



READER'S DIGEST
Condensed
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WEST WIND
TO HAWAII

ADVISE
AND CONSENT

THE MIRACLE
OF MERRIFORD

ACT ONE

FLIGHT
FROM ASHIYA





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Digest
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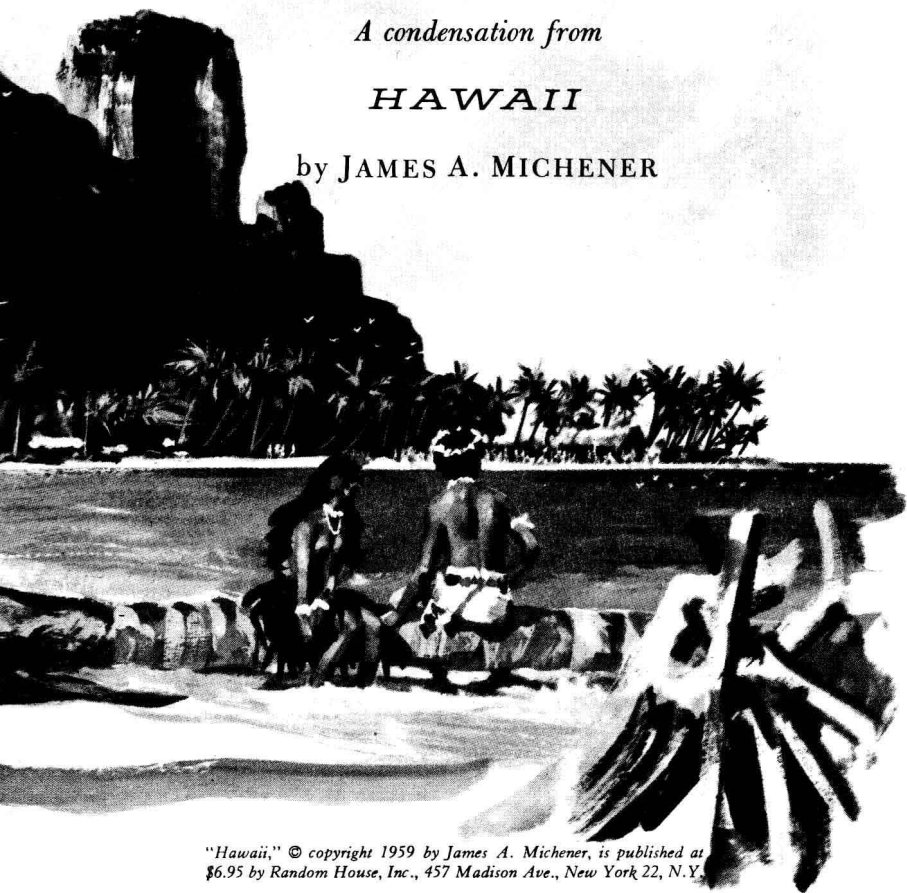
Reader's Digest
CONDENSED BOOKS

WEST WIND TO HAWAII

A condensation from

HAWAII

by JAMES A. MICHENER

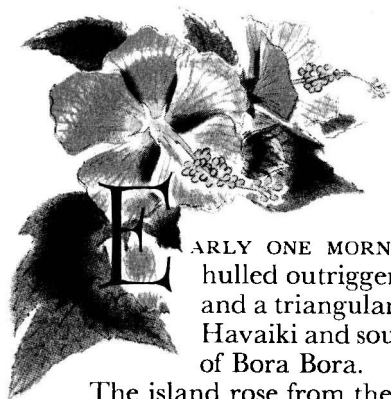


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FOR its discoverers, the lovely, legendary land that is our fiftieth state was the goal at the end of a heroic voyage. Sailing in a twin-hulled canoe, twice as far as Columbus and seven centuries before him, the men and women of Bora Bora were driven by a passion to worship their own gods in their own way.

