

## **Skinny Legs And All Tom Robbins**

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Skinny Legs and All  
Et Tu, Babe  
Still Life with Woodpecker  
Skinny Legs and All  
Where Women Are Kings  
Earthly Possessions  
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Tom Robbins  
Villa Incognito  
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### **Wild Ducks Flying Backward**

These exquisite twin novellas chronicle the difficult choices that reshape the lives of two very different families. In *Ordinary Love*, Smiley focuses on a woman's infidelity and the lasting, indelible effects it leaves on her children long after her departure. *Good Will* portrays a father who realizes how his son has been affected by his decision to lead a counterculture life and move his family to a farm. As both stories unfold, Smiley gracefully raises the questions that confront all families with

the characteristic style and insight that has marked all of her work.

### **The Brief History of the Dead**

Since the publication of *Another Roadside Attraction* in 1971, Tom Robbins (b. 1932) has become known as the principal voice of American countercultural fiction. His cult celebrity was further solidified by the success of *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* (1976) and *Still Life With Woodpecker* (1980). Robbins's mix of vivid language, ribald humor, philosophical musings, controversial commentary on religion and sexuality, and concentration on female protagonists and feminine consciousness has marked almost all of his fiction, as well as his short writings. Despite his undeserved reputation as 1960s hippie icon, all of Robbins's work remains popular and in print, and his later novels--including *Jitterbug Perfume* (1984), *Skinny Legs and All* (1990), *Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas* (1994), *Fierce Invalids Home From Hot Climates* (2000), *Villa Incognito* (2003), and *B Is for Beer* (2009)--engage thoroughly with current politics, mores, and trends. *Conversations with Tom Robbins* brings together more than twenty interviews with the acclaimed author, from the mid-1970s to the present. Throughout the volume, Robbins discusses his working methods, his fusion of Eastern and Western philosophical traditions, the need for wit and humor in serious fiction, and the ways living in the Pacific Northwest has fueled his work.

## **Skinny Legs and All**

"An extraordinary, often hilarious novel." --The New York Times A revelatory tale of love gained and lost, from a master of contemporary American fiction. Gerard sits, fully clothed, in his empty bathtub and pines for Benna. Neighbors in the same apartment building, they share a wall and Gerard listens for the sound of her toilet flushing. Gerard loves Benna. And then Benna loves Gerard. She listens to him play piano, she teaches poetry and sings at nightclubs. As their relationships ebbs and flows, through reality and imagination, Lorrie Moore paints a captivating, innovative portrait of men and women in love and not in love.

## **Et Tu, Babe**

When the stock market crashes on the Thursday before Easter, you—an ambitious, although ineffectual and not entirely ethical young broker—are convinced that you're facing the Weekend from Hell. Before the market reopens on Monday, you're going to have to scramble and scheme to cover your butt, but there's no way you can anticipate the baffling disappearance of a 300-pound psychic, the fall from grace of a born-again monkey, or the intrusion in your life of a tattooed stranger intent on blowing your mind and most of your fuses. Over these fateful three days, you will be forced to confront everything from mysterious African

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rituals to legendary amphibians, from tarot-card bombshells to street violence, from your own sexuality to outer space. This is, after all, a Tom Robbins novel—and the author has never been in finer form. From the Trade Paperback edition.

### **Still Life with Woodpecker**

This exquisite, resonant novel by PEN/Faulkner winner James Salter is a brilliant portrait of a marriage by a contemporary American master. It is the story of Nedra and Viri, whose favored life is centered around dinners, ingenious games with their children, enviable friends, and near-perfect days passed skating on a frozen river or sunning on the beach. But even as he lingers over the surface of their marriage, Salter lets us see the fine cracks that are spreading through it, flaws that will eventually mar the lovely picture beyond repair. Seductive, witty, and elegantly nuanced, *Light Years* is a classic novel of an entire generation that discovered the limits of its own happiness—and then felt compelled to destroy it.

