



## Black Sands

*Colleen Coble*

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## **Black Sands** Colleen Coble

**As a volcano on Hawaii begins to rumble, sudden, inexplicable tragedies bring an unlikely couple together.**

Annie Tagama has always been content to bask in the glow of her brother and sister and to quietly assist her father in his volcano research. Annie has a secret crush on Mano Ohana, though he's never noticed her. Her devotion turns to disdain after a mistake by Mano kills her beloved brother.

But when her younger sister goes missing, she's forced to turn to her former love, now her sworn enemy, for help.

Mano Ohana made a fateful mistake that cold night. A mistake that probably cost the life of his best friend, Tomi Tagama. But the night before he is to bring Tomi's belongings to his family, Mano discovers his friend is still alive--but he's in serious danger. Worse, the danger threatens to spill over to the rest of the Tagama family--and the entire Hawaiian islands.

## **Black Sands Details**

Date : Published November 10th 2005 by Thomas Nelson

ISBN :

Author : Colleen Coble

Format : Kindle Edition 303 pages

Genre : Christian Fiction, Mystery, Romance, Christian, Fiction, Suspense, Christian Romance, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Romantic Suspense, Adventure

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## From Reader Review Black Sands for online ebook

### Debbie says

I really liked this book. I liked the character, Annie, a volcanologist in Hawaii that uses dolphins to find evidence of upcoming eruptions. I liked the mystery. I liked the cute mongoose sidekick, Winston. I liked the romance build up between Annie and Mano, the Navy guy who was dumped by her much prettier, younger sister. The ancient religious cult in town and the "wow, I didn't see that coming" moments made it fun to read. What annoyed me was that the author, for some reason, wanted this to be a "Christian" novel and had random paragraphs where the main character decided to read her Bible for inspiration or a friend would suggest "letting God be the lead in your life." Although I don't disagree with the sentiments, they really had no place in this novel, felt forced, and didn't add anything to it besides minor annoyance to the reader. That is why I gave this 3 instead of 4 stars.

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### Lorraine says

**SUMMARY:** A brainy—and perpetually single—volcanologist, Annie Tagama works alongside her father at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. But despite her pedigree, Annie has lost her passion for volcanology. She's quietly grieving the mysterious loss of her brother in the Middle East. When Annie discovers that her brother might still be alive—and in trouble—she shakes off her malaise and joins forces with Mano Oana, the unnervingly handsome family friend she had always blamed for her brother's death. As Annie and Mano investigate—and find that they have a lot more in common than tragedy—an evil force gathers strength on the main island. An ancient cult has reemerged—and Annie's little sister is somehow involved. As the old religion bubbles to the surface like lava, the old practices are not far behind . . . including human sacrifice. Can Annie and Mano find her brother and save her family from destruction? Or will the ancient evil smother them all in an earth-shattering eruption?

**REVIEW:** Once again Colleen Coble builds a suspense-filled book with lots of twists and turns that kept me guessing until almost the very end. This is Book 2 in the Aloha Reef series and could be read as a stand alone although Mano as well as his family will be more familiar if you have read Book 1 . Also you will know more about Nani the dolphin. I really liked how Annie developed throughout this story gaining in faith and self-confidence. Mano was also well developed as he learned how to deal with a health issue that had definitely thrown him a curve. In addition, I like how Coble includes a romance but it is not the main focus of the story but rather a thread that weaves itself through the main plot. Coble's research into the vulcanology of the islands and her descriptions were very well done and made me feel as though I was walking through the lava beds with Annie and then Mano. The ending was incredible and this could easily be made into a great suspense film. Can't wait to read Book 3 which I already have.

**FAVORITE QUOTES:** "You've lost your vision and can't see the forest for the trees. You're always going to feel lost until you put God back at the center. He has to be the core equation."

"When something else is in God's place, nothing comes out right."

"A real man isn't looking for an ornament but a partner to love."

"God wants to be the most important thing in our lives. He wants to be our first, passion, our first thought in the morning. He wants to be what gives our life purpose."

## Rachel says

This book is the second novel in a Christian suspense and romance series called The Aloha Reef series, as it is set in Hawaii, and, in addition to that, the books all have at least some connection to the sea, shown either through diving, normal swimming, or boating. So, in this book, the main character is Annie, a volcanologist, who has a history with Mano Oana, Kaia's brother, and we get to know her family and her story, which ends happily despite a lot of danger and craziness along the way. Anyhow, I thought the book was well-written and entertaining, and the twists and turns of the plot due to the element of suspense/mystery were quite fun, and I also loved the characters in the book and thought they were portrayed well. It has certainly earned its place on my favorites' list.

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## Cara says

Colleen Coble takes several subplots with unique characters and intertwines them to create an amazing story! The book reads and feels authentic as you follow the characters through a tropical paradise that comes alive. With complex and relateable characters that you'll connect with, and a wonderful message of leaning on God, Coble has penned another amazing read!

5 stars for the second book in the Aloha Reef series!

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## Annie Beth says

As in all of the books, it showed an absolutely beautiful way of two people discover God and fall in love in a breathtaking way. An absolute must read for any Christian girl who like romance but not the gross inappropriate stuff in "teen" reads that aren't "teen" at all.

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## Tammy says

Another great story by Colleen Coble. She does a great job keeping the reader guessing throughout the story. Coble writes in such a way that makes you question who you think the antagonist is. I did feel like the story of Noah and Jillian needed a little bit more information, but it didn't detract from my enjoyment of the book.

I really enjoy the location of this series. Although I've never been to the Hawaiian Islands, I feel like I'm getting a small taste of what it is like. I'm looking forward to reading her next book in this series.

