



**Crisis in the Palace**

NARRATOR: And in that year, the kingdom was abuzz with whispers and rumors of a terrible scandal.

GROUP 1: *(gasp)* Really?

GROUP 2: Yes!

GROUP 1: *(gasp)* You're joking!

GROUP 2: No!

GROUP 1: *(gasp)* You think?

GROUP 2: Maybe.

ALL: *(to a partner)* Shocking!  
*(Each cast member leans a new direction to speak to a different partner)* Ghastly!  
*(All face forward, to the audience)* Dreadful!

ALL: *(singing)* Have you heard? Have you heard? There's a crisis in the palace  
and the kingdom is a-flutter with the news.  
Have you heard? Have you heard? There's a crisis in the palace,  
everybody has a different point of view!  
He said, she said.

GROUP 1: He doesn't!

GROUP 2: Yes, he does!

ALL: Whispers, rumors, listen to the buzz,

GROUP 1: Buzz, buzz, listen, listen, listen. Buzz buzz buzz buzz!

GROUP 2: listen to the buzz, listen to the buzz. Buzz buzz buzz buzz!  
*(at the same time)*

ALL: Oh, the king had a feast for six long months. It was a great success.  
For when a king invites someone, the someone best say yes!  
Then the king said,

KING: "Go and fetch the queen, the party 's getting slow."

ALL: Her lovely face will liven up the place. But the queen said:

VASHTI: "No!"

ALL: *(reacting with shock)* *(gasp)*  
Have you heard? Have you heard? There's a crisis in the palace  
and the kingdom is a-flutter with the news.  
Have you heard? Have you heard? There's a crisis in the palace,  
everybody has a different point of view!  
He said, she said.

GROUP 1: He doesn't!

GROUP 2: Yes, he does!

ALL: Whispers, rumors, listen to the buzz,

GROUP 1: Buzz, buzz, listen, listen, listen. Buzz buzz buzz buzz!

GROUP 2: listen to the buzz, listen to the buzz. Buzz buzz buzz buzz!  
*(at the same time)*



KING:	Enough empty talk! I wish to go over there. <i>(He points to the throne, upstage center.)</i>
HAMAN:	Yes, of course, Your Highness. <i>(calling)</i> Guards! <i>(The GUARDS trot in from preschool office hall in formation, carrying spears. GUARD 1 joins them. The GUARD CAPTAIN carries a folded umbrella.)</i>
GUARDS:	<i>(in a military double-time cadence as they trot)</i> Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom!  <i>(The GUARDS halt at attention stage R and the KING takes his place in the center of the formation. The GUARD CAPTAIN stands behind the KING and raises the umbrella over him.)</i>  <i>(During the chant that follows, the GUARDS and the KING process forward toward the throne with measured steps. After each "King", the GUARDS strike the butts of their spears on the floor, loudly. They chant as they start to move. It is a comically pompous display for such a short trip.)</i>
<b><u>Chant 1</u></b>	
ALL:	Make way for the King, (strike) [repeat 7x...]
GUARD CAPTAIN:	Halt! <i>(The procession stops with the GUARDS surrounding the throne at attention. The GUARD CAPTAIN snaps the umbrella shut and the KING sits.)</i>
KING:	And now, place the queen at my right hand.
HAMAN:	Uh... Your Highness, you banished the queen.
KING:	What?
GUARD CAPTAIN:	She can't come here—You sent her away.
KING:	<i>(standing and moving downstage)</i> Whose idea was that? Now what do I do? <i>(calling)</i> Keeper of the Harem!
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(rushing on)</i> Right here, Your Highness. Your command is my command.
KING:	Somehow I seem to be queenless.
HAREM KEEPER:	You, Sire? But you look fabulous! Have you been working out?
KING:	No, no! I sent her away myself.
HAREM KEEPER:	Oh. In that case, Your Highness, perhaps... you should pick a new queen.
KING:	Excellent idea! Go at once! Find the women to choose from.
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(clapping)</i> All right people, let's get busy!  <i>(KING exits stage R as SEARCHERS head out into audience, looking for candidates for queen.)</i>
SEARCHER 1:	<i>(heading down a side aisle)</i> We've got this side!
SEARCHER 2:	<i>(heading down the other side aisle)</i> We've got this side!
SEARCHER 3:	We'll look in the middle.
SEARCHER 1:	Yuck! The people over here look really bad.
SEARCHER 2:	How about this lady with the funny looking outfit!
ALL:	<i>(after pausing to look)</i> Nawwww.
SEARCHER 3:	<i>(spotting ESTHER near the front of the audience)</i> Hey look! Over here!
SEARCHER 3:	<i>(helping ESTHER stand)</i> She's even wearing a costume from the show!
ALL:	<i>(as the SEARCHERS converge around ESTHER)</i> Ooooo ...
HAREM KEEPER:	What's your name, sweetie?
ESTHER:	Esther.
HAREM KEEPER:	Perfect! Talk about being in the right place at the right time. <i>(exit stage R to get Esther)</i>