### **Skinny Legs and All**

*Until I Find You* is the story of the actor Jack Burns – his life, loves, celebrity and astonishing search for the truth about his parents. When he is four years old, Jack travels with his mother Alice, a tattoo artist, to several North Sea ports in search of

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his father, William Burns. From Copenhagen to Amsterdam, William, a brilliant church organist and profligate womanizer, is always a step ahead – has always just departed in a wave of scandal, with a new tattoo somewhere on his body from a local master or “scratcher.” Alice and Jack abandon their quest, and Jack is educated at schools in Canada and New England – including, tellingly, a girls’ school in Toronto. His real education consists of his relationships with older women – from Emma Oastler, who initiates him into erotic life, to the girls of St. Hilda’s, with whom he first appears on stage, to the abusive Mrs. Machado, whom he first meets when sent to learn wrestling at a local gym. Too much happens in this expansive, eventful novel to possibly summarize it all. Emma and Jack move to Los Angeles, where Emma becomes a successful novelist and Jack a promising actor. A host of eccentric minor characters memorably come and go, including Jack’s hilariously confused teacher the Wurtz; Michelle Maher, the girlfriend he will never forget; and a precocious child Jack finds in the back of an Audi in a restaurant parking lot. We learn about tattoo addiction and movie cross-dressing, “sleeping in the needles” and the cure for cauliflower ears. And John Irving renders his protagonist’s unusual rise through Hollywood with the same vivid detail and range of emotions he gives to the organ music Jack hears as a child in European churches. This is an absorbing and moving book about obsession and loss, truth and storytelling, the signs we carry on us and inside us, the traces we can’t get rid of. Jack has always lived in the shadow of his absent father. But as he grows older – and when his mother dies – he starts to doubt the portrait of his father’s character

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she painted for him when he was a child. This is the cue for a second journey around Europe in search of his father, from Edinburgh to Switzerland, towards a conclusion of great emotional force. A melancholy tale of deception, *Until I Find You* is also a swaggering comic novel, a giant tapestry of life's hopes. It is a masterpiece to compare with John Irving's great novels, and restates the author's claim to be considered the most glorious, comic, moving novelist at work today.

### **Where Women Are Kings**

Imagine that there are American MIAs who chose to remain missing after the Vietnam War. Imagine that there is a family in which four generations of strong, alluring women have shared a mysterious connection to an outlandish figure from Japanese folklore. Imagine just those things (don't even try to imagine the love story) and you'll have a foretaste of this inimitable Tom Robbins' book. Love, lust and wickedly provocative ideas abound. This is perhaps his most beautifully crafted novel – and the most fun to read.

### **Earthly Possessions**

An Arab and a Jew open a restaurant together across the street from the United Nations. It sounds like the beginning of an ethnic joke, but it's the axis around

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which spins Tom Robbins's gutsy, fun-loving, and alarmingly provocative new novel, in which a bean can philosophizes, a dessert spoon mystifies, a young waitress takes on the New York art world, and a rowdy redneck welder discovers the lost god of Palestine--while the illusions that obscure humanity's view of the true universe fall away, one by one, like Salome's veils. *Skinny Legs and All* deals, in Robbins's audacious manner, with today's most sensitive issues: race, politics, marriage, art, religion, money, and lust. It weaves lyrically through what some call the "end days of our planet. Refusing to avert its gaze from the horrors of the apocalypse, it also refuses to let the alleged end of the world spoil its mood. And its mood is defiantly upbeat. In the gloriously inventive Tom Robbins style, here are characters, phrases, stories, and ideas that dance together on the page, wild and sexy, like Salome herself. Or was it Jezebel?

### **Tibetan Peach Pie**

Internationally bestselling novelist and American icon Tom Robbins delivers the long awaited tale of his wild life and times, both at home and around the globe. Tom Robbins' warm, wise, and wonderfully weird novels—including *Still Life With Woodpecker*, *Jitterbug Perfume*, and *Fierce Invalids Home From Hot Climates*—provide an entryway into the frontier of his singular imagination. Madcap but sincere, pulsating with strong social and philosophical undercurrents, his irreverent classics have introduced countless readers to natural born

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hitchhiking cowgirls, born-again monkeys, a philosophizing can of beans, exiled royalty, and problematic redheads. In *Tibetan Peach Pie*, Robbins turns that unparalleled literary sensibility inward, stitching together stories of his unconventional life, from his Appalachian childhood to his globetrotting adventures—told in his unique voice that combines the sweet and sly, the spiritual and earthy. The grandchild of Baptist preachers, Robbins would become over the course of half a century a poet-interruptus, an air force weatherman, a radio dj, an art-critic-turned-psychedelic-journeyman, a world-famous novelist, and a counter-culture hero, leading a life as unlikely, magical, and bizarre as those of his quixotic characters. Robbins offers intimate snapshots of Appalachia during the Great Depression, the West Coast during the Sixties psychedelic revolution, international roving before homeland security monitored our travels, and New York publishing when it still relied on trees. Written with the big-hearted comedy and mesmerizing linguistic invention for which he is known, *Tibetan Peach Pie* is an invitation into the private world of a literary legend.

