

# **WESTERN ESTHER,**

**OF**

**The Gunfight at the Oy Vey Corral**

**A Musical Blasphemy**

**Book, music, and lyrics**

**By Steve Hirsch**

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**Subject to change without notice.**

## **Dramatis Personae**

(ok, the folks in the play....)

### The Principals:

Queen Esther  
Mordechai  
Governor "King" Ahasuerus  
Nick Haman  
Miss Vashti  
Ben Chazzer, the Narrator

### Bad Guys

Teresh  
Bigthan  
Bad Guy 3  
Bad Guy 4

### "King's" Cronies

Mehumen  
Bizzetha  
Zethar  
Carcas

### Cast of "Shushan Idol"

Simon  
Paula  
Ryan  
Paris Meeskite

### People to Whom You Say "There are no small parts, only small actors"

The Irate Man  
The Governor's Secretary  
Lady-in-Waiting 1  
Lady-in-Waiting 2  
Lady-in-Waiting 3  
Servant  
The Old Indian Maid  
The Young Indian Maid  
Young Indian Maid's Mama  
Mrs. Red Dog  
Mrs. Sitting Bull

**Western Esther: or, The Gunfight at the Oy Vey Corral**  
**A Musical Blasphemy**

We open around the campfire. Four nasty looking bad guys are having coffee and beans.

Teresh: He's a mean one, I'm tellin' you – he's a bad hombre.

Bigthan: You think he's any worse then th' others you rode with?

Teresh: I think he's the orneriest polecat I ever met, I do. An I rode with the worst of 'em. I rode with Jesse James, and Billy the Kid, and John Wesley Hardin. I was with the Dalton Gang, the Wild Bunch, the TBA Men's Club, and Quantril's Raiders. But I think he's the most low-down, back-stabbin', cattle rustlin', theivin', lyin, claim-jumpin', bank robbin',, cheatin', swindlin, murderin', no-good cuss I ever knowed.

Bigthan: Wow. He's just a perfect role model.

(general agreement – but Bad Guy 3 scoffs)

Bad Guy 3: I don't know what he's got against them Indians, though. I never saw a man who hated Indians worse, not that I think there's anything wrong with that.

Teresh: I don't know why he does nothin' he does. Like why he wears that hat.

Bad Guy 3: Well, I gotta admit. That hat o' his is a strange thing. Hats like that'n ain't been around fer a hunnert years now. Mebbe he thinks he's George Washington or somethin'?!

Bad Guy 4: Well, why don't you ask him next time you set down to a nice friendly chat? 'Less you're too afraid a him?

Bad Guy 3: Afraid? Heck, ain't no one been born what I'm afraid of. If'n he were here I'd just stand up and say, "Hey Nick – how come you wear that stupid three-cornered hat. Ain't nobody worn hats like that since Benjamin Jefferson Franklin Hancock in the 'Merican Revolution.

(While he's speaking, NICK HAMAN walks in from the right, a scowl on his face, a 3 Cornered Hat on his head).

Nick: Not since the Revolution, huh? Well I'm revolting!

(As Bad Guy 3 looks in terror, Nick pulls a six-gun and shoots him dead. Bad Guy 3 expires spectacularly)

Teresh: You're a bad man, Nick Haman.

Nick: Don't you try to butter me up none. [he looks around] OK – it's about time I told you durn horn toads why I hired you. We're going to start us a little Range War. We're going to ride into town and raise a ruckus and shoot Governor Ahas fulla holes. Then I'm gonna blame the whole thing on the Indians... And then I'm takin' over... I'm gonna be the only law in Shushan Territory. No one is gonna dare speak his mind or try to oppose me. And I'll justify it all under the Patriot Act.

Bad Guy 4: You think the townsfolk will believe it's the Indians what done it? These here Indians are pretty peaceful.

(meanwhile, unknown to the Bad Guys an Indian is hiding, listening)

Nick: I don't give a hoot if the townsfolk believe it or not. I'm gonna blame it on the Indians and then wipe 'em all out. The only good Indian's a dead one.

Teresh: Sounds good to me, Haman.

(Bad Guy 2 starts to fidget- as he does, the Indian silently retreats.)

Bad Guy 4: Be right back. I gotta go take a leak. (he leaves)

Bigthan: Y'know that's amazing. I watched Westerns on TV for years and I never once saw a cowboy go to the bathroom.....

(All of a sudden, there's a blood curdling scream offstage from Bad Guy 4. Bigthan is terrified. Nick hardly reacts)

Nick: I suppose we oughta find out what happened to him. Go look.

(Bigthan goes offstage, then comes back, horrified and shaken. Nick looks at him, barely interested)

Nick: Well?

Bigthan: The Indians got 'im! They got 'im real bad!

Nick: (bored) Was he scalped?

Bigthan: Scalped? Scalped!? He was worse than scalped! He was .....CIRCUMCISED!!!!

## OVERTURE

[Ben Chazzer walks on from stage left. Ben is Gabby Hayes, Andy Devine, Smiley Burdette, Festus, and every 'sidekick' every Western Hero ever had. He's whiskered, grizzled, semi-literate, and our narrator]

Ben: Howdy...howdy. My name's Ben. Ben Chazzer. I'm a sidekick. Times is hard for a sidekick now. Used to be there was maybe five, six cowboys on TV all the time, and every one he had a sidekick. And his sidekick would stick with 'im through everything. It wuz good work, too. All ya needed to do wuz complain a lot, talk funny, and be dumb and ugly. I had work all the time... It'd be real nice nowadays, too. We could round up the bad guys, then him an' me, well, we could go back east to Massachusetts and get hitched....[he stares at the audience]. Well, you can do that now, it's one o' them blue states. You tell me Wild Bill and Jingles wouldn't a got hitched in a moment.

But we ain't here to talk about me. I want to tell you what happened back in Shushan Territory, when Governor "King" Ahasuerus threw hisself a big party fer him and his deputies. They was

cavalry and cowpokes and congressmen and other varmints. They wuz all out at the Silver Shekel Saloon –

The durn party went on for a whole week. An' there on stage was the star of the show....Miss Vashti.

