

SHUSHAN NIGHT LIVE - PURIM 2013 BY SHIRA DANAN

CHAPTER ONE

KING AHASHUERUS is sitting at a desk, speaking to audience.

NARRATOR

We interrupt your regularly scheduled program "The Real Housewives of Shushan" for this important message.

KING AHASHUERUS

Good evening, my fellow Persians. As you all know, I am King Ahashuerus. I rule over one hundred and seven and twenty nations. I know. You're wondering why I never just say "one hundred and twenty-seven nations." Well, I'll tell you why. It's because I'm the king! But let's get serious for a moment. Earlier tonight, at the greatest party ever thrown, which none of you losers were invited to, my wife Vashti refused to appear in front of my buddies and do a dance for them even though I asked nicely. I know you're wondering why I always want my wife to dance for my friends. Well, I'll tell you why. It's because I'm the king! Obviously, we are taking this threat extremely seriously. Once Vashti stops dancing in front of my friends, it's only a matter of time before your far-less-attractive wives hear about it and do the same. Then we'd have an epidemic on our hands, and I don't want that on my conscience. Think about it! All the wives of the land--not dancing provocatively for their husbands' friends. Shudder. So I've decided to take the awesome step of banishing Vashti from the kingdom. That's right. No more Vashti terrorizing us with her ridiculous notions of modesty. I know. You can't believe I really banished Vashti. Well, I'll tell you why. It's because: Live, from Persia! IT'S SHUSHAN NIGHT LIVE!!!

Cue opening credit music if possible.

CHAPTER TWO

NARRATOR

(in SNL voiceover-style deep voice)

It's Shushan Night Live! With King
 Ahashverosh! Queen Vashti! Bigthan!
 Teresh! Ahahashverosh's Best Pal!
 That Guy's Wife, Zeresh! Uncle
 Mordechai! Musical Guest:
 Ahashverosh and the Advisors! And
 your host: Queeeeeeen Estherrrrrr!

ESTHER comes running onstage and stands in front of a microphone.

ESTHER

Thank you, thank you. I'm so
 thrilled to be here at Shushan Night
 Live! Yes! Thank you so much. You
 know, I've dreamed of hosting
 Shushan Night Live ever since I was
 a little girl. So you can imagine
 how thrilled I was when the
 producers called and asked me to
 host after I won a little pageant
 called "Ahashverosh Finds A New
 Queen To Replace Vashti." Yes. And
 thank you so much for your support
 throughout the competition. I went
 up against all the other maidens of
 the kingdom, and I guess there was
 just something the king saw in me,
 because he chose me to be his wife.

MORDECHAI enters, clapping.

MORDECHAI

(to audience)

Isn't she wonderful, guys?

ESTHER

(mugging for camera)

Uncle Mordechai, what are you doing
 here?

MORDECHAI

I just wanted to remind you not to
 mention to King Ahashverosh that
 you're a Jew.

ESTHER

Um, Uncle Mordechai, you just said that on national television.

MORDECHAI

Uh oh. Are we live?

ESTHER

It's called Shushan Night Live, Uncle Mordechai! But don't worry. I think the king's asleep by now.

MORDECHAI

Good, good. But here's something you *should* tell the king.

ESTHER

What is it?

MORDECHAI

It's Bigthan and Teresh--they're planning to assassinate him.

ESTHER

What? Assassinate the king? That's terrible! We'll definitely make sure those guys are hanged and your role in stopping them is recorded in the king's book of chronicles, okay?

MORDECHAI

Sounds good.

ESTHER

Okay, thanks for stopping by. Everyone, my uncle!

Mordechai bows and exits.

ESTHER (CONT.)

Listen, we've got a great show for you tonight! "Ahashverosh and the Advisors" are here. Lots of funny stuff planned. So stick around and we'll be right back!

CHAPTER THREE

HAMAN stands outside the palace gate. MORDECHAI approaches.

HAMAN

Bow before the king's new highest advisor. Me, Haman!

MORDECHAI

No way. I'm not going to bow before you. I only bow before the one, true Jewish G-d.

Mordechai exits.