	<i>(The SEARCHERS lead ESTHER to stairs offstage right.)</i>
NARRATOR:	And so Esther, a young orphan and a Daughter of Israel, was brought to the royal court of the King. Before she entered the walls of the palace, she said goodbye to her guardian Mordecai, the relative had taken her in and raised her when her parents died.
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(entering with ESTHER from stage right)</i> Right this way, dearie. Welcome to your new home.
MORDECAI:	<i>(running to meet them from the other side of the stage)</i> Wait, wait! Let me speak to her.
HAREM KEEPER:	I'm sorry, Sweetlips, you can't come in here.
ESTHER:	Please... it's my guardian. Let me talk to her one more time before I go.
HAREM KEEPER:	Very well, but make it snappy. The hall's only rented till ten. <i>(clapping for attention as she shouts to everyone standing around)</i> Privacy! A little privacy for the girl!
	<i>(All turn away, leaving ESTHER and MORDECAI alone for a moment.)</i>
ESTHER:	I'm sorry, Mordecai. I have to go.
MORDECAI:	I know, my child. You can't say no to a king.
ESTHER:	I'll try to remember what you taught me.
MORDECAI:	I'm sure you will, Esther.
ESTHER:	And I'll try to tell everyone what it means to be one of the people of Israel.
MORDECAI:	<i>(taking her arm and leading her farther downstage left)</i> No! No, you mustn't!
ESTHER:	What do you mean?
MORDECAI:	That's why I had to talk to you. We have enemies in the palace who hate all the people of God.
ESTHER:	Oh, no... what should I do?
MORDECAI:	Be true to your God and true to your people. Just don't tell anyone where you come from.
ESTHER:	I'll do my best. <i>(She turns to go.)</i>
MORDECAI:	And Esther...
ESTHER:	<i>(turning back)</i> Yes?
MORDECAI:	I'm proud of you. You're the daughter I never had.
	<i>(After a brief pause, the HAREM KEEPER turns back into the scene abruptly)</i>
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(Stepping between ESTHER and MORDECAI)</i> O.K., the sob scene's over! Let's keep this thing moving. <i>(clapping her hands)</i> Harem people, front and center! <i>(The BEAUTY CANDIDATES slink on from risers and strike poses.)</i> Folks, I'd like you to meet our newest recruit. Esther baby, strut your stuff!
	<i>(The HAREM KEEPER gives ESTHER a push, and she stumbles forward toward the BEAUTY CANDIDATES. They move around her, eyeing her up and down.)</i>
ALL CANDIDATES:	Ewww...
CANDIDATE 1:	Holy Zoroaster, look what the camel dragged in!
CANDIDATE 2:	That outfit is a scream!
CANDIDATE 1:	Where do you shop, Kid... the Wailing Wall-Mart? <i>(All CANDIDATES snicker.)</i>
CANDIDATE 2:	I think she needs new perfume, too.
CANDIDATE 1:	Yeah, something other than Dead Sea #5!
	<i>(All CANDIDATES laugh louder. The HAREM KEEPER moves to rescue ESTHER by taking her arm and leading her back to stage left.)</i>
HAREM KEEPER:	All right, claws in, you Persian cats! We all know the kid needs a little help.
CANDIDATE 2:	A little! Please.

CANDIDATE 1: She's a Medusa Wannabe.

HAREM KEEPER: Esther honey, before you meet the King, you've been chosen for a very special honor. Your fabulous Trip-to-the-Palace Package comes with a full year of beauty treatments! Six months with oil of myrrh...

ALL: *(like the audience of an infomercial)* Oooo...

HAREM KEEPER: ...and six with perfumes and cosmetics!

ALL: *(applauding politely)* Ahhhh.

ESTHER: *(dryly)* Thanks. I'm flattered, I think.

HAREM KEEPER: Ladies, show her what she needs to know! *(Beauty Candidates & Esther center stage. Mordecai stage L, Harem Keeper stage R, everyone else standing on risers.)*

**Beauty Secrets**

ALL: Beauty secrets, everyone should know. Beauty secrets, are the kind that show!

HAREM KEEPER: *(Beauty Candidates surrounding ESTHER)*  
Everyone's who's anyone knows it's true,\_ you gotta have style and a great hair-do!\_  
If you're not good looking you won't get looks.\_ Judging by the cover isn't just for books!

ALL: Beauty secrets, everyone should know. Beauty secrets, are the kind that show!

MORDECAI: *(stepping away from others and looking toward God)*  
She belongs\_ to the One who made\_ the heavens and the stars,  
Creator of all beauty, who loves us as we are.  
One who knows our secret self, who sees our deepest part.  
True\_ beauty is the love of God\_ you hide within your heart.  
*(CANDIDATES surround ESTHER again.)*

CANDIDATE 2: *(speaking)* Well, Kid, that's fine if you want to keep your beauty a secret...

CANDIDATE 1: *(speaking)* But we're here to tell you...

ALL: Beauty secrets, are the kind that show!

*(King exits stage R, Guard 1 exits stage R & gets tiara. Everyone except below sitting on risers)*

HAREM KEEPER: O.K. people, it's time to play... **[-Mordecai—Record K.—Haman—Beauty C & Esther-]**

ALL: *(shouting)* Name...That... Queen! **[-King (after entry) —Harem Keeper-]**

*(The King enters from stage right. The BEAUTY CANDIDATES and ESTHER line up side by side on stage left. ESTHER is still dressed simply, while the others are garishly outfitted with layers of feathers, furs, jewelry, etc. The KING approaches them, inspecting them.)*

HAREM KEEPER: Well, here they are, Your Highness... the final three contestants. So what'll it be? *(holding her hand over each of the candidates as she names them)* Bachelorette number one... number two... or *(pushing ESTHER forward)*... number three?

KING: Ahhh... *(He indicates ESTHER.)* I choose this one.

ALL BEAUTY CANDIDATES: *(stamping their feet and going back to risers)* Awwwww.

