

SHUSHAN TV: CBI PURIM SHPIEL 2014

by Shira Danan

CHAPTER ONE - MAD MEN

MUSIC: MAD MEN OPENING

AHASHUERUS DRAPER and PEGGY sit across from two EXECs.

AHASHUERUS DRAPER

Listen, Sterling Cooper Draper & Ahashuerus is the biggest advertising company in town. We've got 100 and 7 and 20 accounts.

PEGGY

And we know Hymie's Hamantaschen won't be disappointed if you choose us to do your advertising.

EXEC 1

Well, your reputation precedes you, Ahashuerus Draper.

EXEC 2

We want something exciting, different. People are tired of the same old hamantaschen ads.

EXEC 1

What have you got?

AHASHUERUS DRAPER

Picture this: a family is having a picnic. The sun is shining. The grass is green. Suddenly, the mother opens the picnic basket and what do we see? A perfect box of Hymie's Hamantaschen.

PEGGY

"Hymie's Hamantaschen: When you eat them, you're mishpacha."

Pause.

EXEC 1

I don't love it.

EXEC 2

It feels stale.

EXEC 1

I think we should go. This was a waste of time.

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
Wait, before you go. I've got some entertainment for you.

He runs off, returns with VASHTI.

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
My wife Vashti here is going to do a dance to "Zou Bisou Bisou" for you. She's half French. It's very sexy.

VASHTI
What?! No I'm not!

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
But it's a party!

VASHTI
Just because you're drinking in the middle of the day doesn't make it a party, Ashauerus.

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
I thought I was *supposed* to drink a lot today. Fine, I'm divorcing you and banishing you back to French Canada.

VASHTI
What??

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
It's time I found a younger, more attractive wife anyway.

VASHTI
I *am* your younger, more attractive wife! Don't you love me?

AHASHUERUS DRAPER
What you call love was invented by guys like me to sell nylons.

VASHTI
Ugh, I'm so out of here.

She leaves. Pause. EXEC 1 turns to Draper.

EXEC 1
Edgy, I like it. You're hired.

CHAPTER TWO - SHARK TANK**MUSIC: SHARK TANK OPENING**

A group of INVESTORS including AHASHUERUS sit on one side. ESTHER enters.

ANNOUNCER

Our next contestant on Ahashuerus
Tank is Esther.

ESTHER

(as a sales pitch)

Hello executives. My name is Esther.
Have you ever found yourself needing
a young and submissive wife to
replace your heady, impulsive first
wife? Well, look no further. Today,
I present to you: myself!

INVESTORS applaud.

INVESTOR 1

So your product is...you?

ESTHER

Yes, that's right.

INVESTOR 2

Hi there, Esther. We've had several
young women come in today trying to
get sponsorship. Why should we pick
you?

ESTHER

I'm a fair young maiden with no
known family or connections to
strange and undesirable groups like
the Jews. I'm pleasant and
easy-going, and happy to always
order in the ethnic food of your
choosing.

INVESTOR 1

Let's cut to the chase. What are you
asking for?

ESTHER

I'm looking for a 300,000 shekel
investment for a 30% stake in, well,
me, which I will use to get a
haircut and some new makeup and
bedeck myself with jewels fit for a
queen.

AHASHUERUS

King Ahashuerus here. What's in it for us?

ESTHER

Well, your highness: companionship, someone to watch Netflix with, and of course, a beautiful trophy to wear on your arm.

AHASHUERUS

Look, I'm prepared to offer you 250,000 shekels and up to half my kingdom.

ESTHER

That's a very generous offer.

AHASHUERUS

What do you say, Esther?

ESTHER

Make it 275 and I'll throw in the names of two chamberlains that are planning to kill you.

AHASHUERUS

Done. Anyone else going to make an offer?

INVESTOR 1

Uh, no. We're good.

INVESTOR 2

Yeah, you're the king. You get first dibs.

INVESTOR 1

That's why it's called Ahashuerus Tank. I don't really know why they have other investors on the program.

ESTHER

Then I accept!

AHASHUERUS

Excellent. I love this show.

