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## 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.

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#### Gloria Lockwood:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is reading a book. What about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book once they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you will want this The Spectator Bird (Penguin Classics).

**Sonia Cramer:**

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**Brandon Francis:**

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**Dale Vaught:**

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