



There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale

By Sean Astin, Joe Layden

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The fascinating memoir of a Hollywood life and an inside look at a life-changing role and the groundbreaking *Lord of the Rings* films that captured the imagination of movie fans everywhere.

The Lord of the Rings is one of the most successful film franchises in cinematic history. Winner of a record eleven Academy Awards--a clean sweep--and breaking box office records worldwide, the trilogy is a breathtaking cinematic achievement and beloved by fans everywhere.

For Sean Astin, a Hollywood child (his mother is Patty Duke and stepfather is John Astin) who made his feature film debut at 13 in the 1980s classic *The Goonies* and played the title role in *Rudy*, the call from his agent about the role of Samwise Gamgee couldn't have come at a better time. His career was at a low point and choice roles were hard to come by. But his 18-month experience in New Zealand with director Peter Jackson and the cast and crew of *The Lord of the Rings* films would be more than simply a dream-come-true--it would prove to be the challenge of a lifetime.

There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale is the complete memoir of Sean Astin, from his early days in Hollywood to the role that changed his life. Though much has been written about the making of the films, including the techniques and artistry employed to bring Tolkien's vision of life and the various relationships between castmembers, the real story of what took place on the set, the harrowing ordeals of the actors and the unspoken controversy and backstage dealings have never been told.

Sean's experience and candid account of his time filming in New Zealand is unparalleled. More than a companion guide to the *Ring* films, *There and Back Again* filled with stories from the set and of the actors involved that have never been revealed before and is an eye-opening look from a Hollywood veteran at the blood, sweat and tears that went into the making of one of the most ambitious films of all time.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

At 33, Astin is young to write his life story, and he tries to portray himself as a major star, thus exaggerating his actual status. However, the book succeeds as a brutally frank, hard-hitting portrait of the film business. Astin shoots from the hip, frequently offending people with his contentious viewpoints. He admires his supportive mother, Oscar winner Patty Duke, while chastising her for writing a book about her manic depression and exposing intimate details. He portrays Warren Beatty, who cast him in the controversial *Bulworth*, as someone "who knows he's a megalomaniac and sees nothing wrong with that." A self-described "artist-industrialist," Astin describes his producing and directing activities, which led to a 1991 Oscar nomination for his short film, *Kangaroo Court*. After wowing critics in *Rudy*, Astin landed the choice role of Samwise Gamgee in *Lord of the Rings*, and he recalls making the blockbuster film with intensity and color. Some incidents are enlightening, such as his difficulty getting fitted for prosthetic devices for *LOTR*. Others pack emotional freight, particularly the tale of his father John Astin's efforts to land the role of Gandalf in *LOTR* and being passed over in favor of Ian McKellen. Astin comes across as a complex personality—courageous, impulsive, loving, abrasive—and these contradictory qualities make him an arresting centerpiece for a Hollywood story.

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Review

Praise for *There and Back Again*:

"The *Rings* chapters will appeal to hobbit hounds."

--Entertainment Weekly

"Austin's prose carries an unusual but authentic innocence."

--USA Today

"A candid memoir about the three films but even more about the actor . . . when we arrive on the set, we empathize with Astin's self-doubts while cheering him on (and Sam, too) . . . Highly recommended."

--Library Journal

"A brutally frank, hard-hitting portrait of the film business. Astin shoots from the hip . . . He recalls making the blockbuster film with intensity and color. Some incidents are enlightening, such as his difficulty getting fitted for prosthetic devices for *LOTR*. Others pack emotional freight, particularly the tale of his father John Astin's efforts to land the role of Gandalf in *LOTR* and being passed over in favor of Ian McKellen. Astin comes across as a complex personality--courageous, impulsive, loving, abrasive--and these contradictory qualities make him an arresting centerpiece for a Hollywoof story."

--Publishers Weekly

From the Inside Flap

Praise for Sean Astin and his performance in *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy:

"Every night, Sean Astin is bringing people to tears with his performance it's so powerful."

- Peter Jackson, Director, *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy

"Sean Astin comes into his own with this brave, questing performance. . . Astin is the soul of the movie . . . It's fitting that Sam is the last face we see in *Return of the King*. He is the film's anchor, and Astin plays him with a tenderness that is unique and unforgettable."

- Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*

"The most touching figure . . .is Frodo's sidekick, Sam, who will literally follow Frodo into fire. Sam is played so well by Sean Astin this affectingly loyal hobbit seems the most human figure on screen."
- *The New York Times*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Pamela Steele:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they undertaking activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book might be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing you will ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the book untitled *There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale* can be excellent book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

Maryanna Kuhns:

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John Dearman:

Are you kind of stressful person, only have 10 or perhaps 15 minute in your day to upgrading your mind ability or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you are having problem with the book in comparison with can satisfy your short space of time to read it because this time you only find guide that need more time to be examine. *There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale* can be your answer given it can be read by a person who have those short time problems.

Judith Mandel:

As we know that book is essential thing to add our know-how for everything. By a book we can know everything we want. A book is a range of written, printed, illustrated as well as blank sheet. Every year was exactly added. This book *There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale* was filled with regards to science. Spend your spare time to add your knowledge about your technology competence. Some people has diverse feel when they reading a new book. If you know how big good thing about a book, you can really feel enjoy to read a e-book. In the modern era like at this point, many ways to get book that you wanted.

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