

Esther and the Pirates

By Aaron Eime, CMJ Israel

Scene 1 Pirate of the Caribbean Overture, opening credit sequence, enter Pirate Narrator

Pirate Narrator: Welcome landlubbers, ladies and scallywags .. and anyone else thats not in prison! You be all present here witnesses of a grand adventure, generations in the making it was. I be shipmate Calico Jack and your teller of tales this night. You be not ignorant onlookers this evening, no you be participants in our telling. When I say the deeds of dastardly Captain Haman (boo) ... you give me that sound of derision! When I present the lovely lass Esther (cheer) or the dashing Captain Jack Mordechai (cheer) ... you involve yourselves in revelry to be sure. Many legends and bold fables are told of Purim ... tis all scuttlebutt and half truth compared to tonights retelling of Esther and the Pirates (cheer). Hark now, I hear the entrance of Commodore Xerxes, pirate king of all the seven seas. Baton down the hatches and keep a firm grip on your possessions lest they become nought but pirate treasure.

Overture Enter Commodore Xerxes

Commodore Xerxes: Avast me hearties, a good evening to you's all, allow me a few precious moments of your time to make your acquaintances. I be Commodore Xerxes, pirate king of the seven seas and ruler of all the ports and docks from Ethiopia to India. This be my ship, the Black Persia, she's strong and fast, nigh uncatchable and on it are the bloodthirstiest crew of scoundrels and buccaneers that ever tasted the salt air. Tonight we'll be having a grand shindig and you're all invited. Here comes my closest seafaring freebooter, the dread Captain Haman (boo) ... a man so evil that even hell itself spat him back out!

Overture Enter Captain Haman

Captain Haman: Ahoy Commodore, how fairs the wind?

Commodore Xerxes: Arr, Captain Haman (boo), come close and let us speak aye to aye.

Captain Haman: Aye!

Commodore Xerxes: Aye!

Captain Haman: Aye!

Commodore Xerxes: Aye!

Captain Haman: Aye!

Commodore Xerxes: Enough of this frivolity! Do you know what I like about being a pirate Haman (boo)?

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Captain Haman: Can't say as I do Commodore, what is it you like about pirating? The freedom of the ocean, the unknown horizon or surely is it the gold, the silver, the plunder and the treasure? Arr!

Commodore Xerxes: Nay Haman (boo), tis but the humble drink that sustains us all, rum! There lies a mystery that the ocean can never explain, why is the rum always gone? Now I be in need of a sea shanty and more rum to lighten our mood. Send for me wife, the lovely lassie Vashti herself.

Overture Pirates theme, Enter Vashti

Vashti: You sent for me my husband? What seems to vex you my Commodore?

Commodore Xerxes: Arr, the lovely Vashti, a sight for sore eyes to be sure. A great curse has befallen me and I am in need of attention. The rum is gone. Sing me a shanty and fetch me more grog!

Vashti: Sing you a shanty! Is that all I am to you, your personal iTunes account? Well change my name to Siri why don't you. Have you forgotten who I am? I am descended from the dread pirate Nebuchadnezzar himself. And I don't fetch rum!

Commodore Xerxes: Shiver me timbers, this is mutiny I tell you. Sing us a song and get me more rum!

Vashti: My voice will not grace *your* ears, you seem to be three sheets to the wind as it is. Get your own rum!

Commodore Xerxes: What? I have never been so insulted in all my life.

Vashti: Well I find that hard to believe.

Commodore Xerxes: Mutiny I tell you, treacherous skulduggery. You all heard it. Captain Haman (boo), what should I do? I'm but a humble pirate and this has never happened before. I always get rum.

Captain Haman: Commodore, I told you it was bad luck to have a woman on the ship, now if word gets out about this, about women standing up to men, there is no telling where this will end or what damage this will do to society. We will have civil disobedience, gender confusion, there will be shared public toilets, and people will start using weird personal pronouns and identify as binary numbers, it's going to be a right mess.

Commodore Xerxes: There were a lot of big words in there Haman (boo), but chop off me legs and call me stumpy, shared public toilets, thats disastrous.

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Captain Haman: Arr! Commodore, Vashti must walk the plank. Before it affects the rum supply.

