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

In Four Volumes

**Fielding, Henry**

**London, 1750**

Chap. VI. In which the Mistake of the Landlord throws Sophia into a dreadful Consternation.

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ner haunted me Night and Day. In this Situation I pass through a Scene, the Horrors of which can neither be painted nor imagined. Think, my Dear, figure, if you can, to yourself what I must have undergone. I became a Mother by the Man I scorned, hated, and detested. I went through all the Agonies and Miseries of a Lying-in, (ten Times more painful in such a Circumstance, than the worst Labour can be, when one endures it for a Man one loves,) in a Desert, or rather indeed a Scene of Riot and Revel, without a Friend, without a Companion, or without any of those agreeable Circumstances which often alleviate, and perhaps sometimes more than compensate the Sufferings of our Sex at that Season.

## C H A P. VI.

*In which the Mistake of the Landlord throws Sophia into a dreadful Consternation.*

MRS. Fitzpatrick was proceeding in her Narrative, when she was interrupted by the Entrance of Dinner, greatly to the Concern of *Sophia*: For the Misfortunes of her Friend had raised her Anxiety, and left her no Appetite, but what Mrs. Fitzpatrick was to satisfy by her Relation.

The Landlord now attended with a Plate under his Arm, and with the same Respect in his Countenance and Address, which he would have put on, had the Ladies arrived in a Coach and Six.

The married Lady seemed less affected with her own Misfortunes than was her Cousin: For the former eat very heartily, whereas the latter

could hardly swallow a Morfel. *Sophia* likewise shewed more Concern and Sorrow in her Countenance than appeared in the other Lady; who having observed these Symptoms in her Friend, begged her to be comforted, saying, 'Perhaps all may yet end better than either you or I expect.'

Our Landlord thought he had now an Opportunity to open his Mouth, and was resolved not to omit it. 'I am sorry, Madam,' cries he, 'that your Ladyship can't eat; for to be sure you must be hungry after so long fasting. I hope your Ladyship is not uneasy at any thing: For, as Madam there says, all may end better than any body expects. A Gentleman who was here just now, brought excellent News; and perhaps some Folks who have given other Folks the Slip, may get to *London* before they are overtaken; and if they do, I make no Doubt, but they will find People who will be very ready to receive them.'

All Persons under the Apprehension of Danger convert whatever they see and hear into the Objects of that Apprehension. *Sophia* therefore immediately concluded from the foregoing Speech, that she was known and pursued by her Father. She was now struck with the utmost Consternation, and for a few Minutes deprived of the Power of Speech; which she no sooner recovered, than she desired the Landlord to send his Servants out of the Room, and then addressing herself to him, said; 'I perceive, Sir, you know who we are; but I beseech you;— nay, I am convinced, if you have any Compassion or Goodness, you will not betray us.'

' I betray your Ladyship!' quoth the Land-  
 lord; ' No; (and then he swore several very  
 hearty Oaths) ' I would sooner be cut into ten  
 ' thousand Pieces. I hate all Treachery. I! I  
 ' never betrayed any one in my Life yet, and I  
 ' am sure I shall not begin with so sweet a Lady  
 ' as your Ladyship. All the World would very  
 ' much blame me if I should, since it will be in  
 ' your Ladyship's Power so shortly to reward me.  
 ' My Wife can witness for me, I knew your  
 ' Ladyship the Moment you came into the  
 ' House: I said it was your Honour, before I  
 ' lifted you from your Horse, and I shall carry  
 ' the Bruises I got in your Ladyship's Service to  
 ' the Grave; but what signified that, as long as  
 ' I saved your Ladyship? To be sure some Peo-  
 ' ple this Morning would have thought of get-  
 ' ting a Reward; but no such Thought ever en-  
 ' tered into my Head. I would sooner starve  
 ' than take any Reward for betraying your La-  
 ' dyship.'

' I promise you, Sir,' says *Sophia*, ' if it be  
 ' ever in my Power to reward you, you shall not  
 ' lose by your Generosity.'

' Alack-a-day, Madam!' answered the Land-  
 lord, ' in your Ladyship's Power! Heaven put  
 ' it as much into your Will. I am only afraid  
 ' your Honour will forget such a poor Man as  
 ' an Innkeeper; but if your Ladyship should not,  
 ' I hope you will remember what Reward I re-  
 ' fused—refused! that is, I would have refused,  
 ' and to be sure it may be called refusing; for I  
 ' might have had it certainly; and to be sure you  
 ' might have been in some Houses;—but for my  
 ' Part, would not methinks for the World have  
 ' your Ladyship wrong me so much, as to ima-  
 ' gine

‘ gine I ever thought of betraying you, even before I heard the good News.

‘ What News pray?’ says *Sophia*, something eagerly.

‘ Hath not your Ladyship heard it then?’ cries the Landlord, ‘ nay, like enough: For I heard it only a few Minutes ago; and if I had never heard it, may the Devil fly away with me this Instant, if I would have betrayed your Honour; no, if I would, may I—Here he subjoined several dreadful Imprecations, which *Sophia* at last interrupted, and begged to know what he meant by the News.—He was going to answer, when Mrs. *Honour* came running into the Room, all pale and breathless, and cried out, ‘ Madam, we are all undone, all ruined, they are come, they are come!’ These Words almost froze up the Blood of *Sophia*; but Mrs. *Fitzpatrick* asked *Honour*, who were come?—‘ Who?’ answered she, why the *French*; several hundred thousands of them are landed, and we shall be all murdered and ravished.’

As a Miser, who hath in some well-built City a Cottage value Twenty Shillings, when at a Distance he is alarmed with the News of a Fire, turns pale and trembles at his Loss; but when he finds the beautiful Palaces only are burnt, and his own Cottage remains safe, he comes instantly to himself and smiles at his good Fortunes: Or as (for we dislike something in the former Simile) the tender Mother, when terrified with the Apprehension that her darling Boy is drowned, is struck senseless and almost dead with Consternation; but when she is told that little Master is safe, and the *Victory* only with Twelve hundred brave Men gone to the Bottom, Life and Sense again

again return, maternal Fondness enjoys the sudden Relief from all its Fears, and the general Benevolence which at another Time would have deeply felt the dreadful Catastrophe, lies fast asleep in her Mind.

So *Sophia*, than whom none was more capable of tenderly feeling the general Calamity of her Country, found such immediate Satisfaction from the Relief of those Terrors she had of being overtaken by her Father, that the Arrival of the *French* scarce made any Impression on her. She gently chid her Maid for the Fright into which she had thrown her; and said, 'she was glad it was no worse; for that she had feared somebody else was come.'

'Ay, ay,' quoth the Landlord smiling, 'her Ladyship knows better Things; she knows the *French* are our very best Friends, and come over hither only for our Good. They are the People who are to make old *England* flourish again. I warrant her Honour thought the Duke was coming; and that was enough to put her into a Fright. I was going to tell your Ladyship the News.---His Honour's Majesty, Heaven blefs him, hath given the Duke the Slip; and is marching as fast as he can to *London*, and Ten thousand *French* are landed to join him on the Road.'

*Sophia* was not greatly pleased with this News, nor with the Gentleman who related it; but as she still imagined he knew her (for she could not possibly have any Suspicion of the real Truth) she durst not shew any Dislike. And now the Landlord, having removed the Cloth from the Table, withdrew; but at his Departure frequently repeated his Hopes of being remembered hereafter.