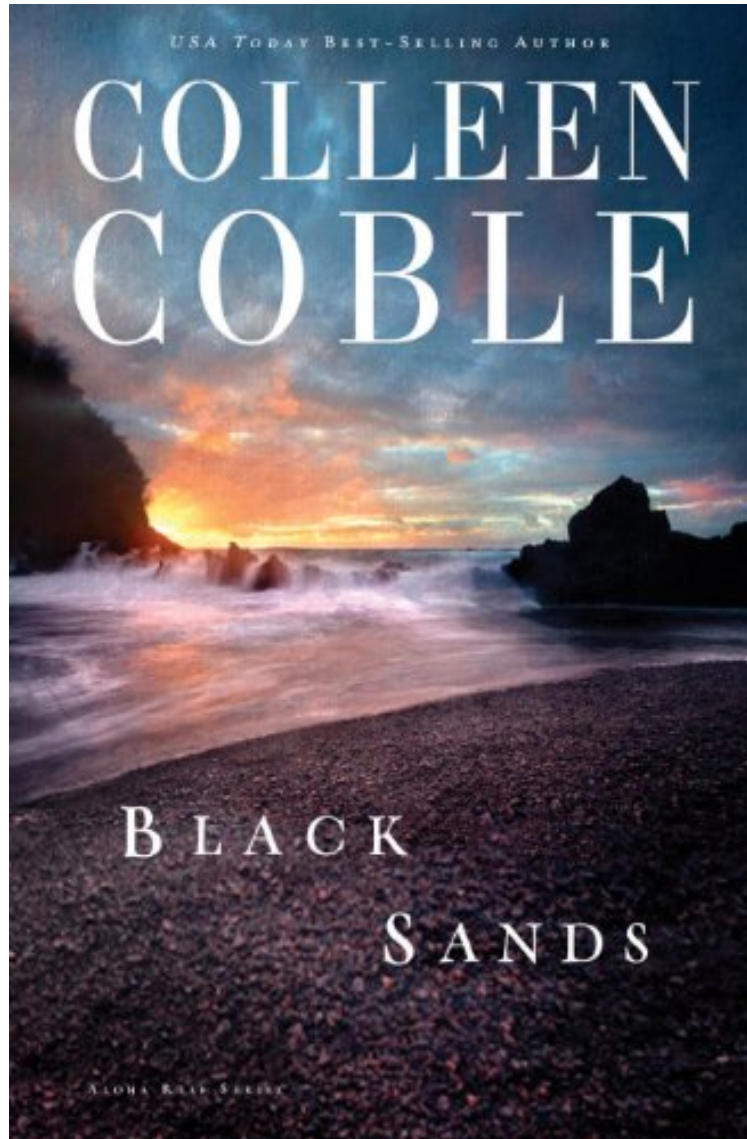


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Black Sands (Aloha Reef Series Book 2)

Colleen Coble

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Colleen Coble : Black Sands (Aloha Reef Series Book 2) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Sands (Aloha Reef Series Book 2):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Just OKBy Carolina ConsumerOK is all I can say about this book. I found Annie's constant fretting and angst about not living up to expectations to be rather tiring after awhile. Her father was intolerable throughout the book. The focus on an ancient Hawaiian god cult seemed unbelievable in a modern age. Overall, I found it fairly boring but made myself finish it. Not interested in the next two books of the series. The author has written far better books than this one.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ann`s Family

Ruined ItBy rachelmI was expecting more. Ann was such a doormat to her whole family. Her dad is so rude to her. He blames her for everything and expects to be waited on all the time. Yet, Ms Coble wants us to believe that he was once a good father. Her brother and sister used her as well. Also her logic when her sister was missing left me scratching my head. Is she out with friends? Is she with their brother? Is she in danger? The overall plot was good and the book would have been a lot better if her family wasn't so rotten. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book! By MF Literary Works This book was full of so much action and interesting facts. I loved learning about the volcanos and all the many things associated with them. I loved the beautiful word pictures of Hawaiian life. The author does such a wonderful job that I want to see it for myself! Now on to the next books in the series!

As a long-dormant volcano rumbles in the distance, a family crisis brings an unlikely couple into an unexpected partnership. 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?