[ We switch to the Silver Shekel Saloon – we'll have to use our imagination, but think of a big, long bar, the sort you saw in every cowboy film ever made. What's over the bar? Well, it could only be one of two things – a mirror, destined to shatter to pieces the moment somebody starts a fight, or a nude, shamelessly displaying herself to the general appreciation of all. So I guess it's a mirror. The cowboys stand at the bar, tossing down whiskey with a single throw. Some play poker. It's pretty rowdy, especially when MISS VASHTI takes the stage – of course she looks like she just walked out of 'Gunsmoke', complete with birthmark. There's also an old Indian present, sitting in the corner, arms folded.]

Vashti: Hello, Suckers! Drunk enough yet? You-all havin' yourselves a fine time here in Shushan? [General commotion]. You think it's wild here? You should see what's goin' on in the back with the Dance Hall Girls. Lookit you boys, drinking out of vessels of gold...it don't mean you can hold your likker any better. [she walks over stage left to Governor Ahas' table]. Well, looky here. What kinda low, miserable, crawlin insect is this? Why I think I know – it's Governor "King" Ahasuerus. How you doin' Shushan Boy?

[Governor Ahas is at his table with a bunch of prosperous cronies. They are all in fancy vests, all puffing fat cigars and drinking whiskey. This is a very self-satisfied bunch, and the Governor is not happy being spoken to in this manner]

Ahas: (self consciously) You watch the way you talk to me, Woman!

Vashti: Watch the way I talk to you? Well, Kingy-poo, you should consider yourself lucky I talk to you at all.

#### AIN'T MET A MAN

Some dumb wimmen just sit and settle  
I want a man who will prove his mettle,  
When I keep a cowboy you can bet he'll  
Thrill me through and through.  
Won't be rushed and I won't be hassled  
I'll keep look in until he's lassoed  
Hog tied branded and thrown and wrassled  
That's just what I'll do!  
And when I'm through,  
He'll be more of a man than you!

I met a cowboy west of Laramie,  
Kissed my hand and said he'd marry me,  
Cross that threshold he would carry me,  
Be my handsome prince.  
He thought we were "his and hers",  
Pipe and slip-pers jewels and furs,

Then I came to bed in spurs,  
Haven't seen him since.

Ain't met a man who could thirll my soul,  
Who could set my heart a flutter or my eyes to roll,  
Who was worth much more than a bul-let hole  
No matter what they do.

I'm a-lookin' for the King of the Wild Frontier  
who can rope those dogies and throw those steers  
And him and me are gona be real pioneers  
Gonna find my buckaroo!  
And when I do  
He'll be more of a man than you!

I met a man in San An tonio  
Told me he was quite a Romeo  
Boasted 'bout the tricks he'd show me, Oh  
Boy would things get hot.  
Turned out all his tricks were stale -  
Just another useless male.  
I spent just one night in jail after he got shot.

Ain't met a man who was worth my while  
Who could make me sing or make me smile,  
'Cause they ain't got guts and they ain't got style  
And they haven't got a clue.

I don't want no wimp, I don't want no toy,  
But how the hell you gonna find the real Mc-Coy  
in a territory governed by a Shushan boy  
Can you find a love that's true?  
But when I do  
He'll be more of a man than you.

I had a friend who lived in Denver.  
Said then Denver's where the men were  
Told me Denver men could send her  
Passion cross the crest.

I found no such El Dorado  
When I went to Col-o rado  
Denver men just sang castrato  
Same as all the rest!

Some dumb wimmen just sit and settle  
I want a man who will prove his mettle,  
When I keep a cowboy you can bet he'll  
Thrill me through and through.  
Won't be rushed and I won't be hassled  
I'll keep look in until he's lassoed

Hog tied branded and thrown and wrassled  
That's just what I'll do!  
And when I'm through,  
He'll be more of a man than you!  
!

Mehumen: [applauding] Well, ain't she just a peach.

Bizzetha: I tell you, there ain't a purtier gal in Shushan Territory than that 'ere Miss Vashti.

Ahas: [still angry] Yeah. Real purty. Let's say just a little...."high spirited"

Abagtha (laughs): High spirited? I hear she wears the pants in the family.

(the men laugh)

Ahas: Nonsense. What do you mean?

Zethar: [laughing] Well, we heard tell that Miss Vashti's the *real* governor in these parts, and it's her what tells you what to do.

Ahas: Ridiculous.[he leans over and gets in Zethar's face, pointing with his cigar] I am an *absolute monarch!* I am the *Law West of the Pecos!*

Carcas: Well, show us then. Command her to do an encore!

[all the men agree...this will be a good test]

Ahas: Well, all right, I will. I'll show you who wears the pants around here. [He stands. He is not wearing pants. He pulls them up angrily] Encore!

[there is no response]

Ahas: I said "Encore!"

[nothing]

Ahas: I said "Encore", dammit!

[Ahas pulls his pistol and fires up into the air. A second later, a cowboy in the saloon yells "Ow", clutches the top of his head, and dies, spectacularly]

[Miss Vashti comes out to the stage, smiles sweetly, and goes "Thhhhhhpt!", and turning around and giving the governor a fully-clothed moon, she exits]

Tarshish [truly upset]: What shall we do with Miss Vashti, according to law, for as much as she had not done the bidding of Governor Ahas!

Memucan: Miss Vashti ain't just stiffed the Gov'ner! All the wimmen are going to hear about this! And it's gonna make their husbands contemptible in their eyes.

Zethar: So what else is new?

Ahas: [angrily] Well, I won't stand for it (he sits....talk about cheap laughs. )

Memucan: Gov'ner, I think you oughta git Miss Vashti outa town on the afternoon stage and find yourself another gal.

Ahas: Memucan, you're right. I want you to put a notice in that newspaper of yours.

Memucan: You mean "The Shushan Rag"?

Ahas: Yes. And I want you to have gals here by Sattiday night so I can choose me a new wife. I want you to go to every homesteader and rancher and squatter in this here territory and bring me their gals. I don't care if you go all the way to Pottstown. I want you to fetch me every virgin in the territory!

Carcas: I thought you wanted a choice.....

Ahas: Let the gal that pleaseth me be queen instead of Vashti. And when the king's decree which he shall make be published throughout all his kingdom, great though it be, all wives will give to their husbands honor, both to great and small.

Zethar: From your mouth to God's ears....

