus)* Antigone!

**Clown 1**                    ... by Sophocles....

**Clown 2&3**                *(bad chorus)* Sophocles!

**Clown 2**                    Before we tell you the tragedy of Antigone, you must first understand that Antigone is the third play in a trilogy of plays. The first two plays concern Antigone's father, Oedipus.

**Clown 3**                    *(as Oedipus)* Hello!

**Clown 2**                    When Oedipus is small he hears a prophecy that he's going to kill his father...

**Clowns**                    *(chorus)* No!

- Clown 2** ...and marry his mother.
- Clowns** (*chorus*) Eewww!
- Clown 3** Well, he doesn't fancy that so he goes travelling.
- Clown 1** On his travels he gets into a fight with a beardy bloke...
- Clown 2** (*as beardy bloke, to Oedipus*) Yer Mum!
- Clown 1** ...and kills him!
- Clown 3** (*as Oedipus, killing beardy bloke*) Take that!
- Clown 2** (*as beardy bloke*) Oh. I am dead.
- Clown 1** Then he becomes King of Thebes cos he solves the riddle of the Sphynx...
- Clown 3** (*as Oedipus*) That's the one about the legs!
- Clown 1** ...so he gets to marry the Queen, Jocasta.
- Clown 1 becomes Jocasta, links arms with Oedipus.
- Clown 2** Then a plague comes to Thebes...
- Clown 1** ...and Tiresias the wise man says:
- Clown 2** (*as Tiresias*) It's because the death of the previous king was never avenged!
- Clown 1** So Oedipus says he's going to find the culprit and banish them.
- Clown 3** (*as Oedipus*) I'm going to find the culprit and banish them!
- Clown 2** But, of course it's him isn't it? The beardy man was his dad, which means his wife...
- Clowns** (*chorus, appalled realisation*)... is his mother!
- Jocasta and Oedipus spring apart.
- Clown 1** Once they've figured this out...
- Clown 2** Which takes a whole play, by the way.
- Clown 1** ...Jocasta kills herself (*as Jocasta, kills herself*).
- Clown 3** (*as Oedipus*) Wife! I mean... Mum!.... (*as Clown*) Oedipus puts out his own eyes (*as Oedipus, puts out own eyes*)
- Clown 2** And that is the end of the first play.
- Clown 1 & 3** That was quick!
- Clown 2** Trouble is, he's had all these kids. Two girls and two boys.
- Clown 3** Oedipus's two sons, Polynices and Eteocles turn against him and drive him out
- Clown 1 & 2** (*as Eteocles and Polynices*) Quick! Lock the door!
- Clown 3** So he goes wandering around the desert as a beggar, accompanied by his daughter...
- Clown 2** (*as Antigone*) Antigone. This way, Dad (*she leads the blind Oedipus*).
- Clown 1** While the other daughter, Ismene, stays at home looking pretty (*as Ismene, looks pretty*).
- Clown 3** The two brothers meanwhile argue about who gets to be king.

**Clown 2** (as Polynices) I would quite like to be king!

**Clown 1** (as Eteocles) I am going to be king!

**Clown 3** They agree to a power-sharing arrangement, a bit like Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, where Eteocles will rule for a year...

**Clown 1** (as Eteocles, triumphant) Yes!

**Clown 3** ...and then Polynices will take over.

**Clown 2** (as Polynices, triumphant) Yes! (As Clown) The trouble is, these two have both been

**Clowns** (chorus) Cursed!

**Clown 2** ... for banishing their dad.

**Clown 1** So it's no surprise that when Polynices returns to take the throne, Eteocles and the next-in-command...

**Clown 3** (as Creon) Uncle Creon!

**Clown 1** ...refuse to let him have it.

**Clown 3 & 1** (as Creon and Eteocles) No, you can't have it.

**Clown 2** So Polynices gets together with the army of Argos to take Thebes by force!

**Clown 1** But unfortunately, like everything you get from Argos, their army is rubbish and Thebes...

**Clown 3 & 1** (as Creon and Eteocles)...Wins the battle!

**Clown 3** The two brothers, of course, meet on the battlefield...

**Clown 2** (as Polynices, as if they had met in the street) Oh my god!

**Clown 1** (as Eteocles) Wow!

**Clown 3** ...and they kill each other!

Eteocles and Polynices kill each other.

**Clown 3** That's how it is if your family's been

**Clowns** (chorus) Cursed!

**Clown 3** And so today, the day after the battle, which is the day on which our play, the third play begins,

**Clown 2** Uncle Creon has become king.

**Clown 3** Oedipus has been taken into heaven.

**Clown 1** And Antigone has come home.