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The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

London, 1750

Chap. X. Containing several Matters natural enough perhaps, but Low.

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C H A P. X.

Containing several Matters, natural enough, perhaps, but Low.

THE Reader will be pleased to remember, that we left Mr. Jones in the Beginning of this Book, on his Road to *Bristol*; being determined to seek his Fortune at Sea; or rather, indeed, to fly away from his Fortune on Shore.

It happened, (a Thing not very unusual) that the Guide who undertook to conduct him on his Way, was unluckily unacquainted with the Road; so that having missed his right Track, and being ashamed to ask Information, he rambled about backwards and forwards till Night came on, and it began to grow dark. Jones suspecting what had happened, acquainted the Guide with his Apprehensions; but he insisted on it, that they were in the right Road, and added, it would be very strange if he should not know the Road to *Bristol*; tho', in Reality, it would have been much stranger if he had known it, having never past through it in his Life before.

Jones had not such implicit Faith in his Guide, but that on their Arrival at a Village he enquired of the first Fellow he saw, whether they were in the Road to *Bristol*. 'Whence did you come?' cries the Fellow. 'No Matter,' says Jones, a little hastily, 'I want to know if this be the Road to *Bristol*.' 'The Road to *Bristol*!' cries the Fellow, scratching his Head, 'Why, Master, I believe you will hardly get to *Bristol* this Way To-night.' 'Prithee, Friend, then,' answered

answered *Jones*, 'do tell us which is the Way.'--
 'Why, Measter,' cries the Fellow, 'you must
 'be come out of your Road the Lord knows
 'whither: For thick Way goeth to *Glocester*.'
 'Well, and which Way goes to *Bristol*?' said
Jones. 'Why, you be going away from *Bristol*,'
 answered the Fellow--'Then,' said *Jones*, 'we
 'must go back again.' 'Ay, you must,' said
 the Fellow. 'Well, and when we come back
 'to the Top of the Hill, which Way must we
 'take?' 'Why you must keep the strait Road.'
 'But I remember there are two Roads, one to
 'the Right and the other to the Left.' 'Why
 'you must keep the right-hand Road, and then
 'go strait forwards; only remember to turn first
 'to your Right, and then to your Left again,
 'and then to your Right; and that brings you
 'to the Squire's, and then you must keep strait
 'forwards, and turn to the Left.'

Another Fellow now came up, and asked which
 Way the Gentlemen were going?--of which
 being informed by *Jones*, he first scratched his
 Head, and then leaning upon a Pole he had in
 his Hand, began to tell him, 'That he must
 'keep the Right-hand Road for about a Mile, or
 'a Mile and half or such a Matter, and then he
 'must turn short to the Left, which would bring
 'him round by Measter *Jin Bearn's*.' 'But
 'which is Mr. *John Bearn's*?' says *Jones*.
 'O Lord,' cries the Fellow, 'why don't you
 'know Measter *Jin Bearn's*? Whence then did
 'you come?'

These two Fellows had almost conquered the
 Patience of *Jones*, when a plain well-looking
 Man (who was indeed a Quaker) accosted him
 thus: 'Friend, I perceive thou hast lost thy



Way; and if thou wilt take my Advice, thou wilt not attempt to find it To-night. It is almost dark, and the Road is difficult to hit; besides there have been several Robberies committed lately between this and *Bristol*. Here is a very creditable good House just by, where thou may'st find good Entertainment for thyself and thy Cattle till Morning.' *Jones*, after a little Persuasion, agreed to stay in this Place till the Morning, and was conducted by his Friend to the Public-House.

The Landlord, who was a very civil Fellow, told *Jones*, ' he hoped he would excuse the Badness of his Accommodation: For that his Wife was gone from home, and had locked up almost every Thing, and carried the Keys along with her.' Indeed, the Fact was, that a favourite Daughter of hers was just married, and gone, that Morning, home with her Husband; and that she and her Mother together, had almost stript the poor Man of all his Goods, as well as Money: For tho' he had several Children, this Daughter only, who was the Mother's Favourite, was the Object of her Consideration; and to the Humour of this one Child she would, with Pleasure have sacrificed all the rest, and her Husband into the Bargain.

Tho' *Jones* was very unfit for any Kind of Company, and would have preferred being alone; yet he could not resist the Importunities of the honest Quaker; who was the more desirous of sitting with him, from having remarked the Melancholy which appeared both in his Countenance and Behaviour; and which the poor Quaker thought his Conversation might in some Measure relieve.

After

After they had past some Time together, in such a Manner that my honest Friend might have thought himself at one of his Silent-Meetings, the Quaker began to be moved by some Spirit or other, probably that of Curiosity; and said, ' Friend, I perceive some sad Disaster hath befallen thee; but, pray be of Comfort. Perhaps thou hast lost a Friend. If so, thou must consider we are all mortal. And why shouldst thou grieve, when thou knowest thy Grief will do thy Friend no Good? We are all born to Affliction. I myself have my Sorrows as well as thee, and most probably greater Sorrows. Tho' I have a clear Estate of 100*l.* a Year, which is as much as I want, and I have a Conscience, I thank the Lord, void of Offence. My Constitution is sound and strong, and there is no Man can demand a Debt of me, nor accuse me of an Injury---yet, Friend, I should be concerned to think thee as miserable as myself.'

