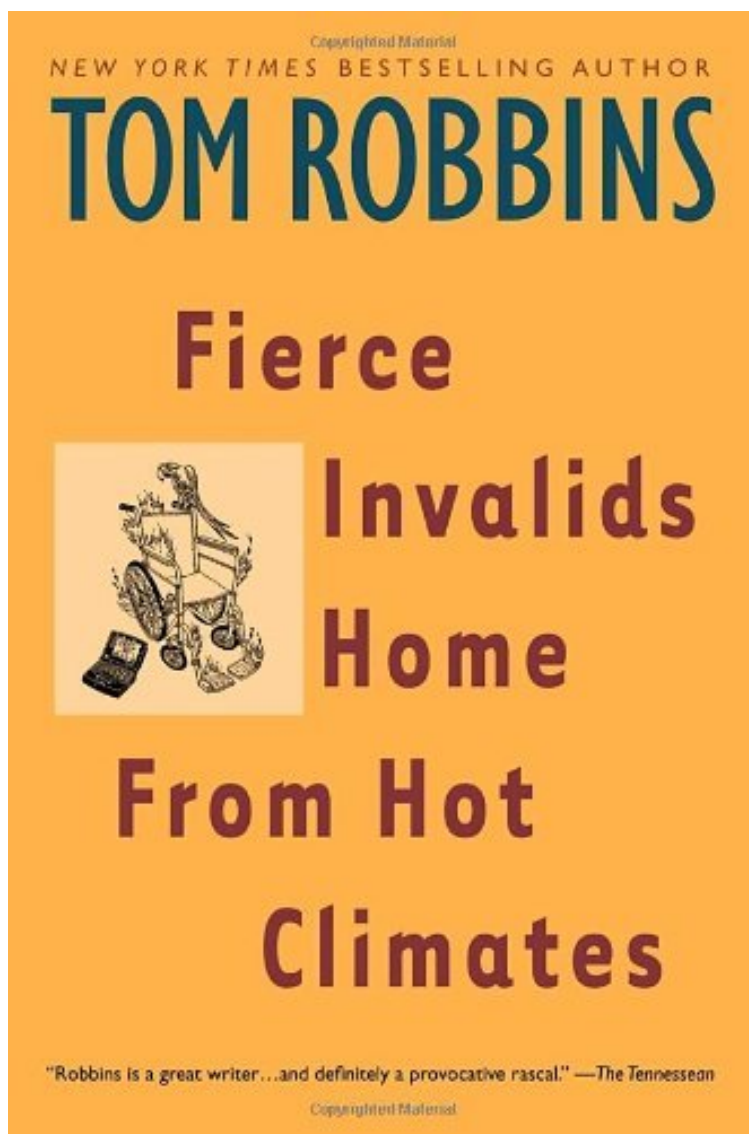


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# Fierce Invalids Home From Hot Climates



*Par Tom Robbins*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurSwitters is a contradiction for all seasons: an anarchist who works for the government; a pacifist who carries a gun; a vegetarian who sops up ham gravy; a cyberwhiz who hates computers; a man who, though obsessed with the preservation of innocence, is aching to deflower his high-school-age stepsister (only to become equally enamored of a nun ten years his senior). Yet there is nothing remotely wishy-washy about Switters. He doesnt merely pack a pistol. He is a pistol. And as we dog Switterss strangely elevated heels across four continents, in and out of love and danger, discovering in the process the true Third Secret of Fatima, we experience Tom Robbins that fearless storyteller, spiritual renegade, and verbal break dancerat the top of his game. On one level this is a fast-paced CIA adventure story with comic overtones; on another its a serious novel of ideas that brings the Big Picture into unexpected focus; but

perhaps more than anything else, *Fierce Invalids* is a sexy celebration of language and life. From the Trade Paperback edition. Extrait Lima, Peru October 1997 The naked parrot looked like a human fetus spliced onto a kosher chicken. It was so old it had lost every single one of its feathers, even its pinfeathers, and its bumpy, jaundiced skin was latticed by a network of rubbery blue veins. "Pathological," muttered Switters, meaning not simply the parrot but the whole scene, including the shrunken old woman in whose footsteps the bird doggedly followed as she moved about the darkened villa. The parrot's scabrous claws made a dry, scraping noise as they fought for purchase on the terra-cotta floor tiles, and when, periodically, the creature lost its footing and skidded an inch or two, it issued a squawk so quavery and feeble that it sounded as if it were being petted by the Boston Strangler. Each time it squawked, the crone clucked, whether in sympathy or disapproval one could not tell, for she never turned to her devoted little companion but wandered aimlessly from one piece of ancient wooden furniture to another in her amorphous black dress. Switters feigned appreciation, but he was secretly repulsed, all the more so because Juan Carlos, who stood beside him on the patio, also spying in the widow's windows, was beaming with pride and satisfaction. Switters slapped at the mosquitoes that perforated his torso and cursed every hair on that hand of Fate that had snatched him into South too-goddamn-vivid America. Boquichicos, Peru November 1997 Attracted by the lamplight that seeped through the louvers, a mammoth moth beat against the shutters like a storm. Switters watched it with some fascination as he waited for the boys to bring his luggage up from the river. That moth was no butterfly, that was certain. It was a night animal, and it had a night animal's mystery. Butterflies were delicate and gossamer, but this moth possessed strength and weight. Its heavy wings were powdered like the face of an old actress. Butterflies were presumed to be carefree, moths were slaves to a fiery obsession. Butterflies seemed innocuous, moths somehow...erotic. The dust of the moth was a sexual dust. The twitch of the moth was a sexual twitch. Suddenly Switters touched his throat and moaned. He moaned because it occurred to him how much the moth resembled a clitoris with wings. Vivid. There were grunts on the path behind him, and Inti emerged from the forest bearing, somewhat apprehensively, Switters's crocodile-skin valise. In a moment the other two boys appeared with the rest of his gear. It was time to review accommodations in the Hotel Boquichicos. He dreaded what he might find behind its shuttered windows, its double-screened doors, but he motioned for the boys to follow him in. "Let's go. This insect--" He nodded at the great moth that, fan though it might, was unable to stir the steaming green broth that in the often substitutes for air. "This insect is making me feel--" Switters hesitated to utter the word, even though he knew Inti could understand no more than a dozen simple syllables of English. "This insect is making me feel libidinous." *Revue de presse* "Superb." *New York Post* "As clever and witty a novel as anyone has written in a long time ... The plot is sustained by [Robbins's] usual virtuoso writing and brilliant flashes of insight. ... Robbins takes readers on a wild, delightful ride. ... A delight from beginning to end.-- *Buffalo News* "Dangerous? Wicked? Forbidden? You bet. ... Pour yourself a bowl of chips and dig in." *Daily News, New York* "Robbins is a great writer ... and definitely a provocative rascal." *The Tennessean* "Whoever said truth is stranger than fiction never read a Tom Robbins novel. ... Clever, creative, and witty, Robbins tosses off impassioned observations like handfuls of flower petals." *San Diego Union-Tribune*