(they all shake their heads in unision. It's a done deal)

Ben: And so the sheriff arrested Miss Vashti and rode her outa town on the afternoon stage and sent her back east. And nobody never heard of her again until she became Senator from New York.

Mordechai: Heap big problem with squaw, Governor?

Ahas: Who are you, Injun?

Mordechai: I am called Mordechai - the son of Jair the son of Shimei the Son of Kish.

Ahas: Well son-of-a-bitch! What do you have to say?

Mordechai: Only that in the writings of my people, we have many stories to show troubles with squaws. Right from first chapter – trouble after trouble with squaws. As the old saying goes in Yiddish, "Cherchez La Femme".

Ahas: Cherchez la femme? What does that mean?

Mordechai: It mean when there's trouble – look for the woman.

### CHERCHEZ LA FEMME

When I think of human history  
And all the pain and misery  
Our gender has encountered and endured.  
I am constantly incredulous  
That after we've been fed with this



We haven't been catharted, calmed, and cured.

Pox upon thee, Mother Eve  
We can't accept,  
We can't believe  
You're still demanding that we eat the fruit.

You cajole, coerce and tease,  
Exasperate our puberties,  
But woe are we  
History  
Affords no substitute....

King Holofernes  
Sat up and said,  
"I wanna girl,  
The kinda girl  
Who'll make me lose my head."  
That Judith was some dish –  
So nice  
So stacked  
She sliced  
She hacked  
The king got his wish.

Samson was strong of  
Sinew and thigh...  
He had it there,  
Up in his hair,  
Till 'Lila happened by.  
She came on sweet and pure  
When Sam awoke  
His strength was broke  
He had a coiffure.

You look at King David –  
He goes out and picks a ...  
A slut  
A stain  
A sin  
A shame  
A sorrow  
A shiksa!

Examine them all,  
Their behavior is faulty.  
What's wrong with Lot's wife?  
Oh, her language was salty.

It's shameful that we want 'em  
It's sinful that we need 'em.

I tell ya, Lord  
If not for broads  
We'd still be in Eden.

But she ate the apple,  
And we hadda scram...  
The moral of the story?  
Cherchez la femme!

I'll tell my son  
And you can tell yours  
To never stray  
And keep away  
From virgins, wives, and whores  
(all one in the same)  
Keep far away from them ...  
Though laurels for pectorals  
They've no morals like men.

Men are serene  
And righteous and pure.  
But tell your heir  
Beware the snare  
Or screw it up for sure!

Tell him ad nauseam  
He won't be worth a damn  
If you don't tell him,  
Cherchez la femme,  
Sam!  
Cherchez, cherchez la femme!

And the Governor's message reached every part of the kingdom – to all the Persians and the Medes – and Mordechai carried it out to the Indians.....

[the Silver Shekel disappears – and in its place, we see the Indian Village – and hear the drums, the same “Indian Drums” from a million movies -- “DUM dum dum dum / DUM dum dum dum / DUM dum dum dum / DUM dum dum dum – we hear animal cries and grunts]

Ben: Jus' lissen to them savages pounding their dern drums...howlin' and carryin' on ...I wonder what it is they're saying...

[the Indians appear on stage; they are wearing jerseys – Washington Redskins, Chicago Blackhawks, Cleveland Indians, Atlanta Braves, etc....they have warpaint and feathers. They sing and dance to “Indian Music”]

Shema! Yisrael!  
Adonai, elo heinu  
Adonai echad!

[Mordechai walks in, reading the newspaper...]

Ben: Now this here Injun Mordechai -- he had brought up Haddassah, that is Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father or mother, and the maiden was of beautiful form and fair to look on....

[Mordechai wears an Indian tunic with tzitzes and tefillin with a feather....Esther is bored and sullen. She sits on a pillow, iPod earbuds, reading a copy of "People"]

Mordechai: [reading the paper] Man, oh, Maneschewitz!

[Esther does not respond]

Mordechai: We have to take you to Shushan!

[Esther does not respond]

Mordechai: Esther!....[he shakes his head...finally, he comes over and yanks the earbuds out of her ears...]

Esther: What?

Mordechai: Esther, you have to start paying attention. We have to take you to Shushan. There's going to be a big contest.

Esther: Why? I hate Shushan. I'm not going.

Mordechai: The Governor has commanded it. Every virgin in the kingdom has to go there.

Esther: Well, that's easily remedied....

Mordechai: Don't be smart with me young lady. This is a big chance for you. The governor wants to choose a new wife, and you're of beautiful form and fair to look on.

Esther: Ugh! The governor's a dork! He's old, fat, and gross. There's no way I'm going.

Mordechai: Esther, this isn't just important for you, this is important for every Indian! Do you know how important this is?

Esther: I'm not going.

Mordechai: Esther, you're acting obnoxious. Do understand how important it would be for an Indian girl to become Queen?

[Now she's interested. Esther's eyes light right up at this prospect – she's downright eager now]

Esther: Queen? You mean if I won the contest I'd be *Queen*?

Mordechai: Yes! You'd be the second most powerful person in the kingdom! No Indian has ever been that powerful!

Esther: Well, it almost happened with Lieberman.....

Mordechai: Yeah, but none of those old Seminoles could figure out the ballot.....

Esther: But I'd be Queen if I won? I mean, I wouldn't have to *like* the King, would I?

[Mordechai rolls his eyes] I think you'd have to sleep with him.

Esther: YUCK!

Mordechai: [enticingly] You'd be Queen.....

Esther: [she decides] I could live with it. But I don't have anything to wear! I need new moccasins! I need new skins....

Mordechai: Don't worry, Esther, I went hunting yesterday. I shot a Shmata (he holds up a new outfit)

Esther: Let's start packing!!

[Interlude: A teenage Indian maiden comes walking happily across the stage, arm in arm with a guy in a wild mask, covered with feathers all over, and looking generally bizarre)

Maiden: Look, Mama! We're engaged! [the maiden holds out her hand so Mama can see the ring]

Mama: You idiot! I said a *rich* Doctor!

[The Scene Switches – We are now on the set of the contest – yes, it's time for "Shushan Idol"]

Ryan (he's just so hip!) ...and for the last 12 months we've scoured the kingdom, looking for virgins...holding auditions in every stinking camp in Shushan, auditioning and humiliating young people every step of the way! And finally, here they are – your *final 2 contestants*. And tonight we'll finally find out! Who will be the next *Shushan Idol*!?