Here the Quaker ended with a deep Sigh; and *Jones* presently answered, ' I am very sorry, Sir, for your Unhappiness, whatever is the Occasion of it.' ' Ah! Friend,' replied the Quaker, ' one only Daughter is the Occasion. One who was my greatest Delight upon Earth, and who within this Week is run away from me, and is married against my Consent. I had provided her a proper Match, a sober Man, and one of Substance; but she, forsooth, would chuse for herself, and away she is gone with a young Fellow not worth a Groat. If she had been dead, as I suppose thy Friend is, I should have been happy!' ' That is very strange, Sir,' said *Jones*. ' Why, would it not be bet-

'ter for her to be dead, than to be a Beggar?'
 replied the Quaker: 'For, as I told you, the
 'Fellow is not worth a Groat; and surely she
 'cannot expect that I shall ever give her a Shil-
 'ling. No, as she hath married for Love, let
 'her live on Love if she can; let her carry her
 'Love to Market, and see whether any one will
 'change it into Silver, or even into Half-pence.'
 'You know your own Concerns best, Sir,' said
Jones. 'It must have been,' continued the
 Quaker, 'a long premeditated Scheme to cheat
 'me: For they have known ope another from
 'their Infancy; and I always preached to her
 'against Love--and told her a thousand Times
 'over it was all Folly and Wickedness. Nay,
 'the cunning Slut pretended to hearken to me,
 'and to despise all wantonness of the Flesh;
 'and yet, at last, broke out at a Window two
 'Pair of Stairs: For I began, indeed, a little to
 'suspect her, and had locked her up carefully,
 'intending the very next Morning to have mar-
 'ried her up to my Liking. But she disappointed
 'me within a few Hours, and escaped away to
 'the Lover of her own chusing, who lost no
 'Time: For they were married and bedded, and
 'all within an Hour.
 'But it shall be the worst Hour's Work for
 'them both that ever they did; for they may
 'starve, or beg, or steal together for me. I will
 'never give either of them a Farthing.' Here
Jones starting up, cry'd, 'I really must be ex-
 'cused; I wish you would leave me.' 'Come,
 'come, Friend,' said the Quaker, 'don't give
 'Way to Concern. You see there are other
 'People miserable, besides yourself.' 'I see there
 'are Madmen and Fools and Villains in the
 'World,'

‘ World,’ cries *Jones*---‘ But let me give you a
 ‘ Piece of Advice; send for your Daughter and
 ‘ Son-in-law home, and don’t be yourself the
 ‘ only Cause of Misery to one you pretend to
 ‘ love.’ ‘ Send for her and her Husband home!’
 cries the Quaker loudly, ‘ I would sooner send
 ‘ for the two greatest Enemies I have in the
 ‘ World!’ ‘ Well, go home yourself, or where
 ‘ you please,’ said *Jones*: ‘ For I will sit no
 ‘ longer in such Company.’---‘ Nay, Friend,’
 answered the Quaker, ‘ I scorn to impose my
 ‘ Company on any one.’ He then offered to
 pull Money from his Pocket, but *Jones* pushed
 him with some Violence out of the Room.

The Subject of the Quaker’s Discourse had
 so deeply affected *Jones*, that he stared very wild-
 ly all the Time he was speaking. This the Qua-
 ker had observed, and this; added to the rest of
 his Behaviour, inspired honest *Broadbrim* with a
 Conceit, that his Companion was, in Reality,
 out of his Senses. Instead of resenting the Af-
 front, therefore, the Quaker was moved with
 Compassion for his unhappy Circumstances; and
 having communicated his Opinion to the Land-
 lord, he desired him to take great Care of his
 Guest, and to treat him with the highest Ci-
 vility.

‘ Indeed,’ says the Landlord, ‘ I shall use no
 ‘ such Civility towards him: For it seems, for
 ‘ all his laced Waste-coat there, he is no more a
 ‘ Gentleman than myself; but a poor Parish
 ‘ Bastard bred up at a great Squire’s about 30
 ‘ Miles off, and now turned out of Doors, (not
 ‘ for any Good to be sure.) I shall get him out
 ‘ of my House as soon as possible. If I do
 ‘ lose my Reckoning, the first Loss is always



‘ the best. It is not above a Year ago that I
 ‘ lost a Silver-spoon.’

‘ What dost thou talk of a Parish Bastard,
 ‘ *Robin*?’ answered the Quaker. ‘ Thou must
 ‘ certainly be mistaken in thy Man.’

‘ Not at all,’ replied *Robin*, ‘ the Guide, who
 ‘ knows him very well, told it me.’ For, in-
 deed, the Guide had no sooner taken his Place
 at the Kitchin-Fire, than he acquainted the
 whole Company with all he knew, or had ever
 heard concerning *Jones*.

The Quaker was no sooner assured by this
 Fellow of the Birth and low Fortune of *Jones*,
 than all Compassion for him vanished; and the
 honest, plain Man went home fired with no less
 Indignation than a Duke would have felt at re-
 ceiving an Affront from such a Person.

The Landlord himself conceived an equal
 Disdain for his Guest; so that when *Jones* rung
 the Bell in order to retire to Bed, he was ac-
 quainted that he could have no Bed there. Be-
 sides Disdain of the mean Condition of his Guest,
Robin entertained violent Suspicion of his Inten-
 tions, which were, he supposed, to watch some
 favourable Opportunity of robbing the House.
 In reality, he might have been very well eased of
 these Apprehensions by the prudent Precautions
 of his Wife and Daughter, who had already re-
 moved every thing which was not fixed to the
 Freehold; but he was by Nature suspicious, and
 had been more particularly so since the Loss of
 his Spoon. In short, the Dread of being robbed
 totally absorbed the comfortable Consideration
 that he had nothing to lose.

Jones being assured that he could have no Bed,
 very contentedly betook himself to a great Chair
 made