

Cooking with Romance, Revenge and Recipes

Review by Clark Issacs

Captain Cooked

Author: S. P. Grogan

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S.P. Grogan has done it again! Creating a vibrant epicurean delight in “*Captain Cooked*,” his latest mystery, which allows you to taste your culinary arts in exploring the dishes of our 50th state, and at the same time have an in-depth look into the behind-the-scenes of modern Hawaii.

This book contains many recipes which tantalize your taste buds and follows the theme of a TV food chef who visits the land of enchantment to participate as one of the judges in a luau contest. His daughter is described as a newbie in the film world and comes along to record his involvement for the television show which features his prowess as a foodie and author of a New York Times best seller.

An outstanding feature of this novel is how well author Grogan was able to express the feelings and thoughts of the heroine, Madison Merlot Dayne. This travelogue-murder mystery is seen through her eyes. Her exploits abound on the island of Hawaii, known as the Big Island. Scuba diving, boating, restaurant hopping, and stumbling onto a murder scene will keep attentive readers guessing about what episode will tantalize her travails next. Many of the romantic inclinations this young woman has are expressed in a tastefully descriptive style without being smutty, but at the same time is fairly steamy. This is an adult book, but the audience will not be offended by its language or scenarios.

Corporate intrigue, wealthy investors, and native Hawaiians intermingle to create motives which cast aspersions upon each group that is introduced. Could this next set of characters be the killer(s)? This question permeates Madison Dayne’s thoughts constantly. However, her

romantic inclinations commence at the start and continue throughout. She has flirtatious involvements with several characters which might seem to be unrequited love, but there is always the possibility dangling before her that the next one will be her soul mate.

As in Grogan's last book "Vegas Die," there is a reward awaiting his audience for the discovery of a hidden item. \$5,000 has been posted as a bounty for the finding of a shark-toothed war club hidden on the Big Island and the clues are hidden in the book and requires the use of GPS. The author's advice is, "Read first as a mystery, and then go back looking for clues." Grogan is not the first to establish a treasure hunt on the Big Island as there are 140 GPS caches hidden by others for treasure hunters to claim.

Another outstanding feature is that \$.25 cents from the sale of each book will be donated to "The Food Basket," Hawaii Island's Food Bank program. A wonderful gesture for sure!

The use of local idiom and culture in this book brings Aloha a bit closer to us mainlanders. Hawaii's State Motto: "Ua mau ke ea o ka aina I ka pono" – *The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness*. This motto truly encapsulates the theme of "Captain Cooked" and is why this book is highly recommended.

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Clark Isaacs is an accomplished book critic who is published in local newspapers and national book review lists. He also is a faculty member of Mohave Community College in Kingman Arizona.

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