[the audience cheers! One of the contestants is all dolled up – but not our Esther – she is wearing a simple top with a long skirt – but she's trying hard to not look like an Indian, right down to the cowgirl hat & boots...She's staying very close to Mordechai. Governor Ahas is sitting off to the side with one or two of his cronies, watching]

Esther: Oh, Cousin Mordechai, I'm so nervous. What if I don't win?

Mordechai: Just remember that the king's wife just left him. He's looking for an old-fashioned girl that he can boss around. Come across nice and submissive and you got it made.

Esther: You want *me* to act submissive? You've *got* to be kidding.

Mordechai: Remember, Esther – you're doing it for the Indian people! But whatever you do, *don't* tell them you're an Indian!

Ryan: Let's meet our final contestants! First, Miss Paris Meeskite!...[Paris waves], from Deep in the Heart of Sumeria, and our other contestant, Miss Esther Haddassah, from...hmmm....it doesn't say.....

Simon: [from the judges table, in black t-shirt & English accent] Well come on, Paris...you're first

Paula: Don't be rude, Simon. There's no need to be rude....that's not really nice....

Ryan: She's a little loopy...

Paula: Oh you shut up....

[Paris trots out & sings a few bars of whatever god-awful song was most recently featured on 'AI']

Simon: Well, that was simply awful....you sound like a croaking toad who hasn't eaten a good beetle in a fortnight....who told you you could sing? They were making a cruel joke ....you have utterly no talent and what's more, you're overweight and funny looking....why don't you go somewhere and shoot yourself....?

Paula: Simon, that was nasty...

Simon: Oh, shut up, you has been.....

[Paris is convulsed with shame and rushes off the stage in tears]

Ahas: Boy! This is real entertainment!

Simon: OK...now let's hear from this Esther person. Honestly, I have *no* idea how she got this far...in the last show I thought she sounded like a creaky hinge on an old violin case that hadn't been greased since 1750 and then wasn't done very well anyway on account of the bad weather they were having in Cremona .....[everyone tries to understand this metaphor] Paula, I think you've rigged this...

Paula: Go to hell, Simon...

Ryan: She's loopy

Simon: Un-believable....

Esther: Cousin Mordechai...I can't sing these things... I'd be lying...I can't be a submissive goody two shoes.....

Mordechai: Yes you can. Be submissive now and yourself after the wedding...it happens all the time.....

[Esther comes forward in her long skirt, tunic, cowgirl boots, hat....and heaves a sigh and pulls on the skirt...down it comes. The tunic has become quite a short miniskirt]

I'M OLD FASHIONED

Oh I'm just a little cowgirl,  
A cow girl that's me!  
I got boots and I got sixguns  
As you plainly can see.  
And I'm ready to change  
Both my name and ad-dress  
For a home on the range  
(But I freely con fess  
That I don't know just how I got in to this mess),  
But I'm just old fashioned I guess.

And if we we re married  
I'd be mild and meek.  
I'd pay rapt attention when ever you speak.  
I'll have dinner ready when you walk through the door.  
I'll wear pearls and dresses when I mop the floor.  
You'll think that it's freaking nineteen-fifty-four.  
Oh, I'll do what ever you say.  
'Cause I'm just old fashioned that way.

Come home real late,  
I don't care if you drink.  
Just leave your dishes right there in the sink.  
Come to the bedroom still reeking ing of gin.  
Shake me and wake me and when you come in,  
I'll rub your sore shoulders,  
I'll pour you a beer,  
And I'll put on that skimpy nightie that's cut down to here.  
And we'll make magic love  
Till you drift off to dreams  
(And that way you won't hear hear my blood curdling screams  
As I keep up this act till I'm ready to hurl!)  
But I'm just and old fashioned girl.  
Just watch the playoffs,  
Pour beer in my plants.  
Tell filthy jokes to my elderly aunts.  
Just keep your brains tucked a way in your pants.  
I'll smile till my own brains explode, 'cause  
I'm just old fashioned,  
You toad.

[throughout the song, Ahas is just transfixed. This is his dream girl. Cute, sexy – and most of all, submissive. He's in love]

Simon: Well, that was just miserable. That was the worst performance I have ever heard. Who told you you can....

Ahas: I liked it (he pulls his sixgun and points it at Simon).

Simon: It was wonderful.

Ryan: And our new Shushan Idol, by unanimous vote of the Governor, is – Esther Hadassah Whatshername!

[Esther reacts appropriately hysterically – Ahas rushes over to her]

Ahas: Esther....that was so...it was so wonderfully....docile, passive, servile, and submissive.

Esther: Oh, that's me....little Miss Pliable and Accommodating.....[it kills her to say this]

Ahas: And that's a lovely dress [he says as he's looking down the front of it]...what is that lovely dress. made of?

Esther: Oh, this? It's from Shmata. It's just a little thing I picked up at the mall in King of Persia. [pause – then to audience] You can get lots of shmatas in King of Persia.

Ahas: Esther....tell me honestly, even though I'm king, the only law West of the Pecos, absolute monarch, and arbiter of life and death for every person in Shushan...what do you think of me?

[she looks desperately at Mordechai for an answer]

Esther: I don't think you're nearly as loathsome as I first thought....

[Bang! There's a shot offstage, and two attendants carry out the lifeless body of Paris Meeskite across the front of the action]

Ahas: [he's not listening, anyway....] Oh, Esther...will you get your lawyer to speak to my lawyer, and we'll see if we can draw up a mutually acceptable pre-nuptial agreement that will protect each of our respective assets in case of irreconcilable differences at some unnamed time in the future?

Esther: I love it when you talk dirty....

Ahas: Marry me, Esther.....swear to love, honor, and most of all, obey....

Esther: Oh (she turns, disgusted, to the audience), your majesty!

Ahas: And then can we have safe sex?

Esther: Yes, I'm a condom-indian.....

AH, MY HEART  
Ah my heart,  
Ah my heart,  
Ah sweet mystery...  
How I plead that I may read  
Your medical history.

