

THE
COMICAL TRANSACTIONS
OF
LOTHIAN TOM.

IN SIX PARTS.



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OF
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PART I.

THIS Thomas Black, vulgarly called Lothian Tom, after his native county, was born four miles from Edinburgh. His father being a very wealthy farmer, gave him good Education, which he was very awkward in receiving, being a very wild, cross, and mischievous boy.

1. When he was about ten years of age, he was almost killed by the stroke of a horse's foot, which his father had, who had a trick of kicking at every person that came behind him; but when Tom was gett'g heal of the dreadful wound whereof many thought he would have died, to be even with the horse, he gets a clod, or piece of a tree, full of wooden pins, such as shoe-makers use to soften their leather upon, and with a rope, he tied it to the couple-bank in the stable, directly opposite to the horse's tail; then gets up on the bank, and gives it a swing back, so that the pikes

in the end of it, came full drive against the horse's arse, which made him to fling: and the more he flung and struck at it, it rebounded back and struck him: The battle lasted with great fury, for a long time, which was good diversion to Tom, until his father, hearing some disturbance in the stable, came in to know the matter and was surprised when he saw the poor horse tanning his own hide, with his legs all cut and bloody, he cut the rope, and the battle was ended. But the poor horse would never kick at any that came behind him afterwards, but always ran from it.

2. It happened one day that Tom went a-fishing, and brought home a few small fish, which his grandmother's cat snapt up in the dark; so Tom, to have justice of the cat for so doing, catches her, and puts her into a little tub, or cog, then sets her a-drift into a mill dam, ordering her to go a-fishing for herself; then sets-out two or three dogs upon her, when a most terrible sea-fight ensued, as ever was seen on fresh-water; for if any of the dogs assayed to board her, by setting in over their nose, badrons came flying to that quarter to repulse him with her claws; then the vessel was like to be overset by the weight

of herself, so she had to flee to the other; and finding the same there, from thence to the middle, where she sat mewling, always turning herself about, combing their noses with her foot. The old woman, being informed of the dangerous situation of her dearly beloved cat, came running with a long pole to beat off the dogs, and haul her ashore. What now, says Tom, if you be going to take part with my enemies, you shall have part of their reward: Then gives the old woman such a push, that she tumbled into the dam over head and ears, beside her beloved cat, and would undoubtedly have perished in the water, had not one of the people, who was there looking at the diversion, come to her relief.

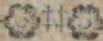
3. After this Tom was sent to the school, to keep his hand out of an ill turn. And having an old cankered, crab-witted fellow for his dominie, they were always at variance; for if Tom had got his whips, which he often deserved, he was sure to be revenged upon his master again for it. So Tom perceiving that his master had a close-stool in a little closet within the school, where he went to ease himself, Tom gets a penny-worth of gun-powder,

and sprinkled it on the ground, directly before the seat; and lays a little of it along in a train to the fire-side; then observing when his Master went into it, and as he was loosing down his breeches, sets fire to the train, which blew it all about his master's bare hips, and scorched him terribly, besides the fright, for which Tom was severely whipt; yet, in a little after, he revenged it on his Master.

4. So it happened one day, as Tom went into his Master's house, the wife was stooping into a big meal-barrel, to bring out some meal; Tom takes her by the feet and coups her up into the barrel with her head down, and her bare back-side uppermost; then runs into the School, crying, O Master, Master! the De'il's looking out o' your meal stand, wi' a fat face and a black ill-saur'd mouth: yon's just Auld Nick, if he be living—At this time the Master ran with all the speed he could, to see what it was, and found it to be his own wife speechless and almost smothered to death; but as she could not tell who did it, Tom got clear off; yet he was not satisfied without some more vengeance on the old fellow; and knowing his Master had a fashion, when he was going to whip

the boys, if they would not loose their breeches willingly, he took his knife and cut them through the waistband behind. So Tom goes to a butcher, and gets a raw pudding, and fills it with blood and water, and puts it within the waist-band of his breeches, then goes to the school next day and, as the master was sitting, with his back towards the fire. Tom lights a piece of paper, and sets his wig in a low, which burnt for some time unperceived, until the flames came fizzing about his ears! He first put out the flames by trampling on the wig, and then flies at Tom in a rage, ordering him to loose his breeches, but Tom told him he was never so mad; then he took his knife, and whips poor Tom over knee, and with great kicking and struggling, cuts the waist-band of his breeches thro' pudding and all, so that the blood gushed out, and Tom cried out Murder! Murder! and down he fell; the poor dominie ran out at the door crying & wringing his hands; word flew about that Tom was sticket by the Dominie, which made the people come running from several parts of the country round about, to see how it was; but on searching him, they found only the empty pudding, which discover-

