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

In Four Volumes

**Fielding, Henry**

**London, 1750**

Chap. III. A Dialogue between the Landlady, and Susan the Chambermaid, proper to be read by all Innkeepers and the Servants

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we rarely see two who are equally able to personate the same Character; yet this of Virtue they can all admirably well put on; and as well those Individuals who have it not, as those who possess it, can all act it to the utmost Degree of Perfection.

When the Men were all departed, Mrs. *Waters* recovering from her Fear, recovered likewise from her Anger, and spoke in much gentler Accents to the Landlady, who did not so readily quit her Concern for the Reputation of the House, in Favour of which she began again to number the many great Persons who had slept under her Roof; but the Lady stopt her short, and having absolutely acquitted her of having had any Share in the past Disturbance, begged to be left to her Repose, which, she said, she hoped to enjoy unmolested during the Remainder of the Night, Upon which the Landlady, after much Civility, and many Court'sies, took her Leave.

### C H A P. III.

*A Dialogue between the Landlady, and Susan the Chambermaid, proper to be read by all Innkeepers and their Servants; with the Arrival, and affable Behaviour of a beautiful young Lady; which may teach Persons of Condition how they may acquire the Love of the whole World.*

**T**HE Landlady remembering that *Susan* had been the only Person out of Bed when the Door was burst open, resorted presently to her, to enquire into the first Occasion of the Disturbance, as well as who the strange Gentleman was, and when and how he arrived.

*Susan*

*Susan* related the whole Story which the Reader knows already, varying the Truth only in some Circumstances, as she saw convenient, and totally concealing the Money which she had received. But whereas her Mistress had in the Preface to her Enquiry spoken much in Compassion for the Fright which the Lady had been in, concerning any intended Depredations on her Virtue, *Susan* could not help endeavouring to quiet the Concern which her Mistress seemed to be under on that Account, by swearing heartily she saw *Jones* leap out from her Bed.

The Landlady fell into a violent Rage at these Words. ‘A likely Story truly,’ cried she, ‘that a Woman should cry out, and endeavour to expose herself, if that was the Case! I desire to know what better Proof any Lady can give of her Virtue than her crying out, which, I believe, twenty People can witness for her she did? I beg, Madam, you would spread no such Scandal of any of my Guests: For it will not only reflect on them, but upon the House; and I am sure no Vagabonds, nor wicked beggarly People come here.’

‘Well,’ says *Susan*, ‘then I must not believe my own Eyes.’ ‘No, indeed must you not always,’ answered her Mistress, ‘I would not have believed my own Eyes against such good Gentlesfolks. I have not had a better Supper ordered this half Year than they ordered last Night; and so easy and good-humoured were they, that they found no Fault with my *Worcestershire* Perry, which I sold them for *Champagne*; and to be sure it is as well tasted, and as wholesome as the best *Champagne* in the Kingdom, otherwise I would scorn to give it  
‘em,

‘em, and they drank me two Bottles. No, no, I will never believe any Harm of such sober good Sort of People.’

*Susan* being thus silenced, her Mistress proceeded to other Matters. ‘And so you tell me,’ continued she, ‘that the strange Gentleman came Post, and there is a Footman without with the Horses; why then, he is certainly some of your great Gentlefolks too. Why did not you ask him whether he’d have any Supper? I think he is in the other Gentleman’s Room; go up and ask whether he called. Perhaps he’ll order something when he finds any Body stirring in the House to dress it. Now don’t commit any of your usual Blunders, by telling him the Fire’s out, and the Fowls alive. And if he should order Mutton, don’t blab out, that we have none. The Butcher, I know, killed a Sheep just before I went to Bed, and he never refuses to cut it up warm when I desire it. Go, remember there’s all Sorts of Mutton and Fowls; go, open the Door, with, *Gentlemen d’ye call*; and if they say nothing, ask what his Honour will be pleased to have for Supper. Don’t forget his Honour. Go; if you don’t mind all these Matters better, you’ll never come to any Thing.’