Commodore Xerxes: Aye Haman (boo) Vashti must walk the plank. Vashti I banish you to a deserted island and away from the Black Persia.

Vashti: Banish me, you couldn't run this ship without me.

Commodore Xerxes: Well I'm going to try. I divorce thee, take her away. (Vashti leaves)

Captain Haman: That was close but I think we saved civilization. You are going to have to find yourself a girl mate, or the crew will think you a eunuch.

Commodore Xerxes: How do we do that Captain Haman (Boo), I haven't been single since I was a wee lad. It's been a long time since I had to find me a bonnie lass and to be honest I can't remember how I found the last one. Did I get her through Amazon? They deliver everywhere you know.

Captain Haman: No your mother arranged the last one. We will have to come up with a new plan. Perhaps we summon the young mermaids of the seas to a banquet and win for yourself a fair ladies heart. Do we have an accord?

Commodore Xerxes: Aye, we have an accord, now I grow melancholy Haman (boo), I'm off to get more rum. See that arrangements are made for the best ladies to come aboard, and check their personal pronouns first. We don't want any surprises Captain.

Captain Haman: Aye sir!

Pirate Narrator: Well he's not much of Commodore I'll admit, but he is the only one that we have. And he really does need a new lady, or the crew will start to think he's a eunuch. And we can't have that. Invitations were sent out from the Black Persia throughout the seven seas. Even Esther (cheer) received an invitation, much to her chagrin. Let's see how she's getting along shall we.

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Scene 2 Pirate of the Caribbean Overture, Pirate Banquet

Esther: Oh Captain Mordechai (cheer), I have received this invitation to the Commodore's banquet, I really don't want to go. They are all villainous evil pirates, they drink too much of that vile rum, they haven't bathed in months and they are totally obsessed with treasure.

Captain Mordechai: Ah lady Esther (cheer), something unseen smiles upon us I think, this you must do for perhaps this will work out for the good of our people. There are a few Jewish pirates in history, but not many and we are a small people. Easily preyed upon I fear.

Esther: But Captain Mordechai (cheer) I'll be alone, I don't know how to be a pirate lady.

Captain Mordechai: I work near the Ships Cabin, I won't be too far away. I promise to keep you safe. Now a word of warning, don't do anything stupid, don't tell anyone that we are related or that you are Jewish.

Esther: Aye Captain Mordechai (cheer)

Captain Mordechai: There's a good girl, now here we are. Act natural. Savvy!

Captain Haman: Arr! Listen up! Vashti has walked the plank, the Commodore needs him a new lass, it's really bad luck to have all these women on board but let the music begin.

Overture Pirates Theme, women parade in front of the Commodore

Commodore Xerxes: Arr, tis a tough choice to be sure, this lass looks like a fine catch and there be something different about her, I'll be taking that one. What be your name m'darling?

Esther: My name is Esther (cheer).

Commodore Xerxes: Well now miss Esther (cheer), pleased to make your acquaintance, let's get to know each other, perhaps a stroll around the ship might do the trick. For something special; a dirge from the highlands itself to chase away the shadows of the night.

Captain Mordechai: A wedding! I love weddings! Drinks all round eh!

Fergus plays the bagpipes

Pirate Narrator: With the banquet in full swing, the rum flowed freely, the swearing got louder, the jokes got worse and so did the dancing. Captain Jack Mordechai (cheer), did not share the same zest for pirate entertainment and went on patrol around the deck of the Black Persia.

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Scene 3 Pirate of the Caribbean Overture, Assassinations and Mordechai

Assassin #1: If I spend one more night on this cold damp stinking ship I swear I'll catch the pox and die.

Assassin #2: Aye, I'm tired of always being seasick and scrubbing these decks while the Commodore lives in his warm cabin.

Assassin #1: And all the time with that dread Captain Haman (boo) always by his side.

Assassin #2: I heard stories of that Haman (boo), he plunders and he pillages and of his enemies he never leaves survivors.

Assassin #1: No survivors you say, then where do all the stories come from I wonder?

Assassin #2: Something needs be done I tell you.

Assassin #1: Aye! I sense a change in the wind, says I. Let's see about killing the Commodore and taking the ship for ourselves.

Assassin #2: Right what I was thinking, but how shall we do it? The Commodore will not walk the plank without a fight. It'll be suicide to take him on alone.