### **A Box of Matches**

SKINNY LEGS AND ALL: An Arab and a Jew open a restaurant together across the street from the United Nations. It sounds like the beginning of an ethnic joke, but it's the axis around which spins this gutsy, fun-loving, and alarmingly provocative novel, in which a bean can philosophizes, a dessert spoon mystifies, a young

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### **them**

"Touches and dazzles and entertains. An enchanting novel." --The New York Times  
In this moving, poignant novel by the bestselling author of *Birds of America* we share a grown woman's bittersweet nostalgia for the wildness of her youth. The summer Berie was fifteen, she and her best friend Sils had jobs at Storyland in upstate New York where Berie sold tickets to see the beautiful Sils portray Cinderella in a strapless evening gown. They spent their breaks smoking, joking, and gossiping. After work they followed their own reckless rules, teasing the fun out of small town life, sleeping in the family station wagon, and drinking borrowed liquor from old mayonnaise jars. But no matter how wild, they always managed to escape any real danger—until the adoring Berie sees that Sils really does need her help—and then everything changes.

## **Fierce Invalids Home From Hot Climates**

This is the first book-length study of the popular novelist Tom Robbins. Whimsy and humor characterize Robbins' work, but style and language are the keystones. Hoyser and Stookey show how Robbins deftly uses style and humor to depict the absurdities and injustices of our world. His novels constantly challenge perceptions of the world that people automatically label as normal. His fiction criticizes the complacency of humans in a world becoming increasingly alienated from nature and the joy of life. In addition to a critical analysis of each of his novels, the study contains biographical material never before published and the first full-length bibliography on Robbins, including a bibliography of reviews of his fiction. This is the first book-length study of the popular novelist Tom Robbins. Whimsy and humor characterize Robbins' work, but style and language are the keystones. Hoyser and Stookey show how Robbins deftly uses style and humor to depict the absurdities and injustices of our world. His novels constantly challenge perceptions of the world that people automatically label as normal. His fiction criticizes the complacency of humans in a world becoming increasingly alienated from nature and the joy of life. In addition to a critical analysis of each of his novels, the study contains biographical material never before published and the first full-length bibliography on Robbins, including a bibliography of reviews of his fiction. The study features a biographical chapter, a chapter on context and style, and individual chapters on each of his novels, *Another Roadside Attraction*, *R*,

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^IEven Cowgirls Get the Blues, Still Life with Woodpecker, Jitterbug Perfume, skinny legs and all^R, and ^IHalf Asleep in Frog Pajamas^R. Each novel is analyzed for plot structure, characterization, and thematic elements. In addition, Hoyser and Stookey define and apply an alternative critical perspective from which to read each novel. The reading of each of Robbins' novels will be enriched by this perceptive study.

### **Tom Robbins**

When we settle for our own dreams, we settle for too little. God promises "to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" in each of our lives (Eph. 3:20, NIV). John Avant shares true stories of God's passion touching lives around the world and helps readers discern God's dreams for themselves - challenging them to put an end to boring living. As readers see God's passionate adventure lived out all around them every day, they'll eagerly accept His invitation to be a part of it - to live a life beyond their imagination! From the Trade Paperback edition.

### **Villa Incognito**

Sometime in the future the head librarian at a great center of learning suddenly disappears, leaving behind a journal that describes his weariness with a world

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"where people teach but know nothing, where the sentences flow on endlessly but lead nowhere." His successor in the post becomes more and more intrigued by the vanished man's fate, until a series of mysterious clues lead him on a journey both inward and outward, to a world that begins where language ends. Within a matter of weeks he finds himself in the company of powerful dervishes, God-intoxicated nomads whose eyes blaze with love, and ragged beggars with the smile of the Pure One. These men, the followers of an enlightened Shaykh, speak little, but simply to be in their company fills him with ecstasy and knowledge.