At the clinic we will cuddle,  
While the the nurse who tests our blood'll  
Tell if we can risk a cuddle  
Or a subtle noon soiree

Ah my heart,  
Ah my heart.  
Would'st thou kiss me please?  
Please come sign here on this line that you've no STDs  
Love insists,  
Love demands  
Hold me close!  
(Wash your hands!)  
Ah my heart,  
Ah my heart  
Ah my heart.

Ah I melt  
I've not felt  
Bliss like this before....  
Do I dare ask if you've shared  
A passionate kiss before?

Yes, I've done this bit already,  
And have got all hot and sweaty.  
Did he take you off to beddy-bye?  
He didn't try...afraid he'd die....

Ah, my sin,  
I give in  
To those devil eyes.  
But that sin we'll not begin till you've been sterilized!

We'll declare each our loves  
But we'll wear rubber gloves,  
Ah my heart  
Ah my heart  
Ah my heart

Ben: And so the Governor loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins...

[ All the dance hall girls go "Thpppppppt" to Esther]....so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her Queen instead of Vashti. And Esther was taken into the Gov'ner's mansion, and the maiden pleased the king, and he advanced her and her maidens to the best place in the house of the women....

....but she could only come to see him when she was called...'cuz if you went to the governor without being summoned...the penalty was *death*...



[The governor's secretary is at her desk....head down in her work. In comes an Irate Man. The Irate Man says:]

Irate Man: I demand to see the governor!

Secretary: [without looking up] Do you have an appointment?

Irate Man: I don't need an appointment!

Secretary: [without looking up, she pulls a six-gun and shoots him]

Ben: Meanwhile ....Nick Haman was up to his dirty deeds.....and back at his hideout at the Oy Vey Corral, he was plotting some pretty ornery stuff....

[Nick Haman comes out with two of the bad guys from the opening scene, Teresh & Bigthan] – but they don't notice that Mordechai is hiding, listening to everything....

Nick: Well, the governor has just gone too far now....I just can't take it any more.....did you see him back at the Silver Shekel...doing that vaudeville number with an *Indian*?

Teresh: Y'know he's really not a bad dancer.....

Nick: Shut up, you fool. It's a disgrace, I say....and it's about time we got rid of *both* of them....Ahaserus *and* his Indian buddy.

Bigthan: How come you hate the Indians so much, Nick?

Nick: How come I hate the Indians! Isn't it obvious! They're *different!* They're not the same as us! They're disgusting – they win Nobel prizes and write songs and novels and make medical discoveries and build businesses and give to charities! It's totally revolting.

Teresh: Yeah, sounds pretty nasty to me....

Nick: I want you hombres to do something about this – I want you to wait here at the Oy Vey corral, and when the Governor comes by, I want you to *bushwack* him. And once he's out of the way, we can do away with the damn Indians....You just listen.

#### THE ONLY GOOD INDIAN'S A DEAD ONE.

When I was boy  
The only joy I found  
Was a summer job I had  
Gassing puppies at the pound.  
And when other children said  
I wasn't fun to be around  
Then their turtles would go missing  
And their goldfish would be drowned!

But the man who put a stop to all my childhood's fond pursuits

And expressed his strong conviction I was rotten to my roots  
And who told the judge that I was far less human than the brutes!  
That man was a red one!  
The only good Indian's a dead one.

When I was a young man  
And was overcome with envy  
And a lust for loot and power  
So I ran for State Assembly  
And I told the legislators  
That their salaries should rise  
And I murdered the debators  
And I said "Hey, listen, guys...."  
Let's just steal from human services  
And no one will be wise!

But the man who put a stop to all my brilliant legislation  
Who uncovered all my plotting and went out and told the nation  
So embarrassed me I publicly cast votes for Education! (sob)  
That man also was a red one.  
The only good Indian's a dead one.

Now I'm sheriff here in Shushan  
It's a little shy of splendid...  
And my rise to total power  
Hasn't gone as I've intended!

Ahasuerus is an ass and can be easily deposed  
And I'll make my grab for power just as soon as he is hosed..  
Then except for those damn Injuns I'll be fully un-opposed!  
I'll get rid of Ahasuerus  
And install my own regime.  
(Though I really hate to say this  
I might just not kill the queen –  
She might serve an useful purpose  
If you know just what I mean)  
So now go, you fools, get everything I've said done --  
We'll ensure that every Indian's a dead one.

Ben: But Mordechai had heard the plot and rushed to tell Esther....and Esther told the Governor. And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found to be so...[Music from "Hang 'Em High" in the background] .and the Governor strung up Teresh and Bigthan right there in the corral.

And y'know, it was kind of ironic – 'cuz the Oy Vey Corral got its name from an Indian Legend....

THE WIND REPLIED "OY VEY"

It was an ancient Indian maid  
Who came upon this place.

Her eyes were dimmed by many years  
And tears were on her face.  
And facing to the sunset  
In the blazing end of day...  
The maid began to pray.

“Two sons you gave me, God,” she said  
“To comfort my old age.  
I thought that each at least would be  
A sachem or a sage...  
True one son is a medicine man,  
But the other, who can say?”  
And the wind replied, “Oy Vey”  
Oy vey, Oy vey  
The wind replied “Oy vey.”

She said “I got no decent skins  
Not anything to wear.  
I think that I should change my name  
To Mrs. Running Bear.  
But my husband shot a shmata  
And I wear it every day!”  
And the wind replied, “Oy vey.”

“I got a crick here in my neck  
Another in my side.  
This wouldn't happen if I had  
A decent horse to ride...  
A horse whose name was 'Lexus'  
Might be perfectly OK”  
And the wind replied, “Oy vey.”

It is a sin to curse the wind,  
But that is what she did!  
She said “This wind should only go  
And drop dead, God forbid!”

And because of that curse  
The wind got worse  
And the sky turned dark and grey.

And suddenly there was a fearsome shriek  
And a gasp and a groan and a wail!  
And the Indian maid disappeared in the wind  
And was lost in the force of the gale!

And the Indians say  
Though I think it's a stretch  
If you listen real close  
You can still hear her kvetch!

And whenever she kvetches  
The earth sorta wretches  
And the sky turns black  
And the thunderbolts crack  
And the whirlwind howls all day!  
The whirlwind screams,  
"Oy, Vey"  
(oy gevalt, oy vey ist mir,  
oy oy gevalt oy vey ist mir!)  
Oy Vey!

