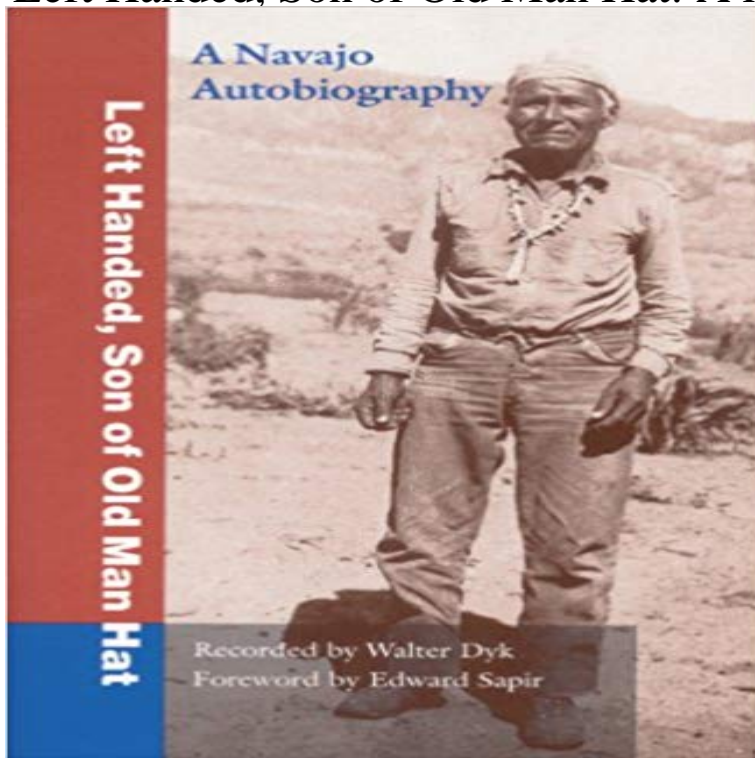


Left Handed, Son of Old Man Hat: A Navaho Autobiography



With a simplicity as disarming as it is frank, Left Handed tells of his birth in the spring when the cottonwood leaves were about the size of my thumbnail, of family chores such as guarding the sheep near the hogan, and of his sexual awakening. As he grows older, his account turns to life in the open: nomadic cattle-raising, farming, trading, communal enterprises, tribal dances and ceremonies, lovemaking, and marriage. As Left Handed grows in understanding and stature, the accumulated wisdom of his people is made known to him. He learns the Navajo life founded upon principles: the necessity of honesty, foresightedness, self-discipline. The style of the narrative is almost biblical in its rhythms; but biblical, too, in many respects, is the traditional way of life it recounts.

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