ed the fraud: Then two men had to get horses and ride after the poor Dominic, who had by this time got 2 or 3 miles away, and when he saw them coming after him, crying stop and come back again, he ran the faster, until he could run no more but fell over on the road, praying them to let him go, for, if he was taken back, he was sure to be hanged; and would not be persuaded Tom was alive, until they forced him back, and he saw him, but he would be Tom's teacher no longer; so Tom's father had to seek another master for him.



PART II.

5. There was a young woman servant to Tom's father, whom Tom had offended by some of his tricks, and she, to be up with Tom again, one night spread a handful of short nettles in his bed, between the sheets, which stung his legs and thighs so much that he was obliged to quit his bed for some part of the night; for which he resolved to be revenged, whenever a proper opportunity offered. It happened in a few days after, that she was invited to a wedding, where the dancing and di-

version induced her to stay all night; and in coming home in the morning, her mistress set her to wash some clothes: . . . But she being fatigued with her night's diversion, fell fast asleep with her hands extended in the tub, and standing on her feet with her belly leaning on the tub; Tom perceiving this, slips her petticoats and smock over her head letting the sun shine on her bare back-side, which faced the high-way. Several people passing by, as she continued in this posture some of them were diverted, and others ashamed at the sight; but a poor cadger had the misfortune to be coming on the road at the time and his horse taking fright at this unusual sight, threw off the creels and broke the poor man's eggs all to smash; which so enraged him, that he lashed her buttocks with his whip, in such an unmerciful manner, that with the smart & shame together, she had not the least inclination to sleep for the remaining part of that day.

C. Tom being grown up to the years and age of a man, thought himself wiser and more artful than his father; & there were several things about the house he liked better than work; so he turned to be a dealer among the brotes, a cowper of

Horses and cows, &c. and even wet ware amongst the brewers and brandy shops, until he cowped himself to the toom halter: and then his parents would supply him no more. He knew well his grandmother had plenty of moneey, but she would give him none, but the old woman had a good black cow of her own: So Tom went to the fields one evening, and catches her and takes her into an old waste house which stood at a distance from any other, and there he kept her two or three days, giving her meat and drink when it was dark at night, and made the old woman believe somebody had stolen the cow for their winter's mart, which was grief enough to the old woman, for the less of her dearly beloved cow. However, she employs Tom to go to a fair that was near-by, and buy her another; and gives him three Pounds, which Tom accepts of very thankfully, and promises to buy one as like the other as he possibly could get: Then he gets a piece of chalk, and brays it as small as meal, and steeps it in a little water, and therewith rubs over the cow's face and back, which made her baith brucket and rigget: So Tom in the morning, takes

the cow to a public house within a little of the fair, and left her till the fair was over, then drives her home, before him; and, as soon as they came home, the cow began to rout as she used to do, which made the old woman to rejoice, thinking it was her own black cow, but, when she saw her white face, she sighed and said, Alas! thou'll ne'er be like the kindly brute, my bonny Black-lady, and yet you rout as like her as ony ever I did hear; But, says Tom to himself, 'Tis a mercy you know not what she says, or all would be wrong yet. So in two or three days the old woman put forth her braw rigget cow in the morning with the rest of her neighbour's cattle, but it came on a sore day of heavy rain, which washed away all the white from her face and back, so that the old woman's Black-lady came home at night, and her rigget cow went away with the shower and was never heard of: But Tom's father having some suspicion, and looking narrowly into the cow's face, found some of the whiteness not washed away, and then he caught hold of Tom, and gave him a hearty beating, and sent him away to seek his fortune with a skin full of sore bones.

PART III.