Interlude: Mrs. Sitting Bull and Mrs. Red Dog meet on the street.

Mrs. Sitting Bull: Yoo Hoo, Mrs. Red Dog, how are you dollink?

Mrs. Red Dog: Nu, Mrs. Sitting Bull! Vas machs du? What is new with your son Sheldon?

Mrs. Sitting Bull: Vey is mir. Mrs. Red Dog, I hate to say it, but he married outside the tribe.

Mrs. Red Dog: Married outside the tribe!! Oy vey, Mrs. Sitting Bull what did you do?

Mrs. Sitting Bull: I'm so ashamed and embarrassed that I changed my name?

Mrs. Red Dog: Mrs. Sitting Bull! Changed your name? To what?

Mrs. Sitting Bull: Mrs. Sitting Shiva

Ben: [comes back reading a postcard...]

...and last week we visited Old Ironsides and Fanueil Hall and now we're heading to a cozy little bed and breakfast in the Berkshires. A big hug from Keemosabee. Love & kisses, Tonto.....

Speaking of cozy, it wasn't long before Esther and Ahaserus had got prêt-ty cozy themselves....and Esther realized that being the Queen wuzn't too bad, and Ahasuerus was summoning her to the Governor's Mansion..oh, sixteen or seventeen times a week....

(Esther walks out on stage, a very satisfied smile on her face. She has, apparently, been 'well summoned')

AHASUERUS  
Ah, ah  
Ahasuerus  
When you say those  
Pretty words you say  
I'm all a-quiver  
I'm just chopped liver  
And I become an Indian giver  
I'm blown away  
I sit here moanin' all day.

I wanna go to you, show to you  
I wanna owe to you  
All that I got  
Whether you called me or not,  
But I would probably get shot  
While standing right on that spot,  
So I'm not!

Ah, Ah  
Ahaseurus  
This girl may go  
Simply quite insane...  
Each time I'm summoned,  
My heart starts drummin'  
And I can feel my body hummin  
Wild refrains....

And I got plans for that man and me  
They don't teach in school  
I just can't tell you my fantasies  
They'd cause you to drool  
I'd really like to, but can't you see  
This play's in a shul  
We're in shul!  
That's so cool...

Ah, Ah,  
Ahasuerus  
.....there's noting else that rhymes.  
It's not the worst of crimes  
If I use my sense  
Of poetic license  
These are desperate times.

But you're an ornery polecat  
You're disgusting and mean  
But from the moment I was told that  
You had made me a queen  
You just became the sweetest soul that  
Baby I've ever seen.  
I'm the Queen!  
It's so keen!

(Esther sits expectantly in her throne, rushed to by her ladies-in-waiting, who adoringly give her a manicure and pedicure, etc.)

Lady-in-Waiting 1: Your majesty, what costly and elegant raiment is your pleasure this morning....we have fine silks of the Orient, soft Egyptian cottons, linens from Tibet...

Lady-in-Waiting 2: With what shall we adorn you, your magnificence? We have diamonds and rubies from Africa, Mesopotamian gold, silver from the mines of Peru....

Lady-in-Waiting 3: What is your pleasure for breakfast this morning? We have prepared fresh breast of hummingbird, with nectar of passionfruit...

Esther: Couldn't I just have a bagel with a shmear? (she covers her mouth, realizing she shouldn't reveal any semetic tastes...)

Interlude:

[Spaghetti Western Music in the Background: A disembodied voice announces....

*The good* [Cowboy all in white comes on stage and faces audience], *the bad* [Nick comes on stage and faces the audience] *and the ugly* [Cowboy with a paper bag over his head and hat on the bag comes out and faces the audience. I have no pride.]

Ben: But meanwhile, back at the Silver Shekel, Nick Haman was wormin' in on Governor Ahas, tryin; to weasel his way into power.

[Nick is walking across stage with the Govenror, Memucan, Bizzetha, Abagtha, & the boys...]

Nick: I tell you, Governor, they're planning a general uprising! My spies have been watching... they've been stockpiling arrows, whittling down trees for bows.... Some of em' even got Colt 45s and Winchester repeaters....

Ahas: You don't mean....

Nick: Yessir... weapons of mass destruction!

Ahas: And you say they're planning an attack?

Nick: Absolutely.

Ahas: What about the North Koreans?

Nick: Forget them. There's oil on the Indian reservation...

Ahas: [Ahas is visibly upset and waffling] What should we do?

Nick: (an evil smile on his face) Just let me take care of it. (he whispers in the Governor's ears...the Governor considers this, makes a face, and makes up his mind)

Ahas: Mecuman...I want you to put a proclamation in that 'ere newspaper of yours. I, Governor "King" Ahasuerus, the only Law West of the Pecos...

Abagtha: Governor, I think we're actually East of the Pecos

Ahas: Where are the Pecos? Somebody check Mapquest.

Mecuman: ...(checks his laptop) I think they're in New Mexico...

Ahas: wherever the hell the Pecos are... hereby proclaim Sherrif Nick Haman as our new Secretary of Defense!

Nick: (reminds him...) ....you forgot the bow down part...

Ahas: Oh yeah. And everyone has to bow down to him....

[Haman steps forward and points to the floor. Ahas' other counselors prostrate themselves to him..]

Ben: So Governor Ahas promoted Nick Haman, that dirty son-of-an-Aggagite, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him, and all the people bowed down and prostrated themselves to him.

[Citizens walking past all bow down before Nick. (Ok...so I did this bit last time)...citizens prostrate themselves...Nick walks away and they get up...then he scoots back & down they go again....we do this up and down a few times....]

Nick: God, I love public service.

[Then who should walk past but Mordechai, reading Torah, and he walks past Nick without paying attention at all]

Nick: Ahem....

Mordechai: Oh, hiya, Haman.

Nick: You're supposed to be prostrate.

Mordechai: Nick, don't bother me with your prostrate problems.

Nick: It is the Governor's command! You're supposed to grovel!

Mordechai: [said with profound pride] Hey, Haman. I'm Jewish. I don't grovel to anyone except my wife....

Nick: You bow to me, you dirty Redskin!

