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

In Four Volumes

**Fielding, Henry**

**London, 1750**

Chap. VII. Containing the whole Humours of a Masquerade.

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For this Sum, therefore, he applied to *Partridge*, which was the first he had permitted him to advance, and was the last he intended that poor Fellow should advance in his Service. To say the Truth, *Partridge* had lately made no Offer of this Kind; whether it was that he desired to see the Bank-Bill broke in upon, or that Distress should prevail on *Jones* to return home, or from what other Motive it proceeded, I will not determine.

## C H A P. VII.

*Containing the whole Humours of a Masquerade.*

OUR Cavaliers now arrived at that Temple, where *Heydegger*, the great *Arbiter Deliciarum*, the great High Priest of Pleasure presides; and, like other Heathen Priests, imposes on his Votaries by the pretended Presence of the Deity, when in Reality no such Deity is there.

Mr. *Nightingale* having taken a Turn or two with his Companion, soon left him, and walked off with a Female, saying, ‘ Now you are here, Sir, you must beat about for your own Game.’

*Jones* began to entertain strong Hopes that his *Sophia* was present; and these Hopes gave him more Spirits than the Lights, the Music, and the Company; though these are pretty strong Antidotes against the Spleen. He now accosted every Woman he saw, whose Stature, Shape, or Air, bore any Resemblance to his Angel. To all of whom he endeavoured to say something smart, in order to engage an Answer, by which he might discover that Voice which he thought it impossible he should mistake. Some of these answered by

a Question, in a squeaking Voice, *Do you know me?* Much the greater Numbers said, *I don't know you, Sir*; and nothing more. Some called him an impertinent Fellow; some made him no Answer at all; some said, *Indeed I don't know your Voice, and I shall have nothing to say to you*; and many gave him as kind Answers as he could wish, but not in the Voice he desired to hear.

Whilst he was talking with one of these last, (who was in the Habit of a Shepherdess) a Lady in a Domino came up to him, and flapping him on the Shoulder, whispered him, at the same Time, in the Ear, 'If you talk any longer with that Trollop, I will acquaint Miss *Western*.'

*Jones* no sooner heard that Name, than, immediately quitting his former Companion, he applied to the Domino, begging and entreating her to shew him the Lady she had mentioned, if she was then in the Room.

The Mask walked hastily to the upper End of the innermost Apartment before she spoke; and then, instead of answering him, sat down, and declared she was tired. *Jones* sat down by her, and still persisted in his Entreaties; at last the Lady coldly answered, 'I imagined Mr. *Jones* had been a more discerning Lover, than to suffer any Disguise to conceal his Mistress from him.' 'Is she here then, Madam?' replied *Jones*, with some Vehemence. Upon which the Lady cry'd, — 'Hush, Sir, you will be observed.—I promise you, upon my Honour, Miss *Western* is not here.'

*Jones* now taking the Mask by the Hand, fell to entreating her in the most earnest Manner, to acquaint him where he might find *Sophia*: And when he could obtain no direct Answer, he began

gan to upbraid her gently for having disappointed him the Day before; and concluded, saying,  
 ' Indeed, my good Fairy Queen, I know your  
 ' Majesty very well, notwithstanding the affected  
 ' Disguise of your Voice. Indeed, Mrs. Fitz-  
 ' patrick, it is a little cruel to divert yourself at  
 ' the Expence of my Torments.'

The Mask answered, ' Though you have so  
 ' ingeniously discovered me, I must still speak in  
 ' the same Voice, lest I should be known by  
 ' others. And do you think, good Sir, that I  
 ' have no greater Regard for my Cousin, than to  
 ' assist in carrying on an Affair between you  
 ' two, which must end in her Ruin, as well as  
 ' your own? Besides, I promise you, my Cousin  
 ' is not mad enough to consent to her own De-  
 ' struction, if you are so much her Enemy, as to  
 ' tempt her to it.'

' Alas, Madam,' said *Jones*, ' you little know  
 ' my Heart, when you call me an Enemy of  
 ' *Sophia*.'

' And yet to ruin any one,' cries the other,  
 ' you will allow, is the Act of an Enemy; and  
 ' when by the same Act you must knowingly  
 ' and certainly bring Ruin on yourself, is it not  
 ' Folly or Madness, as well as Guilt? Now, Sir,  
 ' my Cousin hath very little more than her Fa-  
 ' ther will please to give her; very little for one  
 ' of her Fashion,—you know him, and you know  
 ' your own Situation.'

*Jones* vowed he had no such Design on *So-  
 phia*, ' That he would rather suffer the most  
 ' violent of Deaths than sacrifice her Interest to  
 ' his Desires. He said, he knew how unworthy  
 ' he was of her every Way; that he had long  
 ' ago resolved to quit all such aspiring Thoughts,  
 ' but

‘ but that some strange Accidents had made him  
 ‘ desirous to see her once more, when he pro-  
 ‘ mised he would take Leave of her for ever.  
 ‘ No, Madam,’ concluded he, ‘ my Love is not  
 ‘ of that base Kind which seeks its own Satis-  
 ‘ faction, at the Expence of what is most dear  
 ‘ to its Object. I would sacrifice every Thing  
 ‘ to the Possession of my *Sophia*, but *Sophia* her-  
 ‘ self.’

Though the Reader may have already conceiv-  
 ed no very sublime Idea of the Virtue of the  
 Lady in the Mask; and tho’ possibly she may  
 hereafter appear not to deserve one of the first  
 Characters of her Sex; yet, it is certain, these  
 generous Sentiments made a strong Impression  
 upon her, and greatly added to the Affection she  
 had before conceived for our young Heroe.

