

# An evening on the beach

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An evening on the beach Night was falling. The setting sun's red rays lit up the sky above the western horizon. I could see an oil tanker making its way across the sea just on the horizon. Soon the sun disappeared below the horizon and the sky turned dark but my two friends and I sat on the beach gazing at the place where the sun went down. Sunsets are mesmerizing as we discovered. Only when the mosquitoes started coming in great number were we brought back to reality. We picked ourselves up and walked towards a small pile of wood that we had made earlier. In the dark we could just make out shadows. My friend Francis had a torchlight. He switched it on to show the way. The night creatures were already busy with their activities. On our left where the land was, I could hear the shrill cries of the cicadas and other insects. On our right the waves broke gently on the shore sending up sprays of phosphorescent surf. The sounds and sights of nature were wonderful. The noise of occasional traffic along a road nearby was the only blemish to the otherwise perfect natural surroundings. The three of us were perhaps the only other blemishes. We had the torchlight on and soon we were going to light a bonfire. Nevertheless I proceeded to pour some kerosene onto the pile of wood and put a match to it. Slowly but steadily the fire grew. Soon we were basking in the orange glow of the bonfire. Salleh, my other friend, brought out the snacks and drinks from a bag. We had come to the beach to relax and enjoy ourselves. A bonfire can be mesmerizing too and so we spent a good two hours eating, drinking, talking and singing around it. A number of people appeared and we invited them to share in our little revelry. We did not know any of them, but it did not matter. All I knew was that we enjoyed ourselves in the warm glow of the bonfire which was a

far cry from the cold stares of people on an ordinary street. However all good things must come to an end. The fire slowly died down and darkness regained its mastery. We said goodbye to our visitors and cleaned up the fireplace. Then we walked along the shoreline towards where Salleh had parked his car. Crabs both large and small scurried away at our approach. A gentle breeze rustled among the coconut palms. The black sky was full of glistening stars. It felt good to be alive. Finally we reached the car. We dumped our things in the boot and got into the car ourselves. Salleh started the car and soon we were headed home after spending a wonderful evening on the beach.