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The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

London, 1750

Chap. X. In which Mr. Western visits Mr. Allworthy.

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Morning early to acquaint Mr. *Allworthy*. His Friend would have dissuaded him from this, from the mere Motive of Good-nature ; but his Dissuasion had no other Effect than to produce a large Volley of Oaths and Curses, which greatly shocked the pious Ears of *Supple* ; but he did not dare to remonstrate against a Privilege, which the Squire claimed as a free-born *Englishman*. To say Truth, the Parson submitted to please his Palate at the Squire's Table, at the Expence of suffering now and then this Violence to his Ears. He contented himself with thinking he did not promote this evil Practice, and that the Squire would not swear an Oath the less, if he never entered within his Gates. However, tho' he was not guilty of ill Manners by rebuking a Gentleman in his own House, he paid him off obliquely in the Pulpit ; which had not, indeed, the good Effect of working a Reformation in the Squire himself ; yet it so far operated on his Conscience, that he put the Laws very severely in Execution against others, and the Magistrate was the only Person in the Parish who could swear with Impunity.

C H A P. X.

In which Mr. Western visits Mr. Allworthy.

MR. *Allworthy* was now retired from Breakfast with his Nephew, well satisfied with the Report of the young Gentleman's successful Visit to *Sophia*, (for he greatly desired the Match, more on Account of the young Lady's Character than of her Riches) when Mr. *Western* broke

V O L. II.

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abrupt-

abruptly in upon them, and without any Ceremony began as follows.

‘ There, you have done a fine Piece of Work
 ‘ truly. You have brought up your Bastard to a
 ‘ fine Purpose; not that I believe you have had
 ‘ any Hand in it neither, that is, as a Man may
 ‘ say, designedly; but there is a fine Kettle of
 ‘ Fish made on’t up at our House.’ ‘ What can
 ‘ be the Matter, Mr. *Western*?’ said *Allworthy*.
 ‘ O Matter *enow* of all Conscience; my Daugh-
 ‘ ter hath fallen in Love with your Bastard, that’s
 ‘ all; but I won’t *ge* her a *Hapenny*, not the
 ‘ Twentieth Part of a Brass Varden. I always
 ‘ thought what would come o’ breeding up a
 ‘ Bastard like a Gentleman, and letting *un* come
 ‘ about to *Vok’s* Houses. Its well *wor un* I could
 ‘ not get at *un*, I’d a licked *un*, I’d a spoil’d his
 ‘ Caterwauling, I’d a taught the Son of a Whore
 ‘ to meddle with Meat for his Master. He shan’t
 ‘ ever have a Morsel of Meat of mine, or a
 ‘ Varden to buy it: If she will *ha un*, one
 ‘ Smock shall be her Portion. I’ll sooner *ge* my
 ‘ *Estate* to the *zinking* Fund, that it may be sent
 ‘ to *Hannover* to corrupt our Nation with.’ ‘ I
 ‘ am heartily sorry,’ cries *Allworthy*. ‘ Pox o’
 ‘ your Sorrow,’ says *Western*, ‘ it will do me
 ‘ Abundance of Good, when I have lost my only
 ‘ Child, my poor *Sophy*, that was the Joy of my
 ‘ Heart, and all the Hope and Comfort of my
 ‘ Age; but I am resolved I will turn her out
 ‘ o’ Doors; she shall beg and starve, and rot in
 ‘ the Streets. Not one *Hapenny*, not a *Hapenny*
 ‘ shall she ever *hae* o’ mine. The Son of a Bitch
 ‘ was always good at finding a Hare fitting; an
 ‘ be rotted to’n, I little thought what Puss he was
 ‘ looking after; but it shall be the worst he ever
 ‘ *wound*