CHAPTER THREE - HOUSE OF CARDS**MUSIC: HOUSE OF CARDS OPENING**

HAMAN UNDERWOOD meets MORDECHAI outside the Capitol building.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
(in Southern drawl)
Now what did you say your name was again?

MORDECHAI
Mordechai.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
Well it's nice to meet you, Mr. Mordechai. I'm Haman Underwood. And I sure would appreciate it if you would bow down to me.

MORDECHAI
I'm afraid I can't do that, sir. I only bow to the Holy One.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
(nodding like he understands)
You mean Power?

MORDECHAI
Um, no. Not the false god of Power. The Jewish G-d.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
(speaking out to audience)
He wouldn't bow down to me, but he'd learn soon enough that everyone in Shushan eventually ends up on their knees.

MORDECHAI exits. HAMAN UNDERWOOD goes over to PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS, who is seated at a desk.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
President Ahashuerus, I think you need to know something.

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
What is it, Haman Underwood?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
There's a certain group of people in your kingdom. Their customs aren't like our customs.

(speaking out to audience)
I spoke slowly. I didn't want to
alarm him.

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
Who are these people of whom you
speak?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
They call themselves the Jews. And I
think it would probably be in your
best interest to destroy them.

(speaking out to audience)
I wasn't about to let some Jew knock
me off my pedestal. A simple throw
of the dice decided his fate.

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
I trust you, Haman Underwood. When
do you want the deed to be done?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
I was thinking the 13th day of Adar,
but of course if you have a better
day in mind, sir...

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
No no, that seems fine. Take my
royal ring to seal the decree.

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
(to audience)
The deed was done. Now all I had to
do was sit and wait.

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
Um, who are you talking to?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
What? When?

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
Just now. You said something about
the deed being done?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD
No, I didn't.

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS
Well, you're clearly lying, but I
can't go getting a new advisor every
time one of them turns out to be an
evil maniac, can I?

HAMAN UNDERWOOD

Of course not, sir.

(to audience)

He'd fallen into my web, like a
helpless insect--

PRESIDENT AHASHUERUS

See?! You're doing it again!

CHAPTER FOUR - THE WALKING DEAD**MUSIC: THE WALKING DEAD OPENING**

ESTHER is onstage. MORDECHAI enters dressed like a zombie and lurching around.

ESTHER
Aaaah! Mordechai! Noooo! The zombies
got you!!!

MORDECHAI
(muffled)
MAAaaaaaa.

ESTHER pulls out a gun.

ESTHER
Stay back, you zombie freak!

MORDECHAI
(spitting)
Sorry, mouth full of ashes.

ESTHER
Wait, you're not a zombie?

MORDECHAI
Nope.

ESTHER
Then what's with the sackcloth and
ashes?

MORDECHAI
I'm in mourning. There's a plot to
kill the Jews. We're literally the
walking dead.

ESTHER
Oh no! Who would do such a thing?

MORDECHAI
Your boyfriend's best pal: Haman.

ESTHER
Ugh, that guy is worse than a flesh-
eating monster.

MORDECHAI
Tell me about it. Well, what are you
going to do about it?

ESTHER

Me? Nothing! I haven't survived the zombie apocalypse this long just to go before the king and get my head cut off.

MORDECHAI

If you think he's going to spare you just because you're married to him, you're wrong.

ESTHER

Ugh, fine. Tell all the Jews of the kingdom to fast for three days and three nights--I mean no brains, no nothing.

MORDECHAI

You got it.

ESTHER

After that I'll go before the king, and if I perish, I perish. I can always be revived as one of the undead, right?

MORDECHAI

That's the spirit!

CHAPTER FIVE - DOWNTON ABBEY

MUSIC: DOWNTON ABBEY OPENING

LORD AHASHUERUS is sitting in the library. LADY ESTHER enters timidly. They speak in high-class British accents.

LADY ESTHER
Lord Ahashuerus?

LORD AHASHUERUS
Yes, Lady Esther?

LADY ESTHER
I'm so sorry to disturb you.

LORD AHASHUERUS
Nonsense, you weren't disturbing me at all. I was just sitting here in the library thinking about the collapse of the empire.