### **All the Little Live Things**

"Written with a style and humor that haven't been seen since Mark Twain."—Los Angeles Times What if the Second Coming didn't quite come off as advertised? What if "the Corpse" on display in that funky roadside zoo is really who they say it is—what does that portend for the future of western civilization? And what if a young clairvoyant named Amanda reestablishes the flea circus as popular entertainment and fertility worship as the principal religious form of our high-tech age? Another Roadside Attraction answers those questions and a lot more. It tell us, for example, what the sixties were truly all about, not by reporting on the psychedelic decade but by recreating it, from the inside out. In the process, this stunningly original seriocomic thriller is fully capable of simultaneously eating a literary hot dog and eroding the borders of the mind. "Hard to put down because of

the sheer brilliance and fun of the writing. The sentiments of Brautigan and the joyously compassionate omniscience of Fielding dance through the pages garbed colorfully in the language of Joyce.”—Rolling Stone

### **Light Years**

Known for his meaty seriocomic novels—expansive works that are simultaneously lowbrow and highbrow—Tom Robbins has also published over the years a number of short pieces, predominantly nonfiction. His travel articles, essays, and tributes to actors, musicians, sex kittens, and thinkers have appeared in publications ranging from *Esquire* to *Harper’s*, from *Playboy* to the *New York Times*, *High Times*, and *Life*. A generous sampling, collected here for the first time and including works as diverse as scholarly art criticism and some decidedly untypical country- music lyrics, *Wild Ducks Flying Backward* offers a rare sweeping overview of the eclectic sensibility of an American original. Whether he is rocking with the Doors, depoliticizing Picasso’s *Guernica*, lamenting the angst-ridden state of contemporary literature, or drooling over tomato sandwiches and a species of womanhood he calls “the genius waitress,” Robbins’s briefer writings often exhibit the same five traits that perhaps best characterize his novels: an imaginative wit, a cheerfully brash disregard for convention, a sweetly nasty eroticism, a mystical but keenly observant eye, and an irrepressible love of language. Embedded in this primarily journalistic compilation are a couple of short stories, a sheaf of largely

unpublished poems, and an off-beat assessment of our divided nation. And wherever we open *Wild Ducks Flying Backward*, we're apt to encounter examples of the intently serious playfulness that percolates from the mind of a self-described "romantic Zen hedonist" and "stray dog in the banquet halls of culture."

### **The Book of Strangers**

"Without Anne Tyler, American fiction would be an immeasurably bleaker place."  
--*NEWSDAY* Evie Decker is a shy, slightly plump teenager, lonely and silent. But her quiet life is shattered when she hears the voice of Drumstrings Casey on the radio and becomes instantly attracted to him. She manages to meet him, bursting out of her lonely shell--and into the attentive gaze of the intangible man who becomes all too real.

### **Anagrams**

From Kevin Brockmeier, one of this generation's most inventive young writers, comes a striking new novel about death, life, and the mysterious place in between. The City is inhabited by those who have departed Earth but are still remembered by the living. They will reside in this afterlife until they are completely forgotten. But the City is shrinking, and the residents clearing out. Some of the holdouts, like

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Luka Sims, who produces the City's only newspaper, are wondering what exactly is going on. Others, like Coleman Kinzler, believe it is the beginning of the end. Meanwhile, Laura Byrd is trapped in an Antarctic research station, her supplies are running low, her radio finds only static, and the power is failing. With little choice, Laura sets out across the ice to look for help, but time is running out. Kevin Brockmeier alternates these two storylines to create a lyrical and haunting story about love, loss and the power of memory.

### **A Slipping-Down Life**

Still Life with Woodpecker is a sort of a love story that takes place inside a pack of Camel cigarettes. It reveals the purpose of the moon, explains the difference between criminals and outlaws, examines the conflict between social activism and romantic individualism, and paints a portrait of contemporary society that includes powerful Arabs, exiled royalty, and pregnant cheerleaders. It also deals with the problem of redheads.

