



The Spectator Bird (Contemporary American Fiction)

Wallace Stegner

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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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