

■ **ROGER SMITH** • WRITES FROM: Cape Town, South Africa

DEBUT BOOK: *Mixed Blood* (Henry Holt and Co.)



“An American, hiding out in Cape Town after being blackmailed into a bank heist back home, is building a new life for his pregnant wife and young son when an incident of random violence sets him on a collision course with street gangs and a rogue cop who loves killing.” **WRITING**

HABITS: “When the characters grab me

by the throat and won’t let go—I write all day, every day.” **HOW DID YOU GET YOUR BREAK?** “I landed a great agent in New York. After reading *Mixed Blood*, Alice Martell agreed to represent me and sold it in a month.” **TIME FRAME:** “About a year from first draft to final edit. I had the time of my life.” **SECRET TO SUCCESS:**

“Blind faith and good luck.” **ADVICE:** “Read. Learn from good (and bad) writers. Finish that first novel, even if it’s a mess. Writing is rewriting.” **INFLUENCES:** “Jim Thompson, Elmore Leonard, Denis Johnson, Cormac McCarthy, Norman Mailer, James Ellroy, Richard Price, Pete Dexter.”

WEIRD HOBBIES: “I’m not sure it’s weird, but I practice Ashtanga yoga six mornings a week, no matter what. There’s nothing like the rush of blood from a headstand to get the synapses firing.” **WHAT’S NEXT?** “A second stand-alone thriller about messed-up people in bad situations, to be published in February 2010.”

