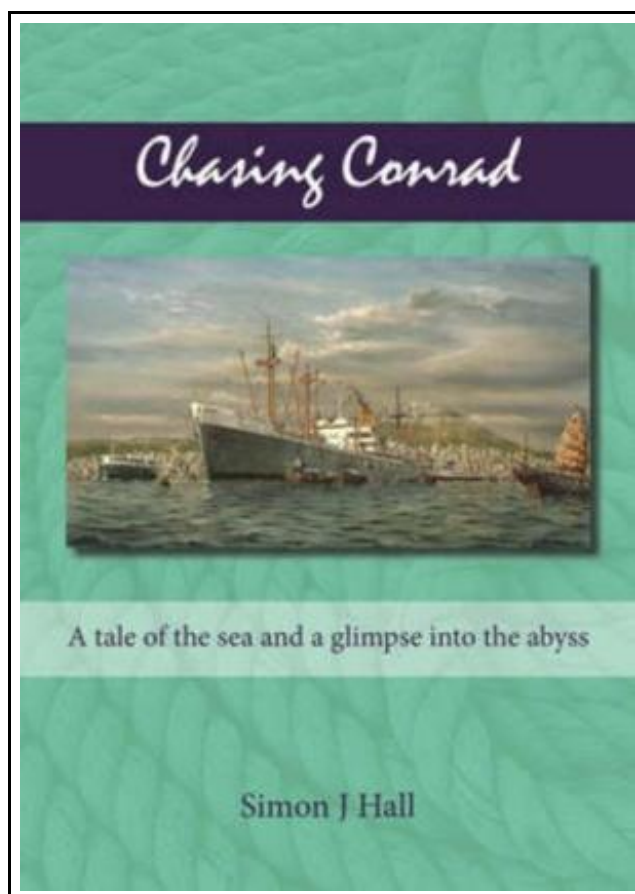


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CHASING CONRAD: A TALE OF THE SEA AND A GLIMPSE INTO THE ABYSS



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Whittles Publishing. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Chasing Conrad: A Tale of the Sea and a Glimpse into the Abyss, Simon J. Hall, Simon Hall's second book is set in the mid-1970s during the closing years of the golden age of British shipping, when cargo carriage at sea saw radical change and the romance of being at sea in old-style cargo ships came to an end. Hall's account is of five years during which he worked as a junior officer in the Far East and South Pacific. This is no ordinary memoir; the prose is vividly expressed, often shocking, often elegiac as evidenced by his description of a night watch in the Indian Ocean: alone on the bridge wing in the warm tropical night, I heard the wind sing through the stays as an Aeolian harp and I felt anointed by my good fortune. On loading rubber and timber in Sarawak he writes: The whole pace of life slowed, it felt as torpid as the idle Rajang river itself and we all slowed with it. Everything was so still, so unmoving, as if the whole world had lain down and gone to sleep. His descriptions of jaunts in forgotten parts of the world are strikingly expressed and there is added poignancy from the charting of Hall's decline into alcohol abuse, expressed in a way that is in turn both sad and shocking: I ordered another cold beer and lit another cigarette, then sat with the ghost of my past dreams while the afternoon died around us and we surveyed the wreckage of all my hopes. This is an important work that captures an age now vanished, written in a style too rarely encountered.



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