*(GUARD enters with the tiara on a pillow and brings it to the HAREM KEEPER.)*

HAREM KEEPER: *(placing the tiara on ESTHER's head)* Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you the new First Lady of the Kingdom, a Queen-for-More-Than-a-Day . . . Queen Esther!

ALL: *(Cheer and applaud as ESTHER exits to change into Queen's costume)*

KING: Very well, my work here appears to be done. *(He starts to exit right.)*

HAMAN: Just a moment, Your Majesty. As long as you're in the mood for choosing things, why don't you select a new prime minister while you're at it?

*(HAMAN strikes a hopeful pose and looks at the KING expectantly.)*

KING:	<i>(missing HAMAN's hint)</i> Very well, <i>(clapping his hands)</i> Keeper of the Records! <i>(The RECORD KEEPER hurries forward, carrying an ornate book.)</i> Who's on the list of candidates for Prime Minister?
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(referring to the book)</i> Your Highness, you have a loyal servant named Mordecai, one of the People of Israel. <i>(MORDECAI steps forward and stands to one side.)</i> She's honest, hardworking, faithful, brave, obedient, and very wise. She also saved your life last year by stopping an assassination plot.
KING:	Yes, but what do the polls say?
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(checking the book)</i> Well, your advisor Haman is very popular. <i>(HAMAN places himself in the KING's view and again strikes a hopeful pose.)</i> He's shallow, thin-skinned, and instead of being honest, he'll tell you whatever you want to hear.
KING:	Ah, that sounds perfect! Make it so!
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(stepping forward and holding her hand over HAMAN's head)</i> O.K., folks, let's give it up for our new prime minister—Haman!
ALL:	<i>(Applaud and cheer.)</i>
HAMAN:	Thank you, Your Highness. And now, let me give you my first piece of advice.
KING:	Yes?
HAMAN:	O Mighty One, we know that people bow to you when you pass by. But if they really honored you, they would also bow to your advisors.
KING:	My advisors?
HAMAN:	Yes, my Perfect Potentate. They might bow to... oh... I don't know... your prime minister for example.
	<i>(HAMAN once again strikes a hopeful pose and looks at the KING expectantly)</i>
KING:	Ah... I see. Yes, now I recall, it is written: "When the King stands high upon the mountain, those who kneel to him, kneel also to the dirt below".
ALL:	Yes... to the dirt below!
	<i>(On the word "dirt" above, all gesture toward HAMAN with an outstretched arm.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(looking around at the pointing arms, dryly)</i> You have a unique way with words, Your Highness.
KING:	And you, Haman, are a man after my own heart. Put it in the Book of Records. Everyone must kneel to my servant Haman, just as they do to me.
ALL:	<i>(chattering at once)</i> Oh great idea, Fabulous, Super, Splendid work, Love the whole concept, etc. <i>(The KING glances around at the chattering crowd.)</i>
KING:	<i>(sternly)</i> Beginning... at once!
ALL:	Ah! <i>(All except MORDECAI drop to their knees quickly)</i>
KING:	That's better. Carryon, Haman, in my place.
	<i>(The KING exits stage R. HAMAN watches him go for a moment, and then dashes over to the throne and sits, relishing the feeling of power.)</i>
HAMAN:	Ahhh... This is the part I was born to play.
NARRATOR:	So everyone bowed low to Haman and honored him as the King commanded.
HAMAN:	<i>(to NARRATOR)</i> Did you say <i>everyone</i> ?
NARRATOR:	Yes.
HAMAN:	<i>(standing and taking a few steps toward the NARRATOR)</i> Well then, that includes you.
NARRATOR:	Oh... no, I'm the Narrator.
HAMAN:	I don't care. The script says everyone kneels to me.





	<b><u>Stand Up</u></b>
MORDECAI:	Stand up, stand up, stand up for what is right. Stand up, stand up, stand up and fight the fight. Be firm, be brave, hold tight to what is true._ God who saves is standing up for you._
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(standing and speaking)</i> Even when the others around you fall?
MORDECAI:	Stand up for what is right.
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(standing and speaking)</i> Even when believing can cost you all?
MORDECAI:	Stand up for what is right.
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(standing and speaking)</i> Even when you're feeling like you're all alone?
MORDECAI:	Stand up for what is right.
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(standing and speaking)</i> Even when the road ahead's unknown?
MORDECAI:	Stand up for what is right.
ALL:	<i>(standing up one at a time)</i> Stand up, stand up, stand up for what is right. Stand up, stand up, stand up and fight the fight. Be firm, be brave, hold tight to what is true._ God who saves is standing up_ for you._
ALL:	When it's time, time to make a choice._ Listen, listen for the Master's voice._ If the word, word of God is clear,_ sing with joy the song you hear._ Even when the others around you fall? <i>(shouting)</i> Stand up for what is right. Even when believing can cost you all? <i>(shouting)</i> Stand up for what is right. Even when you're feeling like you're all alone? <i>(shouting)</i> Stand up for what is right. Even when the road ahead's unknown? <i>(shouting)</i> Stand up and fight the fight. Stand up, stand up, stand up! <i>(shouting)</i> STAND UP!
	<i>(Esther, King, Harem Keeper, Haman, Record Keeper exit stage R. Mordecai/Guards exit stage L) (Mordecai adds sackcloth tunic)</i>
	<i>(Everyone else sits. As the NARRATOR speaks, the KING enters and sits on his throne.)</i>
NARRATOR:	Now when Haman saw that Mordecai did not fear him, his anger grew, and he began to plot against Mordecai. In fact, he cast lots to decide a good day to get rid of all the Jewish people in Persia. And soon he went to the King with his plan.
	<i>(HAREM KEEPER and HAMAN enter from stage right. HAMAN is carrying a rolled up scroll.)</i>
HAREM KEEPER:	<i>(pausing to announce HAMAN)</i> The King will now see his loyal servant Haman! O.K... get in there and schmooze, Persia-boy. <i>(She gives HAMAN a push toward the throne.)</i>
HAMAN:	Your Highness, I regret to say I have some shocking news.
KING:	What is it?
HAMAN:	Most Awesome One, there are traitors in your kingdom.
KING:	<i>(standing)</i> Traitors!?
HAMAN:	Yes. A certain group of people scattered throughout the land do not obey your laws.
KING:	Shocking!
HAMAN:	Yes, it is, O Exalted One. I believe you must get rid of these troublemakers at once!
KING:	How?
HAMAN:	My Gracious Lord, it would be my joy to handle all the unpleasant details. <i>(moving to downstage center)</i> Just say the word, and I'll have them all destroyed.
KING:	Haman, your kindness touches me deeply. <i>(The KING removes his ring and hands it to HAMAN.)</i> Take my royal ring and do whatever you need to do. And now, I wish to leave.
HAMAN:	Guards!
GUARDS:	<i>(come in from stage L &amp; rush to surround the KING)</i> Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom chucka-lucka-lucka, Boom!

