



Title: One-Eyed Jacks

Author: Brad Smith

Description:

At 35, Tommy Cochrane is a washed-up boxer who missed out on a shot at the heavyweight title and has to hang up his gloves for good when he's diagnosed with an aneurysm. His best friend and former sparring partner, T-Bone Pike, isn't in great shape either as the two of them head to Toronto on a quest for the \$5,000 Tommy desperately needs to buy back his grandfather's farm.

In the big city, Tommy and T-Bone encounter an intriguing cast of characters operating on the questionable side of the tracks. Fat Ollie runs the weekly poker game on Queen Street; Buzz Murdoch gives Tommy a job as a doorman at the Bamboo club; Herm Bell is a sharp kid on a run of luck; and Tony Broad is a small-time hood with big-time ambitions and a seedy sidekick named Billy Callahan. There's also Lee Charles, a sharp, cynical, smart-mouthed torch singer, who happens to be Tommy's ex-girlfriend.

In the tradition of James Ellroy, Brad Smith has readers instantly embroiled in a quick-paced plot that involves guns and money, good guys and bad guys, double and triple crosses, and an exciting, suspenseful payoff. An unerring tradition of '50s Ontario, rich in local colour and with the kind of crackling dialogue that drives an Elmore Leonard novel, *One-Eyed Jacks* is a great read that opens up the underbelly of Toronto the Good.

Reviews

The Globe and Mail:

An absorbing story -- with some good sex, bad beatings, stupid thefts and senseless killings. But it's also a good novel about friendship. Brad Smith reminds us, as good novelists always do, that any two hearts can beat as one.

The National Post:

Eminently readable, eminently enjoyable -- *ONE-EYED JACKS*, which marks the arrival of a very capable writer, is a piece of sly, adult-strength pulp fiction.