[They scuffle in the usual missed-punch cowboy movie style. After all, we gotta have a fistfight somewhere....Mordechai gets the upper hand! He pulls out his tomahawk!! He's about to brain Nick and finish him off !!! Then he looks at the tomahawk in disgust and lets Nick go]

Nick: [beat up]What's the matter,Injun....too noble to scalp me...?

Mordechai: No. This tomahawk. It's milchig....

[Mordechai walks off stage. Nick is enraged!]

Nick: That damn Indian. I'll get rid of him. I'll wipe out his whole damn tribe.

MORDECHAI

As I think of the ways that I've  
Tortured and terrified  
On those magical days  
That I rose up to sherrif I've  
Just laughed as my foes  
Have all shriveled and died!  
I'm satisfied.

But of late, it appalls me  
A rival's appeared  
At a time when my climb's but complete!  
And it burns and it galls me  
It's worse than I feared!  
This ass has got talents  
While I in the balance  
Have nothing with which to compete!

Mordechai! Mordechai!  
Oh but I'm mortified!  
Wounded upset and dismayed!  
This Injun's unduly  
Offended yours truly  
No proper respect has been paid!

Mordechai, Not that I  
Feel I have too much pride  
I would just humbly say now  
That groveling Jewry  
Is only what's due me  
So get on your haunches and bow!

Mordechai, Mordechai  
What if I  
Practice some homicide?  
Just have your Injun throat slit?  
Now that would be sporty,  
Now wouldn't it, Morty...  
But you wouldn't like it a bit.

But to the end of all time  
Folks will tell of my crime  
And what stories they'll tell of my fame.  
And the chief of my joys  
Will be hearing the noise  
Whenever they mention my name!

Mordechai, Mordechai,  
Maybe I oughta try  
Going a little bit further...  
Cut the cards,



Pick an Ace  
Wipe out the Injun race!  
Time for a little mass murder!

Now I'll pick out a date  
Not too soon, not too late  
When I'll send his whole tribe  
To their dooms!

On the thirteenth of Adar  
They're dead, right where they are!  
Or I'll eat my hat  
Stuffed with prunes!

[Ahas walks back on stage...with his cronies. They are at a table at the saloon, tossing back whiskeys cowboy style, and are quite drunk. Nick runs over to him, enraged...he stops short and looks at the cronies expectantly...they heave a sigh and prostrate themselves.]

Nick [rapidly]: Governor Ahas! These Indians are scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the counties of the territory! And their laws are diverse from those of every people; neither keep they the laws; therefore it profiteth not the governor to suffer them!

Ahas: Say wha?

Nick: I want them terminated with extreme prejudice.

Ahas: [he doesn't understand at all – nor does he care...he waves away the question and takes another drink] Whatever. Perhaps you'd care to donate to the election finance reform campaign....[he holds out his palm]

Nick: ...and...and...I'll donate ten thousand dollars in silver, in the interest of honest elections and good government. Anonymously.

Ahas: Ten thousand dollars in silver! What did you say you wanted to do?

Nick: Never mind...just sign here....Bartender! Whiskey for the Governor!

Ben: And Haman...and the governor sat down to drink. I mean, what else did you ever see a cowboy do? Chase cows, drink, and shoot people. You probably never knew how active we were in Kiwanis.

Ben: And so it was published in The Shushan Epitaph and sent all over the territory... in the name of Governor Ahas was it written: to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish all the Indians, both young and old, little chillen's and wimmen, too! In one day! Even upon the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, which is in the month of Adar.

Mordechai: [Comes on stage urgently reading the newspaper] ....this is not good. This is so not good. This is terrible.

Esther: Cousin Mordechai! What's wrong....?

Mordechai: It's the governor. He says he wants peace with the Indians.

Esther: What's wrong with that?

Mordechai: He thinks that the best way to make someone peaceful is to kill him.

Esther: (pause - grimly) Yeah. I guess that's pretty effective.

Mordechai: Here....read it yourself.

Esther: Ahasuerus would never do this on his own! This has got to be Haman's influence! Those damn lobbyists!

Mordechai: Esther, you have to go to him...go to the Governor. And make supplication for your people!

Esther: But Mordechai, all the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law! To be put to death! And I have not been summoned to come in to the king for 30 days now!

Mordechai: Must've been a tough month....

Esther: The toughest.....

Mordechai: Esther. You're our only hope. What's more, when he finds out you're an Indian, he'll kill you too!

Esther: Cousin Mordechai, I'm frightened! He'll shoot me right there if I go to him unsummoned! What makes you think he'll listen to me!

Mordedchai: Esther...I have confidence in you. What man could ever say "no" to a Native American Princess.....

Esther: [she is struggling with the decision, but she makes it] OK. I want you to get the whole tribe together and fast for me. And I and my maidens will neither eat nor drink for three days...I mean, look at me, really..... Would you go before the king if you were this enormous?....Does this shmata make me look fat?

[Mordechai rolls his eyes]

[ominous music begins...]

Ben: Well, that little slip of a girl had more true grit than I seed in a lotta menfolk, let me tell you. Jes' three days later, she put on her best boots ....and her shortest skirt...and risked her *whole life* to go see the governor.....

[we see the same desk and the same secretary, still with her head down, scribbling away. Nick and Ahas are absorbed in conversation, off to the side. They don't see her.  
Tentatively...terrified...Esther comes close....]

Esther: I'd...I'd like to see the Governor please?

Nick: Oh, this is just too perfect....it's the queen, un-summoned. He'll have his own wife shot.

Secretary: Do you have an appointment? [she raises her pistol, never looking up]

Esther: No...I just need to see the Governor really badly....

[the Secretary cocks the pistol...and all of a sudden, Esther takes a breath and has a complete change of character – she draws her own six gun, points it at the secretary and shouts]

Esther [a real desperado now]: *Reach for the sky, you Babylonian Bimbo!*

[the secretary, astounded, drops her gun]

Esther: Now I'm a-goin in to see the Governor, and if you try and stop me, I'll fill you fulla lead.

Secretary: Um...the Governor will see you now.....

[Esther's very gait has changed. She's now practically walking like William S. Hart in the old silent Westerns]

Ahas: Why, it's Esther! Why, Esther, come on in! Esther! [he notices..]You're...different....

Esther: This is what three days on a diet will do to a girl.....

