

Landesbibliothek Oldenburg

Digitalisierung von Drucken

The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

London, 1750

Chap. IV. Which we hope will be very attentively perused by young People of both Sexes.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-893

C H A P. IV.

Which we hope will be very attentively perused by young People of both Sexes.

Partridge had no sooner left *Mr. Jones*, than *Mr. Nightingale*, with whom he had now contracted a great Intimacy, came to him, and after a short Salutation, said, ‘So, *Tom*, I hear you had Company very late last Night. Upon my Soul, you are a happy Fellow, who have not been in Town above a Fortnight, and can keep Chairs waiting at your Door till two in the Morning.’ He then ran on with much common-place Raillery of the same Kind, till *Jones* at last interrupted him, saying, ‘I suppose you have received all this Information from *Mrs. Miller*, who hath been up here a little while ago to give me Warning. The good Woman is afraid, it seems, of the Reputation of her Daughters.’ ‘O she is wonderfully nice,’ says *Nightingale*, ‘upon that Account; if you remember, she would not let *Nancy* go with us to the Masquerade.’ ‘Nay, upon my Honour, I think she’s in the Right of it,’ says *Jones*; ‘however I have taken her at her Word, and have sent *Partridge* to look for another Lodging.’ ‘If you will,’ says *Nightingale*, ‘we may, I believe, be again together; for to tell you a Secret, which I desire you won’t mention in the Family, I intend to quit the House to-day.’—‘What, hath *Mrs. Miller* given you Warning too, my Friend?’ cries *Jones*. ‘No,’ answered the other; ‘but the Rooms are not so convenient enough.—Besides, I am grown wea-

‘ry.

ry of this Part of the Town. I want to be nearer the Places of Diversion; so I am going to *Pall-mall*.—‘And do you intend to make a Secret of your going away?’ said *Jones*. ‘I promise you,’ answered *Nightingale*, ‘I don’t intend to bilk my Lodgings; but I have a private Reason for not taking a formal Leave.’ ‘Not so private,’ answered *Jones*; ‘I promise you, I have seen it ever since the second Day of my coming to the House.—Here will be some wet Eyes on your Departure.—Poor *Nancy*, I pity her, faith!—Indeed, *Jack*, you have play’d the Fool with that Girl—You have given her a Longing, which, I am afraid, Nothing will ever cure her of.’—*Nightingale* answered, ‘What the Devil would you have me do? Would you have me marry her to cure her?’—‘No,’ answered *Jones*, ‘I would not have had you make Love to her, as you have often done in my Presence. I have been astonished at the Blindness of her Mother in never seeing it.’ ‘Pugh, see it!’ cries *Nightingale*, ‘What the Devil should she see?’ ‘Why see,’ said *Jones*, ‘that you have made her Daughter distractedly in Love with you. The poor Girl cannot conceal it a Moment, her Eyes are never off from you, and she always colours every Time you come into the Room. Indeed, I pity her heartily; for she seems to be one of the best natured, and honestest of human Creatures.’ ‘And so,’ answered *Nightingale*, ‘according to your Doctrine, one must not amuse one’s self by any common Gallantries with Women, for fear they should fall in Love with us.’ ‘Indeed, *Jack*,’ said *Jones*, ‘you wilfully misunderstand me; I do not fancy Women are so apt to fall in Love; but

‘ but you have gone far beyond common Gallantries.’— ‘ What, do you suppose,’ says *Nightingale*, ‘ that we have been a-bed together?’ ‘ No,’ upon my Honour,’ answered *Jones*, very seriously, ‘ I do not suppose so ill of you; nay, I will go farther, I do not imagine you have laid a regular premeditated Scheme for the Destruction of the Quiet of a poor little Creature, or have even foreseen the Consequence: For I am sure thou art a very good natured Fellow; and such a one can never be guilty of a Cruelty of that Kind; But at the same Time you have pleased your own Vanity, without considering that this poor Girl was made a Sacrifice to it; and while you have had no Design but of amusing an idle Hour, you have actually given her Reason to flatter herself, that you had the most serious Designs in her Favour. Prithee, *Jack*, answer me honestly: To what have tended all those elegant and luscious Descriptions of Happiness arising from violent and mutual Fondness; all those warm Professions of Tenderness, and generous, disinterested Love? Did you imagine she would not apply them? Or, speak ingenuously, did not you intend she should?’ ‘ Upon my Soul, *Tom*,’ cries *Nightingale*, ‘ I did not think this was in thee. Thou wilt make an admirable Parson.—So, I suppose, you would not go to Bed to *Nancy* now, if she would let you?’— ‘ No,’ cries *Jones*, ‘ may I be d—n’d if I would.’ ‘ *Tom, Tom*,’ answered *Nightingale*, ‘ last Night; remember last Night.