LADY ESTHER
How very noble of you, my lord.

LORD AHASHUERUS
What may I assist you with?

LADY ESTHER
I wished to invite you and Sir Haman to lunch at my manor this afternoon.

LORD AHASHUERUS
Will the Dowager Vashti be there?

LADY ESTHER
I hadn't invited her.

LORD AHASHUERUS
In that case, we'd love to come.

CUT TO:

LORD AHASHUERUS, LADY ESTHER, and SIR HAMAN sit at lunch.

SIR HAMAN
Mrs. Patmore has truly outdone herself with this lunch.

LORD AHASHUERUS
Indeed. Now, Lady Esther. May I inquire as to the purpose of this fine luncheon?

LADY ESTHER

I only wished to make a request of you, my lord.

LORD AHASHUERUS

What is it, Lady Esther? You may have anything you like, up to half my estate. Though I should note that with our financial troubles, half my estate isn't quite what it used to be.

LADY ESTHER

I'm holding a banquet tomorrow night. I would love for you and Sir Haman to attend.

LORD AHASHUERUS

Is that all? I'm sure we can find time in our busy schedule of writing letters, ringing for tea, and contemplating the decay of the old ways.

LADY ESTHER

Excellent. I'll see you tomorrow.

LADY ESTHER and LORD AHASHUERUS depart. MRS. ZERESH enters.

MRS. ZERESH

Well, how was your luncheon with his lordship?

SIR HAMAN

It was excellent, Mrs. Zeresh. But I can't be happy when I think of that common footman, Mordechai, refusing to bow down to me, Sir Haman!

MRS. ZERESH

I think I know what would make you feel better.

SIR HAMAN

A hot cuppa and to bed early?

MRS. ZERESH

I was going to say you should build gallows for Mordechai, fifty cubits high.

SIR HAMAN

Ooh, yes, that sounds lovely!

CHAPTER SIX - HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER**MUSIC: HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER OPENING**

NARRATOR

Now back to "How I Met Your King
Ahashuerus."

TWO KIDS sit facing audience on one side of stage. MORDECHAI
talks over mic.

KID 1

So how *did* you meet our King
Ahashuerus?

KID 2

Yeah, get to the point already.

MORDECHAI

I'm getting to it! Don't rush me! I
need at least 9 seasons to tell the
whole story. Ok, so. Late one night,
the king couldn't sleep.

KIDS freeze. KING and COURTIER enter.

KING

I can't sleep. Entertain me.

COURTIER

I'm not going to entertain you. It's
the middle of the night.

KING

You have to entertain me when I
can't sleep. Article 16 of the Bro
Code.

COURTIER

Fine, I'll read to you from the Book
of Records. I bet that will put you
to sleep.

KING

Care to turn that bet into a "slap
bet?"

COURTIER

You're on. Hey, here's a good one.
Apparently, some guy named Mordechai

saved your life.

KING
That's weird. I don't think I ever
rewarded him in any way.

HAMAN enters.

KING (CONT.)
Hey Haman, question for you. If you
wanted to reward the king's best
bro, what would you do?

HAMAN
Wow! You mean me?

KING
Um...

HAMAN
Well, I'd probably take him to
MacLaren's for unlimited drinks,
then drive him to Atlantic City,
screaming out the window the whole
way, "This guy rocks!" Then I'd be
his wingman for life.

KING
Great. I want you to do that for
Mordechai.

HAMAN
Wait, what??!

They freeze.

KID 1
Cool, so that's how you met our King
Ashauerus?

MORDECHAI
No, that's how I met Haman. To be
continued!

Both kids groan.

CHAPTER SEVEN - GAME OF THRONES**MUSIC: GAME OF THRONES OPENING**

ESTHER STARK and AHASHUERUS STARK sit at dinner with HAMAN LANNISTER.

AHASHUERUS STARK
So tell me, my darling Esther, what
is the purpose of this banquet?

ESTHER STARK
(*ominously*)
Adar is coming.

AHASHUERUS STARK
Ooh, gives me the shivers. But what
do you mean by that?

