



No Roads Leads to Rome

R. S. Gompertz

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There's no time like the past to laugh at the present.

A.D. 123. On the edge of the Roman Empire, a dead governor leaves behind the opportunity of a lifetime.

Mysteriously promoted, a senator's son finds himself in an ancient world of trouble. Within days of taking office, Hispania's taxpayers are in open revolt, all legionaries depart to build Hadrian's Wall, and the once-sleepy province is rocked by slave revolts, bread riots, and fad religions.

"No Roads Lead to Rome" chronicles the clumsy schemes of an inept new governor and his shadowy adviser, a superstitious centurion's struggle to save his faith in the faded ideals of the Republic, and a young rebel's reluctant vow to change the course of history. All are pitted against the Gods, the Emperor, and the decline and fall of damn near everything.

It's A.D. 123--a time not unlike the present--and No Roads Lead to Rome.

From Publishers Weekly:

The Roman Empire is at a crossroads, and Emperor Hadrian, realizing that continued expansion will make the empire's borders indefensible, decrees consolidation to a size the legions can better guard. That story is told here in a confusion of the historical, the comical, the metaphorical, and the adventurous that mostly (and surprisingly) holds together fairly well. In the province of Hispania, the governor, Festus Rufius, has just taken over for his murdered predecessor, veteran Centurion Marcus Valerius.

Surviving on graft, plots, kickbacks and bribery, the Empire lurches on while Hispania is beset by slave revolts, food riots, uncollected taxes, and bad wine. And so the province's leadership must resort to a series of desperate illusions to disguise its failings.

All this is recounted swiftly, with verve, panache, and a light tread that makes for a delightful, well told tale.

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