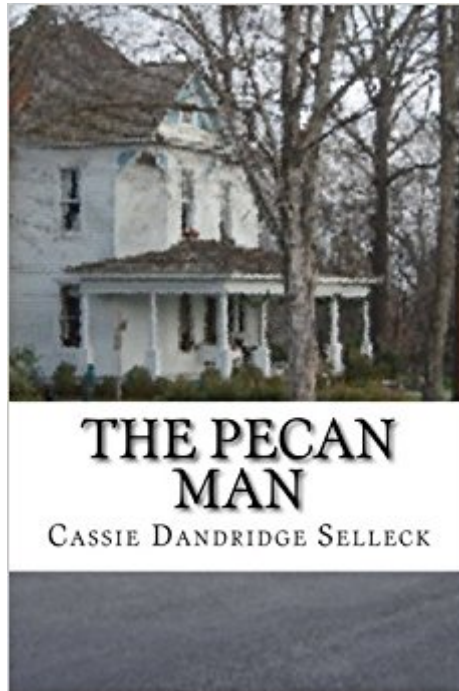




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# The Pecan Man



## Synopsis

The Pecan Man is a work of Southern fiction whose first chapter was the First Place winner of the 2006 CNW/FFWA Florida State Writing Competition in the Unpublished Novel category. In the summer of 1976, recently widowed and childless, Ora Lee Beckworth hires a homeless old black man to mow her lawn. The neighborhood children call him the Pee-can Man; their mothers call them inside whenever he appears. When the police chief's son is found stabbed to death near his camp, the man Ora knows as Eddie is arrested and charged with murder. Twenty-five years later, Ora sets out to tell the truth about the Pecan Man. In narrating her story, Ora discovers more truth about herself than she could ever have imagined. This novel has been described as *To Kill a Mockingbird* meets *The Help*.

## Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: The Pecan Man (January 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0615590586

ISBN-13: 978-0615590585

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 2,959 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #12,449 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Dramas & Plays > Women Authors #78 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Cultural Heritage #1511 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Literary

## Customer Reviews

Cassie Dandridge Selleck is a native of Leesburg, Florida, the town that inspired the fictional Mayville of *The Pecan Man*. She now makes her home on the banks of the Suwannee River in Northwest Florida with her husband, Perry. A writer at heart, she is also the marketing director for Anderson Crane and Bridge Technologies, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

*The Pecan Man* is Cassie Dandridge Selleck's self-published debut novel. Several people, I believe, mentioned that it was part *To Kill a Mockingbird* with various secondary novels. I can see the comparison, the easy, flowing prose, the narrator's voice, Ora, voice, her style of meandering through days. Honestly, Ora's voice reminded far more of the

movie version of *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe*. Ora Lee Beckworth's voice, to me was very similar to Jessica Tandy / Ninny Threadgoode. The Pecan Man has its own little mysterious interwoven stories that create the same kind of easy dialogue involving at least one dark secret. Ora Lee Beckworth, a widow, lives in a charming house near downtown; she can sit on her front porch and watch life pass by. Since she's recently widowed, she hasn't done much but do just that. With her husband gone, though, she does need a man to tend the yard work, and maybe a few odd jobs around the house. When she notices the Pecan Man, a somewhat raggedy-looking, homeless man on with a beat-up old bike wandering in her neighborhood, she asks him if he'd be interested in doing some yard work on a weekly basis. She already has a housekeeper, Blanche, who helps with everything else she needs inside. Needless to say, at least one neighbor, Dovey, across the street, of course, has to step in after a few weeks of the Pecan man being seen in their neighborhood, it just isn't safe, she says. He makes her uneasy, scares people, and well, after all, you wouldn't want people driving through here thinking he actually lived there, would you? This was a short, delightful read. I really look forward to reading more from Cassie Dandridge Selleck.

THE PECAN MAN is set in central Florida in the late 60's to early 70's the widow Ora Lee Beckworth hires an elderly homeless man to work in her yard. Through a wide array of dramatic events, he is arrested for murder. The people in this book are typical of a small Southern town. They drive home the point that no matter what you think you know about a region, an era or an individual, you rarely know the truth. This is the story that Ora tells about the truths as she sees it around those events. It is heavy with themes of truth and racism. Although set in the South during the dynamic period when white people had "advantages" that the black people were not given, this story has an underlying tale about how we define family and how we forgive the failures and flaws of others, even when the flaws and failures are our own. Miss Ora Lee felt more like a close friend of mine than a character in a book. I love the way she gives her neighbor, Dovey Kincaid, her comeuppance and anyone else who acted "less than human" and the way she let the Sheriff Kornegay's teenage son, Skipper, know that she knew how deviant he was for what he had done to a little black girl. So much finesse and tact from a little ole Southern lady did my heart good. It made me love Miss Ora Lee that much more. Her voice is true and authentic in the way humans should act toward other humans, no matter what their color. In Ora's words "It's funny what you take for granted when your

view of the world reflects your own skin color".I think this book will touch many chords of remembrance with older readers. Fiesty Miss Ora Lee is infused with the graceful courage we all hope we'll have when we are tested. It could be an even greater gift for younger readers trying to make sense of all the turmoil from past decades and as a reminder of what should and should never be allowed to happen again. The memories this book brought back to me are priceless and a rare gift indeed. I did not want this book to ever end. I would gladly give this book way more stars than I am allowed to give. HIGHLY RECOMMEND!!!!

An elderly white woman recalls the summer of 1976, when she met - and lost - a homeless black man who changed her life forever.Ora Lee Beckworth, then a new widow, goes against the opinions of everyone in town when she hires "The Pecan Man" (known as Eddie to his mama) to mow her lawn and do various odd jobs. Neighbors insist that Eddie is dangerous, and it's just a matter of time before Ora Lee sees for herself. She assures them otherwise, and with the help of her black housekeeper Blanche and Blanche's four young daughters, does her best to befriend and care for Eddie.Then tragedy strikes, and blame is immediately placed upon Eddie. Ora Lee does what she can, but there's a piece of the puzzle she can never reveal - something which will haunt her til the end of her life.Selleck captures the racial inequality that persisted well into the 1970s in the South, alongside intricately detailed characters whose lives are bound to ring true for readers.

A masterpiece of a novella, easily and enjoyably read in a day. Here's a book that raises the question as to why the big time publishers and reviewers have not picked up on it...especially after the 'rave' reviews given inferior works put out but the large publishing houses. And how many novels today or any day can feature an aging narrator who is as humanly honest as possible, who tries to get things right in her life and openly admits to her many failures? Not many I might add, in answer to my own question, and it is a pleasure finally to read one, even more so when the topic is race and the setting a small town in the deep South. I not only recommend it to all but believe it should be suggested reading in schools from the 9th grade on. Yes, you might find a few small faults (no pro editor as far as I know went over it) but I think most readers, even the harder hearted, will be tearful at the conclusion...I know I was. There is plot, great characters and surprises...you'll want to pass it on to family and friends and insist they read it.

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