

Grace Notes

"God's grace for everyday living"

True love is a Kingdom Enterprise

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In honor of Valentine's Day, I'd like to share with you one of my favorite Biblical love stories in updated format—a timeless tale of arrogance, foolishness, courage, and true love triumphant in the end.

Abby was frantic, agitated... some might even call her a desperate housewife. She had just received a call that would forever change life as she knew it. But then, maybe that wasn't such a bad thing. Life as she knew it wouldn't win any Pulitzers.

It all seemed so promising in the beginning—ten years ago when she'd met Nabe, an ambitious college freshman intent on making a name for himself in the business world one day. She'd fallen in love with his boundless energy, his lust for the good things of life, and had willingly dropped out of school to work three jobs to finance his education in pursuit of his goals...their goals.

But when it finally came to pass, when he'd ruthlessly clawed his way to the top of the financial ladder and was now head of his own Fortune 500 Company, she wasn't so sure this was the life she'd bargained for. Nabe had changed. She barely saw him anymore and when he was home, he was always parked in front of that confounded computer or conferring with some lawyer or CEO on the phone.

Even worse, he'd gained a reputation as a financial black hole, gobbling up everything in his path to satisfy his own greed. But it was never enough. He needed more, always more. The newspapers started calling him "The Butcher of Wall Street," and he'd insisted that everyone call him Butch, including his wife.

Abby's life seemed empty, void of meaning. At 29, she was still beautiful, but already she could see hollowness in the blue eyes staring back at her from the mirror. Could this be all there was to life...and love?

And then came the phone call from Carol, Butch's executive assistant, confiding that the world was about to come to an end.

"He really did it this time; the damage is irreversible," Carol whispered, her voice tinged with fear.

"What do you mean? What did he do?" Abby asked, a dark storm cloud gathering in her stomach.

"You've heard of Dave Jesseson, the CEO of Kingdom Enterprises, haven't you?"

"Well sure, who hasn't? Isn't K.E. the fastest growing conglomerate in the world?"

"That's right. It's downright miraculous how that company has exploded onto the scene. Some say God himself



must be at the helm. Anyway, it turns out that Mr. Jesseson's people have been quietly protecting some of Butch's interests from the opposing smaller companies—the ravenous wolves waiting in the wings to scarf up anything they can. Butch has no idea what a mess he'd be in if the K.E. guys hadn't interceded on his behalf." She paused to catch her breath.

"Just this morning, Mr. Jesseson called Butch and asked very politely if he'd be interested in forming a partnership with K.E. to develop and market a revolutionary invention for shearing sheep."

"What did Butch say?"

"He was rude and insulting and told Mr. Jesseson that he'd made his fortune on his own and would never consider sharing any of it with the likes of him. Then he hung up on him."

"Oh, no!" Abby felt her stomach acids boiling. She reached for a Xanax.

"That's not all. My friend Louise, a K.E. secretary, just called to warn me that Dave Jesseson and his army of lawyers are headed over here as

we speak to initiate a hostile takeover. But Butch is in a meeting and gave me strict orders not to disturb him under any circumstances. What should I do?"

Abby shook her head as the phone slid from her hand. What could anyone do? Butch was probably three sheets to the wind, drinking it up with his corporate buddies behind closed doors as was his habit on Fridays afternoons.

She knew the reputation of Dave Jesseson—strong but fair. Surely he'd listen to reason if she was just quick enough. She flew into action, opening her home safe and stuffing a brief case and two totes with her million-dollar coin collection and Butch's half-million dollar 1909 Honus Wagner baseball card and the 1952 Mickey Mantle worth \$35k.

Racing against time, she drove like Andreotti to Butch's building, dashed through the double glass doors and across the marbled lobby where a dozen suited men were standing in front of the bank of elevators. Recognizing Dave Jesseson from

his magazine covers, Abby threw herself between him and the opening elevator door.

"Wait, please, Mr. Jesseson! I'm Butch's wife, Abby, and I beg you to hear me out."

Dave stepped back, surprise registering on his hardened, determined face.

"I know my husband has returned evil for your good, but I implore you to overlook this foolish thing he's done." She held out the valuables in her arms. "Please accept this humble offering and restrain from shedding corporate blood to avenge yourself. I know the Lord is with you and I know you will never forgive yourself if you act rashly in revenge. Please forgive Butch and most of all, forgive me for not being more aware of my husband's vile ways so I could intervene sooner."

Dave stared at her, his face softening.

"You're right," he said. "I *am* acting rashly and would most assuredly regret this act of revenge when my blood quit boiling tomorrow. Thank you for stopping me, Abby. You're

quite a woman to have such presence of mind like this. Because of you, I will forgive Butch and restrain from harming him. God bless and keep you, Abby."

As Dave left the building, the security guard frantically called Butch to inform him what had happened. Horror-stricken at what almost was, Butch suffered a stroke and became as stone. Ten days later, he died.

Three weeks after the funeral, on Valentine's Day, Abby was up to her elbows sorting out the mess Butch had left her. The doorbell rang. It was a messenger bearing three dozen pink roses and a card reading, "Dearest Abby: You're as brilliant as you are gorgeous. You've won my eternal admiration. Will you be mine? Your grateful servant, Dave."

Oooh, don't you just adore a happy ending? Did you recognize the story of David and Abigail from 1 Samuel 25 (revised with literary license)? If you found my poor rendition remotely alluring, be sure to read the original. God, who created romance, tells it best.

