



## The Spectator Bird (Penguin Classics)

By Wallace Stegner

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**The Spectator Bird (Penguin Classics) By Wallace Stegner**

**From the “dean of Western writers” (*The New York Times*) and the Pulitzer Prize winning—author of *Angle of Repose* and *Crossing to Safety*, his National Book Award—winning novel**

Joe Allston is a retired literary agent who is, in his own words, "just killing time until time gets around to killing me." His parents and his only son are long dead, leaving him with neither ancestors nor descendants, tradition nor ties. His job, trafficking the talent of others, had not been his choice. He passes through life as a spectator.

A postcard from a friend causes Allston to return to the journals of a trip he had taken years before, a journey to his mother's birthplace where he'd sought a link with the past. The memories of that trip, both grotesque and poignant, move through layers of time and meaning, and reveal that Joe Allston isn't quite spectator enough.

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## **The Spectator Bird (Penguin Classics) By Wallace Stegner Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Edward Herrmann is perhaps best known to younger audiences as kindly, patrician Richard Gilmore on the television series *Gilmore Girls*. Here, Herrmann uses his same elegant persona to amplify and underscore the bittersweet nuance of Stegner's novel about a retired man who travels to his mother's Danish hometown. There are hidden reserves of frustration and displeasure in Stegner's tale, and Herrmann aptly conveys these emotions with short, sharp bursts of dialogue matched with longer, more drawn-out ellipses of exposition. He even manages a serviceable Danish accent to top off his flawless performance. (Feb.)

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### Review

"It is the autobiographical nature of Stegner's work . . . that makes it so compelling. In every novel, the narrator has all the gifts of language, empathy, and philosophy, but he nonetheless can never free himself from the torments of the past." —**Jane Smiley, from the Introduction**

"Elegant and entertaining . . . every scene [is] adroitly staged and each effect precisely accomplished."

—*The Atlantic*

### About the Author

**Wallace Stegner** (1909–1993) published more than two dozen books throughout his life, including the novels *Angle of Repose*, which won the Pulitzer Prize; *Crossing to Safety*; and *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*. An early environmentalist, Stegner was instrumental—with his now famous “Wilderness Letter”—in the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

**Jane Smiley** is the Pulitzer Prize–winning author of more than ten novels and four works of nonfiction. She lives in California.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### **Agnes Higa:**

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading addiction give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The info you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with education books but if you want really feel happy read one together with theme for entertaining such as comic or novel. The particular The Spectator Bird (Penguin Classics) is kind of publication which is giving the reader erratic experience.

**Heather Goodson:**

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**Ricky Bradley:**

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**Judy Newberry:**

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