Assassin #1: Poison says I, we'll poison his rum, what's a pirate without rum I ask ye? And we'll send him down to Davy Jones locker.

Assassin #2: Aye, the plan be a good one ... wait, what's that I hear, someone else is on deck with us!

(Enter Mordechai)

Assassin #1: Oy you there, what are you doing evesdroppin? This area is off limits to civilians.

Captain Mordechai: I'm terribly sorry, I didn't know, if I see one I shall inform you immediately.

Assassin #2: I know you! You're that Jack Mordechai (cheer).

Captain Mordechai: Captain, it's Captain Jack Mordechai (cheer).

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Assassin #1: You're not a real pirate, you follow a different code, you don't steal, you don't kill, you don't tell lies.

Assassin #2: Worst kind of pirate I've ever heard of.

Captain Mordechai: But you have heard of me. Apparently there is some sort of high toned and fancy to do in the Ship's Cabin. How could it be that two such fine upstanding pirates like yourselves did not merit an invitation? You're not eunuchs are you?

Assassin #1: Are you threatening us?

Captain Mordechai: Only a little! Savvy!

Assassin #2: Enough of this charade, he's on to us, let's take him!

Overture and Epic Sword Fight, Mordechai defeats the Assassins.

Captain Mordechai: Well that takes care of them, hard to find an honest pirate these days, ah wait those are called lawyers. I really should get back to the Ships Cabin before ... shiver me timbers, too late! Here comes that Captain Haman (Boo), he doesn't like me very much.

Captain Haman: Arr there you are Mordechai (Cheer), you know, I don't like you very much.

Captain Mordechai: What did I tell you. And it's Captain Jack Mordechai (cheer).

Captain Haman: Captain is it, well I don't see your ship, Captain!

Captain Mordechai: I'm in the market, as it were.

Captain Haman: You and your kind never show me any respect, I'm the Commodores first mate, the terror of the sea. And you don't keep to the Code of the Pirates.

Captain Mordechai: We mean no disrespect Captain Haman (boo), but we follow a Code that comes from heaven itself.

Captain Haman: Don't you want to share in the plunder and treasure?

Captain Mordechai: Not all treasure is silver and gold Captain Haman (boo).

Captain Haman: Your people have been rebellious ever since Shadach, Meshach .. and .. and that other landlubber.

Captain Mordechai: Abednego: good boy, nice singing voice, eunuch.

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Captain Haman: Show me your loyalty Mordechai (cheer), give me an Arr!

Captain Mordechai: Captain Haman (boo), I only Arr to God!

Captain Haman: Tis a sad day when a pirate can't get an Arr! You and all your people are going to be fish food, you'll all walk the plank for this, I swear it!

Haman leaves.

Captain Moredchai: How did we get into this mess? Things looked like they were going so well. To the man upstairs, you haven't said much so far in this play. Do you mind giving us some help? We could use a bit of Divine Providence right about now. Savvy!

Pirate Narrator: Buccaneers and Buccanesses, tis true, we haven't heard much from God at this point, and things do look pretty bad, but that doesn't mean the Big Guy is not working behind the scenes. Have some faith people, the shows not over until the geometrically challenged lady ... well you know!

Scene 4 Pirates of the Caribbean Overture, Haman and Zeresh

Captain Haman: That dastardly do-gooder Morechai (cheer), thinking about him gets me so vexed .. look at me, I'm pacing! Zeresh, wife I am need of your counsel, come and attend me with sweet words of villainy.

Overture Zeresh enters

Zeresh: How have you been my husband Haman (boo)

Captain Haman: Terrible m'darling, simply terrible. Thinking of Mordechai (cheer) and his moral band of eunuchs grieves my black heart.

Zeresh: Don't take it so personally, there is no need to overreact.

Captain Haman: Overreact! They defy the Code of the Pirates with their Code from heaven, so called! They don't steal, they don't kill and they even return lost property.

Zeresh: Return lost property, Oh my, those really *are* evil people. Do something Haman (boo) What is your plan?

Captain Haman: I will choose a day, a day like no other, a day we can destroy the Jewish People once and for all. It will be a glorious massacre.