*(The GUARD CAPTAIN raises the umbrella over the KING.)*

**Chant II**

*(The GUARDS and the KING march forward with measured steps, exiting stage right.)*

ALL: Make way for the King, (strike) [repeat 5x...]

HAREM KEEPER: *(trailing after the procession as it exits)* Ladies and gentlemen, the King has left the building. I repeat, the King has left the building.

*(HAMAN watches the formation leave and then unrolls the scroll he has been carrying.)*

HAMAN: Well, isn't this fortunate. I seem to *have* a proclamation right here with me. *(With a flourish, he presses the King's ring to the paper.)* And it's sealed with the King's ring. Keeper of the Records! *(The RECORD KEEPER rushes forward and comes to attention.)* Read this out. *(He hands the scroll to the RECORD KEEPER.)*

RECORD KEEPER: *(reading)* The King commands that on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, all the people of Israel shall be destroyed, killed, and annihilated, and all of their goods shall be plundered.

HAMAN: *(to himself)* So Mordecai, one way or another, you'll fall down before me.

*(HAMAN exits right with an evil laugh.)*

NARRATOR: When Mordecai learned what Haman had done, She tore HER clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes and sat at the King's gate in deep distress.

*(Music begins as the NARRATOR continues.)*

*(During the narration, MORDECAI enters from stage left with a scroll and a quill. She sits and prepares to write, as ESTHER enters from stage right with her own scroll and quill. She sits a good distance away from MORDECAI and thinks for a moment. In order to increase the sense of distance between the two characters, they face away from each other slightly with MORDECAI looking into the distance downstage left, and ESTHER looking toward downstage right. As they say their lines, the two speak slowly and mime writing on their scrolls.)*

NARRATOR: And when Esther heard of her grief, she sent word to her asking what was wrong. And Mordecai wrote back a secret message.

MORDECAI: My Daughter, Esther, our people are in great danger. You must go to the King at once, and beg for mercy.

ESTHER: Dearest Mordecai, no one may approach the King without being summoned. All who break this law are put to death. The only exception is for the King to raise his golden scepter and spare your life.

MORDECAI: My Dearest Daughter, if you remain silent, you will perish anyway. And who knows? It may be that God has placed you in the palace for just such a time as this.

ESTHER: Dearest Mordecai, Go, and gather all the Jewish people of the city to fast and pray for me, and I will pray as well. And after three days I will go to the King, even though it is against the law. *(music ends)*

ESTHER: And if I die, I die.  
*(MORDECAI exits stage R as ESTHER kneels center stage and looks up toward God by focusing on a point high on the back wall behind the audience.)*

*(Wings of the Dawn: everyone but Esther & Record Keeper on risers.)*

**Wings of the Dawn**

RECORD  
KEEPER: (SOLO)

Mighty One, you hear me, \_ though my voice is small.  
In the night, be near me \_ when darkness falls.  
For you whispered in my heartbeat \_ on the day that I was made,  
and I know you go beside me \_ when I'm afraid. (*ESTHER stands*)  
If I climb to the heights of a mountain, or search the depths below,  
I know your arms will hide me everywhere I go.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, or fly beyond the sea, \_ I will find you there waiting for me.

ALL:

Mighty One, you hear me, \_ though my voice is small.  
In the night, be near me \_ when darkness falls.  
For you whispered in my heartbeat \_ on the day that I was made,  
and I know you go beside me \_ when I'm afraid.  
If I climb to the heights of a mountain, or search the depths below,  
I know your arms will hide me, everywhere I go.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, or fly beyond the sea,

ESTHER:

I will find you there,

ALL:

I will find you there, \_

ESTHER/ALL:

waiting for me. \_

*(King, Guards, Haman exit stage R as ominous music is heard. ESTHER slowly steps to a new position and kneels- stage L, facing away from stage R)*

**Chant III**

NARRATOR:

On the third day, Esther took her place in the inner court of the palace in front of the King's hall.  
*(exits)*

ALL:

Make way for the King, (strike) [repeat 7x...]

