



Captive Paradise: A History of Hawaii

James L. Haley

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The most recent state to join the union, Hawaii is the only one to have once been a royal kingdom. After its "discovery" by Captain Cook in the late 18th Century, Hawaii was fought over by European powers determined to take advantage of its position as the crossroads of the Pacific. The arrival of the first missionaries marked the beginning of the struggle between a native culture with its ancient gods, sexual libertinism and rites of human sacrifice, and the rigid values of the Calvinists. While Hawaii's royal rulers adopted Christianity, they also fought to preserve their ancient ways. But the success of the ruthless American sugar barons sealed their fate and in 1893, the American Marines overthrew Lili'uokalani, the last queen of Hawaii.

James L. Haley's *Captive Paradise* is the story of King Kamehameha I, The Conqueror, who unified the islands through terror and bloodshed, but whose dynasty succumbed to inbreeding; of Gilded Age tycoons like Claus Spreckels who brilliantly outmaneuvered his competitors; of firebrand Lorrin Thurston, who was determined that Hawaii be ruled by whites; of President McKinley, who presided over the eventual annexation of the islands. Not since James Michener's classic novel *Hawaii* has there been such a vibrant and compelling portrait of an extraordinary place and its people.

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