### **Appointment in Samarra**

A Children's Book About Beer? Yes, believe it or not—but B Is for Beer is also a book for adults, and bear in mind that it's the work of maverick bestselling novelist

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Tom Robbins, inter-nationally known for his ability to both seriously illuminate and comically entertain. nce upon a time (right about now) there was a planet (how about this one?) whose inhabitants consumed thirty-six billion gallons of beer each year (it's a fact, you can Google it). Among those affected, each in his or her own way, by all the bubbles, burps, and foam, was a smart, wide-eyed, adventurous kindergartner named Gracie; her distracted mommy; her insensitive dad; her non-conformist uncle; and a magical, butt-kicking intruder from a world within our world. Populated by the aforementioned characters—and as charming as it may be subversive—B Is for Beer involves readers, young and old, in a surprising, far-reaching investigation into the limits of reality, the transformative powers of children, and, of course, the ultimate meaning of a tall, cold brewski.

### **Even Cowgirls Get the Blues**

Presents a collection of three novels--"Even Cowgirls Get the Blues," "Jitterbug Perfume," and "Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas."

### **Ordinary Love and Good Will**

From the award-winning author of *Tiny Sunbirds*, *Far Away*, the story of a young boy who believes two things: that his Nigerian birth mother loves him like the

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world has never known love, and that he is a wizard Elijah, seven years old, is covered in scars and has a history of disruptive behavior. Taken away from his birth mother, a Nigerian immigrant in England, Elijah is moved from one foster parent to the next before finding a home with Nikki and her husband, Obi. Nikki believes that she and Obi are strong enough to accept Elijah's difficulties—and that being white will not affect her ability to raise a black son. They care deeply for Elijah and, in spite of his demons, he begins to settle into this loving family. But as Nikki and Obi learn more about their child's tragic past, they face challenges that threaten to rock the fragile peace they've established, challenges that could prove disastrous.

### **Until I Find You**

Joe Allston, the retired literary agent of Stegner's National Book Award-winning novel, *The Spectator Bird*, returns in this disquieting and keenly observed novel. Scarred by the senseless death of their son and baffled by the engulfing chaos of the 1960s, Allston and his wife, Ruth, have left the coast for a California retreat. And although their new home looks like Eden, it also has serpents: Jim Peck, a messianic exponent of drugs, yoga, and sex; and Marian Catlin, an attractive young woman whose otherworldly innocence is far more appealing—and far more dangerous.

### **Conversations with Tom Robbins**

Frank Bascombe has a younger girlfriend and a job as a sportswriter. To many men of his age, thirty-eight, this would be a cause for optimism, yet Frank feels the pull of his inner despair and especially of his recent losses - his preferred career has ended, his wife has divorced him, and a tragic accident took his elder son. In the course of this Easter weekend, Frank will lose all the remnants of his familiar life, though he will emerge heroic with spirits soaring. This is a magnificent novel that propelled Richard Ford into the first rank of American writers.

### **The Passion Promise**

Jitterbug Perfume is an epic. Which is to say, it begins in the forests of ancient Bohemia and doesn't conclude until nine o'clock tonight (Paris time). It is a saga, as well. A saga must have a hero, and the hero of this one is a janitor with a missing bottle. The bottle is blue, very, very old, and embossed with the image of a goat-horned god. If the liquid in the bottle actually is the secret essence of the universe, as some folks seem to think, it had better be discovered soon because it is leaking and there is only a drop or two left. From the Trade Paperback edition.

### **Who Will Run the Frog Hospital**

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The protagonist of Tobias Wolff's shrewdly—and at times devastatingly—observed first novel is a boy at an elite prep school in 1960. He is an outsider who has learned to mimic the negligent manner of his more privileged classmates. Like many of them, he wants more than anything on earth to become a writer. But to do that he must first learn to tell the truth about himself. The agency of revelation is the school literary contest, whose winner will be awarded an audience with the most legendary writer of his time. As the fever of competition infects the boy and his classmates, fraying alliances, exposing weaknesses, *Old School* explores the ensuing deceptions and betrayals with an unblinking eye and a bottomless store of empathy. The result is further evidence that Wolff is an authentic American master. From the Trade Paperback edition.

### **Independence Day**

An Arab and a Jew open a restaurant together across the street from the United Nations. It sounds like the beginning of an ethnic joke, but it's the axis around which spins this gutsy, fun-loving, and alarmingly provocative novel, in which a bean can philosophizes, a dessert spoon mystifies, a young waitress takes on the New York art world, and a rowdy redneck welder discovers the lost god of Palestine--while the illusions that obscure humanity's view of the true universe fall away, one by one, like Salome's veils. *Skinny Legs and All* deals with today's most sensitive issues: race, politics, marriage, art, religion, money, and lust. It weaves

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### **The Sportswriter**

"To read a novel by Anne Tyler is to fall in love." PEOPLE Charlotte Emory has always lived a quiet, conventional life in Clarion, Maryland. She lives as simply as possible, and one day decides to simplify everything and leave her husband. Her last trip to the bank throws Charlotte's life into an entirely different direction when a restless young man in a nylon jacket takes her hostage during the robbery--and soon the two are heading south into an unknown future, and a most unexpected fate.