The Lady now, after a Silence of a few Mo-  
 ments, said, ‘ She did not see his Pretensions to  
 ‘ *Sophia* so much in the Light of Presumption,  
 ‘ as of Imprudence. Young Fellows,’ says she,  
 ‘ can never have too aspiring Thoughts. I love  
 ‘ Ambition in a young Man, and I would have  
 ‘ you cultivate it as much as possible. Perhaps  
 ‘ you may succeed with those who are infinitely  
 ‘ superior in Fortune; nay, I am convinced there  
 ‘ are Women, -- but don’t you think me a strange  
 ‘ Creature, Mr. *Jones*, to be thus giving Advice  
 ‘ to a Man, with whom I am so little acquainted,  
 ‘ and one with whose Behaviour to me I have so  
 ‘ little Reason to be pleased?’

Here *Jones* began to apologize, and to hope  
 he had not offended in any thing he had said of  
 her Cousin. -- To which the Mask answered,  
 ‘ And are you so little versed in the Sex, to  
 ‘ imagine you can well affront a Lady more,  
 ‘ than

‘ than by entertaining her with your Passion for another Woman? If the Fairy Queen had conceived no better Opinion of your Gallantry, she would scarce have appointed you to meet her at a Masquerade.’

*Jones* had never less Inclination to an Amour than at present; but Gallantry to the Ladies was among his Principles of Honour; and he held it as much incumbent on him to accept a Challenge to Love, as if it had been a Challenge to Fight. Nay, his very Love to *Sophia* made it necessary for him to keep well with the Lady, as he made no doubt but she was capable of bringing him into the Presence of the other.

He began therefore to make a very warm Answer to her last Speech, when a Mask, in the Character of an old Woman, joined them. This Mask was one of those Ladies who go to a Masquerade only to vent Ill-nature, by telling People rude Truths, and by endeavouring, as the Phrase is, to spoil as much Sport as they are able. This good Lady therefore, having observed *Jones*, and his Friend, whom she well knew, in close Consultation together in a Corner of the Room, concluded she could no where satisfy her Spleen better than by interrupting them. She attacked them therefore, and soon drove them from their Retirement; nor was she contented with this, but pursued them to every Place which they shifted to avoid her; till Mr. *Nightingale* seeing the Distress of his Friend, at last relieved him, and engaged the old Woman in another Pursuit.

While *Jones* and his Mask were walking together about the Room, to rid themselves of the Teazer, he observed his Lady speak to several Masks, with the same Freedom of Acquaintance

as if they had been barefaced. He could not help expressing his Surprize at this, saying, ' Sure, Madam, you must have infinite Discernment to know People in all Disguises.' To which the Lady answered, ' You cannot conceive any Thing more insipid and childish than a Masquerade to the People of Fashion, who in general know one another as well here, as when they meet in an Assembly or a Drawing-room; nor will any Woman of Condition converse with a Person with whom she is not acquainted. In short, the Generality of Persons whom you see here, may more properly be said to kill Time in this Place, than in any other; and generally retire from hence more tired than from the longest Sermon. To say the Truth, I begin to be in that Situation myself; and if I have any Faculty at guessing, you are not much better pleased. I protest it would be almost Charity in me to go home for your Sake.' ' I know but one Charity equal to it,' cries *Jones*, ' and that is to suffer me to wait on you home.' ' Sure,' answered the Lady, ' you have a strange Opinion of me, to imagine, that upon such an Acquaintance, I would let you into my Doors at this Time o'Night. I fancy you impute the Friendship I have shewn my Cousin, to some other Motive. Confess honestly; don't you consider this contrived-Interview as little better than a downright Assignment? Are you used, Mr. *Jones*, to make these sudden Conquests?' ' I am not used, Madam,' said *Jones*, ' to submit to such sudden Conquests; but as you have taken my Heart by Surprize, the rest of my Body hath a Right to follow; so you must pardon me, if I resolve to attend you wherever  
' you

‘you go.’ He accompanied these Words with some proper Actions; upon which the Lady, after a gentle Rebuke, and saying their Familiarity would be observed, told him, ‘She was going to sup with an Acquaintance, whither she hoped he would not follow her; for if you should,’ said she, ‘I shall be thought an unaccountable Creature, though my Friend indeed is not censorious, yet I hope you won’t follow me: I protest I shall not know what to say, if you do.’

The Lady presently after quitted the Masquerade, and *Jones*, notwithstanding the severe Prohibition he had received, presumed to attend her. He was now reduced to the same Dilemma we have mentioned before, namely, the Want of a Shilling, and could not relieve it by borrowing as before. He therefore walked boldly on after the Chair in which his Lady rode, pursued by a grand Huzza, from all the Chairmen present, who wisely take the best Care they can to discountenance all walking afoot by their Betters. Luckily however the Gentry who attend at the Opera-House were too busy to quit their Stations, and as the Lateness of the Hour prevented him from meeting many of their Brethren in the Street, he proceeded without Molestation, in a Dress, which, at another Season, would have certainly raised a Mob at his Heels.

The Lady was set down in a Street, not far from *Hanover-Square*, where the Door being presently opened, she was carried in, and the Gentleman, without any Ceremony, walked in after her.

*Jones* and his Companion were now together in a very well-furnished and well-warm’d Room,  
when