SHUSHAN NIGHT LIVE - PURIM 2013

by Shira Danan

CHAPTER ONE

KING AHASHUERUS is sitting at a desk, speaking into the camera.

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)

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’t sleep late one night
I toss and turn, it’s not right
Somebody turn on the light
And read to me about Mordechai.

I need to hear something nice
‘Bout a man who saved my life
Somebody turn on the light
And read to me about Mordechai.

Chorus:
Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I will reward you
So call me, Mordy.

Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I will reward you
So call me, Mordy.

HAMAN enters.

AHASHVEROSH (CONT.)
Haman, I need your aid
A special man must be repaid
Perhaps with a parade
Do you think you would like that?
HAMAN
(pleased)
I think that sure sounds nice
Don’t worry about the price
A parade and gifts will suffice
For a man who gives advice.

AHASHVEROSH
Thanks for the help, you’re a doll
Mordechai will love it all
Now go prepare the ball
For the one called Mordechai.

Haman exits angrily.

AHASHVEROSH (CONT.)
Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I will reward you
So call me, Mordy.

Hey, Mordechai
You once saved me
Now I will reward you
So call me, Mordy.

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

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 13th 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!