Ahas: [he's a bit intimidated] Well, what can I do for you? You want half the territory...? You just name it....

Esther: I've come here to invite you to a bar-b-cue. The big feed bag. The ultimate chuck wagon. I got it all set up over at the Oy Vey Corral. [she walks up to all six feet four of Nick in her four-foot eleven-ness, looks straight up and says] And bring him. I want him as my *special guest*....

Nick: Excuse me...you risked sudden death to come here and invite me to dinner?

Esther: Yer darn tootin' I ain't afraid o' you, nor nothin' else.

Ahas: Whoa...oh, I like this....this is a little kinky....

Ben: Well, that night, the Governor couldn't sleep he was so excited about Esther's barbecue.. but then he got him to thinking, which ain't never good for a politician. And he picked up the paper and read about how Mordechai had discovered the plot against him.

Ahas: Hey, what did we ever do to reward that Indian?

Servant: Squat, sir.

Ben: So the next day, the Governor spoke to Haman, who was feeling pretty proud of his-self that the queen had asked him to come to dinner. In fact, Haman was feeling pretty high-falutin' in general

Ahas: You know, I was up late last night thinking.....

Nick: That's not a good thing for a politician....

Ahas: I know. But y'know, sometimes a guy does a king a real big favor....

Nick: [with false modesty] Oh, that's nothing, Governor...

Ahas: No, really (he puts his arm around Nick) I think sometimes its important to really show guys like that that I really appreciate them.

Nick: Aw, governor, you shouldn't.....

Ahas: Nick ....what should be done unto the man who the king delighteth to honor...?

Nick: Delighteth?

Ahas: Delighteth.

Nick: Oh, no, really, Governor

Ahas: Yes, really...

Nick; [of course, this could only be him....] Well...hmmm. Y'know that prize horse of yourn – that Smarty Seabiscuit Secretariat? You could put him on that there horse, and parade him around all of Shushan, with all the dance hall girls throwin' flowers and have some big wig shoutin' out "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor!"

Ahas: Really?

Nick: Reallly.

Ahas: Well, that's a swell idea. And I want you to go fetch that Indian feller, that Morty Chai?

Nick: Oh yeah? (delighted) We gonna give him a little necktie party?

Ahas: (Matter of factly) Well, if you want to give him a nice tie, that's OK, too, but I really want you to do is lead him around the city and shout out that "delighteth" stuff.

Nick: What??

Ahas: Well, I don't know what you're upset about. It was your idea! ....See you at Esther's dinner tomorrow! [he leaves]

Nick: He wants me to do all that to that stinking Indian! This is more than I can stand. This is more than anyone can stand! Well the time's almost come to bring in the cavalry and wipe out those damn redskins once and for all. Right after that idiot queen's dinner!

Ben: So the gov'nor and Haman came to chow down with Queen Esther at the Oy Vey Corral. And boy, oh, boy, them was good vittls! They wuz stuffin theirselves silly for more n' two days!

[there are fast food containers all over the place. Ahas is being waited on by Esther, who looks disgusted every time he reaches for another chicken leg. Nick is standing off to the side, miserable and scowling]

Ahas: Y'know, I ain't et this good in years. Who made this wonderful fried chicken? He ought to go into business...

Esther: It was Roy Rogers. I think he and Dale are setting up a little place on the turnpike.

Ahas: Well, Esther, I have to say I'm mighty satisfied, and mighty happy you're my Queen. You're just my Prairie Honeysuckle, my Rose of the Badlands, and my Sweet Sexy Song of the of the Sagebrush....

[Nick is nauseated]

Esther: That's nice.

Ahas: And whatever it is you might be wanting.....even if it's half the territory...I'd be of a mind to give it to you.

Esther: Well...there is something....if I have found favor in your sight....please don't shoot me....

Ahas: Shoot you? Why would I want to shoot you?

Esther: Me *and* my people....[All of a sudden Nick begins to suspect...he looks worried]....for we are sold down the river.... I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain and to perish!

[Nick realizes what's going on...he starts to talk, but is cut off immediately]

Nick: But governor...I....

Ahas: [truly enraged] Who is it! Who wants to harm my itsty-bitsy queenie-weenie and her people-weeple!?

[Esther runs over to grab Ahas and points rapidly to Nick] An adversary and an enemy! Even this wicked Haman!]

[Ahas and Nick stare each other down for a moment, each striving for Alpha Male. But Nick can't hold the Ahas' gaze. Ahas pushes Esther away. This is his Macho Moment]

Ahas: You ornery polecat. You dirty, theivein', cattle-rustlin hyena.... Draw...

Nick [losing steam quickly]: I have carpal tunnel.....

Ahas: I SAID, "DRAW"!!!....

[the "Gunsmoke" opening "duel music" plays..they draw, and Haman is gunned down spectacularly. Mordechai rushes in. Mordechai, Esther and Ahas stand over the dying villain]

Nick: Ya got me.....but it don't matter....because the order has already gone out to the cavalry...you Indians don't have a chance ...not with the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry ..[he gasps, barely clinging to life]...and George... Armstrong ...Custer! [Esther and Mordechai look at each other, smiling – Nick collapses, dead.]

Ahas: [blows on the barrel of his Colt (and does a fancy spin & return to the holster?)

Ben: He's daid. Cover 'im over afore he stinks.....

Mordechai: Esther! You saved us! I'm so proud of you! You'll be so famous, that one day, Madonna will name herself after you and start studying Kabbalah!

Ahas: And Mordechai, I'm going to draw up a treaty so the Indians never have any problems again. Let's meet in my office next week...maybe we can discuss land for peace....

Ben: And so, the territory was at peace again. Mordechai became the number two man in the kingdom, and relations between men and wimmen....well, they went back the way they had oughta be. Isn't that right, Ahasuerus?

Ahas: Damn right. With man as the Absolute Law West of the Pecos. Esther, sweetheart....go fetch me a beer will you....?

[Esther gives him the Look From Hell]

Ahas: [meekly] OK, ok....I'll get it myself.....

#### FINALE – HAPPY TRAILS

Happy Trails to you  
Until we meet again!  
Happy trails to Jews  
Abei gezunt till then.  
Happy trails to you  
Till we meet again!

Adon olam.....