In the volcanic island they called Havaiki they found both a hell and a paradise. Among the men were those who were lonely for the women they had been forced to leave behind. The women longed for the little children of the home island. Yet they all shared a joyousness in the rich, beautiful new land where the violence and bloodshed which were their heritage would become in time a far memory.

West Wind to Hawaii is an excerpt from James A. Michener's new epic novel, *Hawaii*, his most important work of fiction since he wrote the vastly popular *Tales of the South Pacific*.



EARLY ONE MORNING, in the year 817, a swift single-hulled outrigger canoe, sped along by sturdy paddlers and a triangular sail, swept across the open ocean from Havaiki and sought the solitary entrance to the lagoon of Bora Bora.

The island rose from the sea in sharp cliffs and mighty pinnacles of rock. It was so beautiful that it seemed impossible that it had arisen by chance; gods must have formed its deep-set bays and tree-rimmed shores of glistening sand. Around the entire island was hung a protecting necklace of coral on which wild ocean waves broke in fury, trying vainly to leap inside the placid green lagoon. It was an island of rare beauty—wild, impetuous, lovely Bora Bora.

On shore, from a towering rock, a lookout followed the progress of the urgent canoe with dread. He saw the steersman signal his sailors to drop sail, and watched the canoe pivot deftly to avoid crashing on the reef. With enviable skill the steersman headed his canoe toward the perilous opening in the coral wall.

"Now!" he shouted, and his paddlers worked feverishly, standing the canoe off from the rocks. There was a rush of water, a rising of huge waves, and a swift passionate surge of canoe and flashing paddles through the gap.

The instinctive dread which the lookout felt sped his feet as he rushed down steep paths leading to the king's residence, shouting for all to hear, "The High Priest is returning!" Women who heard the message drew closer to their men.

Dashing up to a grass house larger than its neighbors, the lookout fell to the ground, shouting, "The High Priest is in the lagoon!" A tall, brown-skinned young man, courtier to the king,

emerged in great agitation, and without waiting to adjust his ceremonial tapa robe went running toward the palace. Hurrying into the royal presence, he prostrated himself on the soft pandanus matting that covered the earthen floor, announcing with urgency, "The august one is about to land."

The man he addressed was a handsome, large-headed man of thirty-three with close-cropped hair and unusually wide-spaced, grave, wise eyes. If he experienced the same dread as his underlings, he masked it; nevertheless he moved with alacrity to the treasure room, where he donned an ankle-length robe of pounded tapa bark, throwing about his left shoulder a precious cordon made of yellow feathers, his badge of authority. He adjusted his feather-and-shell helmet; around his neck he placed a chain of shark's teeth. The tall courtier issued a signal, and drums along the shore began to throb in royal rhythms.

"We go to honor the High Priest," the king announced, while an impressive train of tanned warriors, naked to the waist and wrapped in brown tapa, formed behind him. "Hurry, hurry!" he urged them. "We must not be tardy."

Although everyone acknowledged that the king was supreme on Bora Bora, he had found it prudent never to be wanting in courtesies to the spiritual ruler of the island, especially since the requirements of the new god, Oro, were not yet clearly known. The king's father had underestimated the power of the new deity, and during a solemn convocation in the temple of Oro his high priest had suddenly pointed at him as one failing in reverence, and the king's brains had been clubbed in, his body dragged away as another human sacrifice to red Oro, the all-powerful.

But in spite of the king's care, when the procession left the palace the tall young courtier had to warn, "The august one already approaches the landing!" whereupon the king and all his retinue began to run, holding onto their various badges, presenting a ridiculous spectacle. As he ran, the king prayed softly, "If there is to be a convocation, O Gods of Bora Bora, spare me!"

Angry, muttering, damaged in pride, he reached the landing place a few moments before the canoe. The steersman brought it gently to rest, careful lest any untoward accident draw the priest's attention, for he knew what message the priest was bringing from the temple of Oro. On this day it behooved all men to be careful.

