

**52 Loaves:
A Half-Baked Adventure**

“William Alexander can be compared to a crusader, a man on a quest for the holy green.” —LIANE HANSEN, host of NPR’s *Weekend Edition Sunday*

“Nitpicking obsessiveness was never so appetizing.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

“As Alexander takes readers along on his quest for the perfect loaf, he also invites us into his life—and, thanks to his honesty and his sense of humor, he’s somebody you’ll want to know.” —*American Way*

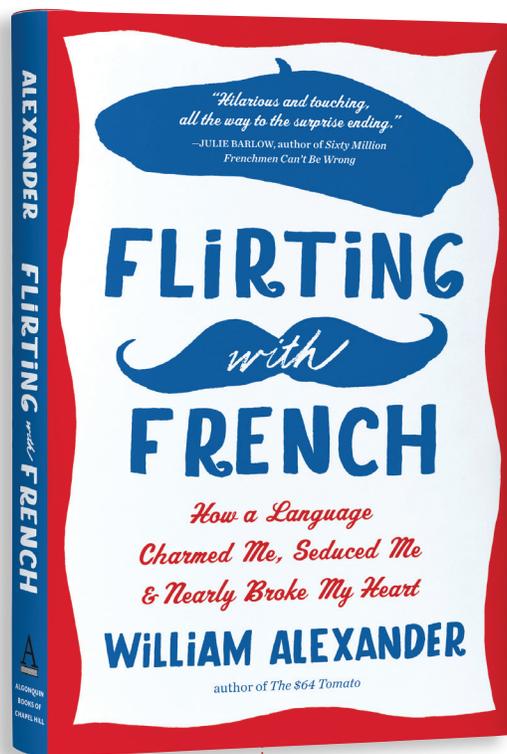
“Alexander’s breathless, witty memoir is a joy to read. It’s equal parts fact and fun . . . Alexander is wildly entertaining on the page, dropping clever one-liners in the form of footnotes and parenthetical afterthoughts throughout.” —*The Boston Globe*

“Laugh out loud funny . . . Alexander definitely doesn’t hold back, whether it’s confessing to tending a loaf of bread over an afternoon tryst with his wife or describing the looks of pity he received after unwittingly asking a ‘stupid’ question at a lecture . . . A great book, simultaneously funny and thoughtful.” —*TheKitchn.com*

“An engaging and instructive read with great rhythm, and if you’ve been on your own quest for good home-baked bread, I think you’ll find it as engrossing as I did. It is the book I was reading in Japan and well, I blame William Alexander for making me miss Mount Fuji while riding the bullet train.” —*Chocolate & Zucchini*

“I love a man who has real passion and William Alexander has it in spades . . . Whether you think he’s genius or just plain insane you will be awed by his relentless pursuit . . . What’s even better is that in this book he shares every single lesson that he’s learned, so you too can make that perfect loaf.” —*Project Foodie*

“Alexander sets up a perfect recipe for a nonfiction story about bread. How can a food with only four ingredients cause ecstasy? Alexander writes aromatic crumbs of baking



wisdom, trailing them on his dogged quest for the perfect loaf. He tucks in his experiences with a meditation and a final revelation in a French monastery. The end is what they call an oven rise, where the dough magically doubles in size and pleasure. Only the recipes are exhausting, as they should be.”

—*The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

“Anyone who has baked bread—or yearns to—will recognize William Alexander’s *52 Loaves* as a quest book. The quest? To re-create the perfect loaf of peasant bread he tasted at a restaurant. Once. Many years ago . . . The funny, often self-deprecating style he used in *The \$64 Tomato* transfers well to *52 Loaves*.”

—*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

“A warm, laugh-out-loud [memoir] . . . Alexander writes about the ups (few), the downs (numerous) and a lively history of bread itself, all recounted in a self-effacing but often irreverent voice . . . There is much to savor here, and Alexander entertainingly unravels many of the staff of life’s deep mysteries for the uninitiated.” —*The Oregonian*

“The world would be a less interesting place without the William Alexanders who walk among us—the people who pursue all sorts of Holy Grails and latch like ticks onto particular passions, yet who have the good grace to tell us all about their exploits with humor, rather than with pomposity . . . Alexander’s pursuit may be bread, but anyone in pursuit of an ideal will probably recognize his musings on whether it’s possible to re-create a memory, much less seek perfection. When those around him question his obsession, you find yourself agreeing with them—while also wondering how exhilarating it might feel to be so passionate about something.” —*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“This humorous memoir is recommended for anyone who has ever tried to bake a loaf.” —*Library Journal*

The \$64 Tomato

“Hilarious . . . His timing and his delivery are flawless.” —*New York Times Style Magazine*

PRAISE FOR WILLIAM ALEXANDER

“A book about gardening was never so funny as this memoir.” —*The Miami Herald*

“Money, sex, aging—that’s real gardening!”
—*The New York Observer*

“Engaging, well paced and informative. . . . Gardening as extreme sport.” — *The New York Times Book Review*

“A disarmingly witty take on horticulture among the energetic middle-aged . . . A paean to the homesteader who never gets written about, the pioneer whom all of us could have been in another life, the incompetent one.”
—*The Washington Post*

“Quick and very entertaining . . . Alexander is Icarus; his garden is the sun. Where these two meet makes *The \$64 Tomato* very endearing.” —*The Boston Globe*

“The shocking revelation that a single lush Brandywine tomato cost him \$64 to grow led to [this] humorous memoir.”
—*USA Weekend*

“Hysterical . . . Both an inspiration and a cautionary tale for anyone who has ever looked at a tomato and thought, I could grow that!” —*Life magazine*

“Engaging, funny, and down-to-earth.”
—*Entertainment Weekly*

“A fast-paced memoir . . . An odyssey that explores gardening through trial and humor . . . Gardeners will see themselves on every page.” —*Chicago Sun-Times*

“The real treat of *The \$64 Tomato* comes in the form of Alexander himself . . . A rollicking read.”
—*New York Newsday*

“A wry memoir in which every reader who’s spent way more to grow a plant than he could purchase it for at the supermarket will recognize his own successes, failures and foibles.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

“The laugh-out-loud antics of a naive, would-be gentleman farmer learning the realities of country gardening . . . If you need a laugh, read this book.” —*The Sacramento Bee*

“A delightful guide to achieving gardening bliss.”
—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Amusing . . . An entertaining read.” —*Rocky Mountain News*

“A quick read full of fun and foibles . . . His costbenefit analysis of what each Brandywine tomato’s price would be is a riot.” —*The Seattle Times*

“*The \$64 Tomato* is worth a read, whether you love to dig in the dirt or can’t keep a philodendron alive, because Alexander’s determination and sense of humor are enviable. Plus, he’s just a good writer.” —*Florida Times-Union*