ESTHER STARK
That's why I asked you and Haman
Lannister here today.

AHASHUERUS STARK
Anything you require, my queen, you
may have it--up to half my kingdom.

EVERYONE ONSTAGE AND OFF
(*yelling*)
King of the North!

ESTHER STARK
Someone is threatening my people.

AHASHUERUS STARK
By your people, you mean...the
Starks?

ESTHER STARK
No, I mean the Jews. I am Jewish.

AHASHUERUS STARK
But who would threaten you, my wife?

ESTHER STARK
(*pointing*)
It is him: Haman Lannister!

AHASHUERUS STARK
Him? But he's the hand of the king!

ESTHER STARK

He is the one who is trying to kill
the Jews.

AHASHUERUS STARK

In that case, he's dead.

HAMAN LANNISTER

Now let's not be too hasty.

AHASHUERUS STARK

Seize him, guards!

Two GUARDS rush onstage and try to attack HAMAN. HAMAN pulls
out a sword and fights back. They both fall to the ground,
dead.

ESTHER STARK

(tsking)

Such a violent show.

AHASHUERUS STARK

That's HBO for you. Don't worry, I
have a lot of back-up guards.

Two more GUARDS enter and they manage to fight HAMAN and
take him down.

AHASHUERUS STARK (CONT.)

What should we do with him?

ESTHER STARK

Hang him. On the very gallows he
built for Mordechai.

HAMAN LANNISTER

Noooo!

AHASHUERUS STARK

Oh come on. That's pretty mild
compared to the way most people die
on this show.

CHAPTERS EIGHT, NINE, AND TEN - THE DAILY SHOW

MUSIC: THE DAILY SHOW OPENING

JON STEWART sits at his desk.

JON STEWART

Welcome back to the Daily Show. Our top story tonight is part of our ongoing series: You Can't Be Ahashuserious.

The good guys have won! Mordechai has replaced Haman as the king's top advisor.

And all of this went down because of one special queen. No, I'm not talking about Freddie Mercury. I'm talking about Queen Esther.

After revealing Haman's evil plot, Esther told the king that Mordechai is her uncle. To which Ahashuerus responded, "Oh. My bad." Then he gave Mordechai the only thing better than an apology: jewelry. Specifically, the king gave Mordechai his official ring.

Here with more on this developing story is our senior Mordechai correspondent: Mordechai.

MORDECHAI enters and sits next to JON. Applause.

MORDECHAI

Thank you Jon.

JON STEWART

Mordechai, what was your first order of business as the king's adviser?

MORDECHAI

Well Jon, I knew I had to act quickly, before the feeble-minded king passed his ring on to another adviser or a particularly shiny rock.

JON STEWART

I'm assuming that you wanted the king to reverse his decree to kill all the Jews, right?

MORDECHAI

That's correct, Jon. Unfortunately, the king's decrees are irreversible.

JON STEWART

Um, excuse me?

MORDECHAI

Yes Jon, much like the decision to get a tattoo, kingly decrees can never been taken back, no matter how bad of an idea they were in the first place.

JON STEWART

So...should we be in hiding right now?

MORDECHAI

No, Jon. Luckily, the king let me issue a new decree, that the Jews be allowed to defend themselves against their attackers.

JON STEWART

Oh, well that's good. We're great at smoting.

MORDECHAI

It was a bloody day. Among the thousands we killed were the ten sons of Haman: Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vajezatha.

JON STEWART

They were really asking for it with those names.

MORDECHAI

Indeed, Jon. Anyway, the Jews won, and that's why I'm declaring the 14th of Adar to be a day of celebration called Purim, after the lots that Haman drew.

JON STEWART

Instead of naming the holiday after

our enemy's tool of destruction,
wouldn't it be nicer to call it
something pleasant, like Happiness
Day?

MORDECHAI

No. That's a terrible idea, Jon.

JON STEWART

Mordechai, everyone! Well, everyone,
that's our show. Now here it is:
your moment of zen.

ENTIRE CAST comes onstage and band leader leads them in a
Purim song to close the show.

THE END!