

The background is a vibrant tropical collage. At the top, there are large green palm fronds and a yellow and orange flower. To the right, a pink and orange flower is visible. In the bottom left, a pineapple drink is featured with a red straw, a yellow straw, a green umbrella, and various fruits like strawberries, blueberries, and an orange slice. The text is centered over this background.

DON HULA

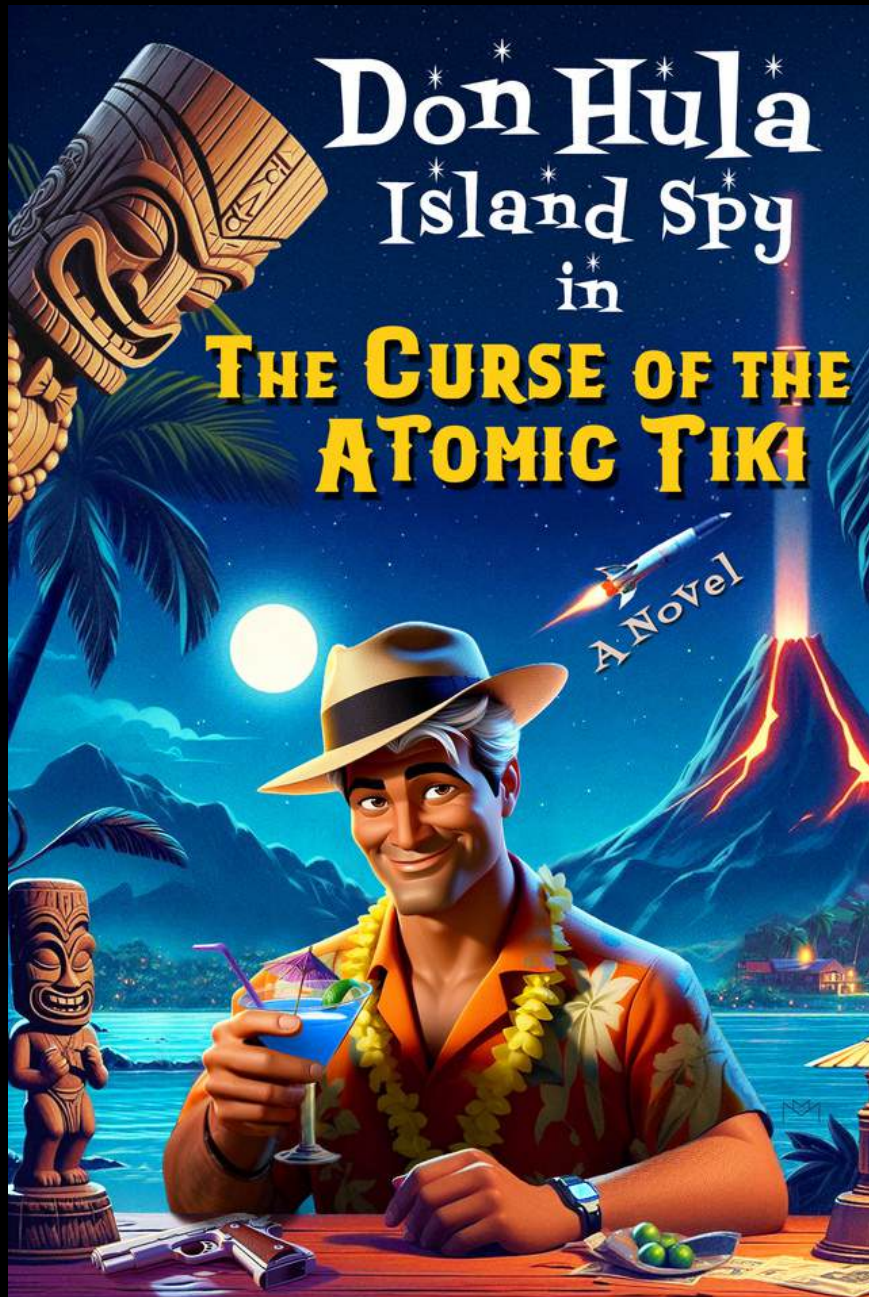
Island Spy

**Saving the World
One Mai Tai at a Time**

*Mike
McGee*

With Illustrations

About the Novel



Mike McGee / with Illustrations

Tropical drinks,
Cold War secrets,
and temperamental Tikis.
Welcome to a wonderful,
crazy paradise.