### **Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas**

Two widowed sisters drive from Chicago to California: Helene, the driver, is a blind diabetic and Ina, the navigator, is overly fond of beer. (Nancy Pearl)

## **Skinny Legs and All**

Winner of the National Book Award and in print for more than thirty years, them ranks as one of the most masterly portraits of postwar America ever written by a novelist. Including several new pages and text substantially revised and updated by the author, this Modern Library edition is the most current and accurate version available of Oates' seminal work. A novel about class, race, and the horrific, glassy sparkle of urban life, them chronicles the lives of the Wendalls, a family on the steep edge of poverty in the windy, riotous Detroit slums. Loretta, beautiful and dreamy and full of regret by age sixteen, and her two children, Maureen and Jules, make up Oates' vision of the American family--broken, marginal, and romantically proud. The novel's title, pointedly uncapitalized, refers to those Americans who inhabit the outskirts of society--men and women, mothers and children--whose lives many authors in the 1960s had left unexamined. Alfred Kazin called her subject "the sheer rich chaos of American life." The Nation wrote, "When Miss Oates' potent, life-gripping imagination and her skill at narrative are conjoined, as they are preeminently in them, she is a prodigious writer." In addition to the text revisions, this--new edition contains an Afterword by the author and a new Introduction by Greg Johnson, Oates' biographer and the author of two monographs on the work of Joyce Carol Oates.

### **Florence of Arabia**

The whooping crane rustlers are girls. Young girls. Cowgirls, as a matter of fact, all “bursting with dimples and hormones”—and the FBI has never seen anything quite like them. Yet their rebellion at the Rubber Rose Ranch is almost overshadowed by the arrival of the legendary Sissy Hankshaw, a white-trash goddess literally born to hitchhike, and the freest female of them all. Freedom, its prizes and its prices, is a major theme of Tom Robbins’s classic tale of eccentric adventure. As his robust characters attempt to turn the tables on fate, the reader is drawn along on a tragicomic joyride across the badlands of sexuality, wild rivers of language, and the frontiers of the mind.

### **Tom Robbins**

Julian and Caroline English are at the center of the social elite until Julian makes a fateful decision to break with polite society and embarks on a rapid spiral toward self-destruction.

### **Another Roadside Attraction**

Frank Bascombe, in the aftermath of his divorce and the ruin of his career, has

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entered an 'Existence Period' - selling real estate in New Jersey and mastering the high-wire act of normalcy. But over one Fourth of July weekend, Frank is called into sudden, bewildering engagement with life. Independence Day is a moving, peerlessly funny odyssey through America and through the layered consciousness of one of its most compelling literary incarnations, conducted by a novelist of extraordinary empathy and perception.

### **Skinny Legs and All**

#### **B Is for Beer**

Literary agent Joe Allston, the central character of Stegner's novel *All the Little Live Things*, is now retired and, in his own words, 'just killing time until time gets around to killing me.' His parents and his only son are long dead, leaving him with neither ancestors nor descendants, tradition nor ties. His job, trafficking the talent of others, had not been his choice. He passes through life as a spectator. A postcard from an old friend causes Allston to return to the journals of a trip he and his wife had taken years before, a journey to his mother's birthplace, where he'd sought a link with the past. The memories of that trip, both grotesque and poignant, move through layers of time and meaning, and reveal that Joe Allston isn't quite

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spectator enough. Wallace Stegner was the author of, among other works of fiction, *Remembering Laughter* (1973); *The Big Rock Candy Mountain* (1943); *Joe Hill* (1950); *All the Little Live Things* (1967, Commonwealth Club Gold Medal); *A Shooting Star* (1961); *Angle of Repose* (1971, Pulitzer Prize); *Recapitulation* (1979); *Crossing to Safety* (1987); and *Collected Stories* (1990). His nonfiction includes *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian* (1954); *Wolf Willow* (1963); *The Sound of Mountain Water* (essays, 1969); *The Uneasy Chair: A Biography of Bernard deVoto* (1964); *American Places* (with Page Stegner, 1981); and *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West* (1992). Three short stories have won O.Henry prizes, and in 1980 he received the Robert Kirsch Award from the Los Angeles Times for his lifetime literary achievements.

