ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

BIOGRAPHY

Jus Tuf Luk: A Life in the American Century
Jerry T. Lewis
CreateSpace
978-1-4499-9672-7
Three Stars (out of Five)

In *Jus Tuf Luk: A Life in the American Century*, author Jerry T. Lewis takes the reader from the birth of his parents in the late 1800s to his own birth in 1929 and through to the present time. Though he tells his story in the third person ("this saga unfolds like a silent movie…"), he frequently reverts to first-person commentary.

As a boy, he had a newspaper route, which gave him his first taste of responsibility and independence. "I felt that first breeze of freedom just peddling about town in the early morning," he writes. "Often seeing the sun come up, and always by myself, I took to singing: the only songs I knew were the Hit Parade love songs…"

His family moved nearly every year of his childhood, so Lewis had to adapt to new environments, schools, and friends. With a lust for independence and freedom, he began living on his own at fifteen. He writes about his educational experiences with lingering disillusionment and bitterness. The boy who never quite fit in became the young man who, throughout his years in the Navy and later in college, still was very much alone. Rebellion blanketed his life, including his relationship with family, school, religion, and society.

The author maintains consistency in style and tone throughout the book, whether he's writing about engineering or raising dogs. He covers his marriages, the births of his children, and the years of their childhood. The chapter that introduces his second wife, Maggi, is told through her eyes, from her birth in Germany to her immigration to the United States.

Lewis tells his story in great detail, sometimes telling us more than we need to know. For example, in a passage on increasing the size of a dog run: "A chute of corrugated metal panels laid along the support of two crossed 2×4's was erected down the hill for about 60 feet to the cement mixer…The back wall went 25 feet along the uphill and about 4 feet high after the foundation trough laid below grade. Tar paper and drain rock in back of the wall … " His description continues for two more paragraphs.

Lewis presents a well-written snapshot of twentieth-century America, although his story

is sadly filled with cynicism and discontent.

Pat Avery