‘--When ev’ry Eye was clos’d, and the pale Moon,
‘ And silent Stars shone conscious of the Theft.

‘ Lookee,

‘ Lookee, Mr. *Nightingale*,’ said *Jones*, ‘ I am no canting Hypocrite, nor do I pretend to the Gift of Chastity, more than my Neighbours. I have been guilty with Women, I own it ; but am not conscious that I have ever injured any—Nor would I, to procure Pleasure to myself, be knowingly the Cause of Misery to any human Being.’

‘ Well, well,’ said *Nightingale*, ‘ I believe you, and I am convinced you acquit me of any such Thing.’

‘ I do, from my Heart,’ answered *Jones*, ‘ of having debauched the Girl, but not from having gained her Affections.’

‘ If I have,’ said *Nightingale*, ‘ I am sorry for it ; but Time and Absence will soon wear off such Impressions. It is a Receipt I must take myself: For to confess the Truth to you,—I never liked any Girl half so much in my whole Life ; but I must let you into the whole Secret, *Tom*. My Father hath provided a Match for me, with a Woman I never saw ; and she is now coming to Town, in order for me to make my Addresses to her.’

At these Words *Jones* burst into a loud Fit of Laughter ; when *Nightingale* cried,—‘ Nay, prithee don’t turn me into Ridicule. The Devil take me if I am not half mad about this Matter! my poor *Nancy*! Oh *Jones*, *Jones*, I wish I had a Fortune in my own Possession.’

‘ I heartily wish you had,’ cries *Jones* ; for if this be the Case, I sincerely pity you both : But surely you don’t intend to go away without taking your Leave of her ?’

‘ I would not,’ answered *Nightingale*, ‘ undergo the Pain of taking Leave for ten thousand
‘ Pound ;

' Pound; besides, I am convinced, instead of
 ' answering any good Purpose, it would only
 ' serve to inflame my poor *Nancy* the more. I
 ' beg therefore, you would not mention a Word
 ' of it To-day, and in the Evening, or To-mor-
 ' row Morning, I intend to depart.'

Jones promised he would not; and said, upon
 Reflection he thought, as he had determined and
 was obliged to leave her, he took the most pru-
 dent Method. He then told *Nightingale*, he should
 be very glad to lodge in the same House with
 him; and it was accordingly agreed between them,
 that *Nightingale* should procure him either the
 Ground Floor, or the two Pair of Stairs; for the
 young Gentleman himself was to occupy that
 which was between them.

This *Nightingale*, of whom we shall be pre-
 sently obliged to say a little more, was in the or-
 dinary Transactions of Life a Man of strict Ho-
 nour, and what is more rare among young Gen-
 tlemen of the Town, one of strict Honesty too;
 yet in Affairs of Love he was somewhat loose in
 his Morals; not that he was even here as void of
 Principle as Gentlemen sometimes are, and oftener
 affect to be; but it is certain he had been guilty
 of some indefensible Treachery to Women, and
 had in a certain Mytery, called *Making Love*,
 practised many Deceits, which, if he had used in
 Trade he would have been counted the greatest
 Villain upon Earth.

But as the World, I know not well for what
 Reason, agree to see this Treachery in a better
 Light, he was so far from being ashamed of his
 Iniquities of this Kind, that he gloried in them,
 and would often boast of his Skill in gaining of
 Women, and his Triumphs over their Hearts, for
 which