*Susan* departed, and soon returned with an Account, that the two Gentlemen were got both into the same Bed. ‘Two Gentlemen,’ says the Landlady, ‘in the same Bed! that’s impossible; they are two errant Scrubs, I warrant them; and, I believe, young Squire *Allworthy* guessed right, that the Fellow intended to rob her Ladyship: For if he had broke open the Lady’s Door with any of the wicked Designs of

‘ a Gentleman, he would never have sneaked  
 ‘ away to another Room to save the Expence of a  
 ‘ Supper and a Bed to himself. They are certain-  
 ‘ ly Thieves, and their searching after a Wife is  
 ‘ nothing but a Pretence.’

In these Censures, my Landlady did Mr. *Fitzpatrick* great Injustice; for he was really born a Gentleman, though not worth a Groat; and tho’, perhaps, he had some few Blemishes in his Heart as well as in his Head, yet being a sneaking, or a niggardly Fellow, was not one of them. In reality, he was so generous a Man, that whereas he had received a very handsome Fortune with his Wife, he had now spent every Penny of it, except some little Pittance which was settled upon her; and in order to possess himself of this, he had used her with such Cruelty, that together with his Jealousy, which was of the bitterest Kind, it had forced the poor Woman to run away from him.

This Gentleman then being well tired with his long Journey from *Chester* in one Day, with which, and some good dry Blows he had received in the Scuffle, his Bones were so sore, that added to the Soreness of his Mind, it had quite deprived him of any Appetite for eating. And being now so violently disappointed in the Woman, whom at the Maid’s Instance, he had mistaken for his Wife, it never once entered into his Head, that she might nevertheless be in the House, though he had erred in the first Person he had attacked. He therefore yielded to the Dissuasions of his Friend from searching any farther after her that Night, and accepted the kind Offer of Part of his Bed.

The



The Footman and Post-boy were in a different Disposition. They were more ready to order than the Landlady was to provide; however, after being pretty well satisfied by them of the real Truth of the Case, and that Mr. *Fitzpatrick* was no Thief, she was at length prevailed on to set some cold Meat before them, which they were devouring with great Greediness, when *Partridge* came into the Kitchin. He had been first awaked by the Hurry which we have before seen; and while he was endeavouring to compose himself again on his Pillow, a Screech-Owl had given him such a Serenade at his Window, that he leapt in a most horrible Affright from his Bed, and huddling on his Cloaths with great Expedition, ran down to the Protection of the Company, whom he heard talking below in the Kitchin.

His Arrival detained my Landlady from returning to her Rest: For she was just about to leave the other two Guests to the Care of *Susan*; but the Friend of young Squire *Allworthy* was not to be so neglected, especially as he called for a Pint of Wine to be mulled. She immediately obeyed, by putting the same Quantity of Perry to the Fire: For this readily answered to the Name of every Kind of Wine.

The *Irish* Footman was retired to Bed, and the Post-boy was going to follow; but *Partridge* invited him to stay, and partake of his Wine, which the Lad very thankfully accepted. The School-master was indeed afraid to return to Bed by himself; and as he did not know how soon he might lose the Company of my Landlady, he was resolved to secure that of the Boy, in whose Presence he apprehended no Danger from the Devil, or any of his Adherents.

And

And now arrived another Post-boy at the Gate; upon which *Susan* being ordered out, returned, introducing two young Women in Riding-habits, one of which was so very richly laced, that *Partridge* and the Post-boy instantly started from their Chairs, and my Landlady fell to her Court'sies, and her Ladyships, with great Eagerness.

The Lady in the rich Habit said, with a Smile of great Condescension, 'If you will give me Leave, Madam, I will warm myself a few Minutes at your Kitchin Fire; for it is really very cold; but I must insist on disturbing no one from his Seat.' This was spoken on Account of *Partridge*, who had retreated to the other End of the Room, struck with the utmost Awe and Astonishment at the Splendor of the Lady's Dress. Indeed she had a much better Title to Respect than this: For she was one of the most beautiful Creatures in the World.