It's 1959. Burned-out spy Don Hula just wants to fade into his tropical island hideaway and forget the world. But when bizarre phenomena begin shaking up a remote chain of South Pacific islands—think underground labs, South Seas assassins, and neighborhood Tikis with existential angst—Hula's forced back into the game for the weirdest, most dangerous mission of his career.

A kaleidoscopic mash-up of vintage spy thrillers and Tiki bar fun, “Don Hula, Island Spy, in The Curse of the Atomic Tiki” is a smart, wild, and hilarious adventure with a big heart and even bigger explosions. Perfect for fans of Doctor Who, Richard Osman, and Mystery Science Theater 3000, this breezy, offbeat spy caper blends humor, heart, and high-stakes absurdity in a retro world where nothing is as it seems—and where the Tikis have lots to say about it.

The novel includes dozens of full-color illustrations, plus cocktail recipes and other fun extras!

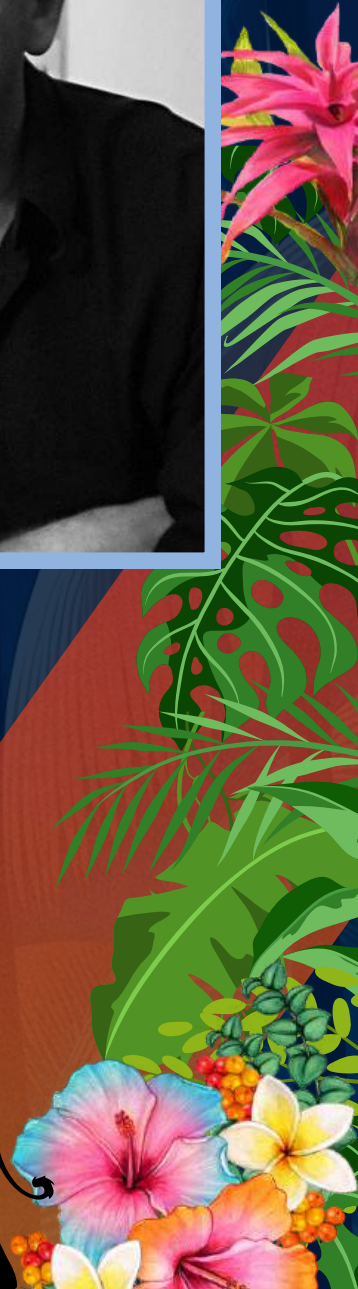
The Author, This Guy

Mike McGee



Over the past 20 years, Mike's lived and worked in various areas of the world, from Switzerland to China to Brazil, writing and podcasting about ventures such as dancing with geishas in Japan, rappelling through underground waterfalls in New Zealand, and working as an elephant *mahout* (trainer/caretaker) in the jungles of Thailand—in this last endeavor being paired with an extremely intelligent elephant who was often very, very naughty.

He's a Gold Award Winner for the Lowell Thomas Travel Book of the Year, is recipient of the Best Book Award at the Indie Book Awards, and wrote, produced, and directed a series of comedy sci-fi/fantasy audiodramas that aired on radio stations in the US and Canada, and on an international satellite network. He's also a seasoned graphic designer (20+ years), creating artwork for other authors, and for his own audio and literary endeavors.



5 Things to Know About Don Hula, Island Spy, in The Curse of the Atomic Tiki

1

As much as the novel is a send-up of 1960s spy tropes, it's also a satire of old "Polynesian pulp" tales from the 1940s and '50s, and their sometimes questionable depiction of islanders—like the "restless natives" thing and all those sensual island temptresses.

