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**The History Of Tom Jones, A Foundling**

In Four Volumes

**Fielding, Henry**

**London, 1750**

Chap. V. In which Jones receives a Letter from Sophia and goes to a Play  
with Mrs. Miller and Partridge.

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‘ what Undutifulness brings Volks to. You have an Example in your own Family.’

‘ Brother,’ cries the Aunt, ‘ you need not shock my Niece by such odious Repetitions. Why will you not leave every Thing entirely to me?’ ‘ Well, well; I wull, I wull,’ said the Squire.

And now Mrs. *Western*, luckily for *Sophia*, put an End to the Conversation, by ordering Chairs to be called. I say luckily; for had it continued much longer, fresh Matter of Disension would, most probably, have arisen between the Brother and Sister; between whom Education and Sex made the only Difference; for both were equally violent, and equally positive; they had both a vast Affection for *Sophia*, and both a sovereign Contempt for each other.

#### C H A P. V.

*In which Jones receives a Letter from Sophia, and goes to a Play with Mrs. Miller and Partridge.*

THE Arrival of *Black George* in Town, and the good Offices which that grateful Fellow had promised to do for his old Benefactor, greatly comforted *Jones* in the midst of all the Anxiety and Uneasiness which he had suffered on the Account of *Sophia*; from whom, by the Means of the said *George*, he received the following Answer to his Letter, which *Sophia*, to whom the Use of Pen, Ink, and Paper was restored with her Liberty, wrote the very Evening when she departed from her Confinement.

‘ Sir,

‘ Sir,

‘ As I do not doubt your Sincerity in what  
 ‘ you write, you will be pleased to hear that some  
 ‘ of my Afflictions are at an End, by the Arrival  
 ‘ of my Aunt *Western*, with whom I am at present,  
 ‘ and with whom I enjoy all the Liberty I  
 ‘ can desire. One Promise my Aunt hath insisted  
 ‘ on my making, which is, that I will not see or  
 ‘ converse with any Person without her Knowledge  
 ‘ and Consent. This Promise I have most  
 ‘ solemnly given, and shall most inviolably keep :  
 ‘ And tho’ she had not expressly forbidden me  
 ‘ Writing, yet that must be an Omission from  
 ‘ Forgetfulness ; or this, perhaps, is included in  
 ‘ the Word conversing. However, as I cannot  
 ‘ but consider this as a Breach of her generous  
 ‘ Confidence in my Honour, you cannot expect  
 ‘ that I shall, after this, continue to write myself,  
 ‘ or to receive Letters, without her Knowledge.  
 ‘ A Promise is with me a very sacred  
 ‘ Thing, and to be extended to every Thing understood  
 ‘ from it, as well as to what is expressed  
 ‘ by it ; and this Consideration may perhaps, on  
 ‘ Reflection, afford you some Comfort. But why  
 ‘ should I mention a Comfort to you of this Kind ?  
 ‘ For though there is one Thing in which I can  
 ‘ never comply with the best of Fathers, yet am  
 ‘ I firmly resolved never to act in Defiance of  
 ‘ him, or to take any Step of Consequence without  
 ‘ his Consent. A firm Persuasion of this,  
 ‘ must teach you to divert your Thoughts from  
 ‘ what Fortune hath (perhaps) made impossible.  
 ‘ This your own Interest persuades you. This  
 ‘ may reconcile, I hope, Mr. *Allworthy* to you ;  
 ‘ and if it will, you have my Injunctions to pursue



' sue it. Accidents have laid some Obligations on  
 ' me, and your good Intentions probably more.  
 ' Fortune may, perhaps, be sometimes kinder to  
 ' us both than at present. Believe this, that I  
 ' shall always think of you as I think you deserve,  
 ' and am,

' Sir,

' Your Obliged Humble Servant,

' Sophia Western.

' I charge you write to me no more—at pre-  
 ' sent at least; and accept this, which is now of  
 ' no Service to me, which I know you must  
 ' want, and think you owe the Trifle only to  
 ' that Fortune by which you found it\*.'