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Zeresh: And that Mordechai (cheer), what of him? What of your plans for that one?

Captain Haman: I don't know, what do you suggest?

Zeresh: The hangman has not had much work as of late, so build new gallows, 75 feet high and during this special day of days you can hang him.

Captain Haman: 75 feet high, yes, I like it. Very public! Arr!

Zeresh: Aye, everyone will see, everyone will know what it means to cross swords with Captain Haman (boo) Have you chosen a date for this special day of days?

Haman: No, not yet, let's do that now.

Zeresh: In the usual way, in the custom of the pirates of the Black Persia. (Zeresh and Haman do Rock, Paper, Scissors) It's the 13th of Adar.

Captain Haman: Sounds good, nice ring to it. Maybe it isn't such bad luck to have a woman on board after all. Oh I am so excited, I can't wait to tell the Commodore.

Scene 5 Esther and Mordechai

Captain Mordechai: Esther (cheer)

Esther: What is it Mordechai (cheer)?

Captain Mordechai: That's Captain Mordechai (cheer), I'm trying to say something important Esther (cheer) .. but it's really hard to get a word in with all this cheering going on.

Esther: Well, stop saying my name then Mordechai (cheer).

Captain Mordechai: Now look, this is serious. Very serious! Captain Haman (boo) is planing to destroy our people.

Esther: What is that vile pirate up to now?

Captain Mordechai: He's planned a massacre on the 13th of Adar, he's going to wipe out the Jewish people from the Black Persia and all the seven seas! In one day!

Esther: Oh that is terrible, that heathen Haman (boo) is both a genius and a madman.

Captain Mordechai: It's remarkable how those two traits so often coincide. You will have to go to the Commodore. You will have to defend our people.

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Esther: Mordechai (cheer), you know I can't go to the Commodore without an invitation. It's against the Pirate Code. The penalty can be severe. I don't know if I can do it! The only exception is if he extends out his royal sceptre during parley! Only then he will spare my life. And it's been nearly 30 days since I was last invited to go to the Commodore.

Captain Mordechai: You haven't been invited to the Commodore in 30 days! Huh! Talk about a boring husband. He's not a eunuch is he? Look there are really only two rules, what a man can do and what a man can't do. You can accept that you are the Commodore's wife and that you have great influence, even leverage. Or you could ignore us and you'll have to square with that someday. But I'll tell you this, if you do nothing help will come from some other place. Perhaps you have come to this position for such a time as this.

Esther: You are right Mordechai (cheer), I will do this thing, go fast and pray, I will go to the Commodore even though it is against the Pirates Code, and if I perish I perish.

Scene 6 Overture, Commodore and Haman

Commodore Xerxes: You know that great feeling you have when you get into bed, fall straight to sleep and wake up feeling refreshed and ready to take on the day, well I don't have it. Here I am in the dead of night and I'm still awake. Worse, once again the rum is gone.

Captain Haman: Commodore, ah you're still awake I see, excellent! There be a plague upon the seas, a certain people of a certain race are onboard this very ship, they be dissolute creatures, Jewish pirates no less. If you but give me permission I will see that they get what they deserve, a short drop and a sudden stop. I'll feed em to the sharks.

Commodore Xerxes: Captain Haman (boo), are they really that bad?

Captain Haman: Aye! Sons of krakens to be sure. They keep not to the Pirates Code, neither steal, cheat or lie, and if unchecked we will left with naught but an empty bottle of rum.

Commodore Xerxes: Why is the rum always gone?

Captain Haman: Aye! A travesty of no ends, lets rid ourselves of these people and take all their stuff, what says the Pirate Code: take what ya can and give nothing back! Do we have an accord?

Commodore Xerxes: Aye! Get on the horn and send letters of marque. Let it known that we have cast lots, to be known as Purim, the date is set for all the Jews to be sent to Davy Jones locker. And Haman (boo), get me a bottle of rum!

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(Mordechai and Esther enter)

Captain Haman: Wait just a minute Mordechai (cheer), you can't come here before the Commodore uninvited. Its against the Code!

Captain Mordechai: Its *Captain* Jack Mordechai (cheer)

Captain Haman: What is to be done to the pirate who comes uninvited to the Commodore?

