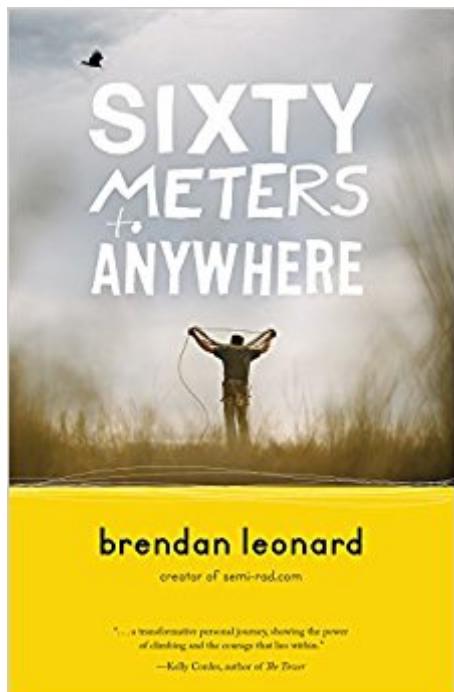


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# Sixty Meters To Anywhere



## Synopsis

"A searingly original testament to the transcendent power of wild spaces, and the redemptive radiance of the American West."--Kevin Fedarko, author of *The Emerald Mile*When Brendan Leonard moved to the West at age 23, he was a mess. He had a tenuous grip on sobriety, only six months after his last drink had landed him in yet another jail cell. It was the final mistake in a long list that included multiple arrests, wrecked cars, broken bones, fistfights, and ruined relationships. In Montana, he took his first steps into the Rocky Mountains, unwittingly beginning a decade-long obsession with climbing and a journey that would take him all over the West and Europe. Written with unflinching honesty and vulnerability, *Sixty Meters to Anywhere* is the memoir of a barstool storyteller who left the bar and found adventure, redemption, and a life that almost never happened.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Brendan Leonard's writing resonates with the luminous, hard-rock clarity and the elusive sense of grace that can only be encountered at the sharp end of one's rope. A deeply honest, courageously wrought, searingly original testament to the austere rewards of climbing, the transcendent power of wild spaces, and the redemptive radiance of the American West." --Kevin Fedarko, author of *The Emerald Mile: The Epic Story of the Fastest Ride in History Through the Heart of the Grand Canyon*"Nothing is off limits for Leonard in this shocking memoir about recovery from addiction and redemption in the mountains." --Grayson Schaffer, senior editor, *Outside*"Brendan Leonard has earned his sensitivity to the human condition the hard way: by tearing himself apart until the pain could no longer be ignored. Brendan's online satirical pieces have always been a surefire laugh for

me, but *Sixty Meters to Anywhere* reveals the darker path from where those quips and jabs emanate. Brendan's voice is at once crass, funny, heart-wrenching, and life-affirming. The heavy irony of Brendan's journey from the gutter to the mountaintop is that his personal perception of the pitfalls of being human, and the possibility of redemption, would make him just the type of bartender that the lonely and lost sometimes need in the long night before the dawn." --Chris Kalous, The Enormocast"Sixty Meters to Anywhere takes us on a transformative personal journey, showing the power of climbing and the courage that lies within. Brendan writes with his usual blend of purpose, love and honesty, which reflect the person he's become and the life that he lives."--Kelly Cordes, author of *The Tower: A Chronicle of Climbing and Controversy on Cerro Torre*"Brendan Leonard's prose has the clarity of crisp granite ridges and flashes of light on summer snow, of moonlight sifting through pine branches and footfalls on silent trails--of all those times when, near the top of a mountain as the air spreads out and the world expands below, you feel as though the simple, yet mysterious act of ascent could actually change your life."--Katie Ives, Editor-in-Chief, *Alpinist* "Since climbing's earliest days, non-climbers have asked 'Why?' In *Sixty Meters to Anywhere*, Brendan Leonard gives the best answer I've ever heard."--Shannon Davis, former editor, *Climbing* magazine "Honest as a trad lead, committed as a free solo, this is the story of how a rope becomes life's gift of redemption--and inspiration."--Steve Casimiro, founder, *Adventure Journal*"Don't read this book unless you enjoy laughing, adventure, honesty, humility, and excellent storytelling"--Peter Brown, author of *Graphic the Valley and The End of Boys*

Brendan Leonard's writing has appeared in *Alpinist*, *Climbing*, *Outside*, *Men's Journal*, *High Country News*, *Adventure Cyclist*, *National Geographic Adventure*, and dozens of other publications. He is a contributing editor at *Climbing*, *Adventure Journal*, and the podcast *The Dirtbag Diaries*. He divides his time between Denver and a roaming 2005 Chevy Astrovan. You can find him at [semi-rad.com](http://semi-rad.com).