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## Shannah Mauney says

This is another FANTASTIC book by Colleen Coble! I am seriously never disappointed in her works. Just as with the first book in the series, *Distant Echoes*, this book grabbed me and didn't let me go until the end! View my full review here.

### **Kav says**

An intense and riveting page-turner. Complicated family dynamics paired with a difficult romance kept me reeling -- never mind the twisty turny plot and parade of intriguing characters that might -- or might not -- be motivated by evil intent. This is Colleen Coble at her gnarliest. :-) Throw away your armchair sleuth manual and just sit back and enjoy the tumultuous ride!

This is book 2 in the Aloha Reef series but it reads fine as a standalone. Though if you have read the first book you'll be happy to reacquaint yourself with some familiar faces in this one.

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### **Batgirl13 says**

This was a birthday gift and the description sounded right up my alley. Coble did get the volcanology in the book correct which made it much more of a pleasure to read than most fiction books with volcanoes involved. There was some good information about Hawaiian volcanoes in the book. The central mystery was pretty fast paced with a lot of twists and turns. I did figure about halfway through that someone in the book was involved but I was not sure how until the very end. The cult aspect of the book seemed a bit distracting overall and I am still not totally sure how it all fit in with the ending. The romance (definitely secondary to the mystery in this book) felt a bit forced at times but in the end was pretty sweet. A few things with the dolphins seemed far-fetched but I am no biologist and they may indeed be possible. I might check out others from her in the future.

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### **Sarah says**

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### **Kw says**

Thoroughly enjoyable. Interesting information about the study of volcanoes, and more on Hawaiian history and culture. Loved the story.

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### **Jen says**

A much stronger story. This one came together much more easily and seamlessly.

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### **Caryl says**

I was immediately pulled into the story. The twists and turns kept me turning the pages. This book is a must

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read.

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## **Kathy says**

Setting: Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park; Hawai'i Volcanoes Observatory/Jagger Museum/ her office; rain forest & cabin; Tagama family owned hundred-acre compound, kid's clubhouse; heiau – Hawaiian temple; Aloha Shores – no running water/sewers – hippies lived there; Loihi – ocean lava bed; Puuhonua o Honaunau – Place of Refuge; Shark Head Bar in Na'alehu;

Characters:

dolphin and her trainer make an appearance : )

Annie Tagama: volcanologist; stressed; lost mother and brother, and trying to keep her father okay, and to keep the house, and keep up the finances (they don't have enough money), etc; at work, the ledge she was on broke, and she landed in lava, burning her feet and ankles – and though healed, she limps, she has scars, she is afraid;

Wilson: mongoose that she rescued – her pet; the bright spot in her life; her protector;

Mano Oana: family friend; served with her brother Tomiko, who died in service to his country – and Annie blamed Mano; was on a mission with Tomi, the mission went bad; explosion; remembered pulling Tomi through the water, but then blacked out; found out he was having a diabetic attack, and now is working at managing it; on medical leave from service, when he got a call from Tomi (whom all thought was dead), and told to return home, and give his bank book to his sister;

Tomiko "Tomi": hmmm Tomi... undercover, got in too deep with the middle eastern bad honcho's daughter, who was also trying to get info from him; he gave her some incidental army secrets, he deposited a million dollars into his account, he tried to get her smuggled out to freedom, he died rather than face treason; but now the daughter wants his help again... and bad guys on Hawaii want the money... and he's hiding still;

Edega Tagama: dad; volcanologist; lost without the balance of his wife; leaving the day to day running of the household and land to his daughter, he is hiding/ amercing himself in a redundant volcano study;

Monica Rogers: lives in Aloha Shores; works with Annie, but is a pain in the behind;

Fawn Trenton: Annie's best friend; an encourager; prays for her;

Leilani Tagama: Annie's younger, flighty, nothing to do with volcanoes sister; she's missing; kidnapped, drugged, being held, ultimately as a sacrifice to Gina's vengeance – but to look like a cult sacrifice;

Gina Sarris: her boss; the wife and mother of 2 people who had died in a diving accident that had been piloted by her brother; she's out for revenge... and pretends to be dating Edega, and understanding to Annie... but...

Jullian Sommers: abandoned by husband, who stole her research, published it with mis-information, minimizing the probability of an eruption; her 8 year old daughter Heidi;

Noah Sommers: gambling debts prompted him to submit to guys who want a report that will keep the their development of Aloha Shores and gambling establishment moving forward... and he stole his wife's

research, and left her for shame...

Summary:

Annie and Mano – drawn together as they try to find her sister, find her brother... protect the island... overcome her fear... drawn together... find love

Memorable scenes:

“His name meant “shark” and it had never seemed more apt than this minute. He could destroy the even tenor of her life as easily as a great white could thrash a seal.”

“Without her mother’s attention, weeds had choked the path to the koi fish pond in much the same way that the family’s cares had begun to strangle Annie. The bonsai had lost its shape, too, just as her family no longer resembled the perfect unit it had once been.”

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### **Beth says**

Some parts were interesting -- the science group in Hawaii, Annie's slowly evolving life with her family, some were romance/mystery short on common sense (Tomi's plot with the Iranians, Mano's detective techniques, the final scene with the bad guy). And the religion stuff didn't feel very organic -- every now and again the author with suddenly remember she had meant to write a Christian book and the characters would suddenly talk about their relationship with the Lord or whip out a bible, but it didn't seem to really affect how they made decisions or what they wanted from their lives. Maybe it's just a more Protestant way to do religion?

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