The Novel also Includes:

2

30 Full-Color Illustrations



3

Classic Tropical
Cocktail Recipes
to Impress Your
Friends and
Neighbors!

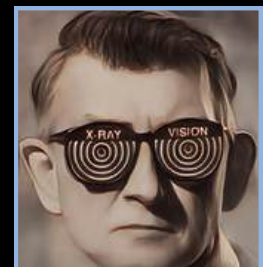


4



Interactive Text and Stories

5



Well-Intentioned Attempts at Comedy
Okay, so maybe they don't always hit the mark,
but hey, we tried.

“History has a way of creeping up on you.”

Chapter 1 (book excerpt, abridged)

Don*Hula*
Island Spy

On the faraway island of Tanga Tua, in the balmiest, most exotic corner of the South Pacific, Don Hula—ex-spy and “world escapee,” as he liked to think himself—lay stretched out in a hammock in a small jungle clearing. It was late afternoon, and the palm trees and patches of colorful flowers nearby were relaxing with him.

Among his other interests, Hula, in his forties, considered himself a dabbler in atomic things: small, peculiar devices. It was just a quirky hobby, really, and not *too* horribly dangerous, but it’s what passed as fun for him here, especially on quieter nights when the rest of the island had gone to sleep.

Occasionally, his odd little creations even came in handy on various outings requested of him by Tanga Tua’s local chieftain. All part of an arrangement that allowed Hula to live on the island in peace. And he was *all for* peace—he’d had more than his fill of everything else *but that* the past twenty years.

At the moment, he was simply trying to indulge in a nap—one overdue by years, as far as he was concerned, given his frantic former life. He sank deeper into his hammock—detached, cool: a chilled tropical cocktail perspiring in the sun.

Speaking of which...Hula reached for one of his own tiki-themed concoctions on the table beside him. Took a sip.

That was number one on his new List of Rules since he’d arrived on Tanga Tua: “Always keep a cocktail handy.” Did wonders for his work ethic...and his worries.

The bushes rustled.

*Uh-oh...*He sighed, very quietly. *Couldn’t he even sip a cocktail in peace?*

Hula kept his eyes closed, hat down over his brow, ears pricked up.

Someone—or *something*—was headed his way. And coming in slowly.

This brought up rule number two: “Always keep something *lethal* handy, too.” History has a way of creeping up on you.

He stealthily gripped the Beretta 418 Panther in his pocket.

When the intruder got to within about four yards, Hula pulled his gun. He nudged his trilby up to see who or what he was up against.

There was a tsk sound. “That is sooo uncivilized,” he heard a familiar voice say. “Anyone else would simply say hello.”

Akamu, the slim son of the island’s chieftain, Loto, stood before Hula, dressed in simple shorts and shirt. His thick black hair was lopsidedly layered on one side of his head, as if a little library had toppled over. His arms were crossed in disappointment. Pretty much the standard look for Akamu. A very old twenty-two, Akamu was a fretful soul who looked out of sorts in most every situation he found himself in. Despite his exasperated nature, Hula enjoyed his company. They saw the world in the same disaffected way. Plus, it was always fun to try and get a rise out of him.

“Excuse me,” Hula said, a gleam in his eye, “but *you’re* the one sneaking up on people.”

“That was not sneaking. I am offended to the core. My pop would have my hide for sneaking, or tippy-toeing, or ‘creeping.’” He used quote fingers for that last one. “No one on Tanga Tua does ‘sneaking’—unless it’s to get past my mom. Like my pop does.”

Hula pocketed his gun. “Hmm, methinks the chief’s royal brood doth protest too much.”

“First, *rude* gunplay, and now bastardizing the bard. I’m not sure which I find more contemptible. I do hope you’re proud of yourself.”

Hula chuckled.

“Yes, I can see you are,” Akamu said. “So, did you learn these splendid manners from your family, or did you have to go to some juvie school in the US for it?”