HAMAN

Ugh, I'm so frustrated that Mordechai wouldn't bow before me. I know what I'll do. Since he's a Jew, I'll kill all the Jews! But what day should I do it?

Haman puts his arms out in a quizzical pose and freezes.

NARRATOR

Has this ever happened to you? Well now, you'll be able to destroy entire peoples in one fell swoop with Purim Dice.

Haman takes out a pair of dice and shakes them.

HAMAN

I'll just use one die to get the month. And the other to get the day. So that's the 13th day of the...12th month. Thanks Purim Dice!

NARRATOR

You're welcome, Haman!

A MESSENGER enters.

HAMAN

(writing a letter)

Here, take this message and send it to all of the provinces in the kingdom, letting them know that all the Jews should be killed on the 13th day of the 12th month.

MESSENGER

That's a great day for a massacre, Haman! How'd you pick it?

HAMAN

I picked it with Purim Dice!

Haman and the Messenger give the audience a thumbs up.

NARRATOR

He picked it with Purim Dice, and
now you can too! Purim Dice. From
the makers of Ear Hats. The hats
that look like ears!

CHAPTER FOUR

Mordechai sits at a newsdesk, shuffling his notes.

MORDECHAI

Welcome to Weekend Update! I'm your host, Mordechai, and this is the news. Tonight's top story is that the king's advisor, Haman, has decided to kill all the Jews of the kingdom on the 13th of Adar. Here to comment on the news is Queen Esther.

Esther enters, sits next to Mordechai.

ESTHER

Hi. Thanks for having me.

MORDECHAI

Esther, what do you think about Haman's decree?

ESTHER

I'm sorry, what?

MORDECHAI

You mean, you haven't heard?

ESTHER

Heard what? Mordechai, why are you dressed in rags? And are those...ashes on your head? Don't you usually wear a suit for this segment?

MORDECHAI

So you haven't heard that Haman has gotten the king's permission to kill off all the Jews?

ESTHER

Haha, good one.

MORDECHAI

I'm not joking.

ESTHER

Oh. Wow. That sucks. But I guess there's nothing I can do about it.

MORDECHAI

Actually--

ESTHER

Nope, not a single thing a lowly queen like me could do.

MORDECHAI

You could go before the king and tell him you're a Jew and he has to reverse the decree.

ESTHER

Nope. Nothing. It's terrible to feel so helpless, but there it is.

MORDECHAI

Seriously, Esther! You're our only hope!

ESTHER

Ugh, fine. Tell Aunt Bracha to fast for three days and three nights and then I'll go to see the king.

MORDECHAI

Why Aunt Bracha?

ESTHER

Because if you tell her something, all the Jews in Persia will have heard it in about half an hour.

MORDECHAI

Excellent point. Ladies and gentleman, Queen Esther!

Esther waves, leaves.

MORDECHAI (CONT.)

That's all the news for tonight. I'm Mordechai. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

CHAPTER FIVE

ESTHER, HAMAN, and the KING are contestants in Celebrity Jeopardy. They stand in a row on one side of the stage. ALEX TREBEK stands opposite. Each contestant waves as Alex introduces them.

ALEX TREBEK

Welcome to Celebrity Jeopardy! Our contestants tonight are Queen Esther, King Ahashverosh, and our returning champion, Haman. Let's get started. The categories are: Shushan History. Classic Movie Lines. Boo-ing. Lunch. Scepters. 127 Nations. Queen Esther, we'll start with you.

QUEEN ESTHER

I'll take Lunch for 200, Alex.

ALEX TREBEK

Here's the clue: *She* invited Ahashverosh and his advisor Haman over for lunch to give them some big news.

HAMAN

(buzzes in)
Vashti.

ALEX TREBEK

You have to answer in the form of a question. Also, no. King Ahasverosh? Queen Esther?

They both shake their heads.

ALEX TREBEK (CONT.)

"Who is Queen Esther?"

QUEEN ESTHER

Ooh, I should have gotten that.

ALEX TREBEK

Yes, you should have. Queen Esther, back to you.

QUEEN ESTHER

Let's try Scepters for 200.

