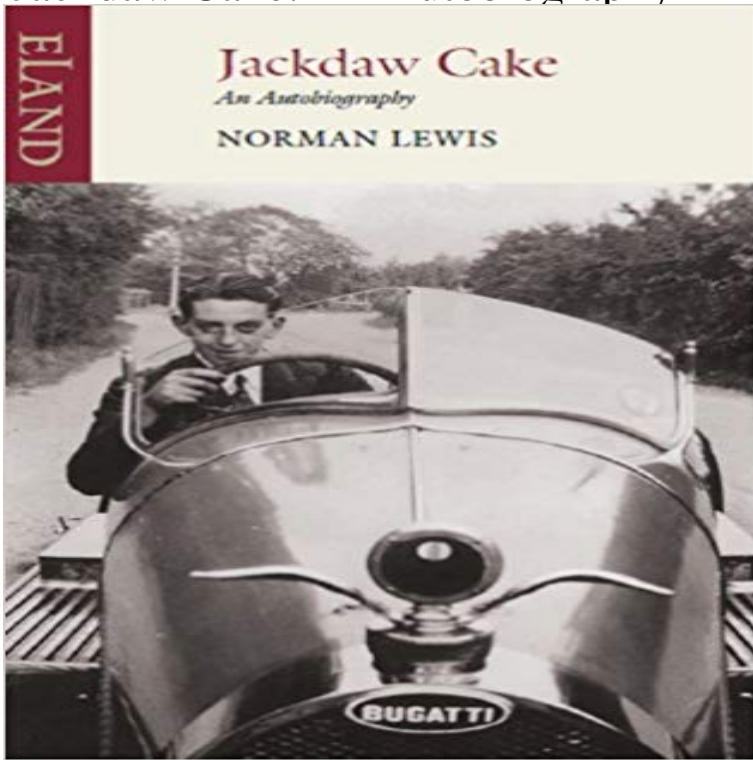


# Jackdaw Cake: An Autobiography



With dry, laconic wit, Norman Lewis remembers his transformation from stammering Welsh schoolboy to worldly wise, multilingual sergeant in the Intelligence Corps, on the cusp of becoming a writer. With a calm, observant gaze from the start, the young Norman moves from Spiritualist parents in Enfield to live with supremely dotty aunts in Carmarthen, whose baking of a weekly cake to feed the jackdaws gives the book its title. Escaping his eccentric family by marrying the daughter of a Sicilian associate of the Mafia, Norman made a living as a wedding photographer and by dealing in cameras, while restoring and racing Bugattis for pleasure. Here we see his first journeys in Spain, Cuba and the Yemen and a wartime spent in Algeria, Sicily and Italy, all of which acted as an apprenticeship for his career as one of the twentieth century's greatest travel writers.

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