7. Tom being now turned to his own shifts, considers with himself how to raise a little more money; so he gets a long string, as near as he could guess to be the length of his mother, and into Edinburgh he goes, to a wright who was acquainted with his father and mother: The wright asked him how he did? He answered him very softly, he had lost a good dutiful mother last night, and there's a measure for her coffin. Tom went out and staid for some time, and then comes in again, and tells the wright he did not know what to do, for his father had ordered him to get money from such a man whom he named, and he was that day gone out of town: The wright asked him how much he wanted? To which he answered, A guinea and a half might do, or 30 shillings at the least: So he gave him the guinea and the half: Then Tom gave him strict charges to be out to-morrow by 11 o'clock with the coffin, and, that he should get his money with him. Tom set out for the ale-house, with the money, and lived well while it lasted. Next morning the wright and his two lads went out with the

coffin, and as they were going into the house, Tom's mother, standing at the door, asked the master how he did, and where he was going with that fine coffin? He did not know well what to say, being so surprised to see her alive; but at last he told her, her son brought in the measure yesterday, and had got a guinea and a half from him, which he said was to buy some other necessaries for the funeral. () the rogue! said she, has he play'd me that? So the wright got his guinea and a half, and so much for his trouble, and had to take back his coffin with him again.

8, Tom being now short of money again, began to think how he could raise a fresh supply; so he went to the port amongst the shearers, and there he hired about thirty of them, and agreed to give them a whole week's shearing at ten pence a-day, which was twopence higher than any had got that year; this made the poor shearers think he was an honest, generous and genteel master as ever they got, for he took them all into an ale-house, and gave them a hearty breakfast, till they could eat no more. Now, says he, when there is so many of you together, perhaps from different parts, and unacquainted

with one-another, I do not know, but as there may be some of you honest men, & some of you rogues; and as you are to lie all in one barn together, any of you who has any money, you'll be surest to give it to me, and I'll mark it down in my book with your names, and what I receive from each of you, and you shall have it all again on Saturday-night, when you get your wages. O! very well, goodman, take mine, take mine, every one faster than another; some gave him five, six, seven, and eight shillings, even all they had earned thro' the harvest; which amounted to near Seven Pounds Sterling. Having got all their money, he goes on with them, till about three miles out of the town, and coming to a great field of standing corn, tho' somewhat green, yet convenient for his purpose, as it lay at some distance from any house or person. So he made them begin there, telling them he was going to order dinner, for them, and send his own servants to join them: Away he goes with all the speed he could, but takes another road into the town, lest they should follow and catch him. Now, when the people to whom the corn belonged, saw such a band in

their field, they could not understand the meaning of it; so the farmer, whose corn it was, went off, crying always as he ran, to them to stop; but they would not, until he began to strike at them and they at him he being in a great passion, as the corn was not fully ripe; at last, by force of argument and other people coming up to his assistance, the poor shearers, were convinced they had got the bite, which caused them to go away lamenting their misfortune.

In two or three days after, as Tom was going down the Canariegate, he meets one of his shearers, who knew him, and kept fast by him, demanding his money, and satisfaction for the rest: 'Whist, whist, says Tom,' and you'll get yours and something else beside.'—So Tom takes him into the jail, and calls for a bottle of ale and a dram and taking the jailor aside, as if he was going to borrow the money from him, he says 'This man is a great thief, I and two others were in search of him three days, and the other 2 men have the warrant with them, so if you keep the rogue till I run & bring them, you shall have a guinea in reward.' 'Yes,' said he, 'go and I'll fix him.' So Tom got off, leaving the man and the jailor struggling together, & goes to England.

PART IV:

9. Tom having now left his own native country, went into the country of Northumberland, where he hired himself with an old miser of a farmer; and here he continued for several years, performing his duty in his service very well, tho' sometimes playing a roguish bite on those about him. His master had a very naughty custom that he would allow them no candle at night to see with, when at supper: Tom one night sets himself next to his master, and as they weré all about to fall on, Tom puts his spoon into the heart of the dish, where the crowdy was hottest and claps a spoonful into his master's mouth; a pox on you for a rogue, cried his master, for my mouth is burnt! A pox on you for a master, says Tom, for you keep a a house as dark as Purgatory, for, I was going to my own mouth with that soup, and miss'd the way, it being so dark; don't think, master, that I am such a big fool as to feed you, while I have a mouth of my own. So, from that night that Tom burnt his master's mouth with the hot crowdy, they always got a candle to show them light at supper, for his mas-

ter would feed no more in the dark while Tom was about the house.

