

## Comical Transactions

OF

## LOTHIAN TOM.

IN SIX PARTS.

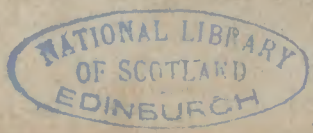
Containing a Collection of Roguish Exploits done  
by him both in Scotland and England,



KILMARNOCK :

*Printed by H. Crawford, Bookseller,*

1823.



# THE COMICAL TRANSACTIONS

OF

## LOTHIAN TOM.

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### PART I.

**T**HIS 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 horse's foot, which his father had, w<sup>h</sup> had a trick of kicking at every pers<sup>on</sup> that came in behind him; but when Tom was got heal of the dreadful wound whereof many thought he would have died, to be even with the horse, he get a clog, or piece of a tree, full of wooden pins, such as shoe-makers use to soften their leather upon, and with a rope he tie it to the couple-bauk in the stable, directly opposite to the horse's tail; then gets u

in the bank, and gives it a swing back, that the pikes in the end of it, came all drive against the horse's arse, which made him to fling: and the more he flung and struck at it, it rebounded back again 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 surpris'd 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 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 csg, then sets her a-drift into a mill-dam, ordering her to go fishing for herself, then sets out two or three dogs upon her, when a most terrible sea-fight ensued, as ever was seen in fresh water; for if any of the dogs attempted to board her, by setting in over her 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 fly to the other; and finding the same there from thence to the middle, where she saw 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. When 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 whip 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 fore the seat, and lays a little of it on a train to the fire-side; then serving when his Master went into it, and as he was loosing down his breeches, sets fire to the train, which blew it all out his Master's bare hips, and scorched him terribly, besides the fright, for which Tom was severely whipt; yet in a little time 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-faur'd mouth; Tom's just Auld Nick, if he be living.— At this 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 drew 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 waistband 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 being informed that Tom did it, flies to him in a rage, ordering him to loose his breeches, but Tom told him he was never so mad: then he drew his knife, and whips poor Tom over his knee, and with great kicking and struggling cuts the waistband 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 and 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 discovered the fraud; Then two men had to get horses

and ride after the poor Dominic, who had by this time got two or three miles away, and when he saw them coming after him, crying to 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.

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## 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 proper opportunity offered. It happened in a few days after, that she was invited to a wedding, where the dancing and diversion 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, and for want of rest, 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 backside, which faced the highway. Several people passing by while 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 and shame together, she had not the least inclination to sleep for the remaining part of that day.

6. Tom being grown up to the years and age of a man, thought himself wiser and more artful than his father; and there were several things about the house he liked better than to work; so he turned to be a dealer amongst the brutes, a cow-



ber of horses and cows, &c. and even  
wet ware amongst the brewers and brandy  
shops, until he cowped himself to the  
loom halter; and then his parents would  
supply him no more. He knew well his  
grandmother had plenty of money, 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 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 loss of her dearly  
beloved cow. However, she employs  
Tom to go to a fair that was near by,  
and buy her another; gives him three  
pounds, which Tom accepts of very  
thankfully, and promises to buy one as  
like the other as possibly he 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, and 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, sighed and said, Alas! thou'll ne'er be like the kindly brute, my Black-lady, and yet routs 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 chalk not washed away, and then he gave poor Tom a hearty beating, and sent him away to seek his fortune with a skin full of sore bones.

7. Tom being now turned to his own  
affairs, considers with himself how to raise  
a little more money; so he gets a long  
ring, 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 thirty shil-  
lings at the least. So he gave him the  
guinea and the half. Then Tom gave him  
strict charge, to be out on the morrow  
against eleven o'clock with the coffin, and  
he should have his money altogether. Tom  
set out for the ale-house with the money,  
and lived well while it lasted. Next morn-  
ing 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 the day before, and had got a guinea and a half from him, which he said was to buy some other necessaries for the funeral. O the rogue! said she, has he played 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 tenpence a-day, which was two-pence 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

there may be some of you honest men, and 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's 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, though 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 thereafter, as Tom was going down the Canongate, he meets one of his shearers, who knew him, and kept fast by him, demanding his money, and satisfaction for the rest. 'Whisht, whisht,' 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; then takes the jailor aside, as if he had been going to borrow the money from him, and says to the jailor, 'This man here is a great thief, I and two others have been in search of him these three days, and the other two men have the warrant with them; so if you keep this rogue here till I run and bring them, you shall have a guinea in reward.' 'Yes,' said the jailor, 'go and I'll fix the rogue for you.' So Tom got clear off, leaving the poor innocent fellow and the jailor struggling together, and then sets off for England directly.

## PART IV.

9. Tom having now left his own native country, went into the county 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, though 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 were 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 house as dark as Purgatory, for I was going to my own mouth with that soup and missed 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 shew them light at supper, for his master

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 plow, when he saw his master coming from the house towards him, he left the horses and the plow 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 two 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 plow, 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?"

Why,' says his master, 'I'll hold a guinea you don't.' 'Done,' says Tom. In he goes, and gets a good shoe of his master's, and runs another way across the fields, until he got before the butcher, near to 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: 'Hey,' said he to himself, 'there's a good shoe, if I knew how to get on my calf again; I would fight for it; but what signifies one without its neighbour?' So off he goes, and lets it lie. Tom then slips out, and takes up the shoe again, and runs across 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 his 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, than Tom says, 'Now, master, what will you hold but I'll steal it from him again, ere he goes two 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 a foot through the fields, until he came before the butcher, hard by 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 through 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 through 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.

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## 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 great number 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 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 of 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 quite disabled me below, that I cannot perform a husband's duty in bed.' The old woman hearing this clapt her hands, and fell a-crying, 'O! if it had been any impediment but that, but that, but that wofu' 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, no, 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 your 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 two 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.

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PART VI.

13. 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 and cows, feeding of veals for slaughter, and the like. On one day he went to a fair and bought a fine cow from an old woman, but Tom was dged by the lowness of the price that the cow certainly had some fault. Tom says the wife the other hearty bicker of her, then says he, 'Gudewife, the money is yours, and the cow is mine, ye maun tell me ony wee bits of faults that she has.' 'Indeed,' quoth the wife, 'she has nae fault but ane, and if she had wanted it, she wad never a parted wi' her.' 'And what's that, gudewife?' said he. 'Indeed,' said she, 'the filthy daft beast sucks ay her sel.' 'Hute,' says Tom, 'if that be all, I'll soon cure her of that.' 'O! can ye do that,' said the wife; 'if I had kend what

had a done it, ye wadna gotten her.'—  
 'Awell,' says Tom, 'I'll tell you what  
 to do: Tak the cow's price, I gave you  
 just now, and tie it hard and fast in your  
 napkin, and give it to me through 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  
 herself in my aught.' 'I wat well,' said  
 she, 'I'se do that, an' there shou'd be  
 witchcraft in't.' So Tom no sooner got  
 it through below the cow's wame, than he  
 looses out the money, and puts it in his  
 pocket, and gave the wife again her nap-  
 kin 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 herzel in my aught, as I tol-  
 you.' 'O dole!' cried the wife, 'is that  
 your cure? Ye've cheated me, ye've cheat-  
 ed me!'

FINIS.

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And Sold by him Wholesale and Retail, at his Shop, at the  
 Cross;—where may be had, Bibles, Testaments, and Psalm  
 Books, Gilt and Plain.—Also, the following Catechisms:  
 Father's—Mother's—Young Communicant's—Muckarsie's—  
 Oliphant's, and Brown's;—a complete Assortment of Scho-  
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