ALEX TREBEK

He raised his scepter for Queen Esther when she came to visit him

unannounced. Haman?

HAMAN

Was it me?

ALEX TREBEK

No, it wasn't. Also, that's still the wrong kind of question. King Ahashverosh.

KING AHASHVEROSH

(giggling)

Ha. Raised his scepter. I get it.

ALEX TREBEK

That is incorrect. And...childish. That's the buzzer. The correct question was "Who is Ahashverosh?" Queen Esther, back to you.

QUEEN ESTHER

I'll try Boo-ing for 400.

ALEX TREBEK

Here's the clue: Haman. Yes, Queen Esther?

QUEEN ESTHER

Um...boo?

ALEX TREBEK

The judges will accept that answer! You're now in the lead with \$400. Ahashverosh and Haman have yet to do anything remotely right. Esther, pick a category.

QUEEN ESTHER

I'll take Lunch for 400.

ALEX TREBEK

At the lunch she hosted for Ahashverosh and Haman, Esther asked them to come again for this meal. Ahashverosh?

KING AHASHVEROSH

(snickering)

What is he raised his scepter toward her?

ALEX TREBEK

No. No, that doesn't even make sense. Haman?

HAMAN

What is Boooooo?

ALEX TREBEK

No, that is incorrect. The correct answer was, What is dinner? Esther invited them for dinner, as you should know, since it was you she invited. Esther, back to you.

QUEEN ESTHER

I'll take Shushan History for 1,000, Alex.

ALEX TREBEK

And that's our Daily Double. You can risk up to \$400, which is, unbelievably, the most money anyone has earned today.

QUEEN ESTHER

I'll risk it all.

ALEX TREBEK

Here's the clue: When Haman returned from his feast with Esther, he was upset by seeing this man outside the palace gates and decided to build gallows on which to hang him.

QUEEN ESTHER

Um...who is...G-d?

ALEX TREBEK

No. Look, we don't usually do this, but I've been told I can give you a hint. You're related to him.

QUEEN ESTHER

Uh...my dad? Who is my dad?

ALEX TREBEK

No. That's not right either. He's your uncle. I really could not be any more clear.

QUEEN ESTHER

Oh, I know! Who is Uncle Shimon?

ALEX TREBEK

(frustrated)

No! You idiot! How are you people running the kingdom?! The correct answer was Who is Mordechai. We'd

usually skip to Final Jeopardy at this point, but since you all have \$0, we're just going to call it a three-way loss. No one wins. You're all terrible people.

He exits.

AHASHVEROSH

That's alright, we're all already extremely wealthy.

Haman and Esther nod happily and cheer.

CHAPTER SIX

QUEEN ESTHER

Ladies and gentlemen, "Ahashverosh
and the Advisors"!

AHASHVEROSH enters.

AHASHVEROSH

(to melody of "Call Me,
Maybe")

I can not sleep late one night
I toss and turn, it's not right
Somebody turn on the light
And read my book to me please.

I need to hear something nice
'Bout a man who saved my life
Somebody turn on the light
And read my book to me please.

Your deed's recorded
You must, be rewarded
My friend, you have earned it
What can I do to thank you, Mordy?

Chorus (x4):
Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I'll reward you
So call me, Mordy.

HAMAN enters.

AHASHVEROSH (CONT.)

Haman, I welcome your aid
A special man must be paid
Perhaps with a nice parade
Do you think you would like that?

HAMAN

(pleased)

King, I think that sure sounds nice
Do not worry 'bout the price
A parade and gifts will suffice
For a man who gives advice.

AHASHVEROSH

Thanks, you're a doll
Mordechai will love it all
Go prepare the ball
That I'll use to thank dear Mordy!

Haman exits angrily.

AHASHVEROSH (CONT.)

Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I'll reward you
So call me, Mordy.
(x4)

Fade out.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AHASHVEROSH and HAMAN are sitting on two chairs arranged to look like a couch, wearing the best Wayne's World Wayne and Garth costumes you are able to find. HAMAN plays air guitar, while AHASHVEROSH pretends to rock out on the drums.

AHASHVEROSH AND HAMAN

(singing)

*Haman's World! Haman's World! Party
Time! Excellent!*

AHASHVEROSH

Party on, Haman.