When the canoe was secured, the High Priest disembarked with

imperial dignity, his white-bark cape with its fringe of dog's teeth shining against his long, black hair. As he moved with his god-carved staff to meet the king, he genuflected slightly, as if to acknowledge the latter's supremacy. Then he waited grimly while King Tamatoa bowed low enough to impress all witnesses with the fact that power had somehow been mysteriously transferred from his hands into those of the priest. "Oh, blessed of the gods!" the king began. "What is the wish of Oro?"

The crowd held its breath in apprehension until the High Priest finally spoke: "A new temple is to be erected in Tahiti and we shall convene to consecrate the god who is to live in that temple."

No one gasped, lest he draw fatal attention to himself. Even Tamatoa himself, who was reasonably sure to be spared, felt his knees weaken while he waited for the dread details. Then in a hushed voice he asked, "When is the convocation?"

"Tomorrow!" the High Priest said sternly, and the king thought: "If the convocation is tomorrow, it must have been decided upon ten days ago! Else how could the news reach far Tahiti in time for their canoe to return to Havaiki tomorrow? Our High Priest must have been in secret consultation with the priests of Oro during all those ten days."

Finally Tamatoa asked, "How many men for Oro?"

"Eight," the priest replied, impersonally. Holding his staff before him, the gaunt dark man moved off toward his temple; then suddenly he whirled about and thrust his staff directly at the steersman who had brought him into the lagoon. "And this one shall be first!" he screamed.

"No! No!" the steersman pleaded, falling to his knees.

Implacably, the priest pointed the staff. "When the seas were upon us, this one prayed not to Oro for salvation but to Tane."

"Oh, no!" the sailor pleaded.

"I watched his lips," the priest said with awful finality. Attendants from the temple hauled off the quaking steersman. "And you!" the dreadful voice cried again, thrusting his staff at an unsuspecting watcher. "In the temple of Oro, on the holy day, your head nodded." Once more the attendants closed in, dragging the culprit away.

Solemnly the High Priest withdrew and Tamatoa was left with the miserable task of nominating six additional human sacrifices.

The aide whose tardiness had been the cause of the unseemly rush to the beach was first chosen; the lookout, blamed by the aide, was next. The other four would be taken from the slaves. This decided, the king strode back to the palace, while the tall courtier and the lookout, already pinioned by the priests, stood in limp amazement, appalled by the catastrophe in which each had so accidentally involved the other.

AS THE frightened crowd dispersed, King Tamatoa's brother, Teroro, stood bitter and silent in the shade of a breadfruit tree. He was taller than most, better muscled than any, and marked by a lean, insolent courage that no man could mistake. He had remained apart because he hated the High Priest, despised the new god Oro, and was revolted by the incessant demand for human sacrifice, and the High Priest, of course, had detected the young chief's absence from the welcoming throng, a breach of conformity which enraged him.

After the ceremony, Teroro's stately wife, a golden-skinned young woman with flowing hair that held banana blossoms, sat with him by the lagoon. "Teroro," she said, "I am afraid for you. You must not go to the convocation."

"Who else can command our canoe?" he asked impatiently. "I'm not afraid of the convocation, Marama. Besides, my brother may need my help. Without me events could go badly."

Marama, whose name meant the moon, all-seeing and compassionate, retreated to a different argument. "Last year," she said, "a woman from Havaiki confided to me that the priests there consider our High Priest the ablest of all. They plan to give him a position of prominence."

"I wish they would, and take him from this island."

"But they wouldn't dare do this as long as his own island is not completely won over. It seems to me that the High Priest will do everything possible in this convocation to prove to the priests of Havaiki that he is more devoted to Oro than they."

As often when the wise, moon-faced woman spoke, her husband began to pick up a thread of importance. "You think that, to impress others, the High Priest will sacrifice the king?"

"No, Teroro," Marama corrected. "It is you whom the High Priest suspects of disloyalty to Oro. Because you still worship Tane, it is your feet he will place upon the rainbow."

"Only in my heart do I worship Tane."

"But if I can read your heart, so can the priests."

His comment on this was forestalled by the summons of an agitated messenger. Teroro was wanted by the king.