'wound in his Life. She shall be no better than
 'Carrion; the Skin o'er is all he shall ha, and
 'zu you may tell un.' 'I am in Amazement,'
 cries *Allworthy*, 'at what you tell me, after what
 'passed between my Nephew and the young
 'Lady no longer ago than Yesterday.' 'Yes,
 'Sir,' answered *Western*, 'it was after what
 'passed between your Nephew and she that the
 'whole Matter came out. Mr. *Blissl* there was
 'no sooner gone than the Son of a Whore came
 'lurching about the House. Little did I think,
 'when I used to love him for a Sportsman, that
 'he was all the while a poaching after my
 'Daughter.' 'Why, truly,' says *Allworthy*,
 'I could wish you had not given him so many
 'Opportunities with her; and you will do me
 'the Justice to acknowledge, that I have always
 'been averse to his staying so much at your
 'House, tho' I own I had no Suspicion of this
 'Kind.' 'Why, Zounds!' cries *Western*,
 'who could have thought it? What the Devil
 'had she to do wi'n? He did not come there
 'a courting to her; he came there a hunting
 'with me.' 'But was it possible,' says *All-*
worthy, 'that you should never discern any
 'Symptoms of Love between them, when you
 'have seen them so often together?' 'Never
 'in my Life, as I hope to be saved,' cries *Wes-*
tern. 'I never so much as zeed him kiss her in
 'all my Life; and so far from courting her, he
 'used rather to be more silent when she was in
 'Company than at any other Time: And as for
 'the Girl, she was always less civil to'n than to
 'any young Man that came to the House. As
 'to that Matter, I am not more easy to be de-
 'ceived than another; I would not have you
 D 2 ' think

‘ think I am, Neighbour.’ *Allworthy* could scarce refrain Laughter at this; but he resolv’d to do a Violence to himself: For he perfectly well knew Mankind, and had too much good Breeding and good Nature to offend the Squire in his present Circumstances. He then ask’d *Western* what he would have him do upon this Occasion. To which the other answer’d, ‘ That he would have him keep the Rascal away from his House, and that he would go and lock up the Wench: For he was resolv’d to make her marry Mr. *Bliffl* in Spite of her Teeth’ He then took *Bliffl* by the Hand, and swore he would have no other Son-in law. Presently after which he took his Leave, saying, his House was in such Disorder, that it was necessary for him to make haste home, to take care his Daughter did not give him the Slip; and as for *Jones*, he swore, if he caught him at his House, he would qualify him to run for the Gelding’s Plate.

When *Allworthy* and *Bliffl* were again left together, a long Silence ensued between them; all which Interval the young Gentleman fill’d up with Sighs, which proceeded partly from Disappointment, but more from Hatred: For the Success of *Jones* was much more grievous to him than the Loss of *Sophia*.

At length his Uncle ask’d him what he was determin’d to do, and he answer’d in the following Words. ‘ Alas, Sir, can it be a Question what Step a Lover will take, when Reason and Passion point different Ways? I am afraid it is too certain he will, in that Dilemma, always follow the latter. Reason dictates to me, to quit all Thoughts of a Woman who places her Affections on another; my Passion bids me
‘ hope

' hope ſhe may, in Time, change her Inclina-
 ' tions in my Favour. Here, however, I con-
 ' ceive an Objection may be raiſed, which, if it
 ' could not fully be answered, would totally deter-
 ' me from any further Purſuit. I mean the In-
 ' juſtice of endeavouring to ſupplant another, in
 ' a Heart, of which he ſeems already in Poſ-
 ' ſeſſion ; but the determined Reſolution of Mr.
 ' *Western* ſhews, that in this Caſe I ſhall, by ſo
 ' doing, promote the Happineſs of every Party ;
 ' not only that of the Parent, who will thus be
 ' preſerved from the higheſt Degree of Miſery,
 ' but of both the others, who muſt be undone
 ' by this Match. The Lady, I am ſure, will be
 ' undone in every Senſe : For, beſides the Loſs
 ' of moſt Part of her own Fortune, ſhe will be
 ' not only married to a Beggar, but the little
 ' Fortune which her Father cannot with-hold
 ' from her, will be ſquandered on that Wench,
 ' with whom I know he yet converſes --- Nay,
 ' that is a Trifle : For I know him to be one of
 ' the worſt Men in the World : For had my
 ' dear Uncle known what I have hitherto endea-
 ' voured to conceal, he muſt have long ſince
 ' abandoned ſo profligate a Wretch.' ' How,'
 ' ſaid *Allworthy*, ' hath he done any Thing worſe
 ' than I already know ? Tell me, I beſeech you.'
 ' No,' replied *Bliffl*, ' it is now paſt, and per-
 ' haps he may have repented of it.' ' I com-
 ' mand you, on your Duty,' ſaid *Allworthy*, ' to
 ' tell me what you mean.' ' You know, Sir,'
 ' ſays *Bliffl*, ' I never diſobeyed you ; but I am
 ' ſorry I mentioned it, ſince it may now look
 ' like Revenge, whereas, I thank Heaven, no
 ' ſuch Motive ever entered my Heart ; and if
 ' you oblige me to diſcover it, I muſt be his Pe-



