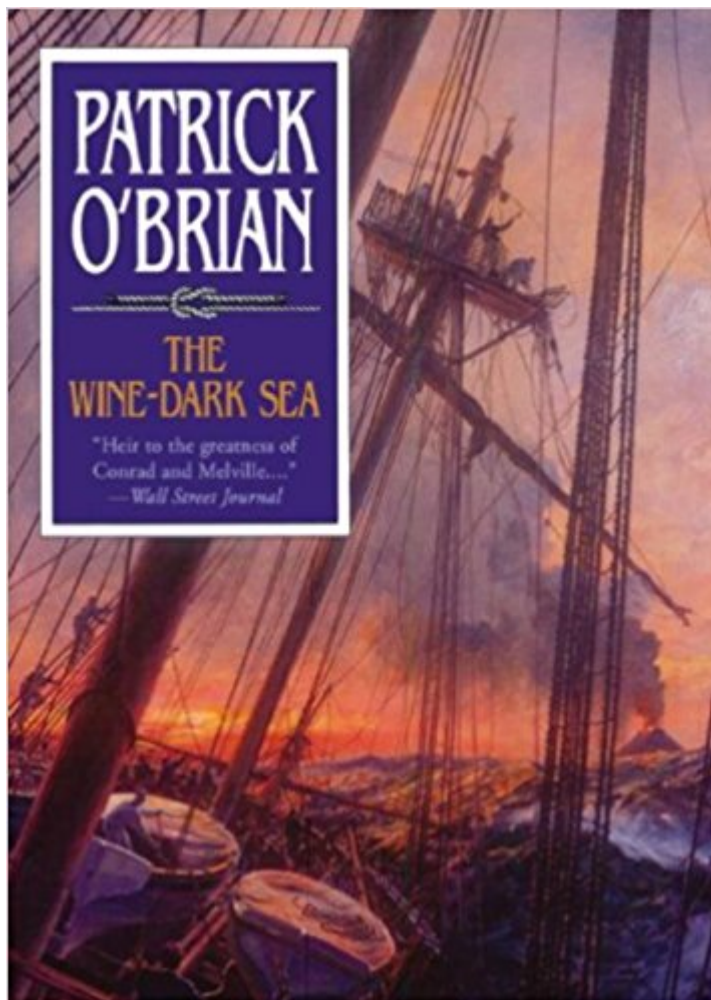


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The Wine-Dark Sea (Aubrey-Maturin)



Synopsis

Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin pursue a privateer through the Great South Sea. While Maturin's mission is to ignite the revolutionary tinder of South America, Aubrey will survive a desperate journey and come face-to-face with his illegitimate son. They are reunited in a breathtaking chase through stormy seas and icebergs.

Book Information

Series: Aubrey-Maturin (Book 16)

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

In this installment of O'Brian's maritime epic, Captain Aubrey and the crew of the *Surprise* are pursuing an American privateer through the Great South Sea. As is his custom, O'Brian grabs your attention with the first, beautifully memorable sentence: "A purple ocean, vast under the sky and devoid of all visible life apart from two minute ships racing across its immensity." And he doesn't relinquish it until 260 pages later, by which point Jack Aubrey is delighted at the mere fact of being alive. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Though the Jack Aubrey-Stephen Maturin books can be profitably read separately, as fans know, together they read as one long, wonderful novel. This 16th installment (following *The Truelove*) is no doubt the best chapter yet. In the early 1800s, Bluff Jack, captain of the privateer *Surprise*, steers his frigate across the Pacific to South America, around Cape Horn and into the Atlantic, taking French and American prizes, fighting off a Yankee Man of War and suffering dire eye and leg wounds for his trouble. Subtle Stephen, ship's doctor and British intelligence agent, almost pulls off