Commodore Xerxes: What is to be done to the pirate who comes uninvited to the Commodore? Thats a tough one, I should have paid more attention in pirate school. Anyone? Any thoughts?

Esther: Parley!

Captain Haman: What?

Esther: Parley! I invoke the right of parley. According to the code of the brethren set down by our ancestor pirates Abraham and Jacob you have to grant me an audience with the Commodore.

Commodore Xerxes: Captain Haman (boo), You'll lay no hand against those under the protection of parley.

Captain Haman: Well now, we must honour the code. Who in the blistering depths of the seven seas invented parley?

Captain Mordechai: Ah, that would be the French.

Commodore Xerxes: Now what is it you be wanting miss Esther (cheer)? And please use small words, we are but humble pirates.

Esther: I promised that I would be good wife. So if you gentlemen haven't got anything else to do I'd like to invite you to a banquet I'm preparing. There will be rum.

Commodore Xerxes: Well now, rum you say, seems like the schedule just opened up, what say you Captain Haman (boo)?

Captain Haman: Its a pirates life for me lady Esther (cheer), I'll be there.

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Scene 7 Overture Pirates

Esther: This is it Mordechai (Cheer), our one chance to save our people.

Captain Mordechai: I'm sure you'll do fine Esther (Cheer), just speak the truth and the truth shall set us free ... hmm, something Biblical about that. Savvy!

Commodore Xerxes: Delightful banquet, delicious spread, these spring rolls are to die for, what say you Haman (boo)?

Captain Haman: Oh they're all right.

Commodore Xerxes: Now look Haman (boo) there are two types of people in the world, people who like spring rolls and liars.

Captain Haman: I notice that your bottle is empty, would you like me fetch you another?

Commodore Xerxes: Seriously Haman (boo) what would I want with *two* empty bottles? Now then m'lassie Esther (cheer), the time be upon us, what is it you desire, name it, up to half my treasure. Did I really say that? Wow you must be good!

Esther: My noble Commodore and husband, if it pleases you to grant me my life, for there is an unjust plot to destroy my people and me along with them.

Commodore Xerxes: Someone dares to kill my lass, outrageous, who be this miscreant? I'll have his guts for a garter before the sun sets!

Esther: In truth the villain is close at hand Commodore, there is the adversary, the dread pirate Haman (boo). For I am Esther (cheer) of the Jewish people, and Captain Jack Mordechai (cheer) is actually my cousin from the tribe of Benjamin.

Captain Haman: What? I didn't know she was Jewish! This is terrible.

Captain Mordechai: No this is great!

Commodore Xerxes: Actually this is complicated!

Esther: It's not complicated, Captain Haman (Boo) has tricked you into signing letters of marque against my people, to destroy us all and that will include me. Your wife!

Captain Haman: Impossible!

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Captain Mordechai: Impossible? No, not probable! Now Captain Haman (boo) the game is up, don't do anything stupid. (Haman pulls out his sword) Like that!

Captain Haman: Curses and blistering barnacles, I knew it was bad luck to bring a woman on board. I'll take you with me Mordechai (cheer).

Epic Sword Fight, Overture Pirates, Haman is defeated

Commodore Xerxes: Well done Mordechai (cheer), the day is won.

Esther: But Commodore the letters of marque are still out there and they can't be changed according to the Pirates Code.

Commodore Xerxes: Well speaking of the code, let's just say they are more like guidelines than actual rules. I'll make new letters of marque to allow the Jewish people to defend themselves. That should fix everything shipshape.

Captain Mordechai: Well now, I'm feeling really good about all this. I think we have all come that special place, ecumenically, socially, grammatically. She's all set to be a good wife like she promised, Haman (boo) is set to die like the Commodore promised, Esther (cheer) is safe like I promised, so we are all men of our word, except for Esther (cheer) who is in a fact a woman.

Pirate Narrator: All right it didn't happen exactly like that. Perhaps we added a few tales of our own. But God does indeed work in mysterious ways, His hand, though not always so easily seen is still there, always! A day of darkness has been turned to light, sadness into joy, a time of despair into a season of generosity. And so it was decreed that this would be an everlasting festival for the Jewish People, to celebrate redemption, from now on and every year we will gather together for the Feast of Purim.

The End, Overture Purim Song Maccabeats