A Child who hath just learnt his Letters, would  
 have spelt this Letter out in less Time than *Jones*  
 took in reading it. The Sensations it occasioned  
 were a Mixture of Joy and Grief; somewhat like  
 what divide the Mind of a good Man, when he  
 peruses the Will of his deceased Friend, in which  
 a large Legacy, which his Distresses make the  
 more welcome, is bequeathed to him. Upon the  
 whole, however, he was more pleased than dis-  
 pleased; and indeed the Reader may probably  
 wonder that he was displeas'd at all; but the  
 Reader is not quite so much in Love as was poor  
*Jones*: And Love is a Disease, which, though it  
 may in some Instances resemble a Consumption,  
 (which it sometimes causes) in others proceeds in  
 direct Opposition to it, and particularly in this,

\* Meaning, perhaps, the Bank-bill for 100/.

that

that it never flatters itself, or sees any one Symptom in a favourable Light.

One Thing gave him complete Satisfaction, which was, that his Mistress had regained her Liberty, and was now with a Lady where she might at least assure herself of a decent Treatment. Another comfortable Circumstance, was the Reference which she made to her Promise of never marrying any other Man: For however disinterested he might imagine his Passion, and notwithstanding all the generous Overtures made in his Letter, I very much question whether he could have heard a more afflicting Piece of News, than that *Sophia* was married to another, though the Match had been never so great, and never so likely to end in making her completely happy. That refined Degree of *Platonic* Affection which is absolutely detached from the Flesh, and is indeed entirely and purely spiritual, is a Gift confined to the female Part of the Creation; many of whom I have heard declare, (and doubtless with great Truth) that they would, with the utmost Readiness, resign a Lover to a Rival, when such Resignation was proved to be necessary for the temporal Interest of such Lover. Hence, therefore, I conclude, that this Affection is in Nature, though I cannot pretend to say, I have ever seen an Instance of it.

Mr. *Jones* having spent three Hours in reading and kissing the aforesaid Letter, and being, at last, in a State of good Spirits, from the last mentioned Considerations, he agreed to carry an Appointment, which he had before made, into Execution. This was to attend Mrs. *Miller*, and her younger Daughter, into the Gallery at the Playhouse, and to admit Mr. *Partridge* as one of the Company.

For



For as *Jones* had really that Taste for Humour which many affect, he expected to enjoy much Entertainment in the Criticisms of *Partridge*; from whom he expected the simple Dictates of Nature, unimproved indeed, but likewise unadulterated by Art.

In the first Row then of the first Gallery did Mr. *Jones*, Mrs. *Miller*, her youngest Daughter, and *Partridge*, take their Places. *Partridge* immediately declared, it was the finest Place he had ever been in. When the first Music was played, he said, 'It was a Wonder how so many Fiddlers could play at one Time, without putting one another out.' While the Fellow was lighting the upper Candles, he cried out to Mrs. *Miller*, 'Look, look, Madam, the very Picture of the Man in the End of the common-Prayer Book, before the Gunpowder-Treason Service.' Nor could he help observing, with a Sigh, when all the Candles were lighted, 'That here were Candles enough burnt in one Night, to keep an honest poor Family for a whole Twelve-month.'

As soon as the Play, which was *Hamlet* Prince of *Denmark*, began, *Partridge* was all Attention, nor did he break Silence till the Entrance of the Ghost; upon which he asked *Jones*, 'What Man that was in the strange Dress; something,' said he, 'like what I have seen in a Picture. Sure it is not Armour, is it?' *Jones* answered, 'That is the Ghost.' To which *Partridge* replied with a Smile, 'Persuade me to that, Sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever actually saw a Ghost in my Life, yet I am certain I should know one, if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, Sir, Ghosts don't appear in such Dresses as that, neither.' In this Mistake,