About the Author USA Today bestselling author Colleen Coble has written numerous romantic suspense novels including *The Inn at Ocean's Edge*, *Twilight at Blueberry Barrens*, and *Beneath Copper Falls*. Visit her website at ColleenCoble.com, Twitter: @colleencoble, Facebook: colleencoblebooks. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter One One Year Later Annie Tagama squatted on the lava and examined the cracks. Vog burned her nose and eyes. She barely noticed the stink of sulfuric gases that hung in a miasma around her. The thick air was as much a part of her world as the rough lava under her feet and the blue Hawaiian sky over her head. Even though she knew she was safe here in this stable part of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, caution dictated her choices on this work day--her first since the accident. "Can you bring me a new GPS receiver?" Monica Rogers called from the edge of the lava shelf. "This one is shot." The older woman's voice reminded Annie of Minnie Mouse, and it didn't match Monica's stocky frame. Annie stood and took two steps toward Monica. She peered toward the drop-off, where heavy clouds of sulfuric mist billowed. Sweat broke out on her forehead. Her lungs constricted. You can do it. It's safe. She swallowed the sour taste in her mouth. Carrying the new receiver, she took a few more steps. "Hurry up!" Monica squeaked. "I'll do it." Annie's best friend, Fawn Trenton, took the receiver from her hand, her expression warning Annie not to cross Monica. Annie froze, and Fawn hurried toward Monica. Thirty-something Fawn turned heads wherever she went. Her tawny hair gleamed in the filtered wash of sunshine. Bright blue beads decorated the long braid that hung over one shoulder. Her T-shirt read SAVE THE RAIN FOREST. Annie stepped away from the edge and sighed with relief. She had to get over this fear that turned her knees to jelly, but she wasn't sure how to go about it. The shelf out there was perfectly safe. It hadn't had a collapse in years. But her face was still damp, and her pulse still galloped. She was such a failure. Turning her back on the other women, she returned to her task. Her pack held cans of yellow spray paint. She grabbed one and began to spray the cracks in the ground. Watching the paint over the coming weeks would tell the scientists about the earth's movement. She forced herself to focus, though it was hard not to let her gaze stray to the vog drifting up from the drop-off. Half an hour later, Monica and Fawn joined Annie near the two all-terrain vehicles. Monica's lips were tight, and she kept shooting angry glares toward Annie. "I'm going to headquarters," she said. Her movements stiff, she stalked to her ATV and drove off. "I hope she doesn't rat on you," Fawn said. Annie bit her lip. "I don't think Gina will listen if she does." Limping toward her ATV, she saw a glint of metal in the sun. She stooped and picked up a delicate necklace. What was this doing here? The familiarity made her catch her breath. It couldn't be her sister's, could it? Surely there were many necklaces like this on the island. Fawn peered over her shoulder. "What's wrong?" Annie turned over the heart-shaped pendant and saw the initials A. T. on the back. "It's Leilani's," she muttered. She rubbed her forehead. "How did it get here? Your sister wouldn't set foot on the volcano if you paid her." Unease began to coil in Annie's chest. "She didn't come home last night. I figured she was out with her friends and didn't think much about it. You know how she is. I'm sure she called Father after I left the house this morning." But that didn't explain the necklace's appearance out here. Fawn's gaze followed hers. "Maybe she loaned it to someone? Did you borrow it a few days ago and forget about it?" Annie shook her head. "She never takes off this necklace. Mother gave it to her the week before she died. Leilani even showers in it. These are Mother's initials. A. T. Adele Tagama." When their mother committed suicide a year ago, she and Leilani both had clung to anything of their mother's. Her thoughts boiled with possibilities--all of them dire. Fawn squeezed Annie's arm. "Don't go jumping to conclusions. Maybe it broke and someone found it." It was hard not to jump to conclusions, not after

