

## TO CATCH THE SETTING SUN

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### Excerpt

The reflection from scattered tiki torches competed with the moonlight flickering across the black velvet lagoon. Gentle trade winds, carrying the sweet peach-like scent of plumeria, tickled the flames and the palm fronds. Clearly a welcomed reprieve from five straight days of stifling temperatures. A catamaran and a couple small outrigger canoes, their artfully painted fiberglass hulls made to look like the wood of ancient Koa trees, were pulled up along the sandy shoreline. The heavy beat of drums reverberated off the tall palms and set the rhythm for a half-dozen pair of grass-skirted hips dancing on the main stage while vacationers laughed, ogled, and stuffed their faces with shredded pork, scoops of macaroni salad, steaming flavored rice wrapped in Ti leaves, thick slices of pineapple, papaya, mango, and freshly roasted macadamia nuts that were all artfully displayed on wide banana leaf covered center pieces. They sat cross-legged in the sand, sipping Mai Tais from plastic cups made to look like hollowed out coconut shells, lost in a tropical fantasy that came complete with a souvenir snap shot taken with an authentic hula girl—the perfect paradise as portrayed on the website. The noise from the music, chanting, and laughter, drowned out the frantic noise of the nearby kitchen, and it drowned out the desperate pleas and painful cries of Makani Palahia from the far side of the beach at Auntie Lily's Luau Cove and Hawaiian Barbecue.