The Lady earnestly desired *Partridge* to return to his Seat, but could not prevail. She then pulled off her Gloves, and displayed to the Fire two Hands, which had every Property of Snow in them, except that of melting. Her Companion, who was indeed her Maid, likewise pulled off her Gloves, and discovered what bore an exact Resemblance, in Cold and Colour, to a Piece of frozen Beef.

'I wish, Madam,' quoth the latter, 'your Ladyship would not think of going any farther To-night. I am terribly afraid your Ladyship will not be able to bear the Fatigue.'

'Why sure,' cries the Landlady, 'her Ladyship's Honour can never intend it. O bless me, farther To-night indeed! Let me beseech your Ladyship not to think on't.—But to be sure,

‘ sure, your Ladyship can’t. What will your Honour be pleased to have for Supper? I have Mutton of all Kinds, and some nice Chicken.’

‘ I think, Madam,’ said the Lady, ‘ it would be rather Breakfast than Supper; but I can’t eat any Thing; and if I stay, shall only lie down for an Hour or two. However, if you please, Madam, you may get me a little Sack-whey, made very small and thin.’

‘ Yes, Madam,’ cries the Mistress of the House, ‘ I have some excellent White-wine.’ ‘ You have no Sack then,’ says the Lady. ‘ Yes, an’t please your Honour, I have; I may challenge the Country for that—But let me beg your Ladyship to eat something.’

‘ Upon my Word, I can’t eat a Morfel,’ answered the Lady; ‘ and I shall be much obliged to you, if you will please to get my Apartment ready as soon as possible: For I am resolved to be on Horseback again in three Hours.’

‘ Why *Susan*,’ cries the Landlady, ‘ is there a Fire lit yet in the *Wild-goose*?—I am sorry, Madam, all my best Rooms are full. Several People of the first Quality are now in Bed. Here’s a great young Squire, and many other great Gentlemen of Quality.’

*Susan* answered, ‘ That the *Irish* Gentlemen were got into the *Wild-goose*.’

‘ Was ever any Thing like it!’ says the Mistress; ‘ why the Devil would you not keep some of the best Rooms for the Quality, when you know scarce a Day passes without some calling here?—If they be Gentlemen, I am certain, when they know it is for her Ladyship, they will get up again.’

‘ Not



‘ Not upon my Account,’ says the Lady; ‘ I will have no Person disturbed for me. If you have a Room that is commonly decent, it will serve me very well, though it be never so plain. I beg, Madam, you will not give yourself so much Trouble on my Account.’ ‘ O, Madam,’ cries the other, ‘ I have several very good Rooms for that Matter, but none good enough for your Honour’s Ladyship. However, as you are so condescending to take up with the best I have, do, *Susan*, get a Fire in the *Rose* this Minute. Will your Ladyship be pleased to go up now, or stay till the Fire is lighted?’ ‘ I think, I have sufficiently warmed myself,’ answered the Lady; ‘ so if you please I will go now: I am afraid I have kept People, and particularly that Gentleman (meaning *Partridge*) too long in the Cold already. Indeed I cannot bear to think of keeping any Person from the Fire this dreadful Weather.’ She then departed with her Maid, the Landlady marching with two lighted Candles before her.

When that good Woman returned, the Conversation in the Kitchen was all upon the Charms of the young Lady. There is indeed in perfect Beauty a Power which none almost can withstand: For my Landlady, though she was not pleased at the Negative given to the Supper, declared she had never seen so lovely a Creature. *Partridge* ran out into the most extravagant Encomiums on her Face, though he could not refrain from paying some Compliments to the Gold Lace on her Habit: The Post-boy sung forth the Praises of her Goodness, which were likewise echoed by the other Post-boy, who was now come in. ‘ She’s a true good Lady, I warrant her,’