10. There was a servant girl in the foresaid house, who, always when she made the beds, neglected to make Tom's and would have him to do it himself:—
 'Well then,' says Tom, 'I have harder work to do, and I shall do that too.'—

So next day, when Tom was in the field at the plough, when he saw his master coming from the house towards him, he left the horses and the plough standing in the field, and goes away towards his master, who cried, 'What is wrong? or, is any thing broke with you?' 'No no' says Tom, but I'm going home, to make my bed, it has not been made these 2 weeks, and just now it is about the time the maid makes all the rest, so I'll go home and make mine too.' No, no, sirrah, says his master, 'go back to your plough, and I'll cause it to be made every night for you.' 'Then,' says Tom, 'I'll plow two or three furrows in the time.'

11. There was a butcher came to his master's and bought a fine fat calf, so Tom laid it on the horse's neck, before the butcher; and when he was gone, 'Now,' says Tom, 'what will you hold

master, but I'll steal that calf from the butcher before he goes two miles off it. 'Why,' says his master, 'I'll hold a guinea as you don't.' 'Done,' says Tom. 'I' he goes, and gets a good shoe of his master's, and runs another way a-cross the fields, until he got before the butcher, near the corner of a hedge, where there was an open and turning of the way; here Tom darts himself behind the hedge, and throws the shoe in the middle of the high way; then up comes the butcher, riding, and his calf behind him: 'Hay,' said he to himself, 'there's a good shoe, if I know how to get on my calf again, I would light for it: but what signifies one without its neighbour? So off he goes, and lets it ly. Tom then slips out, and takes up the shoe again, and runs cross the fields, until he got in before the butcher, at another open of the hedge, about half a mile distant, and there he throws out the shoe again, on the middle of the road: then up comes the butcher, and seeing it, says to himself 'Now, I shall have a pair of good shoes for the lifting; and down he comes, lays the calf on the ground, and tying his horse to the hedge, runs back, thinking to get the other shoe, in which time, Tom whips

up the calf and shoe, and home he comes, demanding his wager, which his master could not deny, being so fairly won.—

The poor butcher returned back to his horse, got only his travel for his pains; so missing his calf, he knew not what to say or do, but thinking it had broke the rope from about its feet, and had run into the fields, the butcher spent that day in search of it amongst the hedges and ditches, and returned to Tom's master's all night, intending to go and search farther for it next day, giving them a tedious relation how he came to lose it by a cursed pair of shoes which he believed the devil had dropped in his way; and how he had taken the calf and all along with him, expressing his thankfulness that the devil was so honest as to spare his old horse, when he stole away his calf.

Next morning Tom went to work, and made a fine white face on the calf with chalk and water; then brings it out, and sells it to the butcher, which was good diversion to his master and other servants to see the butcher buy his own calf again. No sooner was he gone with it, then Tom says, 'Now, master, what will you hold but I'll steal it from him again, ere he

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goes 2 miles off? 'No, no,' says his master 'I'll hold no more bets with you, but I'll give you a shilling if you do it.' Done says Tom, 'it will cost you no more.' So away he runs thro' the fields, until he came before the butcher, just at the place where he stole the calf from him the day before; and here he lies behind the hedge and as the butcher came past, he put his hand on his mouth, and cried Ba, baw, like a calf; The butcher hearing this swore to himself that there was the calf he had lost the day before! Down he comes and throws the calf on the ground, gets in thro' the hedge in all haste, thinking he had no more to do but to take it up; but as he came in at one part of the hedge Tom jumps out at another, and gets the calf on his back; he then gets in over the hedge on the other side, and thro' the fields he came safely home, with the calf on his back; while the poor butcher spent his time and labour in vain, running from hedge to hedge, and hole to hole, seeking what was not there to be found. So the butcher returned to his horse again, and finding his other calf gone, he concluded it to be done by some invisible spirit about that spot of ground; and so went home

and raised a bad report on the devil saying, that he was turned a highwayman, and had taken two calves from him. So Tom washing the white face of the stolen calf, his master sent the butcher word to come and buy another calf; which he accordingly did a few days after, and Tom sold him the same calf, the third time; then told him the whole affair, as it was acted, giving him his money again. So the butcher got but fun for his trouble.

PART V.