### **Jitterbug Perfume**

In this fiendishly original new novel, Mark Leyner is a leather-blazer-wearing, Piranha 793-driving, narcotic-guzzling monster who has potential rivals eliminated by his bionically enhanced bodyguards, has his internal organs tattooed, and eavesdrops on the erotic fantasies of Victoria's Secret models -- which naturally revolve around him. Leyner's jet-propelled roller derby through the cultures of celebrity, cyberpunk, and rabid egotism is exhilaratingly bizarre, exhaustingly funny -- and you'd better hope it's just fiction.

### **The Widows' Adventures**

SKINNY LEGS AND ALL: An Arab and a Jew open a restaurant together across the street from the United Nations. It sounds like the beginning of an ethnic joke, but it's the axis around which spins this gutsy, fun-loving, and alarmingly provocative novel, in which a bean can philosophizes, a dessert spoon mystifies, a young waitress takes on the New York art world, and a rowdy redneck welder discovers the lost god of Palestine--while the illusions that obscure humanity's view of the true universe fall away, one by one, like Salome's veils. Skinny Legs and All deals with today's most sensitive issues: race, politics, marriage, art, religion, money, and lust. It weaves lyrically through what some call the "end days" of our planet. Refusing to avert its gaze from the horrors of the apocalypse, it also refuses to let the alleged end of the world spoil its mood. And its mood is defiantly upbeat. In the gloriously inventive Tom Robbins style, here are characters, phrases, stories, and ideas that dance together on the page, wild and sexy, like Salome herself. Or was it Jezebel? From the Hardcover edition.

### **Penpal**

Switters 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

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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 doesn't merely pack a pistol. He is a pistol. And as we dog Switters's 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 dancer—at the top of his game. On one level this is a fast-paced CIA adventure story with comic overtones; on another it's 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.

### **Old School**

Emmett has a wife and two children, a cat, and a duck, and he wants to know what life is about. Every day he gets up before dawn, makes a cup of coffee in the dark, lights a fire with one wooden match, and thinks. What Emmett thinks about is the subject of this wise and closely observed novel, which covers vast distances while moving no further than Emmett's hearth and home. Nicholson Baker's extraordinary ability to describe and celebrate life in all its rich ordinariness has never been so beautifully achieved. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## **The Spectator Bird**

The bestselling author who made mincemeat of political correctness in *Thank You for Smoking*, conspiracy theories in *Little Green Men*, and Presidential indiscretions *No Way to Treat a First Lady* now takes on the hottest topic in the entire world-Arab-American relations-in a blistering comic novel sure to offend the few it doesn't delight. Appalled by the punishment of her rebellious friend Nazrah, youngest and most petulant wife of Prince Bawad of Wasabia, Florence Farfarletti decides to draw a line in the sand. As Deputy to the deputy assistant secretary for Near East Affairs, Florence invents a far-reaching, wide-ranging plan for female emancipation in that part of the world. The U.S. government, of course, tells her to forget it. Publicly, that is. Privately, she's enlisted in a top-secret mission to impose equal rights for the sexes on the small emirate of Matar (pronounced "Mutter"), the "Switzerland of the Persian Gulf." Her crack team: a CIA killer, a snappy PR man, and a brilliant but frustrated gay bureaucrat. Her weapon: TV shows. The lineup on TV Matar includes *A Thousand and One Mornings*, a daytime talk show that features self-defense tips to be used against boyfriends during Ramadan; an addictive soap opera featuring strangely familiar members of the Matar royal family; and a sitcom about an inept but ruthless squad of religious police, pitched as *"Friends from Hell."* The result: the first deadly car bombs in the country since 1936, a fatwa against the station's entire staff, a struggle for control of the kingdom, and, of course, interference from the French. And that's only the

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beginning. A merciless dismantling of both American ineptitude and Arabic intolerance, Florence of Arabia is Christopher Buckley's funniest and most serious novel yet, a biting satire of how U.S. good intentions can cause the Shiite to hit the fan.

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