her mother had died out here. She'd thrown herself into the lava, leaving only her Surfah flip-flops behind. Blue ones that Annie kept on her dresser. She shuddered. Trouble had been Leilani's middle name since then. Annie was ill equipped to deal with Leilani's rebellious ways. Though her sister was only five years younger than Annie's thirty years, sometimes Annie felt generations older. Annie told herself not to worry. There was likely a perfectly reasonable explanation. "You're probably right. It's not unlike her to be gone overnight. It's just this necklace." She went toward their vehicle. "I'd better check and see if my dad has heard from her. I'll call some of her friends. I'm sure there's some explanation." Fawn followed her. "Annie to the rescue. Don't you ever get tired of being the one that everyone leans on? You'll never get to live your own life." "I love my family," Annie said. They reached the Kawasaki ATV. "Hop on, let's go." Fawn shrugged and got behind her. "Your family's expectations are going to kill you. I hate to see the way you beat yourself up when you can't do everything. Have you been drinking the chamomile tea I gave you? It should help with the stress." Annie grinned. "Yes, doctor." "I know you think I harp on this too much, but you've taken over everything for them since your mom died. They're never going to let you have a life if you make it too easy for them. They've all turned into babies. They're adults. Make them act like it." "I know, I know. I will." Annie negotiated the a'a trail carefully. She didn't dare drive too fast, or the sharp bits of lava would shred the ATV's tires. The a'a finally gave way to black gravel, and she picked up her speed. "Harp is a good word. On a double-word square it would be worth eighteen points." Talking about Scrabble was better than thinking about the necklace in her pocket. Or about how accurate Fawn's observations were. Things had changed for the Tagama family, but there was no going back. Annie couldn't bear to see her family suffer anymore, not if she could shoulder the burdens for them and ease their lives. "I should save my breath," Fawn said. "I was going to offer to get you an appointment at the Fairmont for a Lomilomi massage, but you don't deserve it." Fawn knew how to stab her where it hurt. "Meanie." Annie turned the corner onto concrete. The long, squat building that housed the offices sat at the top of a small rise and was surrounded by lava fields. To the right of the Hawai'i Volcanoes Observatory was the Jagger Museum, containing a history of the Hawai'i volcanoes. Scientists from all over the world came here to study the geological processes that triggered volcanic activity. She parked the ATV and waited for Fawn to hop off, then dismounted. Fawn smoothed the locks of hair the wind had teased from her braid. "You're too young to spend your life in front of a board game. When was the last time you went to the movies or even out to eat?" Annie scrunched her forehead as she thought. "Um, the last time you and I went. I guess it was last month," she said. "My point exactly. Five weeks ago, to be exact. I've invited you to do something every Friday since then too, and you always say you have to fix dinner for your dad. That's not normal, Annie. You're only thirty, not eighty. And you're letting him become a tyrant. I think he thinks he's a Japanese emperor from the 1800s now that your mom isn't around to keep him in line." "I know, I know." The parking lot beside the squat brick building was nearly empty, and Annie realized it was after five o'clock. Gina's car was still in the lot though. Annie started toward her Nissan Pathfinder. A movement at the office door caught her eye, and she glanced up to see her boss waving at her imperiously. "Annie, I need to see you," Gina called. Annie sighed. Fawn raised her eyebrows. Their boss, Gina Sarris, turned and walked back inside. Judging from Gina's stiff back, Annie was headed for trouble. Annie limped toward the building. She didn't have time for this. The hum of the banks of computers greeted her as she opened the door. The familiar squawk of the scanner and the click of the seismometer eased her tension a little. She went down the hall, which was lined with pictures of volcanoes in various stages of eruption. Other walls held photo essays of the various studies going on--projects like gravitational studies, electrical processes, gas geochemistry, and ground deformation. She stepped into her boss's office. It was empty. She went to the office chair by the window. "Sorry to keep you." Gina came into the room and moved to her desk. Barely five feet tall, she still wore the heavy work pants she donned when out in the field. A stench of sulfur followed her. The cracked leather chair practically swallowed her. She pulled her glasses to her nose, then flipped open a folder. "I need to get home right away." Annie slipped her hand into her pocket and fingered her sister's necklace. Gina gave her a kind smile. "Don't look so scared, Annie. We're just going to talk." Gina had taken over as Scientist-in-charge a little over a year ago. Things had run smoothly under Gina's supreme organizational skills. Her dark hair never dared to be out of place, and every paper clip on her desk was perfectly aligned. Though in her fifties, she was still beautiful with perfect, unlined skin. She had a faint accent no one had been able to figure out. With her dark coloring, she could be French, Greek, part Hawaiian, or any of the other nationalities in this melting pot. Annie knew Gina liked her. That was the only thing that might save this interview from going south. "Okay." She moved toward Gina's desk. "It's good to have you back. How have you been feeling? I noticed you're only limping a little now." "Pretty good. The doctor says the lim...