*(The KING enters from stage right, carrying a scepter and surrounded by the GUARDS and HAMAN in formation)*

*(During the chant, the GUARDS, HAMAN, and the KING march slowly toward ESTHER, who is kneeling with her back toward the formation. The GUARD CAPTAIN leads the procession with his spear pointing forward, stabbing in front of him with each "strike". It is clear that if ESTHER does not move, the spears will eventually stab her. Everyone in the formation stares straight ahead with stern expressions, oblivious of the woman in their path. It is as though a slow train is rolling down a track, and ESTHER is in its path. The chant builds in intensity, as the rest of the CROWD leans forward and looks on in growing horror. On the last "Make way for the King," ESTHER stands and faces the spear.)*

ALL:

*(loud gasp of shock as ESTHER stands)*

*(The KING immediately holds up his hand and the formation stops. ESTHER lowers her head and looks at the floor, resigned to her fate. There is a moment of silence, and then the KING slowly walks forward and stands beside ESTHER. He looks at her sternly, and then his look softens. With slow deliberation, he raises his scepter. ESTHER looks up in wonder, and then hesitantly reaches out and touches the scepter.)*

ALL:

*(soft sigh of relief, as they relax)*

*(The KING lowers the scepter, and then gently places a hand on ESTHER's shoulder.)*

KING:

What is it, my Queen?

ESTHER:

My King, I have a favor to ask.

KING:

It is written : "When courage speaks, a wise man listens." (*announcing it to ALL*) Let the whole world know—this woman may ask me for anything, even up to half my kingdom!

ESTHER:

Thank you, gracious King. My request is this: I want you to come to a special banquet I'm preparing. You too, Haman.

HAMAN:	<i>(moving to stand beside ESTHER)</i> How thoughtful of you, Queen.
KING:	And then what?
ESTHER:	And then, Your Highness, I'll reveal what's on my heart.
HAMAN:	Oooooo... that's mysterious. You're going to surprise us?
ESTHER:	<i>(significantly, looking at HAMAN)</i> I'm certainly going to try.
KING:	<i>(offering her his arm)</i> Once again, my favored Queen, ask for whatever you want and I will grant it.
	<i>(The KING exits right with ESTHER. HAMAN lingers for a moment downstage and then, as the NARRATOR speaks, he goes to stage R in front of Haman's Friends on risers.)</i>
NARRATOR:	That day, Haman hurried home in high spirits, confident of his power and position. And there he called together his friends and family for a party in his own honor.
	<i>(ZARESH goes to stand beside Haman.)</i>
HAMAN:	My darling, Zaresh... friends... Thank you so much for coming. Tonight I want to share some wonderful news. Queen Esther has personally chosen me—and me alone—to be a special guest at a great banquet for the King tomorrow night.
FRIENDS:	Ooooo.
HAMAN:	So I have just one thing to say to all of you... I'm king of the world !!!
ALL:	<i>(Applaud and cheer.)</i>
HAMAN:	Thank you. You like me... you really, really like me.
ZARESH:	<i>(gushing)</i> Of course we do, my Persian peanut. Everyone loves you.
HAMAN:	Well, not everyone.
ZARESH:	No?
HAMAN:	No. There's that horrible Mordecai who sits at the King's gate every day and mocks me!
ZARESH:	Well, don't you pay any attention to him.
HAMAN:	I'm sorry, my precious kumquat. I just can't help it.
ZARESH:	<i>(getting a sudden idea)</i> I know, my little lotus blossom! <i>(She pinches HAMAN's cheek.)</i> Why don't you build a seventy-five-foot sharpened pole and hang MS. Mordecai from it tomorrow? Then you'll be in a good mood for the King's dinner.
FRIENDS:	Hey, good idea, Yeah, Sounds great! <i>(etc.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(taking ZARESH's hand)</i> Ah, my little Turkish Delight. You always know how to cheer me up. I'll talk to the King about it first thing in the morning.
ZARESH:	<i>(putting her other hand on top of HAMAN's)</i> And until then, my succulent fig, you can tell us again about your wonderful plans.
FRIENDS:	<i>(as the music begins)</i> Yes, speech! Speech! Speech!
	<i>It Would Take a Miracle: Everyone on risers except Haman, Zaresh</i>

**It Would Take a Miracle**

HAMAN: Now it's time to celebrate the end of everything I hate.

ALL FRIENDS: (speaking) Yeah, we'll show them!

ALL FRIENDS: (speaking) Yeah! Right! You got that right! (etc.)

HAMAN: Israel and Mordecai tomorrow face a day to die.

ZARESH: (speaking) We're all with you, Darling.

ALL FRIENDS: Yeah.

HAMAN: I'm a man who had the will to make a plot with secret skill.

ZARESH & HAMAN: A man with brains \_ and iron nerve.

HAMAN: I'll get the things that I deserve.

ALL FRIENDS: (shouting) Three cheers!

ALL FRIENDS: (shouting) Haman, Haman, Haman!

HAMAN: For there's a plan no one can see, a final day that waits for me.

ZARESH: Who will rise and who will fall?

HAMAN: There's only one who knows it all.

ZARESH & HAMAN: And it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle,

HAMAN: this I vow!

ZARESH, HAMAN, and FRIENDS: Yes, it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle to save them now!

(HAMAN, ZARESH, and FRIENDS freeze until they sing again.)

