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The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling

In Four Volumes

Fielding, Henry

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Chap. I. Of Love.

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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F A
F O U N D L I N G .

B O O K VI.

Containing about three Weeks.

C H A P. I.

Of Love.

IN our last Book we have been obliged to deal pretty much with the Passion of Love; and, in our succeeding Book, shall be forced to handle this Subject still more largely. It may not, therefore, in this Place, be improper to apply ourselves to the Examination of that modern Doctrine, by which certain Philosophers, among many other wonderful Discoveries, pretend to have found out, that there is no such Passion in the human Breast.

Whether these Philosophers be the same with that surprizing Sect, who are honourably mentioned

VOL. II.

B

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tioned by the late Dr. *Swift*; as having, by the mere Force of Genius alone, without the least Assistance of any Kind of Learning, or even Reading, discovered that profound and invaluable Secret, That there is no God: or whether they are not rather the same with those who, some Years since, very much alarmed the World, by shewing that there were no such Things as Virtue or Goodness really existing in Human Nature, and who deduced our best Actions from Pride, I will not here presume to determine. In reality, I am inclined to suspect, that all these several Finders of Truth are the very identical Men, who are by others called the *Finders of Gold*. The Method used in both these Searches after Truth and after Gold, being indeed one and the same; *viz.* the searching, rummaging, and examining into a nasty Place; indeed, in the former Instances, into the nastiest of all Places, A BAD MIND.

But though, in this Particular, and perhaps in their Success, the Truth-finder, and the Gold-finder, may very properly be compared together; yet in Modesty, surely, there can be no Comparison between the two; for who ever heard of a Gold-finder that had the Impudence or Folly to assert, from the ill Success of his Search, that there was no such thing as Gold in the World? Whereas the Truth-finder, having raked out that *Jakes*, his own Mind, and being there capable of tracing no Ray of Divinity, nor any thing virtuous, or good, or lovely, or loving, very fairly, honestly, and logically concludes, that no such things exist in the whole Creation.

To avoid, however, all Contention, if possible, with these Philosophers, if they will be called
so;

so; and to shew our own Disposition to accommodate Matters peaceably between us, we shall here make them some Concessions, which may possibly put an End to the Dispute.

First, we will grant that many Minds, and perhaps those of the Philosophers, are entirely free from the least Traces of such a Passion.

Secondly, That what is commonly called Love, namely, the Desire of satisfying a voracious Appetite with a certain Quantity of delicate white human Flesh, is by no means that Passion for which I here contend. This is indeed more properly Hunger; and as no Glutton is ashamed to apply the Word Love to his Appetite, and to say he *LOVES* such and such Dishes; so may the Lover of this Kind, with equal Propriety say, he *HUNGERS* after such and such Women.

Thirdly, I will grant, which I believe will be a most acceptable Concession, that this Love for which I am an Advocate, though it satisfies itself in a much more delicate Manner, doth nevertheless seek its own Satisfaction as much as the grossest of all our Appetites.

And, Lastly, That this Love, when it operates towards one of a different Sex, is very apt, towards its complete Gratification, to call in the Aid of that Hunger which I have mentioned above; and which it is so far from abating, that it heightens all its Delights to a Degree scarce imaginable by those who have never been susceptible of any other Emotions, than what have proceeded from Appetite alone.

In return to all these Concessions, I desire of the Philosophers to grant, that there is in some (I believe in many) human Breasts, a kind and benevolent Disposition, which is gratified by

contributing to the Happiness of others. That in this Gratification alone, as in Friendship, in parental and filial Affection, as indeed in general Philanthropy, there is a great and exquisite Delight. That if we will not call such Disposition Love, we have no Name for it. That though the Pleasures arising from such pure Love may be heightened and sweetened by the Assistance of amorous Desires, yet the former can subsist alone, nor are they destroyed by the Intervention of the latter. Lastly, That Esteem and Gratitude are the proper Motives to Love, as Youth and Beauty are to Desire; and therefore though such Desire may naturally cease, when Age or Sickness overtakes its Object; yet these can have no Effect on Love, nor ever shake or remove from a good Mind, that Sensation or Passion which hath Gratitude and Esteem for its Basis.

To deny the Existence of a Passion of which we often see manifest Instances, seems to be very strange and absurd; and can indeed proceed only from that Self-Admonition which we have mentioned above: But how unfair is this? Doth the Man who recognizes in his own Heart no Traces of Avarice or Ambition, conclude therefore that there are no such Passions in Human Nature? Why will we not modestly observe the same Rule in judging of the Good, as well as the Evil of others? Or why, in any Case, will we, as *Shakespeare* phrases it, "put the World in our own Perion?"

Predominant Vanity is, I am afraid, too much concerned here. This is one Instance of that Adulation which we bestow on our own Minds, and this almost universally. For there is scarce
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