



## One Lucky Fool

### Tom Pointer

Tom Pointer (Aug 13, 2014)

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*This page-turner delves into the psyche of its main character, offering both humor and insight into Southern life.*

When a disturbed former veteran, William “Rooster” Brown, accidentally foils a robbery in 1950s Texas, his life takes a turn into an unexpected tangle of domestic pretension, suspicion, and revenge. He is the lucky fool of this book’s title, and his combination of hidden desires and outwardly charms make for a lengthy, compelling character study.

Rooster is a God-fearing war veteran living in Eisenhower-era Merky, Texas, and whose grandfather was a killer—Devin “Devil” Brown. While stalking a waitress outside a diner, Rooster accidentally thwarts a family of crooks trying to commit a robbery there, killing the leader in the process. Now Rooster is a hero, especially to Mr. Tucker, a local filling-station and movie-house mogul whose waitress daughter, Laurie, he saved. But Rooster also becomes the target of the criminal family, and on the watch list of the authorities who know his family’s history.

Rednecks and white collars, civility and violence, true love and psychotic lust—these opposing themes are all covered in Tom Pointer’s narrative. It has crime and thriller elements throughout, while also combining elements of pulp fiction, melodrama, and dark, almost Southern-Gothic comedy. Successfully combining such a motley mixture is a difficult task, but *One Lucky Fool* is an interesting surprise that succeeds in the end.

In fact, the book is an unquestionable page-turner. Since its central character is slightly despicable, two-faced, and thrust into a world of civility that involves romance and revenge, there’s a desire to know what happens next. Thankfully, Pointer delivers with lean, no-frills prose and subtle period details that allow access into the character’s head while getting a glimpse of what he sees around him, including him being taken on as worker by Tucker in reward for his bravery, not to mention the hypocrisies of the characters and the environment they live in—e.g., “Rooster placed the Bible on the nightstand as if he might actually read it.”

Some parts of the storyline are hard to accept as completely believable. Rooster falls for Laurie, and he’s caught between wanting to admit his sinful feelings and wanting to continue living in his new, glossy, affluent world without material wants. But these minor flaws are negligible. If backwater places can still be the sources for tragedy, comedy, and social critique, *One Lucky Fool* is a great showcase of all these and more in one tight package.

JAMES BURT (September 26, 2014)

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