

Fire and Vengeance: A Koa Kane Hawaiian Mystery

Robert McCaw

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In Robert McCaw's winding thriller, a conflicted cop wrangles a conspiracy and a family emergency.

When a volcanic vent explodes under an elementary school, it leaves ten children dead. There is evidence that people knew about the danger, but tried to hide it. Detective Koa is determined to get to the bottom of the cover-up; he has big name suspects in mind.

Information about Hawaii's geological history and relationship with volcanic threats is dusted into conversations, while the conspiracy itself sparks outrage among media and parents. Koa traces its origins to five major players in Hawaii's land development and political arenas, who are described in illustrative terms, their illicit motivations captured in sharp detail. Meanwhile, an unknown but powerful person connects the suspects to a dark secret from their past, and an action-packed confrontation brings clarity to Koa's case.

Koa is a diligent detective whose exchanges with colleagues are infused with Hawaiian language and culture. He's familiar with criminal minds and harbors guilt over a lingering secret of his own; his brother, Ikaika, has been in and out of jail for years. Koa struggles with his past, but the bonds of family are tight. His mother's pleas to not give up on Ikaika are an emotional addition, and when it's discovered that Ikaika has two large tumors, Koa sees an opportunity for redemption. Fascinating questions about how behavior is influenced by the brain's functions and health challenges arise.

Balancing the elementary school explosion investigation with Koa's family troubles, *Fire and Vengeance* is a meticulous mystery in which murders serve as messages to the elite members of society.

DELIA STANLEY (July / August 2020)

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