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The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

London, 1750

Chap. XII. A Discovery made by Partridge.

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CHAPTER XII.

A Discovery made by Partridge.

WHILE *Jones* was exulting in the Consciencefulness of his Integrity, *Partridge* came capering into the Room, as was his Custom when he brought, or fancied he brought, any good Tidings. He had been dispatched that Morning, by his Master, with Orders to endeavour, by the Servants of *Lady Bellafton*, or by any other Means, to discover whether *Sophia* had been conveyed; and he now returned, and with a joyful Countenance told our Heroe, that he had found the lost Bird. ‘I have seen, Sir,’ says he, ‘black *George*, the Gamekeeper, who is one of the Servants whom the Squire hath brought with him to Town. I knew him presently, though I have not seen him these several Years; but you know, Sir, he is a very remarkable Man, or to use a purer Phrase, he hath a most remarkable Beard, the largest and blackest I ever saw. It was some Time however before black *George* could recollect me.’—‘Well, but what is your good News?’ cries *Jones*, ‘What do you know of my *Sophia*?’—‘You shall know presently, Sir,’ answered *Partridge*, ‘I am coming to it as fast as I can.—You are so impatient, Sir, you would come at the Infinitive Mood, before you can get to the Imperative. As I was saying, Sir, it was some Time before he recollected my Face.—‘Confound your Face,’ cries *Jones*, ‘what of my *Sophia*?’—‘Nay, Sir,’ answered *Partridge*, ‘I know nothing more of *Madam Sophia*, than what I am going

' going to tell you ; and I should have told you
 ' all before this if you had not interrupted me ;
 ' but if you look so angry at me, you will fright-
 ' en all of it out of my Head, or to use a purer
 ' Phrase, out of my Memory. I never saw you
 ' look so angry since the Day we left *Upton*,
 ' which I shall remember if I was to live a thou-
 ' sand Years.'—' Well, pray go on in your own
 ' Way,' said *Jones*, ' you are resolved to make
 ' me mad I find.' ' Not for the World,' an-
 ' swered *Partridge*, ' I have suffered enough for
 ' that already ; which, as I said, I shall bear in
 ' my Remembrance the longest Day I have to
 ' live.—' Well, but black *George*?' cries *Jones*,
 '—' Well, Sir, as I was saying, it was a long
 ' Time before he could recollect me ; for indeed
 ' I am very much altered since I saw him. *Non*
 ' *sum qualis eram*. I have had Troubles in the
 ' World, and nothing alters a Man so much as
 ' Grief. I have heard it will change the Colour
 ' of a Man's Hair in a Night. However, at last,
 ' know me he did, that's sure enough ; for we are
 ' both of an Age, and were at the same Charity
 ' School. *George* was a great Dunce, but no
 ' Matter for that ; all Men do not thrive in the
 ' World according to their Learning. I am sure
 ' I have Reason to say so ; but it will be all one a
 ' thousand Years hence. Well, Sir,---where was
 ' I?---O---well, we no sooner knew each other,
 ' than after many hearty Shakes by the Hand, we
 ' agreed to go to an Alehouse and take a Pot, and
 ' by good luck the Beer was some of the best I
 ' have met with since I have been in Town.---
 ' Now, Sir, I am coming to the Point ; for no
 ' sooner did I name you, and told him, that you
 ' and I came to Town together, and had lived

together ever since, than he called for another Pot, and swore he would drink to your Health; and indeed he drank your Health so heartily, that I was overjoyed to see there was so much Gratitude left in the World: And after we had emptied that Pot, I said I would be my Pot too, and so we drank another to your Health; and then I made haste Home to tell you the News.

‘What News?’ cries *Jones*, ‘you have not mentioned a Word of my *Sophia*!’ — ‘Bless me! I had like to have forgot that. Indeed we mentioned a great deal about young *Madam Western*, and *George* told me all; that *Mr. Bliss* is coming to Town in order to be married to her. He had best make Haste then, says I, or some Body will have her before he comes; and indeed, says I, *Mr. Seagrim*, it is a thousand Pities some Body should not have her; for he certainly loves her above all the Women in the World. I would have both you and she know that it is not for her Fortune he follows her; for I can assure you as to Matter of that, there is another Lady, one of much greater Quality and Fortune than she can pretend to, who is so fond of some Body, that she comes after him Day and Night.’

Here *Jones* fell into a Passion with *Partridge*, for having, as he said, betrayed him; but the poor Fellow answered, he had mentioned no Name: ‘Besides, Sir,’ said he, ‘I can assure you, *George* is sincerely your Friend, and wished *Mr. Bliss* at the Devil more than once; nay, he said he would do any Thing in his Power upon Earth to serve you; and so I am convinced he will.---Betray you indeed! why I
question

‘question whether you have a better Friend than
‘George upon Earth, except myself, or one that
‘would go farther to serve you.’

‘Well,’ says *Jones*, a little pacified, ‘you say
‘this Fellow, who I believe indeed is enough in-
‘clined to be my Friend, lives in the same House
‘with *Sophia*?’

‘In the same House!’ answered *Partridge*;
‘why, Sir, he is one of the Servants of the Fa-
‘mily, and very well drest I promise you he is;
‘if it was not for his black Beard, you would
‘hardly know him.’

‘One Service then at least he may do me,’
says *Jones*; ‘sure he can certainly convey a Let-
‘ter to my *Sophia*.’

‘You have hit the Nail *ad unguem*,’ cries *Par-
tridge*; ‘How came I not to think of it? I will
‘engage he shall do it upon the very first men-
‘tioning.’

‘Well then,’ said *Jones*, ‘do you leave me
‘at present, and I will write a Letter which you
‘shall deliver to him To-morrow Morning; for
‘I suppose you know where to find him.’

‘O yes, Sir,’ answered *Partridge*, ‘I shall
‘certainly find him again; there is no Fear of
‘that. The Liquor is too good for him to stay
‘away long. I make no Doubt but he will be
‘there every Day he stays in Town.’

‘So you don’t know the Street then where
‘my *Sophia* is lodged?’ cries *Jones*.

‘Indeed, Sir, I do,’ says *Partridge*.

‘What is the Name of the Street?’ cries
Jones.

‘The Name, Sir, why here, Sir, just by,’
answered *Partridge*, ‘not above a Street or two
‘off. I don’t indeed know the very Name; for

‘ as he never told me, if I had asked, you know
 ‘ it might have put some Suspicion into his Head.
 ‘ No, no, Sir, let me alone for that. I am too
 ‘ cunning for that, I promise you.’

‘ Thou art most wonderfully cunning indeed,’
 replied *Jones*; ‘ however I will write to my
 ‘ Charmer, since I believe you will be cunning
 ‘ enough to find him To-morrow at the Ale-
 ‘ house.’

And now having dismissed the sagacious *Partridge*,
Mr. Jones sat himself down to write, in
 which Employment we shall leave him for a
 Time. And here we put an End to the fifteenth
 Book.

BOOK XVII

Containing the Space of Five Days

CHAPTER I

THE
 I Have heard of a Dramatic Writer who used
 to say he would rather write a Play than a
 Prologue; in like manner I think I can
 wish his Page were printed the back of this
 History than the British Chapter to each of
 To say the Truth I believe many a heavy
 Critic hath reproved on the Head of that
 Author who first introduced the Method of pre-
 fixing to his Play the Prologue of Matters which