

share, if they fail to discover the men who have thus broken the edict.

First  
stasimon:  
332—375.  
Anapaests,  
376—383.

The choral ode which follows is a beautiful treatment of a theme which this mysterious deed suggests,—human inventiveness,—its audacity and its almost infinite resource, save for the limits set by fate. As these strains cease, anapaests spoken by the leader of the Chorus express sudden amazement and pain.—Antigone, the royal maiden, the niece of the king, is led in, a prisoner in the hands of the guard.

III.  
Second  
episode:  
384—581.

Questioned by Creon, Antigone replies that she knew the edict, but nevertheless paid funeral-rites to her brother because she held that no human law could supersede the higher law of the gods. She is ready to die.

Creon, still more incensed by her demeanour, vows that she shall indeed perish by a shameful death. He suspects Ismene also; and she is presently brought in. Agonised by grief for her sister's impending doom, Ismene entreats that she may be considered as sharing the responsibility of the deed; she wishes to die with her sister. Antigone firmly and even sternly, though not bitterly, rejects this claim, which 'justice will not allow'; the deed has been hers only. Ismene vainly seeks to move Creon; he is not touched by her despair, or by the thought—to which Ismene also appeals—that his son Haemon is betrothed to Antigone. He orders that both sisters shall be taken into the house, and closely guarded; for his present purpose is that both shall die.

Second  
stasimon:  
582—625.  
Anapaests,  
626—630.

Moved by the sentence which has just been passed, the Chorus speaks of the destiny which has pursued the royal line of Thebes: 'When a house hath once been shaken from heaven, there the curse fails nevermore.' The sisters were the last hope of the race; and now they too must perish. The ode closes with a strain of general reflection on the power of Zeus and the impotence of human self-will. There is no conscious reference to Creon; but, for the spectators, the words are suggestive and ominous.

IV. Third  
episode:  
631—780.

Haemon enters. He has come to plead with his father for the life of his betrothed Antigone. This scene is one of the finest in the play. A lesser dramatist would have been apt to