Like many folks, my first introduction to Brendan as a story teller wasn't Semi-Rad, but the *Dirtbag Diaries*, and *Sixty Meters to Anywhere* was one of his first stories I heard. So I was psyched to get his new book, I thought I knew most of the story. After reading it over a few very long nights in a tent, I can't tell you how wrong I was. This story is just as funny and well written as you'd expect, but it had a rawness and honesty that I wasn't expecting. I knew Brendan was an idiot when he was drinking - but I had no idea what a complete jerk he was. And he definitely was. But he opens up about all that, his struggles with sobriety and life, and how the outdoors doesn't just define him, it

really completes him. And, of course, you have to laugh to think how clueless he was the first time he had a burrito or how hard it was for him to fit in when he was at the outdoor Mecca of Montana. Over the years I've been incredibly lucky to have Brendan become a friend, and it's been incredible to see how he's grown as a creative person - but I definitely have never been as proud as I was after reading this, as moved by anything he put out, and as psyched to see what he has next after opening himself up like this. Do yourself a favor and get this book as soon as you can and read it with a headlamp somewhere - you definitely will not be disappointed.

Sixty Meters to Anywhere, Brendan Leonard's story of redemption, survival, and arrival, is honest, insightful and entertaining. We would expect no less from the creator of Semi-rad.com. His sincere, brave narrative of rising from the ashes of addiction, arrest and general assholery to find an identity as a climber is a tale relatable to all. Brendan's conversational writing style and intelligent perceptions make this a book that is a pleasure to read and hard to put down. Brendan notes that, "In addiction, just like climbing, you can't fall off if you don't let go." This inspirational message resonates throughout the book. Additionally, Brendan writes, "A climber, finally identified by something I do instead of something I don't do." One can't help thinking that snippets of wisdom like these are a comfort to those who struggle to overcome addictions. Perhaps Brendan's most important message is simple and summarized well in one quote: "Is it more foolish to risk your life or risk wasting your life?" He answers that question in pure pragmatic Semi-rad style, with integrity, intelligence and enthusiastic charm.

This book oozes vulnerability and possibility. I'm certain many of us can relate to his challenges, his loneliness, and the power of choosing to keep moving forward towards our own hopes and dreams. This was simply one of the better books that I've read in a long time.

I am a big fan of Brendan Leonard's writing from his semi-rad.com web site. While this book is not full of the humor typically found on his blog, it does carry the same introspective and poignant message that is often the conclusion of his essays. Brendan digs deep and reveals the details of his past that led him to make substantial changes in his way of life and become the extraordinary guy that he is today.

The book is fine, but really not great. It reads very quick, not very witty like his blog, and it is not that

inspirational. But it tries to be all of these things. Even the title is a bit deceiving and has forced pseudo-philosophical meaning. It's a good quick read I guess, but there is sooooo much better climbing literature out there I just don't see why this one is getting all of the attention.

A well-told, deeply personal story of recovery and the beauty that can follow it. Brendan's ability to share a range of feelings and emotions—“from deep despair to sheer, ebullient joy”—make this an intimate self-portrait that also does a pretty good job of inspiring others to choose paths that lead to the outdoor world. It's really, really good.

Most everyone in recovery from any addiction knows one of the keys to getting sober and staying that way is to find our thing, that, hopefully good thing that can consume our lives as much as our addiction did. The routes to finding that thing vary as widely as the individuals searching for it. Every person may live a different storyline but within are similarities that bind us all. This is the compelling story of one man's journey and how he made, and continues to make it work today.

You will not regret reading this book. A very honest look at the life of an alcoholic and how he used strength, courage, perseverance and climbing to overcome his addiction. I love his honesty and straight forwardness. Brendan lays it all out there with no excuses. Here is not only a gifted climber but a gifted writer as well.

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