HAMAN

Party on, Ahashverosh.

AHASHVEROSH

Hey Haman, do you ever wonder what it would be like to eat your own ears?

HAMAN

(giggles stupidly)

No.

AHASHVEROSH

(clearly lying)

Neither did I. I was just asking. They don't look delicious at all.

HAMAN

Hey, Ahashverosh. Do you know who we're the guests of today?

AHASHVEROSH

Is it a babe?

HAMAN

Yeah, it's a babe.

AHASHVEROSH

Oh, nice. Party. Bonus.

HAMAN

It's Queen Esther.

AHASHVEROSH

No way.

HAMAN

Way.

QUEEN ESTHER enters. Haman and Ahashverosh bow down to her.

AHASHVEROSH AND HAMAN

We are not worthy! We are not worthy!

QUEEN ESTHER

No, you're really not.

HAMAN

So, why did you invite us over today?

AHASHVEROSH

Yeah, whatever it is, just spit it out. You can have up to, like, half my kingdom.

HAMAN

That's what she said!

Ahashverosh and Haman wave their fingers at each other.

QUEEN ESTHER

(sighing)

Well, my king. I wanted to tell you something pretty heavy. My life is being threatened.

AHASHVEROSH

This is when you say "Not!", right?

QUEEN ESTHER

No, Ahashverosh. Not "not." I'm serious. Someone is trying to kill me and my people, the Jews.

AHASHVEROSH

Bummer. Who is it?

QUEEN ESTHER

(pointing)

It is none other than Haman!

AHASHVEROSH AND HAMAN

(to Esther)

No way!

QUEEN ESTHER

Way.

AHASHVEROSH

(to Haman)
No way!

HAMAN
(to Ahashverosh, sheepishly)
Way.

AHASHVEROSH
How could you? I trusted you, man.

HAMAN
Oh, man. I didn't think you'd find
out.

AHASHVEROSH
Well I did. And I'll hang you on the
very gallows you built for
Mordechai! Guards, take him away!

HAMAN
Harsh.

GUARDS enter and drag HAMAN away. Esther sits by
Ahashverosh.

QUEEN ESTHER
Thanks, Ahashverosh. I knew you'd do
the right thing.

AHASHVEROSH AND QUEEN ESTHER
(singing and doing air guitar)
*Ahashverosh's World! Ahashverosh's
World! Party Time! Excellent!*

CHAPTERS EIGHT, NINE, and TEN

Entire cast is gathered on the stage, waving and hugging, and should continue doing so throughout. Would be great if there was some music playing.

QUEEN ESTHER

Thank you all so much for being here tonight! It's been incredible hosting Shushan Night Live! By the way, Ahashverosh, I want you to meet my uncle, Mordechai!

AHASHVEROSH

He's your uncle?

QUEEN ESTHER

Yep!

MORDECHAI

It's true. (to camera) Hi mom!

AHASHVEROSH

Hey, do you want a job as chief advisor to the king?

MORDECHAI

Sure!

QUEEN ESTHER

(to camera/audience)

Before we go, I have to thank Haman's sons: Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha. Thanks for paying for your father's crimes!

Mordechai pulls Ahashverosh over to the side, while others continue waving, hugging.

MORDECHAI

So as your new advisor, I advise you to undo the official decree to kill all the Jews.

AHASHVEROSH

Ooh, no can do. You can't undo a royal decree.

MORDECHAI

Are you serious?

AHASHVEROSH

Yes. But we can issue an order
saying the Jews can fight back!

MORDECHAI

Drat. Okay, I guess that's better
than nothing!

Mordechai exits.

QUEEN ESTHER

Just want to make sure all the Jews
watching out there tonight heard
that! You can defend yourselves
against the royal forces!

Mordechai re-enters!

MORDECHAI

We won! The royal forces were
defeated!

Everyone cheers.

MORDECHAI (CONT.)

From now on the 14th of Adar will be
a day of celebration and feasting!

Everyone cheers again.

QUEEN ESTHER

We did it, Uncle Mordechai! Thank
you Shushan! Good night!