Mistake, which caused much Laughter in the Neighbourhood of *Partridge*, he was suffered to continue, 'till the Scene between the Ghost and *Hamlet*, when *Partridge* gave that Credit to *Mr. Garrick*, which he had denied to *Jones*, and fell into so violent a Trembling, that his Knees knocked against each other. *Jones* asked him what was the Matter, and whether he was afraid of the Warrior upon the Stage? 'O la! Sir,' said he, 'I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of any Thing; for I know it is but a Play. And if it was really a Ghost, it could do one no Harm at such a Distance, and in so much Company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only Person.' 'Why, who,' cries *Jones*, 'dost thou take to be such a Coward here besides thyself?' 'Nay, you may call me Coward if you will; but if that little Man there upon the Stage is not frightened, I never saw any Man frightened in my Life. Ay, ay; *go along with you!* Ay, to be sure! Who's Fool then? Will you? Lud have Mercy upon such Fool-hardiness!—Whatever happens it is good enough for you.—*Follow you?* I'd follow the Devil as soon. Nay, perhaps, it is the Devil—for they say he can put on what Likeness he pleases.—Oh! here he is again.—*No farther!* No, you have gone far enough already; farther than I'd have gone for all the King's Dominions.' *Jones* offered to speak, but *Partridge* cried, 'Hush, hush, dear Sir, don't you hear him!' And during the whole Speech of the Ghost, he sat with his Eyes fixed partly on the Ghost, and partly on *Hamlet*, and with his Mouth open; the same Passions which succeeded



ceeded each other in *Hamlet*, succeeding likewise in him.

When the Scene was over, *Jones* said, 'Why, *Partridge*, you exceed my Expectations. You enjoy the Play more than I conceived possible.' 'Nay, Sir,' answered *Partridge*, 'if you are not afraid of the Devil, I can't help it; but to be sure it is natural to be surprized at such Things, though I know there is nothing in them: Not that it was the Ghost that surprized me neither; for I should have known that to have been only a Man in a strange Dress: But when I saw the little Man so frightned himself, it was that which took hold of me.' 'And dost thou imagine then, *Partridge*,' cries *Jones*, 'that he was really frightened?' 'Nay, Sir,' said *Partridge*, 'did not you yourself observe afterwards, when he found it was his own Father's Spirit, and how he was murdered in the Garden, how his Fear forsook him by Degrees; and he was struck dumb with Sorrow, as it were, just as I should have been, had it been my own Case.—But hush! O la! What Noise is that? There he is again.—Well, to be certain, though I know there is nothing at all in it, I am glad I am not down yonder, where those Men are.' Then turning his Eyes again upon *Hamlet*, 'Ay, you may draw your Sworc; what signifies a Sword against the Power of the Devil?'

During the second Act, *Partridge* made very few Remaks. He greatly admired the Fineness of the Dresses; nor could he help observing upon the King's Countenance. 'Well,' said he, 'how People may be deceived by Faces? *Nulla fides fronti* is, I find a true Saying. Who would



‘ would think, by looking in the King’s Face,  
 ‘ that he had ever committed a Murder?’ He  
 then enquired after the Ghost; but *Jones*, who  
 intended he should be surprized, gave him no other  
 Satisfaction, than ‘ that he might possibly see him  
 ‘ again soon, and in a Flash of Fire.’

*Partridge* sat in fearful Expectation of this;  
 and now, when the Ghost made his next Ap-  
 pearance, *Partridge* cried out, ‘ There, Sir,  
 ‘ now; what say you now? Is he frightened now  
 ‘ or no? As much frightened as you think me,  
 ‘ and, to be sure, no Body can helpsome Fears,  
 ‘ I would not be in so bad a Condition as what’s  
 ‘ his Name, Squire *Hamlet* is there, for all the  
 ‘ World. Bless me! What’s become of the  
 ‘ Spirit? As I am a living Soul, I thought I saw  
 ‘ him sink into the Earth.’ ‘ Indeed, you saw  
 ‘ right,’ answered *Jones*. ‘ Well, well,’ cries  
*Partridge*, ‘ I know it is only a Play; and be-  
 ‘ sides, if there was any Thing in all this, Madam  
 ‘ *Miller* would not laugh so: For as to you, Sir,  
 ‘ you would not be afraid. I believe, if the De-  
 ‘ vil was here in Person.—There, there—Ay,  
 ‘ no Wonder you are in such a Passion; shake  
 ‘ the vile wicked Wretch to Pieces. If she was  
 ‘ my own Mother I should serve her so. To be  
 ‘ sure, all Duty to a Mother is forfeited by such  
 ‘ wicked Doings.—Ay, go about your Business;  
 ‘ I hate the Sight of you.’

