

## Abigail

By Scott R. Mealey

*[The cast of this sketch consists of at least 9 people. David, Nabal, and Abigail should be played by the appropriate gender if possible. More people could be added to Nabal's entourage and/or David's unit – the lackey/soldier lines could be divided up among them. The scene will probably run between four to five minutes. The original ending will set a more serious tone and the alternative a lighter one. It is up to you to decide which is more appropriate for the context you use it in. I've imagined that this scene would take place in the center aisle of a church but it could also be done on a stage with at least two clear exits.]*

**Messenger:** [Following Nabal and lackeys in from the back] So, as you can see, unlike nearly every other army, we've never touched so much as a hair on your men or flock's heads. And, in addition to that, we've insured the complete security of all of your people and positions in a very dangerous countryside.

[Nabal stops abruptly, taking his lackeys by surprise (who, perhaps, stumble into one another).]

**Nabal:** ...And who, I wonder, are the ones making the countryside so dangerous?

**Lackey#1.:** Yeah, I wonder?

**Lackey #2:** I betcha it's them isn't it boss?

**Messenger:** But sir, if you'd just ask your shepherds...

**Nabal:** I'm not getting anywhere near those shepherds. Their smell alone would put my stomach off for the entire feast.

**Lackey#1.:** Yeah, they're just gross!

**Lackey#2.:** Yeah, even worse than my sandals!

**Messenger:** But, what should I tell my master David about getting some supplies?

**Nabal:** You can tell him that perhaps he should be focusing more on his *own* master rather than trying to extort goods from me! [feeling pretty good about his bravery] You can tell him that! [begins to walk away]

**Lackey #1:** Yeah, you can tell him that! [also walks away]

**Messenger:** I expect you'll be seeing him soon, so you can, perhaps, tell him yourself... [exits the way he/she came in. Nabal and Lackey#1 freeze in fear. There is a brief pause.]

**Lackey#2.:** What do you think he meant by that? [Lackey #1 grabs lackey#2 and they all exit in the direction they had been walking. A female servant

comes out of hiding and looks first in the direction of Nabal's exit and then in the direction of the Messenger's exit.]

- Servant:** [distraught] Abigail! Mistress Abigail! [Abigail enters unseen by the servant probably from a similar direction Nabal exited from] Abigail!
- Abigail:** Calm down girl – you're going to upset my husband even before he's started to drink.
- Servant:** But Mistress Abigail, it's *lord* Nabal that I needed to talk to you about. He just sent the messenger away empty-handed!
- Abigail:** Whose messenger?
- Servant:** Captain David's.
- Abigail:** You don't mean the former military captain who's been protecting our flocks all winter?
- Servant:** Yes... [Abigail looks down with a sad sigh] What do you think they'll do to us now that Nabal's turned him down?
- Abigail:** I imagine they'll kill us all... [gathers herself] ...unless we can move quickly. Come with me. We'll find as much as we can ...and we'll pray that we aren't already out of time...
- [They exit as David and his soldiers come in. David is fuming.]
- David:** I can't believe we wasted our time protecting that ingrate's flocks.
- Soldier#1:** And his whining shepherds.
- Soldier#2:** Not to mention their lousy harp playing.
- David:** Well, let me tell you, no one's going to be bothered by this Nabal and anything or anyone belonging to him again.
- Soldier#1:** There won't be a man left alive.
- Soldier#2:** Not a harp left to pluck.
- David:** [Abigail followed by her servant comes back in. They are both carrying various containers that should look to contain food. In their rage, David and his soldiers don't notice Abigail until she speaks] It's not enough that I have deal with Saul, now I have to contend with this... this maddening...
- Soldier#1:** ...this ungrateful...
- Soldier#2:** ... this uncultured...

**Abigail:** Fool. [They all turn to stare at her. She kneels down quickly as does her servant] You're right my husband is all of these things, but most of all he is a fool. Please, forgive me – forgive all of us. Had I known your servant had come, you can be sure he would not have returned empty handed. Please accept these gifts we've brought and the rest of which that is on its way. Know also that my arrival is another gift to you as well, my lord captain. It is a gift from God to keep you from inflicting needless bloodshed in a moment of rage and revenge. It is the gift of a clear conscience.

**David:** [David pauses then hangs his head.] You're right. Of course, you're right. [He takes her by the hands and lifts her up] May God be praised for you – you have prevented a horrible.... May you be blessed for your good judgement. Go in peace.

[All exit from the direction they came]

{Alternative add-on}

**David:** Perhaps we will meet again under better circumstances...

**Abigail:** Perhaps.

[After a moment of lingering, all exit from the direction they came. After a brief moment, Lackey #2 appears from his hiding place.]

**Lackey#2:** Nabal! Lord Nabal! [He begins to run toward the exit Nabal took] You're just going to die when you hear the news!