12. There was an old rich blind woman, who lived hard by, that had a young girl, her only daughter, and she fell deep in love with Tom, and Tom fell as deep in love with the money, but not with the maid; the old woman bestowed a vast of presents on Tom, and mounted him like a gentleman, but still he put off the marriage from time to time, and always wanted something, which the old woman gave the money to purchase for him, until he had got about thirty pounds of her money, and then she would delay the marriage no longer; Tom went and took the old woman and the girl aside, and made his apology as follows; 'Dear mother, said

he, I am very willing to wed with my dear Polly, for she appears as an angel in mine eyes; but I am sorry, very sorry to acquaint you that I am not a fit match for her. 'What, child,' says the old woman, 'there's not a fitter match in the world for my Polly: I did not think your country could afford such a clever youth as what I hear you to be; you shall neither want gold nor silver, nor yet a good horse to ride upon, and when I die you shall have my all.' 'O but,' says Tom, 'mother, that's not the matter at all, the stop is this, when I was at home in Scotland, I got a stroke with a horse's foot, on the bottom of my belly, which has so quite disabled me below, that I cannot perform a husband's duty in bed.' The old woman hearing this clapped her hands and fell a-crying, 'O! if it had been any impediment but that, but that, but that woful that! which gold nor silver cannot purchase, and yet the poorest people, even common beggars, have plenty of it.'— The old woman and her daughter sat crying and wringing their hands; and Tom stood and wept lest he should get no more money. 'O, mother,' says Polly, 'I'll wed with him nevertheless, I love him so

dearly ! ‘ No, ne, you foolish girl, would you throw yourself away, to marry a man and die a maid ! you don’t know the end of your creation, it is the enjoyment of a man in bed, that makes women to marry, which is a pleasure like Paradise ; and if you wed with this man, you’ll live and die and never know it.’ ‘ Hoo, hoo,’ says Tom, ‘ if I had got money, I needed not been this way till now, ‘ money you fool,’ said the old woman, ‘ there’s not such a thing to be got for money in all England,’ ‘ Ay,’ says Tom, ‘ there’s a doctor in Newcastle, will make me as able as any other man for ten guineas,’ ‘ Ten Guineas !’ said she ; ‘ I’ll give him 50 guineas if he will ; but here is twelve, and go to him directly, and know first what he can do, and come again and wed my child, or she and I will soon die both for thy sake.’ Tom having now got twelve guineas more of their money, prepared for his journey and early next morning set out for Newcastle ; but instead of going to Newcastle ; he came to old Scotland, and left Polly and her mother to think upon him. In about two weeks after, when he was not like to return, nor so much as to send them any word, the old woman and Polly

got a horse, and came to Newcastle in search of him, and went through all the Doctors' Shops, asking if there came a young man there about 2 weeks ago, with a broken —— to mend? Some laughed at them, others were like to kick them out of doors, and so they had to return without getting any account of him.

PART VI.

15. Now, after Tom's return to Scotland, he got a wife, and took a little farm near Dalkeith, and became a very douse man for many days, following his old business the cowping of horses & cows, feeding of veals for slaughter, and the like. So one day he went to a fair, and bought a fine cow from an old woman, but Tom judged by the lowness of the price that the cow certainly had some fault: Tom gives the wife the other hearty bicker of ale, then says he, 'Gudewife, the money is yours, and the cow is mine, ye maun tell me ony wee bits o' faults that she has.' 'Indeed,' quo' the wife, 'she has nae a fault but ane, and if she had wanted it, I wad ne'er a parted wi' her.' 'And what's that, Gudewife?' said he. 'Indeed,' said she, 'the filthy daft beast sucks ay herself.' 'Hute,' says Tom, 'if that be all, I'll

soon cure her o' that, 'O! can ye do that,' said the wife; if I had kend what had a done't, ye wadna a gotten her.'—
 'A well,' says Tom, 'I'll tell you what to do: Take the cow's price, I gave you just now, and tie it hard and fast in your napkin, and give it to me thro' beneath the cow's wame, and I'll give you the napkin again over the cow's back, and I'll lay my life for it, that she'll never suck hersel in my aught, 'I wat well,' said she 'I'll do that, an' there shou'd be witchcraft m't. So Tom no sooner got it thro' below the cow's wame, than he looses out the money and puts it in his pocket, and gave the wife again her napkin over the cow's back, accordingly as he told her, saying 'Now, wife, you have your cow, and I my money, and she'll never suck hersel in my aught, as I told you. 'O dole!' cried the wife, 'is that your cure? ye've cheated me, ye've cheated me?'

F I N I S.