



**Title:** Big Man Coming Down The Road

**Author:** Brad Smith

**Description:**

In life, multi-millionaire Everett Eastman was a ruthless industrialist, a bad husband, and an absentee father. In death, he becomes really aggravating. In a farewell gesture to his three scattered offspring, he bequeaths each one of them a tarnished jewel from his declining empire. The slothful and duplicitous Ben receives the thriving auto parts plant that he already oversees. He immediately sets his sights on acquiring all three companies. Reality-challenged Ethan gains ownership of a failing distillery. Their sister, the independent Kick, reluctantly assumes the reins of Great North, a small publishing company and sometime music producer. The trio learn from the will's executor former NHL-er turned farmer Will Montgomery, that the departing Everett has seen fit to challenge them with a series of codicils. Ben is required to fulfill a major parts contract while Ethan has to get the whisky plant back in the black. And Kick, a chronically impoverished documentary film-maker with a project on the go in Wyoming, is dismayed to learn that she is required to produce a back tax album with a fading country music star. The singer, Jonah Peck, proves to be every bit as cantankerous and difficult as Everett Eastman himself. Which means that Kick is out of the frying pan. And into the fire.

**Reviews**

**National Post (Canada):**

*Big Man Coming Down the Road*, the new novel by writer Brad Smith is a rollicking, ramshackle read that's bold and oversized, funny and oddly touching but free of cheap sentimentality.

Smith writes with a confidence bordering on cocky, a sureness of tone that serves to unify his narrative and the more than half a dozen major characters, in a story that ranges from a farm in southwestern Ontario to the bars and recording studios of Memphis.

Smith's skill with characterization is essential to the success of the novel. Drawn with broad strokes at first, they grow to reveal surprising nuances and depths. The dialogue is punchy throughout, and the interaction between the characters is mined for both laughter and drama (often at the same time).

Much of *Big Man Coming Down the Road* plays out with a healthy (if occasionally obvious) good humour and an absence of pathos. Though the stakes are high, the tone is light, and it is clear we are meant to be entertained. And entertained we are.

**The Globe and Mail:**

What's truly distinctive about *Big Man Coming Down the Road* is the way Smith documents, with sly good humour, the not-so-graceful ways in which conflicting views on the environment, global capitalism and female-male relationships get played out at ground

level in the Ontario heartland.

***NOW Magazine (Toronto):***

... a total treat ... Smith just will not bow to stereotypes -- the women, no matter their age, give off a major whiff of sexuality, the guys may be laconic but they are not dim. Both the men and women act like heroes and villains.

He's got a real sense of place, too. Pear Orchard, the family farm, is lovingly evoked, field by field. If you want to know what Nashville's like without booking a flight, dive into this book.

The story just rocks. It's part potboiler, part love story and all heart.

Put away your assumptions and enjoy the ride.

***Quill and Quire:***

The new novel from Brad Smith is the kind of fast-paced, plot-rich book that begs to be called, in all earnestness, a rollicking good time. In fact, it captures the excitement of its characters' lives so well that it might inspire a reader to run out and make baleful country music or buy a dilapidated truck and drive to rural America.

Smith weaves together an absurd number of plotlines, each with its own unexpected twists and turns, so deftly that the novel's dénouement comes as a believable resolution that is not the slightest bit trite. Of course, it does help that the straight-shooting Kick is as vocally skeptical of a pat ending as any reader would be.