'titioner to you for your Forgiveness.' 'I will
 'have no Conditions,' answered *Allworthy*, 'I
 'think I have shewn Tenderness enough towards
 'him, and more perhaps than you ought to
 'thank me for.' 'More, indeed, I fear than
 'he deserved,' cries *Blifil*; 'for in the very Day
 'of your utmost Danger, when myself and all
 'the Family were in Tears, he filled the House
 'with Riot and Debauchery. He drank and
 'sung and roared; and when I gave him a gentle
 'Hint of the Indecency of his Actions, he fell
 'into a violent Passion, swore many Oaths, called
 'me Rascal, and struck me.' 'How!' cries
Allworthy, 'did he dare to strike you?' 'I am
 'sure,' cries *Blifil*, 'I have forgiven him that
 'long ago. I wish I could so easily forget his
 'Ingratitude to the best of Benefactors; and yet,
 'even that I hope you will forgive him, since
 'he must have certainly been possessed with the
 'Devil: For that very Evening, as Mr. *Thwackum*
 'and myself were taking the Air in the Fields,
 'and exulting in the good Symptoms which
 'then first began to discover themselves, we un-
 'luckily saw him engaged with a Wench in a
 'Manner not fit to be mentioned. Mr.
 '*Thwackum*, with more Boldness than Prudence,
 'advanced to rebuke him, when (I am sorry to
 'say it) he fell upon the worthy Man, and beat
 'him so outrageously, that I wish he may have
 'yet recovered the Bruises. Nor was I without
 'my Share of the Effects of his Malice, while I
 'endeavoured to protect my Tutor: But that I
 'have long forgiven; nay, I prevailed with Mr.
 '*Thwackum* to forgive him too, and not to in-
 'form you of a Secret which I feared might be
 'fatal to him. And now, Sir, since I have un-
 'advisedly

' advisedly dropped a Hint of this Matter, and
 ' your Commands have obliged me to discover
 ' the Whole, let me intercede with you for him.'
 ' O Child,' said *Allworthy*, ' I know not whether
 ' I should blame or applaud your Goodness, in
 ' concealing such Villany a Moment: But where
 ' is Mr. *Thwackum*? Not that I want any Con-
 ' firmation of what you say; but I will examine
 ' all the Evidence of this Matter, to justify to
 ' the World the Example I am resolved to make
 ' of such a Monster.'

Thwackum was now sent for, and presently ap-
 peared. He corroborated every Circumstance
 which the other had deposed; nay, he produced
 the Record upon his Breast, where the Hand-
 writing of Mr. *Jones* remained very legible in
 Black and Blue. He concluded with declaring to
 Mr. *Allworthy*, that he should have long since in-
 formed him of this Matter, had not Mr. *Blifil*,
 by the most earnest Interpositions, prevented him.
 ' He is,' says he, ' an excellent Youth; though
 ' such Forgiveness of Enemies is carrying the
 ' Matter too far.'

In Reality, *Blifil* had taken some Pains to
 prevail with the Parson, and to prevent the Disco-
 very at that Time; for which he had many Rea-
 sons. He knew that the Minds of Men are apt
 to be softened and relaxed from their usual Seve-
 rity by Sickness. Besides, he imagined that if
 the Story was told when the Fact was so recent,
 and the Physician about the House, who might
 have unravelled the real Truth, he should never
 be able to give it the malicious Turn which he
 intended. Again, he resolved to hoard up this
 Business, till the Indiscretion of *Jones* should af-
 ford some additional Complaints; for he thought