PEOPLE OF ISRAEL: Now it's time to fast and wait and pray to God it's not too late.  
Haman \_\_ with his evil lies\_ has planned a day for us to die.\_\_  
But there's a ruler higher still \_\_ who has an even stronger will,\_\_  
who has the power to surround \_ and turn a kingdom upside down.  
And it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle, this IS true!  
And if you need a miracle, really need a miracle, never underestimate what God can do!

ALL: For there's a plan no one can see, a final day that waits for me.  
Who will rise and who will fall?\_ There's only one who knows it all.\_

ISRAEL & HAMAN/FRIENDS: And it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle, it would take a miracle,  
(at the same time) It would take, take a miracle,

this is true! And if you need a miracle, really need a miracle,  
This I vow! It would take,

never underestimate what God can do!  
take a miracle to save them now!

*(KING, MORDECAI, ESTHER, GUARD CAPTAIN, GUARD 1, HAMAN exit right, as others sit on risers. The KING enters and sits on his throne, with HAREM KEEPER & RECORD KEEPER on either side.)*

**[Harem Keeper – King (on throne) – Record Keeper]**

NARRATOR: Much later that night in the palace, the King could not sleep.

KING: Keeper of the Records!

RECORD KEEPER: (stepping forward) Yes, Your Highness.

KING: Read to me from The Book of the Great Deeds of Government.

*(The RECORD KEEPER moves to pick up a book.)*

HAREM KEEPER:	Fabulous idea, Your Highness. That'll put you to sleep for sure!
KING:	<i>(to RECORD KEEPER)</i> Just start anywhere.
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(after clearing throat)</i> On the tenth day of the fifth month in the fourth year of the reign of the Mighty King of Persia, two men plotted to kill the King. But the King's faithful servant MS. Mordecai overheard the plot and reported it, thus sparing the King's life. Later, on the fifteenth...
KING:	<i>(standing)</i> Stop! I remember when that happened. Did we ever reward this Mordecai?
RECORD KEEPER:	<i>(checking the book)</i> Uh... no, Your Highness.
HAREM KEEPER:	Oh, tacky, tacky, tacky.
KING:	We should do something.
HAREM KEEPER:	Oh, Your Highness, do I see a brainstorm coming?
KING:	I don't know. Where are my advisors when I need them?
	<i>(GUARD 1 enters from stage right with HAMAN close behind.)</i>
GUARD 1:	<i>(coming to attention)</i> Announcing the amazingly convenient arrival of Prime Minister Haman.
	<i>(HAMAN steps toward the KING, and the KING moves to meet him.)</i>
KING:	Haman! Just the man I want to see. <i>(The KING claps a hand on HAMAN's shoulder and leads him downstage.)</i> How should I honor someone who has done me great service?
	<i>(HAMAN suddenly warms to the thought that the KING wishes to honor him.)</i>
HAMAN:	You want to honor someone?
KING:	Yes.
HAMAN:	<i>(fawning over the KING and brushing specks of lint off his shoulders)</i> Someone close by, perhaps? Who's always looking out for you?
KING:	You've guessed it then.
HAMAN:	I think so! Well, give "that person" one of your robes, put THIS PERON on one of your horses, and get one of your princes to parade THIS PERSON around the streets of the city proclaiming: Here is THE PERSON the King wishes to honor!
KING:	Splendid idea!
HAMAN:	And can I modestly ask, O King—am I to be the one?
KING:	Yes, if you want to!
HAMAN:	Oh, thank you, King!
KING:	You will be the one to lead the horse.
	<i>(The KING starts to exit right)</i>
HAMAN:	To... lead the horse?
KING:	<i>(turning back)</i> Yes, just as you said. Now go get everything ready. I want to honor my faithful servant Mordecai this very day.
	<i>(KING exits R)</i>
HAMAN:	Mordecai?
HAREM KEEPER:	Yes. Doesn't that just make your heart beat faster?
HAMAN:	<i>(moving toward the NARRATOR)</i> Mordecai?!
	<i>(MORDECAI enters and circles to HAMAN's right.)</i>

NARRATOR:	So Haman was forced to honor Mordecai, the person he hated.
HAMAN:	<i>(whining)</i> Oh, no...
MORDECAI:	Hello, Haman. Good to see you again.
HAMAN:	<i>(to NARRATOR)</i> Please... do I have to?
NARRATOR:	It's in the script. We wouldn't want to cut anything from your big part.
HAMAN:	It's impossible. We don't have a horse.
NARRATOR:	<i>(handing him a stick horse)</i> Use your imagination.
HAMAN:	You gotta be kidding. This is ridic...
NARRATOR:	<i>(interrupting)</i> And before Haman had time to object further, he found himself out on the streets of the city. And there he led Mordecai up and down, shouting: This is THE PERSON the King delights to honor. <i>(to HAMAN)</i> Go ahead, shout it out.
	<i>(MORDECAI takes the horse, and HAMAN holds the reins.)(Everyone on risers stands; Crowd 1 &amp; CANDIDATE 2 to mics)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(disgustedly)</i> This is THE PERSON the King delights to honor.
CROWD 1:	<i>(stepping forward)</i> What did you say?
	<i>(HAMAN starts to trudge stage right, leading the horse.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(louder, through clenched teeth)</i> This is THE PERSON the King delights to honor.
CROWD 1:	I'm sorry. Could you repeat that just a little bit louder?
HAMAN:	<i>(shouting at CROWD 1)</i> This is THE PERSON the King delights to honor.
CANDIDATE 2:	<i>(pinching HAMAN's cheek)</i> Ah... I think somebody's got a little love in his heart.
	<i>(The GUARD CAPTAIN enters quickly from stage right, carrying a toy horn. He steps up on a box. Guard 1 joins him.)</i>
GUARD CAPTAIN:	<i>(coming to attention)</i> Prime Minister Haman!
HAMAN:	<i>(irritated, moving to GUARD CAPTAIN)</i> What?
GUARD 1:	<i>(in a commanding tone)</i> The King has summoned you to the palace. The banquet is about to begin.
	<i>(The GUARD CAPTAIN turns and blows the toy horn right into HAMAN's face.)</i>
HAMAN:	I'm getting a very bad feeling about this.
	<i>(As the music begins, all sway on risers. The KING, ESTHER, and HAMAN move to center stage; everyone else on risers.)</i>

