



Shark Dialogues

Kiana Davenport

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Spellbinding in its imagery and ancient myths, *Shark Dialogues* is the stunningly sensual and visionary epic of a Polynesian Hawaiian family, a story of daring, passionate women and men, their losses and triumphs, their comedies and tragedies, their anguish and joy. Set mainly in contemporary Hawaii, it is a spectacular odyssey through fire and water, a journey that begins in the nineteenth century with the fateful meeting of a Yankee sailor and the runaway daughter of a Tahitian chief. Sweeping from that distant past into the present turbulent decade, Kiana Davenport has woven an astonishing, compassionate portrait of her people, one of personal and political complexities - a surreal and provocative, wise and erotic tale of villains and dreamers, of "stone-eaters" and queens, of revolutionaries, and of lepers and healers. Central to all is the matriarch Pono, a statuesque, pure-blooded Hawaiian, a kahuna, or seer, whose past is shrouded in mystery. Pono's love for Duke Kealoha - a man hidden from the world, a man his daughters and granddaughters have never known is one of the most haunting love stories of our time, a love that lasts through sixty years, a love so profound she "dares everything, commits every conceivable act for him." As the novel opens, Pono's four granddaughters are converging on her run-down coffee plantation on the Big Island, summoned by Pono in her eighty-fourth year. United by their fear of and devotion to Pono, each woman is of "mixed blood" parentage: Ming - Hawaiian-Chinese, is a lover of art and music, who suffers from lupus; Vanya - Hawaiian-Filipino, is a lawyer and a fiery political activist; Rachel - Hawaiian-Japanese, is a great beauty, obsessed with her Yakuza husband; Jess - Hawaiian-Caucasian, is a veterinarian, whose pale skin makes her "inferior" in Pono's eyes. Never having known their true genealogy "Pono's girls," as they are called, have led tormented, scattered lives. Now, caught up in Pono's spell, feeling a sense of "immi

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