“Spy school, thank you. Undercover Class of ’38.” Hula grinned. “I majored in Misinformation. With a minor in Government Overthrow.”

“You’re probably telling the truth, aren’t you?” Akamu said, shaking his head. Hula let him keep guessing. But it *was* true.

“Well, I attend IPU—Island Polytechnic University,” Akamu said, “over on Hana Nui, land of lazy volcanoes, and they teach us to respect the classics, even the Western ones. No wonder your types are constantly bumping chests over dopey things like who has the bigger bomb. How stupid. I *would* say something more vulgar, but this *is* the 1950s.”

Hula looked at his atomic wristwatch, mostly to show he was bored. “And your reason for ruining my previously *pleasant* afternoon is because...?”

“Big Pop Daddy wants a word with you.”

“*Right now*? Can’t I at least finish my cocktail?”

“Look, it’s...well, it’s important,” Akamu said, showing real concern now.

Hula gave in with a sad little sigh, head dropping.

“And you might want to change first, too,” Akamu added. “For everybody’s sake.”

“Oh, this again.”

“It’s not my fault you have the *worst* fashion taste. It’s legendary on Tanga Tua. Look at this,” he said, pointing at the hurricane of colors and patterns covering Hula. “Flowered *shirts* should never be worn with flowered *shorts*. That goes double for floral-print *hats*.” He gestured to Hula’s garish trilby. “What corner of hell did you find *that* in? You look like a crayon box exploded.”

“I think what I’m wearing is quite stylish, actually. Some might even say trailblazing,” Hula said, putting on fake airs.

Akamu just stared at him. “Look, whatever this evil ‘fashion statement’ is you’re trying to pioneer for the Nazis and the Third Reich or whoever, it’s just painful. Those are people’s eyes you’re messing with.”

Hula couldn’t keep from laughing.

“Yes,” Akamu said, “it’s all *funny* and fun and games till someone’s retinas blow out.”

“Fine,” Hula replied. “But the hat stays.” He grabbed a pair of khaki pants and put them on, giving Akamu more grief as payback. “So your dad sent you as messenger boy to come get me? That’s a bit beneath you, isn’t it, what with all that royal blood zipping around in there looking down on other people’s blood? Not to mention their perfectly reasonable clothing choices.”

“I do not know *why* I am friends with you...Now, if you’re through with this completely uncalled-for cheekiness, I suggest we go see Pop.”

“That wasn’t uncalled for,” Hula said, all innocent.

Akamu huffed. “And here you even pulled a gun on me.”

“Cuz you were sneaking,” Hula said with a chuckle.

And off they went.

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Don Hula
Island Spy

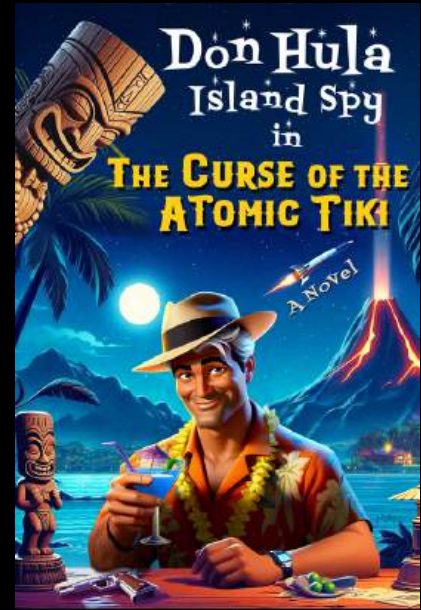


Don Hula, Island Spy, in The Curse of the Atomic Tiki

Book Blurb

It's 1959. Burned-out spy Don Hula just wants to fade into his tropical island hideaway and forget the world. But when bizarre phenomena begin shaking up a remote chain of South Pacific islands, Hula's forced back into the game for the weirdest, most dangerous mission of his career, facing South Seas assassins, criminal monkeys, diabolical ukuleles, and temperamental Tikis who keep hinting that the world's about to end . . . probably around Thursday. It's all more than a poor ex-agent can possibly handle.