THE PALACE was a large, low building, its roof of palm fronds held up by coconut-tree pillars carved with figures of gods. Rolled-up lengths of matting could be dropped from the eaves for secrecy or protection from rain. The principal room contained many signs of royalty: feather gods, carved shark's teeth, and huge *Tridacna* shells. All parts of the structure were held together by strands of golden-brown sennit, the marvelous island rope woven from coconut-palm fibers. Nearly two miles of it had been used in construction; wherever one piece of timber touched another, pliant golden sennit held the parts together. A man could sit in a room tied with sennit and revel in its intricate patterns the way a navigator studies stars at night or a child tirelessly watches waves on sand.

Teroro found Tamatoa deeply perturbed. "Will the canoe be ready by sunset?" the king asked.

"It will, but I hope you won't be on it."

"I am determined to go to this convocation," Tamatoa replied.

"Only evil can befall you," Teroro insisted.

The king rose from his mats and walked disconsolately to the palace entrance, from which he could see the majestic cliffs of Bora Bora and the sun-swept lagoon. At this moment the warrior-king Tamatoa was a symbol of overpowering authority to his younger brother; although Teroro wanted to grasp him by his arm and pull him down onto the mats for an honest conversation, he could never have brought himself to do so. The king was the instrumentality whereby the gods delivered mana—the spiritual sanctification of the heavens—to Bora Bora. Even to touch him or pass upon his shadow was to drain away some of that mana. So Teroro prostrated himself on the matting, crept to the king's feet, and whispered, "Sit with me, brother, and let us talk." And while the flies droned in morning heat, the two men talked.

They were a handsome pair, separated in age by six years. Their father had named his first son Tamatoa—the Warrior; and then when a younger brother was born he had reasoned: "How fortunate! When Tamatoa becomes king his brother can serve

him as high priest." And the younger child had been named Teroro—the Brain, the man who can divine complex things quickly. But so far he had not proved his name to be appropriate.

Tamatoa had developed into a classical island warrior; six times in his reign he had beaten back invaders from powerful Havaiki. Teroro, on the other hand, showed no signs of becoming a priest. Tall and wiry, with a handsome thin face, he had an impetuous temper and was slow to grasp abstract ideas. His love was navigation and the challenge of unknown seas.

"If I must be sacrificed to bring this island into harmony with new gods, then I will be sacrificed. But I am afraid it is for you the gods will send the rainbow," Tamatoa whispered.

"We have stood against them in the past, we can do so again."

"In the past they had canoes and spears. Now they have plans and plots. How has the High Priest succeeded in manipulating our people so successfully?"

"When our people see many sacrifices they know the gods listen. It makes the island seem safer."

The king studied his brother. "Would it not be possible for you to accept their new god?" he asked cautiously.

"Impossible," Teroro said flatly. "I was born with the blessing of Tane. My father died defending Tane, and his father before him. I will never consider another god."

The king breathed deeply. "Those are my thoughts, too. But I am afraid the High Priest will destroy us with his tricks."

"I'll trick *him*!" Teroro cried in frustration. "When the club falls, I shall kill the High Priest. I will rage through all Havaiki."

"As I thought!" the king cried sharply. "You have a plan to riot. Oh, Teroro, it will accomplish nothing. That is why you must not attend this convocation."

Teroro spoke humbly yet stubbornly: "Beloved brother, that is why I must go. I swore to our father that I would protect you. But I will give you my promise not to riot unless they strike you."

He walked out into the glorious high noon of Bora Bora. The sun filtered through palm fronds and breadfruit leaves, making soft patterns in the dust. Naked children called back and forth, and fishermen hauled their canoes onto the beach. Through the beautiful and dusty heat Teroro moved slowly to a long shed, under which *Wait-for-the-West-Wind*, the mammoth ceremonial canoe of Bora Bora, rested.

It was the swiftest ship the world at that time had ever known, capable of doing thirty knots in bursts, ten knots hour after hour for days at a time; a twin-hulled craft seventy-nine feet long, with tiered sterns twenty-two feet high and a solid platform slung across the hulls on which forty men could ride, with pigs and pandanus and water stowed safely in the hidden innards.