**This Is the Day**

ALL: This is the day, this is the hour, a sense of excitement is filling the hall.  
This is the day, this is the hour, the Queen tells her secret to all.  
This is the day, this is the hour,  
The end of the silence, the start of a song.  
This is the day, this is the hour,  
ESTHER: for naming to whom I belong.  
ALL: This is the day, the turn of the story we waited to know.  
This is the day, the turn of the story we waited to know.  
This is the hour, to see where the mystery will go.  
This is the hour, to see where the mystery will go.  
(together) This is the day, this is the hour, the King in his glory, the Queen in her place.  
This is the day she faces a power, with only the power of grace.  
This is the day, this is the hour, a sense of excitement is filling the hall.  
This is the day, this is the hour, the Queen tells her secret, *(ALL gesture toward ESTHER)*  
the Queen tells her secret, the Queen tells her secret to all! *(audience applauds)*

*(At the end of the song, The KING stands upstage center in front of his throne. ESTHER stands several steps to his left, and HAMAN to his right. The CROWD sits on risers.)*

KING: *(announcing grandly, over a tremolo)* And now Queen Esther, the moment has come. It's time to announce your request to the whole world. The one thing you wish from me, even up to half my kingdom is... ?  
*(The piano tremolo stops.)*

ESTHER: My life and the life of my people.  
*(ALL glance around with a puzzled murmur.)*

KING: What?

ESTHER: Your Highness, there is someone in your kingdom who wishes to kill me.

ALL: *(gasp)*

KING: Who would dare such a thing?!

ESTHER: The man I'm talking about is in this very room.

ALL: *(bigger gasp)*  
*(HAMAN rushes over to ESTHER and stands with his back to her, arms outstretched, as if to shield her from harm.)*

HAMAN: Don't worry, Your Majesty, I'll protect you.

ESTHER: *(moving away from HAMAN)* This man is also planning the death of my family and friends.

ALL: *(bigger gasp)*

KING: Tell me his name, and I will show that man the end of his plotting!

ESTHER: Your Highness... *(pointing to HAMAN)* this is the man... Haman!

ALL: *(cry out)*

KING: Haman!

ESTHER: Yes, O King. I am one of the people of Israel, the very people this Haman is planning to destroy.



KING:	<i>(to HAMAN)</i> What is the meaning of this!?
HAMAN:	<i>(cowering away)</i> Wait, there's been a terrible mistake.
KING:	<i>(stepping toward HAMAN menacingly)</i> Indeed there has!
HAMAN:	<i>(dropping to his knees and groveling as the KING circles behind him)</i> Now, Your Highness... Oh Great and Merciful and... Forgiving... Father of All... don't do anything hasty. Remember, it is written: "If you... if you've got a hot potato... uh... let it cool down for a while before you chew on it!"
KING:	I cannot stand to be in your presence! And I must think before I act! <i>(The KING storms out, almost growling with anger.)</i> Arrrrrrrr!
ALL:	<i>(as the KING exits with the GUARDS &amp; GUARD CAPTAIN)</i> Oooooo!
HAMAN:	<i>(standing and crossing to ESTHER)</i> Queen Esther, believe me, I had no idea you were one of those lovely people of Israel. Of course, when I said I wanted to kill all of you, I meant it in the best possible way... <i>(Throwing himself to his knees and wrapping his arms around her legs.)</i> Ooooo... please, please, please, don't let him kill me . . .
ESTHER:	<i>(struggling to pry his arms loose)</i> Please, let go of me! <i>(HAMAN's grasp slips to one leg as ESTHER tries to pull away.)</i>
HAMAN:	I always thought you were a very nice person. Really I did.
ESTHER:	Please stop! You're hurting me! <i>(HAMAN's grasp slides all the way down to ESTHER's ankle, and she ends up dragging him across the stage in her struggle to get loose.)</i>
HAMAN:	No, no, no. I love you, I love you, I love you, really, I do... <i>(The GUARD CAPTAIN rushes back on, blowing a whistle loudly. He is followed closely by the KING. The two stand over HAMAN, and the CAPTAIN threatens him with a spear.)</i>
ALL:	<i>(gasping cry)</i> Ah!
KING:	Silence! <i>(HAMAN stops wailing.)</i> It's not enough that you plot against my Queen. Now you would put your hands on her in my own palace? Well, I say it is written: "You... are... dead... meat!" <i>(The GUARD CAPTAIN blows his whistle again and the GUARDS surround HAMAN, pointing their spears toward him.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(looking around, fearfully)</i> Now wait just a minute... <i>(The GUARD CAPTAIN forces HAMAN to center stage with his spear.)</i>

