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The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

London, 1750

Chap. II. In which the Landlady pays a Visit to Mr. Jones.

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Incidents, should be trite, common, or vulgar; such as happen in every Street, or in every House, or which may be met with in the home Articles of a News-Paper. Nor must he be inhibited from shewing many Persons and Things, which may possibly have never fallen within the Knowledge of great Part of his Readers. If the Writer strictly observes the Rules abovementioned, he hath discharged his Part; and is then intitled to some Faith from his Reader, who is indeed guilty of critical Infidelity if he disbelieves him. For want of a Portion of such Faith, I remember the Character of a young Lady of Quality, which was condemned on the Stage for being unnatural, by the unanimous Voice of a very large Assembly of Clerks and Apprentices; tho' it had the previous Suffrages of many Ladies of the first Rank; one of whom, very eminent for her Understanding, declared it was the Picture of half the young People of her Acquaintance.

C H A P. II.

In which the Landlady pays a Visit to Mr. Jones.

WHEN *Jones* had taken Leave of his Friend the Lieutenant, he endeavoured to close his Eyes, but all in vain; his Spirits were too lively and wakeful to be lulled to Sleep. So having amused, or rather tormented himself with the Thoughts of his *Sophia*, till it was open Day-light, he called for some Tea; upon which Occasion my Landlady herself vouchsafed to pay him a Visit.

This

This was indeed the first Time she had seen him, or at least had taken any Notice of him; but as the Lieutenant had assured her that he was certainly some young Gentleman of Fashion, she now determined to shew him all the Respect in her Power: for, to speak truly, this was one of those Houses where Gentlemen, to use the Language of Advertisements, meet with civil Treatment for their Money.

She had no sooner begun to make his Tea, than she likewise began to discourse. ‘La! Sir,’ said she, ‘I think it is great Pity that such a pretty young Gentleman should undervalue himself so, as to go about with these Soldier Fellows. They call themselves Gentlemen, I warrant you; but, as my first Husband used to say, they should remember it is we that pay them. And to be sure it is very hard upon us to be obliged to pay them, and to keep ’em too as we Publicans are. I had twenty of ’um last Night besides Officers; nay, for matter o’ that, I had rather have the Soldiers than Officers: For nothing is ever good enough for those Sparks; and I am sure, if you was to see the Bills; La, Sir, it is nothing. I have had less Trouble, I warrant you, with a good Squire’s Family, where we take forty or fifty Shillings of a Night, besides Horses. And yet I warrant me, there is *narrow* a one of all those Officer Fellows, but looks upon himself to be as good as *arrow* a Squire of 500*l.* a Year. To be sure it doth me Good to hear their Men run about after um, crying your Honour, and your Honour. Marry come up with such Honour, and an Ordinary at a Shilling a Head. Then there’s such Swearing among ’um, to be sure, it
 ‘frightens

frightens me out o' my Wits; I thinks nothing
 can ever prosper with such wicked People. And
 here one of 'um has used you in so barbarous a
 Manner. I thought indeed how well the rest
 would secure him; they all hang together; for
 if you had been in Danger of Death, which
 I am glad to see you are not, it would have
 been all as one to such wicked People. They
 would have let the Murderer go. I had have
 Mercy upon 'um; I would not have such a Sin
 to answer for, for the whole World. But tho'
 you are likely, with the Blessing, to recover,
 there is Laa for him yet; and if you will em-
 ploy Lawyer *Small*, I darest be sworn he'll make
 the Fellow fly the Country for him; tho' per-
 haps he'll have fled the Country before; for it
 is here To-day and gone To-morrow with such
 Chaps. I hope, however, you will learn more
 Wit for the future, and return back to your
 Friends: I warrant they are all miserable for
 your Loss; and if they was but to know what
 had happened. La, my seeming! I would not
 for the World they should. Come, come, we
 know very well what all the Matter is; but if
 one won't, another will; so pretty a Gentle-
 man need never want a Lady. I am sure, if I
 was as you, I would see the finest She that ever
 wore a Head hanged, before I would go for a
 Soldier for her.—Nay, don't blush so (for in-
 deed he did to a violent Degree;) why, you
 thought, Sir, I knew no hing of the Matter, I
 warrant you, about Madam *Sophia*.' 'How,'
 says *Jones*, starting up, 'do you know my *So-*
phia?' 'Do I! ay marry,' cries the Land-
 lady, 'many's the Time hath she lain in this
 House.' 'With her Aunt, I suppose,' says
Jones.

