

## Orphan Girl To Queen ©

Theme: This monologue tells of the girl Hadassah who became Esther, Queen of Persia. This orphaned young woman grew up in the care of her uncle Mordecai, a man prepared to stand up for his principles against powerful people, and he passed those qualities on to Esther. Together they changed the law of the land. In order to fight injustice we must have the courage to oppose those who hold others under their power. And we must break the chains of fear which hold us back

Bible Reference: Esther

Cast: 1

Set: blank

Lighting, Sound: standard

Costumes: could be traditional or contemporary

Props: none

Time: 12

Script:

They call me . . . Hadassah!

They call me . . . Esther!

They call me . . . Queen of Persia!

These are . . names. . . merely names!

Some would call me . . . scheming.

Others would refer to me as . . . ruthless.

Some want to categorize me as a . . . feminist.

Why must people assign a tag?

A tag is like a meaningless mist that covers the fertile land, like the odor of a tender steak being prepared on a hot fire . . sometimes pleasant but never filling.

But you need to know my story, my beginnings, where I came from. Listen closely and I will explain.

My father Abihail and his wife died when I was a child, and it fell to my uncle, Mordecai, to provide a home and upbringing. Mordecai was a warm and a wise Jewish man, and I loved him and he loved me. But we were Jews in a foreign land, disrespected and downtrodden.

The ruler of the land was King Ahasuerus, (*pronounced Ahashverosh*), and he was married to his Queen, Vashti. The queen was said to be incredibly beautiful, but wicked and vain. However I didn't know and frankly I had no interest in either she or the king. But I was soon to become intimately acquainted.

The king held an extravagant 180 day feast for his influential friends and the queen was busy entertaining wives in another part of the castle. The king requested his queen to appear before the king and his guests to show off her great beauty, an invitation which the queen unceremoniously declined. This refusal caused the king embarrassment and was greeted by shock and disapproval

from men all over the land. King Ahasuerus thought it necessary to dispose of his queen and to start a search throughout the land for the most beautiful young virgin girl in the land.

Here is where I became involved in the story.

I, along with hundreds of beautiful young girls from all over the land, was brought to the castle and subjected to 12 months of intensive pampering and beauty treatment. From this group I was selected to be the king's new queen.

The life was not unpleasant and, thankfully, I was able to have contact with my uncle, Mordecai.

One day when Mordecai was sitting at the king's gates he overheard two of the king's officers plotting to kill the king. Mordecai came to me at once with the news and I informed the king that his life was in danger. I ensured that the king was aware that it was Mordecai who had saved the king's life.

But soon after it was not the king's life, but the lives of all Jewish people which were in grave danger.

Almost since the beginning of time my people have been under siege, enslaved, embattled, beleaguered . . .

During my reign as Queen of Persia a madman . . . Haman the Agagite . . . hatched a diabolical plan to eliminate the Jewish people . . .

Haman was one of the most prominent princes in the kingdom, and had found favor with the king. Haman sent chills down my spine whenever I was near him; I neither liked nor trusted him. But my husband the king had signed a proclamation that, as Haman moved about, all people would bow to him. And, as you can imagine, my dear uncle Mordecai refused to bow down to anyone except his own God, Yaweh, and so, with the assistance of some of his unscrupulous friends, Haman hatched the idea to destroy, kill, annihilate all Jews in the land.

This disastrous news struck Mordecai like a thunder bolt. Although respect for his God disallowed him bowing to Haman, still Mordecai could not ignore the fact that his action had put all Jews in peril. In his grief Mordecai tore his clothes and put ash on his head, as was the custom of our leaders when faced with grief and mourning.

I sent new clothing to my uncle but he stoutly refused them, and he dropped another terrifying thought on me. . . Mordecai reminded me that I too was a Jew and if Haman were permitted to pursue his evil plan I too would be a victim. And with this he explained that only the king could prevent Haman from carrying out this act of genocide, and only I had access to the king!

When Mordecai first approached me on the subject, requesting I bring this injustice to the attention of my husband the king, I refused to consider it, realizing I would likely be put to death for approaching the king on such a matter. At the advice of Mordecai I had never brought the subject of my Jewish ancestry to the attention of my husband; obviously the king would be more than unhappy to learn that I had withheld this information.

However at the strong urging of Mordecai, and being convicted by my own conscience, I realized that I could not close my eyes to the plight of my people.

But I couldn't!

I simply couldn't!

But there was no choice. . .

I knew what I must do.

I knew what my people required of me . . .

More, I knew what my God expected of me and why God had masterminded my placement as Queen of Persia. . . . For truly my magnificent rise from orphan girl to queen was no accident, but was of God's making. . . I was made for this moment . . . I must not fail.

Ill equipped I was for this assignment . . . but I was not alone.

I had my dear uncle Mordecai who had mentored and tutored me throughout my life, and who stood beside me through these frightening and tumultuous times.

I had my maid servants and the Jewish people of Persia, all who fasted and prayed for three days prior to my approaching my king husband.

And I had my God Yaweh who, I instinctively knew, held the upcoming events in the palm of his loving hand.

And so it was with a pounding but protected heart I entered the presence of the king!

And my first glance took all fears from my heart and mind.

For the mighty and powerful King Ahasuerus, with a smile on his face, held out his scepter to me, a sign that my visit was accepted, and favored.

My husband king asked the desire of my heart, offering anything up to half his kingdom.

He must have been shocked and surprised when I requested only a banquet with he and Haman.

During that banquet I requested another banquet with the king and Haman the following day.

The banquet was scarcely complete when Haman proceeded to have a huge gallows erected, it's purpose to terminate the life of my uncle Mordecai.

That night the king had a restless sleep. He called on his staff to bring to him the history of happenings during his kingship. From those records he realized that he had done nothing to reward Mordecai for saving his life when his officers had plotted to kill him.

And so it was that the next morning when Haman arrived at the castle that the king put the question to Haman, "What should be done for a man whom the king delights to honor?"

Haman, ever the vain and egotistical one, naturally assumed that it was he to whom the king was referring. . . And so it was that smug was his response:

"This man should wear a royal robe, be mounted on one of the king's own horses, led throughout the city, proclaiming to one and all, 'This is what is done for the man who the king delights to honor!'"

Imagine Haman's humiliation and despair when the king agreed, then explained to Haman that Mordecai was the man who was to be honored, and demanded that Haman be the one to lead the horse and Mordecai about the city, proclaiming the king's high feelings for my uncle.

That night during the banquet I informed the king of Haman's plan to massacre all Jews in Persia.

And I also informed the king of my Jewish ancestry.

Haman came to me, pleading for his life. But seeing this only made the king more furious.

And so it was that the king ordered that Haman be hanged on the very gallows which Haman had built for Mordecai.

I was so proud and happy for my uncle! The king appointed Mordecai Prime Minister of the land!

And the king ordered that the Jewish people be allowed to arm themselves and settle scores with those who would do them wrong.

And so it was that through the protection of God my people were saved.

But Haman was not the first to seek to exterminate the Jewish race . . . and unfortunately he would not be the last.

*(short pause, look around)*

They call me . . . Hadassah!

They call me . . . Esther!

They call me . . . Queen of Persia!

But these are only names.

Who I am is a woman of God, ordinary but served by an extraordinary God.

I am a woman who had to die to my own needs and desires and to follow God, wherever he chose to place me.

I am a woman who was moved by the injustices around me and by the sufferings those injustices were causing to others less able to stand up to the aggressors. My love for my people and my concern