Our Critic was now pretty silent till the Play,  
 which *Hamlet* introduces before the King. This  
 he did not at first understand, ’till *Jones* explained  
 it to him; but he no sooner entered into the Spi-  
 rit of it, than he began to bless himself that he  
 had never committed Murder. Then turning to  
*Mrs. Miller*, he asked her, ‘ If she did not ima-  
 ‘ gine

gine the King looked as if he was touched ; though he is,' said he, ' a good Actor, and doth all he can to hide it. Well, I would not have so much to answer for, as that wicked Man there hath, to sit upon a much higher Chair than he sits upon.—No wonder he run away ; for your Sake I'll never trust an innocent Face again.'

The Grave-digging Scene next engaged the Attention of *Partridge*, who expressed much Surprise at the Number of Skulls thrown upon the Stage. To which *Jones* answered, ' That it was one of the most famous Burial-places about Town.' No wonder then,' cries *Partridge*, ' that the Place is haunted. But I never saw in my Life a worse Grave-digger. I had a Sexton when I was Clerk, that should have dug three Graves while he is digging one. The Fellow handles a Spade as if it was the first Time he had ever had one in his Hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe.'—Upon *Hamlet's* taking up the Skull, he cried out, ' Well it is strange to see how fearless some Men are : I never could bring myself to touch any Thing belonging to a dead Man on any Account.—He seemed frightened enough too at the Ghost I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*'

Little more worth remembering occurred during the Play ; at the End of which *Jones* asked him, ' which of the Players he had liked best ?' To this he answered, with some Appearance of Indignation at the Question, ' The King without Doubt.' ' Indeed, Mr. *Partridge*,' says Mrs. *Miller*, ' you are not of the same Opinion with the Town ; for they are all agreed, that *Ham-*  
let



' let is acted by the best Player who ever was  
 ' on the Stage.' ' He the best Player!' cries  
*Partridge*, with a contemptuous Sneer, ' Why I  
 ' could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I  
 ' had seen a Ghost, I should have looked in the  
 ' very same Manner, and done just as he did.  
 ' And then, to be sure, in that Scene, as you  
 ' called it, between him and his Mother, where  
 ' you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help  
 ' me, any Man, that is, any good Man, that  
 ' had such a Mother, would have done exactly  
 ' the same. I know you are only joking with  
 ' me; but, indeed, Madam, though I was never  
 ' at a Play in *London*, yet I have seen acting be-  
 ' fore in the Country; and the King for my Mo-  
 ' ney; he speaks all his Words distinctly, half as  
 ' loud again as the other.—Any Body may see he  
 ' is an Actor.'

While Mrs. *Miller* was thus engaged in Con-  
 versation with *Partridge*, a Lady came up to  
 Mr. *Jones*, whom he immediately knew to be  
 Mrs. *Fitzpatrick*. She said, she had seen him  
 from the other Part of the Gallery, and had ta-  
 ken that Opportunity of speaking to him, as she  
 had something to say, which might be of great  
 Service to himself. She then acquainted him with  
 her Lodgings, and made him an Appointment  
 the next Day in the Morning; which, upon  
 Recollection, she presently changed to the After-  
 noon; at which Time *Jones* promised to attend  
 her.

Thus ended the Adventure at the Play-house;  
 where *Partridge* had afforded great Mirth, not  
 only to *Jones* and Mrs. *Miller*, but to all who  
 sat within Hearing, who were more attentive to  
 what