"Wait for the west wind," the men who built the canoe had advised, "for it blows strong and sure from the heart of the hurricane." The north wind cannot be depended upon, and the east wind is no treasure, for it blows constantly, and the south wind brings nothing but irritating minor storms. Wait for the west wind! It blows from the heart of the hurricane. It is a wind to match this great canoe.

BY NIGHTFALL *Wait-for-the-West-Wind* was in the water and ready. The upswept sterns were decorated with flowers and pennants of yellow tapa. The permanent platform which held the two hulls together was covered with polished planks. At the forward end stood an ultra-sacred grass-thatched temple, toward which a solemn procession of priests now moved in dread silence.

The High Priest, a skullcap of red feathers on his hair, proceeded to the grass temple and paused, at which all Bora Borans, king and slave alike, fell to the ground and hid their faces, for what was about to occur was too sacred for even a king to behold.

The statue of Oro himself, woven of sennit and with sea shells as eyes, was about to be placed inside the temple for its journey to Havaiki. From his robes the High Priest produced a wrapping of ti leaves, which hid the god, and, holding the bundle high above him, he prayed in a terrifying voice, then kneeled and placed the god inside the temple. He moved back, struck the canoe with his staff and cried, "*Wait-for-the-West-Wind*, take thy god safely to Havaiki!"

The prostrate crowd rose silently, and the young chiefs who would paddle the canoe leaped into the two hulls. Next the seers of the island, old men of wisdom, stepped on board wearing solemn brown tapa and skullcaps edged with dog's teeth. Teroro, wearing a warrior's helmet of feathers and shark's teeth, took his place in the prow, while the king, in precious yellow robes which covered his ankles, stood amidships. Then the High Priest announced that he was ready to accept the sacrifices.

Servants of Oro came forth with palm fronds which they spread in careful patterns, aft of the temple, and on these were laid strange gifts: a fish from the lagoon, a shark caught at sea, a turtle taken on a special island, and a pig that had from birth been dedicated to Oro. Then, at the last moment, priests led forth the eight human sacrifices, and the people of Bora Bora, in awful silence, watched their neighbors depart for the last time.

Teroro, raising his paddle, gave the canoe a mighty shove that sent it into the lagoon. It did not spring lightly toward the reef as usual, but moved reluctantly. By the time the stars had risen, it had covered only a small portion of its gloomy journey to Havaiki.

When the constellation which astronomers in other parts of the world had named the Lion was rising in the east, the seers agreed that the time was near. The High Priest confirmed the fact that the red-tipped hour of dawn, sacred to Oro, was at hand. He nodded, and a huge, slack-headed drum was struck in slow rhythm, sending its cry far out to sea.

The rest of the world was silent. Even the lapping waves and birds who customarily cried at dawn ceased their murmuring at the approach of dread Oro. There was only the drum, until, as night paled and red streamers rose in the east, Teroro caught the sound of another drum, and then a third, far in the distance. The canoes, still invisible to one another, were beginning to assemble for the solemn procession into the channel of Havaiki.

The men in *Wait-for-the-West-Wind* had varied thoughts as they approached the landing. The High Priest reasoned that, considering Bora Bora's stupid persistence in allegiance to Tane, the more sacrifices to Oro the better. "Weed them out, root and branch," he muttered to himself. "We must impress the islands."

King Tamatoa's thoughts were different. He looked upon sacrifices as the simplest way of obtaining a steady flow of mana, but he felt considerable uneasiness over their number, for Bora Bora was not a large island. The king wondered: "Is this sudden conversion to Oro a device by the wise men of Havaiki whereby they can depopulate my island?"

Teroro saw things more simply. He was outraged. The death of slaves he could condone. But to execute the best fighters on Bora Bora was wrong and disastrous.

The convocation was planned to last three days, during which assemblies of priests took place in an extensive, roofless rock tem-