In response to the interest of millions of Patrick OBrian fans, here is the final, partial installment of the Aubrey/Maturin series. Blue at the Mizzen (novel 20) ended with Jack Aubrey getting the news, in Chile, of his elevation to flag rank: Rear Admiral of the Blue Squadron, with orders to sail to the South Africa station. The next novel, unfinished and untitled at the time of the authors death, would have been the chronicle of that mission, and much else besides. The three chapters left on OBrians desk at the time of his death are presented here both in printed version—including his corrections to the typescript—and a facsimile of his manuscript, which goes several pages beyond the end of the typescript to include a duel between Stephen Maturin and an impertinent officer who is courting his fiancée. Of course we would rather have had the whole story; instead we have this proof that OBrians powers of observation, his humor, and his understanding of his characters were undiminished to the end.

My Personal Review:
I read the Aubrey/Maturin canon during the 90s, including the last few as they were published. Therefore, OBrians death in 2001 brought a sudden end to my travels with him. When 21 was published a few years later, I couldnt bring myself to embrace a reminder that there would be no more novels in the series. But, enough time has passed that I felt the time was right to read it.

21 offers a fascinating insight to OBrians writing process. The handwritten first draft is surprisingly well-developed, but undergoes revisions with the first typewritten draft, presented on the opposite page. A subsequent typewritten draft would have refined the prose further. The intriguing part is what is revealed in the handwritten draft. Some passages are fitfully written, with scratched out phrases and adjoining sections that clearly have intervals of time between them as evidenced by the change in handwriting. Other passages clearly flowed from his pen as long, uninterrupted, streams of inspiration.

This book is clearly only for the OBrian enthusiast. The prose lacks the crispness one normally associates with OBrian, which presumably would have been injected in the final draft. The book not only lacks a title, but only has about 3 chapters. The typewritten draft ends mid-sentence.
strikingly poignant end to one of the greatest bodies of work in English literature.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:

21: The Final Unfinished Voyage of Jack Aubrey (Aubrey/Maturin Series) - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!