#### **Chant IV**

GUARD CAPTAIN:	<i>(almost in a loud whisper)</i> Death to Haman!
ALL GUARDS:	<i>(softly and ominously at first)</i> Death to Haman! [repeat, growing louder]
HAMAN:	<i>(over the chant)</i> Come on, what are you doing? <i>(The GUARDS begin to circle HAMAN, as they start to stamp their feet in time to the chant.)</i> <i>(The GUARDS begin to close in slowly, picking up the chant, which gradually accelerates as it grows in volume.)</i>
ALL:	Death (stamp) to Haman! (stamp) [repeat 7x, growing louder and faster] <i>(HAMAN tries to get out of the circle, but every time he moves to escape, he is blocked by spears.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(desperately)</i> Now wait... this isn't funny... <i>(ad libs)</i> Stop, let me go, this isn't right... <i>(etc.)</i>
ALL:	<i>(shouting with GUARD CAPTAIN leading)</i> Death (stamp) to Haman! (stamp) Death (stamp) to Haman! (stamp) Deeeaaaath!

	<i>(As ALL shout, HAMAN drops to his knees and the GUARDS raise their spears menacingly over him.)</i>
HAMAN:	<i>(yelling loudly over the noise, as he drops to his knees and covers his head)</i> Stop!!! <i>(ALL stop and the GUARDS move so HAMAN can be seen clearly. There is a moment of silence.)</i> I don't want to do this anymore.
	<i>(ALL take a step back from HAMAN.)</i>
NARRATOR:	What's wrong... Isn't this the role you were born to play?
HAMAN:	<i>(hesitantly)</i> O.K.... Maybe I was wrong. I guess... I just thought it was the most important part.
NARRATOR:	It's not?
HAMAN:	I don't know. I mean... I didn't know it ended like this.
KING:	<i>(to NARRATOR)</i> How does it end?
NARRATOR:	<i>(reading from book)</i> Because of the faithfulness of Esther, Haman's plan was defeated, and Haman received the very punishment he had planned for bbMordecai.
ALL:	Oooo.
HAMAN:	<i>(quickly)</i> O.K. I admit it. <i>(He removes the King's ring and hands it to MORDECAI.)</i> Maybe some other parts were more important than mine.
MORDECAI:	Thank you.
	<i>(HAMAN moves to one side and sits dejectedly on stool with his back toward the rest of the cast.)</i>
NARRATOR:	<i>(to audience, narrating)</i> And so the people of God were saved.
	<i>(ALL direct the song to God by focusing on a point high on the back wall behind the audience.)</i>

### **A Simple Prayer**

ALL, except  
HAMAN:

We know \_\_\_ there is a hidden hand behind the things we see,  
that guides until at last we find the place we need\_ to be.

*(A number of the cast including MORDECAI and the KING begin to kneel, one at a time. ESTHER moves to HAMAN and gently puts a hand on his shoulder.)*

And though our part is small and weak, we know that when we kneel,

*(HAMAN looks at ESTHER who gestures toward MORDECAI. HAMAN shifts his glance to MORDECAI who is now looking at him with encouragement. ESTHER leads HAMAN toward MORDECAI and kneels.)*

and offer up \_\_\_ a broken heart, God's power is revealed.

*(HAMAN stands hesitantly and then comes to a decision—kneeling beside MORDECAI and ESTHER. ALL focus on God for the remainder of the song.)*

And so we say a simple prayer, that when the day is through,  
O loving God,\_ we see your face and find our place, and find our place in you.

*(The KING, ESTHER, HAMAN, MORDECAI, and the HAREM KEEPER stand and face the audience.)*

NARRATOR:

Well, I think you can see we had everything we needed to tell a story.

KING:

A king...

ESTHER:

A queen...

HAMAN:	A prime minister...
MORDECAI:	A faithful servant...
HAREM KEEPER:	And many others.
NARRATOR:	And whenever the story is told, all God's people—great and small—celebrate the One who has placed us where we are for a reason.
HAREM KEEPER:	So... let's celebrate
ALL:	<i>(cheering)</i> Weeeooo! Etc.

**God Is Our God**

ALL: God is our God,\_ we will proclaim.\_ God is our God,\_ forever amen!  
 We are the ones\_ called by the name of the God who is true, true to the end.\_

Send the word by royal rider, racing with the wind:\_  
 The loyal God of Israel is rising to defend.\_  
 God's truth will overtake the lies of those who hate,\_  
 until a day of sorrow is a day to celebrate!

God is our God,\_ we will proclaim.\_ God is our God,\_ forever amen!  
 We are the ones\_ called by the name of the God who is true, true to the end.\_

Give a shout for Esther who was brave and faced the day.\_ *(shouting)* Esther!  
*(ESTHER bows as ALL applaud.)*  
*(MORDECAI stands up on a box and ALL gesture toward him.)*

Raise a cry for Mordecai,\_ who had the faith to pray.\_ *(shouting)* Mordecai!  
*(MORDECAI bows as ALL applaud.)*

When we witness power used to help the cause of sin,\_  
*(HAMAN stands up on a box and mugs shamelessly, making muscle flexing poses. ALL gesture toward him.)*  
 we'll make a noise to tell the world that evil will not win!  
*(ALL boo vigorously, making thumbs down motions.)*  
*(HAMAN shrugs and helps pull the KING up on the box beside him. HAMAN then jumps off the box.)*

We'll make a noise to tell the world that evil will not win!  
*(ALL gesture to the KING who bows and ALL applaud.)*

God is our God,\_ we will proclaim.\_ God is our God,\_ forever amen!  
 We are the ones\_ called by the name of the God who is true, true to the end,  
 true to the end, true to the end,\_ God is our God!

