

Playwriting



Level 3

QUEEN ESTHER SAVES HER PEOPLE

SCENE 1

The throne room of King Ahasuerus.

A servant brings Esther to the king.

KING AHASUERUS: What is your name?

ESTHER: My name is Esther, my lord.

KING AHASUERUS: I like your looks, Esther, so I choose you out of all the women that have been brought to my palace to be queen instead of Vashti.

The servant brings Esther to the king. Esther kneels before the king, and he places the crown on her head. Esther, the king, and the servant exit.

SCENE 2

A street in Susa.

Haman walks along the street. He sees that Mordecai does not bow down to him. Haman goes to his house.

HAMAN: *(To his family and friends)* There is a man who is a Jew. His name is Mordecai, and he dares to not bow down to me, the king's favorite prince.

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Why don't you build a gallows 70 feet high and hang Mordecai on it? Then ask the king if you may kill all the Jews in his kingdom.



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HAMAN: That is a great idea! But first, I must cast lots because the king has not asked me to come to him; he could have me beheaded.

While the stage directions are satisfactory, there is very little illustration of how people feel based on their actions. For instance, you could say Mordecai was downcast as he waited at the gate. This shows that he is sad.

Haman casts lots.

NARRATOR: So Haman cast lots until one day...

HAMAN: *(To his family and friends)* Today when I cast lots, they said that I should go ask the king if I can kill all the Jews in the kingdom.

NARRATOR: So Haman went to the king.

The throne room of King Ahasuerus. Haman bows.

HAMAN: *(To king)* O king, live forever! There is a certain tribe of people that has always rebelled. I ask your permission to kill all of these people. I will give you money out of my treasury to pay for their taxes so that you will still have the same amount of money.

KING AHASUERAS: You may have the people. Keep your riches. You may do anything you want with the people.

NARRATOR: So the king gave Haman his ring to seal the letter with.

The library in the palace of Ahasuerus. Haman and a scribe are bent over a piece of parchment.

HAMAN: *(To scribe)* On the thirteenth day of the twelfth month you are to kill all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women.

Haman and scribe exit.

NARRATOR: And Haman signed the proclamation with the king's ring. He sent forth messengers throughout the kingdom to tell everyone the message.



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The format is very good. It is clear what is going on and who is speaking.

SCENE 3

NARRATOR: Mordecai has just heard Haman's decree.

Mordecai is at the gate of the palace. He is dressed in sackcloth.

ESTHER: *(To servant)* Give Mordecai these clothes and ask him why he is mourning.

SERVANT: Yes, my lady.

The servant goes to Mordecai and tries to get him to put on the clothes.

NARRATOR: Mordecai refused the clothes and told the servant the terrible news. He told the servant to ask Esther to go to the king and ask him to spare her life and the lives of the Jews.

The servant goes back to Esther in the palace and gives her Mordecai's message.

SERVANT: *(To Esther)* My Lady, Mordecai refused the clothes and told me to tell you of Haman's decree to kill all the Jews. He told me to ask you to go to the king and ask him to spare your life and the lives of the Jews.

ESTHER: *(To servant)* Tell Mordecai that no one is allowed to see the king if they have not been asked. Unless the king holds out his golden scepter, the person will be beheaded.

Servant leaves Esther and talks to Mordecai outside the palace.

MORDECAI: Tell Esther: do not think you will be saved when all the Jews are killed just because you are queen. If you don't speak to the king the Jews will be saved in some other way, and you and your family will be killed. Who knows, maybe you were made queen for this purpose.

The servant goes back to the palace.



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The use of a narrator is a good way to include information that can not be spoken by characters.

NARRATOR: The servant gave Esther the message from Mordecai.

ESTHER: *(To servant)* Tell Mordecai to tell all the Jews to fast for three days, and my maidens and I will do the same. Then I will go to the king.

The servant goes to the gate and delivers Queen Esther's message to Mordecai.

NARRATOR: The servant gave Mordecai Esther's message, and he did what she said. At the end of the three days, Esther dressed in her best robes and went before the king. The king lifted his scepter and spoke to her.

Esther goes to the throne room of King Ahasuerus.

KING AHASUERUS: What do you want Queen Esther? I will give you anything in my power, even half of my kingdom.

ESTHER: O king, if I have found favor in your sight, will you and Haman come to a banquet that my maidens and I have prepared?

Esther leaves the throne room.

NARRATOR: So the king and Haman came to Esther's banquet.

King Ahasuerus, Esther, and Haman enter the dining room.

KING AHASUERUS: *(To Esther)* Esther, what do you want? You may have whatever you want even half of my kingdom.

ESTHER: If I have found favor in the sight of my lord, will you and Haman come to another banquet I have prepared? Then I will tell you what I want.

King Ahasuerus, Esther, and Haman exit the dining room.



NARRATOR: The king was very pleased, and he went to the second banquet with Haman.

SCENE 4

King Ahasuerus, Esther, and Haman enter the dining room.

NARRATOR: Haman happily came with the king to the queen's banquet.

KING AHASUERUS: *(To Esther)* What do you want? I will give you anything you wish up to half of my kingdom.

ESTHER: O king, if I have found favor in your sight, spare my life and the lives of my people.

KING AHASUERUS: Who is this man who has done this?

ESTHER: It is Haman, my lord.

The king leaves the dining room. Haman rises and goes toward Esther to plead for his life.

NARRATOR: The king went to the garden and Haman pled for Esther to save him. He accidentally fell on Esther right as the king came in.

Haman trips and falls on Esther just as the king enters the dining room.

KING AHASUERUS: How dare you touch thy queen!

Haman is removed by the king's guards.

Esther and King Ahasuerus exit.

NARRATOR: Haman was hanged on the gallows he had made to hang Mordecai on. Haman's estates were given to Esther, and Esther gave them to Mordecai. The king gave Mordecai Haman's high position.



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SCENE 5

NARRATOR: Since the king had made the killing of all the Jews a law, he could not change it. So he sent out a decree that declared that the Jews could fight back. And so the problem was solved.

THE END