Jones.—‘Why there it is now,’ cries the Landlady. ‘Ay, ay, ay, I know the old Lady very well. And a sweet young Creature is Madam *Sophia*, that’s the Truth on’t.’ ‘A sweet Creature!’ cries *Jones*, ‘O Heavens!’

*Angels are painted fair to look like her.
There’s in her all that we believe of Heaven,
Amazing Brightness, Purity and Truth,
Eternal Joy, and everlasting Love.*

‘And could I ever have imagined that you had known my *Sophia*!’ ‘I wish,’ says the Landlady, ‘you knew half so much of her. What would you have given to have sat by her Bed-side? What a delicious Neck she hath! Her lovely Limbs have stretched themselves in that very Bed you now lie in.’ ‘Here!’ cries *Jones*, ‘hath *Sophia* ever laid here?’—‘Ay, ay, here: there; in that very Bed,’ says the Landlady, where I wish you had her this Moment; and she may wish so too for any Thing I know to the contrary: For she hath mentioned your Name to me.’—‘Ha,’ cries he, ‘did she ever mention her poor *Jones*?—You flatter me now; I can never believe so much,’ ‘Why then,’ answered she, ‘as I hope to be saved, and may the Devil fetch me, if I speak a Syllable more than the Truth. I have heard her mention Mr. *Jones*; but in a civil and modest Way, I confess; yet I could perceive she thought a great deal more than she said.’ ‘O my dear Woman,’ cries *Jones*, ‘her Thoughts of me I shall never be worthy of. O she is all Gentleness, Kindness, Goodness. Why was such a Rascal as I born, ever to give her soit Bosom a
‘Mo-

' Moment's Uneasiness? Why am I cursed? I,
 ' who would undergo all the Plagues and Misfe-
 ' ries which any Dæmon ever invented for Man-
 ' kind, to procure her any Good; nay, Torture
 ' itself could not be Misery to me, did I but
 ' know that she was happy.' ' Why, look you
 ' there now,' says the Landlady, ' I told her
 ' you was a constant Lovier.' ' But pray, Ma-
 ' dam, tell me when or where you knew any
 ' thing of me; for I never was here before, nor
 ' do I remember ever to have seen you.' ' Nor
 ' is it possible you should,' answered she; ' for
 ' you was a little Thing when I had you in my
 ' Lap at the Squire's.'—' How the Squire's,' says
Jones, ' what do you know that great and good
 ' Mr. *Allworthy* then?' ' Yes, marry do I,
 ' says she; ' Who in the Country doth not?'—
 ' The Fame of his Goodness indeed,' answered
Jones, ' must have extended farther than this;
 ' but Heaven only can know him, can know
 ' that Benevolence which it copied from itself,
 ' and sent upon Earth as its own Pattern. Man-
 ' kind are as ignorant of such divine Goodness, as
 ' they are unworthy of it; but none so unwor-
 ' thy of it as myself. I who was raised by him
 ' to such a Height; taken in, as you must well
 ' know, a poor base-born Child, adopted by
 ' him, and treated as his own Son, to dare by
 ' my Follies to disoblige him, to draw his Ven-
 ' geance upon me. Yes, I deserve it all: For I
 ' will never be so ungrateful as ever to think he
 ' hath done an Act of Injustice by me. No, I
 ' deserve to be turned out of Doors, as I am.
 ' And now, Madam, says he, I believe you will
 ' not blame me for turning Soldier, especially
 ' with such a Fortune as this in my Pocket.' At
 ' which