

ANTIGONE. Why do you want me to be quiet?  
Because you know that I am right? Do you think  
I can't see in your face that what I am saying is  
true? You can't admit it, of course; you have to  
go on growling and defending the bone you call  
happiness. I spit on your happiness! I spit on your  
idea of life-that life that must go on, come what  
may. You are all like dogs that lick everything they  
smell. You with your promise of a humdrum  
happiness-provided a person doesn't ask too much  
of life. I want everything of life, I do; and I want it  
now! I want it total, complete: otherwise I reject it!  
I will not be moderate. I will not be satisfied with  
the bit of cake you offer me if I promise to be a  
good little girl. I want to be sure of everything this  
very day; sure that everything will be as beautiful  
as when I was a little girl. If not, I want to die!

ANTIGONE. And you are very sure, aren't you, that that night, at the dance, when you came to the corner where I was sitting, there was no mistake? It was me you were looking for? It wasn't another girl? And you're sure that never, not in your most secret heart of hearts, have you said to yourself that it was Ismene you ought to have asked to marry you?

But you love me as a woman-as a woman wants to be loved, don't you? Your arms around me aren't lying, are they? Your hands, so warm against my back-they're not lying? This warmth that's in me; this confidence, this sense that I am safe, secure, that flows through me as I stand here with my cheek in the hollow of your shoulder: they are not lies, are they?

am ashamed of myself.

But this morning, this special morning, I must know. Tell me the truth! I beg you to tell me the truth! When you think about me, when it strikes you suddenly that I am going to belong to you-do you have the feeling that-that a great empty space is being hollowed out inside you, that there is something inside you that is just-dying?

That's the way I feel.

ANTIGONE. But I am not the king; and I don't have to set people examples. Little Antigone gets a notion in her head-the nasty brat, the willful, wicked girl; and they put her in a corner all day, or they lock her up in the cellar. And she deserves it. She shouldn't have disobeyed!

Understand! The first word I ever heard out of any of you was that word "understand." Why didn't I "understand" that I must not play with water-cold, black, beautiful flowing water-because I'd spill it on the palace tiles. Or with earth, because earth dirties a little girl's frock. Why didn't I "understand" that nice children don't eat out of every dish at once; or give everything in their pockets to beggars; or run in the wind so fast that they fall down; or ask for a drink when they're perspiring; or want to go swimming when it's either too early or too late, merely because they happen to feel like swimming. Understand! I don't want to understand. There'll be time enough to understand when I'm old .... If I ever am old. But not now.

ANTIGONE. Nowhere. It was beautiful. The whole world was gray when I went out. And now-you wouldn't recognize it. It's like a post card: all pink, and green, and yellow. You'll have to get up earlier, Nurse, if you want to see a world without color. The garden was lovely. It was still asleep. Have you ever thought how lovely a garden is when it is not yet thinking of men? The fields were wet. They were waiting for something to happen. The whole world was breathless, waiting. I can't tell you what a roaring noise I seemed to make alone on the road. It bothered me that whatever was waiting wasn't waiting for me. I took off my sandals and slipped into a field. Do you think that if a person got up every morning like this, it would be just as thrilling every morning to be the first girl out of doors? It was still night. There wasn't a soul out of doors but me, who thought that it was morning. Don't you think it's marvelous to be the first person who is aware that it is morning?