Spy-fi for the Fun at Heart



Mike McGee / with Illustrations

**Includes Dozens of
Full-Color Illustrations,
Plus Cocktail Recipes
and Other Fun Features!**

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Interview Questions

What inspired you to write a novel like *Don Hula*, *Island Spy*, which doesn't fit into the usual genres or cross-genres today?

As a reader, I'm always looking for something different, that's a mix of genres, that's fresh and unusual and plays with the form. It's like a new way of seeing and experiencing life. Plus, I do really love old films and TV shows from the 1960s, and this is kind of a goofy homage to them. They had a lot more charm and innocence about them, and they weren't afraid to be silly, or make fun of themselves. There's a lot of self-deprecation in *Don Hula*, too, plus the occasional breaking of the fourth wall, which is always fun.

The novel constitutes a brand-new subgenre, something called Tiki Spy-fi. What is that?

Tiki Spy-fi is a mix of vintage spy thrillers with the colorful escapism of Tiki bars and the Tiki culture itself – all of it set in a tropical paradise. And it's the fun of the Tiki culture, coupled with the *danger* of the spy lifestyle, that gives the book its lovely romp of light and dark, serious and silly – with lots of rum and late-night luaus thrown in to spice things up.

You said you feel that novels of this type are sorely needed these days. How so?

The world's on fire right now. Sometimes literally. We've been through so much lately. I'm often desperate to find things that *aren't* angst-ridden, nightmarish, highly dysfunctional stories, TV shows, films, you name it. Ha! Why make our incredibly stressed-out lives even more incredibly stressed out? I want something to look forward to, that gives me a reason to get out of bed in the morning, that gives me hope and joy and reminds me of how much fun life can be. I really miss that. That's truly why I wrote this: for me and so many of my friends.

Why has Tiki culture reemerged so strongly after disappearing for 30 years?

I think the resurgence of Tiki culture, which is *very* loosely based on Polynesian and other South Seas cultures, has a lot to do with Tiki culture's fun and escapist nature. It's a way of getting away from it all. Anyone who's ever gone to a Tiki bar knows it's immersive, like entering another world. It has its own faux tropical surroundings, its own music (everything from *exotica* to the Rat Pack), its own whimsical tongue-in-cheek art, and of course its colorful drinks that are sometimes a little party in themselves. And that's one of the things about Tiki culture: it knows it's silly, and rather ridiculous, and revels in it.

You've lived and worked in many countries, often for months or years at a time. How were you able to do this, and did it help you write *Don Hula*, *Island Spy*?

I was able to work remotely very early on, many years before COVID forced us to do so – which sometimes wasn't the easiest, say, when you were out in the Jordanian desert hobnobbing with camels. Plus, back when I started doing it, getting access to the internet could be pretty sketchy even in urban areas. But it allowed me to work on my laptop as I traveled, and learn about the people wherever I stayed – my friends – and what was important to them. This, in turn, taught me about *me* and *my* home. And all those experiences informed my writing when it came to *Don Hula* and other stories. Travel may be the best teacher in the world.

Music is a big part of the novel, too. Something called *exotica*, which has a fervent underground following. What is it exactly, and who are its most well-known performers?

Exotica music can be kitschy or beautiful or crazy. Sometimes all three. And it might include wild animal sounds and unusual instruments like Burmese gongs, bamboo sticks, Polynesian instruments. Most of the tunes are little atmospheric tone poems that try to give you a feeling, no matter how cliché or outlandish they might be, of what it's like to live in "exotic" far-away lands, whether it be a tropical island, the Arabian desert, the Far East, or Africa – places that most Americans, especially back in the '50s and '60s, just didn't have the ability to visit. *Exotica*'s most famous performers were people like Martin Denny, Les Baxter, Yma Sumac, and the showman supreme, Esquivel.



Thank
you

from

Don Hula
Island Spy