a coup in Peru and must escape across the Andes, losing some toes to frostbite for his efforts. Favorite characters reappear here: Killick, Jack's crabby steward; Sarah and Emily Sweeting, precocious Melanesian waifs attached to Maturin's sick-berth; Sam, Jack's illegitimate black son and rising Churchman. The naval actions are bang-on and bang-up--fast, furious and bloody--and the Andean milieu is as vivid as the shipboard scenes. As usual, readers can revel in the symbiotic friendship of Jack and Stephen, who make for a marvelous duo, whether in their violin and cello duets or in their sharp dialogue. If O'Brian hasn't quite had a break-out book yet, then this deserves to be it. 40,000 first printing; \$50,000 ad/promo; author tour. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Good lengthy account of travelling through the Peruvian Andes which takes away from the nautical in nautical fiction. Another account of getting caught in the ice during fog around Cape Horn. Another loss of a rudder in the southern latitudes and another sea battle that almost happened. There were two sea battles actually; an incredibly easy one in the beginning and an incredibly non-existent one near the end. This book felt mostly like it was just another in a series of filler material. As I always say, the writing is excellent and it shows such an incredible amount of research necessary to tell the story in such detail. I have to admit to tiring of the perpetual filler material in each of the last three books. I hope O'Brian gets back to writing nautical adventures in this series. This is another book you could easily live without in this series if you so chose.

The continuing adventures of Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin is nothing short of irresistible, dynamic pleasure. Storms, prizes, enemy vessels and spies, you'll inhale this installment of our favorite sailing duo.

One has to be a lover of Patrick O'Brian to appreciate Book 16 of this sea-going, Napoleonic War series. If you are on Book 16, you already know what I mean. It is wonderful, adventurous, humorous and a definite page turner. You will never read novels as well written as O'Brian's works. If you haven't read any of the Aubrey/Maturin novels, you must begin at the beginning with "Master and Commander". Sit back and enjoy these great tales for months, even years to come. Hint: Don't get upset if you don't understand the operation of the ship, with its rigging and sails and masts. The reader doesn't have to most of the time. Just be amazed that Mr. O'Brian understood it all. Perhaps by Book 10 you will comprehend it better.

For those who love earlier volumes of this series, volumes 14 through 16 taken together are a complex and multi-skein series of threads that contribute very well to the whole enterprise of Aubrey as Britannia, with all his narrowness and dogmatism, and all his spirit power and courage. There was a reason that Great Britain was The Empire in the 19th century, and Patrick O'Brian, God, Mary and Patrick be with him, expresses the strength of the British at sea exceptionally well.

These novels are the best of breed, bar none. If you've read the first and haven't read every single one of the series...well, I'll never love you, nor will any of the other thousands and thousands of fans. As a blue water sailor, I join the legions of other sailors who revere these books. It's all about those who "go down to the sea in ships", but with cannons and cutlasses. But if you're not a sailor you will nevertheless love these books because they create unforgettable characters who complexly evolve as the books move along in what is a continuing story full of danger, mystery, love, despair, honor-dishonor, failure and Phoenix-like success. Read these, you won't be sorry.

Patrick O'Brien never fails to thrill in the high sea adventures of Aubrey/Maturin. It is a shame that Hollywood only made one movie off of these books and that being Master and Commander. It could have been a great franchise and money maker with some effort put into it. I find all of O'Brian's novels in this series great reading with high adventure.

I think this series is one, if not, THE best that I have read. The books offer insights into history and particularly interesting details into the British Navy, how the politics worked, the mores, the physical details, and many, many similar things. I never thought I would get so hooked on something like this series. Read it, and please start from the first book, though they can be read individually and stand on their own. Reading them serially, though, adds insight. I am so sorry that I am coming to the end. Shame on O'Brian for not living forever and turning out these books as fast as I have time to read them.

My husband loves these books and reads them every night. He likes the full-bodied characters of captains and sailors at sea and the tough and interwoven lives they live. He told me the other night that it's about the life of a sea captain from a young shiphand, I believe, to an old sea captain throughout the years and volumes with many interesting tales and adventures. He'd be better at describing them, but I can say that my husband is very well-read and only enjoys books well-written.

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