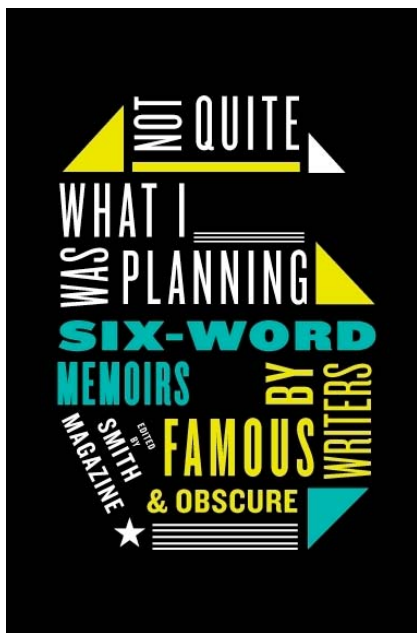


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"Will thrill minimalists and inspire maximalists." ~ *Vanity Fair*



ONE LIFE.
SIX WORDS.
WHAT'S YOURS?

NOT QUITE WHAT I WAS PLANNING

SIX-WORD MEMOIRS
BY WRITERS FAMOUS AND OBSCURE

FROM **SMITH** MAGAZINE

Edited by Rachel Fershleiser and Larry Smith

"Barrister, barista, what's the diff, Mom?"

"Being a monk stunk. Better gay."

"Jew-born. Yeshiva-educated. Date goyim."

"Big hair, big heart, big hurry."

"He wore dresses. This caused messes."

"Shy Jersey kid, overcompensating ever since"

Legend has it that Hemingway once wrote a novel in six words—"For sale: baby shoes, never worn." In this confessional, voyeuristic age, the six-word story has evolved into the six-word memoir—the short, short form applied to real lives. What started as a contest on www.SMITHmag.net, an online magazine about personal storytelling, is now **NOT QUITE WHAT I WAS PLANNING: Six-Word Memoirs By Writers Famous and Obscure** (Harper Perennial, February 5, 2008; Trade Paperback Original; \$12.00).

Most are contest entries by regular folks from around the country and the world; others are from celebrity contributors like George Saunders, Richard Ford, Jonathan Lethem, Dave Eggers, David Rakoff, Sebastian Junger, Amy Sedaris, Elizabeth Gilbert, Joan Rivers, Aimee Mann, and Stephen Colbert.

As exciting as any bestselling writer's submission, though, are the relationships formed with the rest of the 800 contributors, most of whom have never been published. They followed up their six words with long letters, photos of their children, personalized comic strips, and even origami animals. Some sent updates on developments in their lives that changes their memoirs daily—trying to conceive, life-threatening illnesses, or just new hockey skates.

The six-word memoir has captured the public imagination. Submissions still come in by the thousands; teachers assign them to first-grade students and MFA candidates; families share them across holiday tables; bloggers collect them from friends; and animal-lovers even write them for their pets.

Suspiciously addictive and deceptively simple **NOT QUITE WHAT I WAS PLANNING** is an illustrated collection that is funny, strange, sad, and uplifting. From the bittersweet (“Cursed with cancer, blessed with friends”) and poignant (“I still make coffee for two”) to the inspirational (“Business school? Bah! Pop music? Hurrah”) and secretive (“I like big butts, can't lie”), it is both a moving peek at the minutia of humanity and the hippest, most literary toilet reading you'll ever find.

ABOUT SMITH MAGAZINE:

SMITH Magazine (www.SMITHmag.net) is an online publication dedicated to storytelling that was created in January 2006. Founding editor **Larry Smith** was, most recently, the articles editor of *Men's Journal*, and has been the executive editor of Yahoo! Internet Life, and senior editor at *ESPN* magazine. His writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Popular Science*, *Men's Health*, *Salon*, *Slate*, and other places. **Rachel Fershleiser** is SMITH's memoir editor and a freelance writer.

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Harper Perennial

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For more information on SMITH magazine visit www.SMITHmag.net and check out the 6-Word music video at <http://smithmag.net/sixwordvideo>