



My Staggerford Journal

Jon Hassler

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"April 3, 1976. Completed Staggerford this morning at 9:15. . . . The most satisfying thing I've done since playing high school football."

In the spring of 1975, an unknown Minnesota teacher named Jon Hassler decided to take a sabbatical and fulfill his lifelong dream of writing a novel. A year later, Hassler typed the final page of Staggerford--a book that has won a cherished place as a classic novel of small-town life in America. Now, many years and many novels later, Hassler shares the private story of Staggerford's creation as recorded in the vividly revealing journals he kept while writing the book.

Hassler's My Staggerford Journal is at once the narrative of a work of art struggling to be born and the portrait of a creative mind in the throes of a life-altering breakthrough. Day by day, we peer over Hassler's shoulder as he breathes life into his creation--realizing with a sudden flash of insight that his hero Miles Pruitt should not have a wife, shaping and reshaping the character of the Bonewoman, heeding the good "advice" of the spirited Miss Agatha McGee, stumbling on the perfect title. Here, too, is the moving account of the novelist's inner doubts and comic missteps, his lonely triumphs and jarring sacrifices.

My Staggerford Journal affords a rare glimpse into the imagination of one of the best-loved masters of contemporary American fiction. Jon Hassler's many fans, as well as all readers interested in seeing the creative process at work, will be spellbound by this wonderful book.

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