

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Pu‘u ‘Ualaka‘a

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**K**athy got on her cell phone during breakfast the next morning. “Aloha, Tracy, this is Kathy. We’re on the vacation you booked for us. The flights were great, and this place is absolutely beautiful. Can you give me a call when you get a chance? Matt got drawn into another case, and we need your help with some information. It’s about 9:30 in the morning here, and we’re going out for a couple of hours. I’ll have my phone with me, but I’m not sure what kind of reception I’ll get where we’re going. You may want to try me about 9 this evening, your time. Okay, talk to you later. Thanks.”

“Does she work Saturdays?”

“It’s her own business. I think she works 24x7.” She smiled at Hogan. “Don’t worry, she’ll get back to me today.”

“Good. Well, let’s get at least some vacation time in today. Ready for a drive?”

“I am. What and where?”

“First HPD. Then that state wayside I read about, Poo Ooahlaka, or something like that. It’s probably better known as Tantalus lookout. The book described it as one of the best views in Hawaii.”

“Sounds great. Where is it?”

“In the mountains overlooking Honolulu. Straight line, it’s probably only a couple of miles from HPD. But driving, I think it’ll take about a half hour.”

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Twenty minutes later they walked into HPD Headquarters on Beretania Street. They entered the building and were directed to Keoki’s office. They

## Death Inside Diamond Head

found the detective on the phone; he motioned for them to come in and have a seat, which they did. Keoki finished the call in a couple of minutes

“Good morning, folks. As I said in my text, I’ve got lab and coroner results.”

“Great. And?”

“As I suspected, the drugs are cocaine and heroin. We did find a couple of prints on the bags, and they should be good enough to identify whose they are or if they’re from more than one person. I should be able to have those Monday”

“Good. And the coroner?”

“He’s in his office right now. Let’s call him.” Tanaka put the desk phone on speaker and dialed a number.

“Good morning, detective, this is Sam Fong.”

“Hi, Sam. I’ve got Matt Hogan and Kathy Russell here with me. They’re the ones from New York helping with the Diamond Head death.”

“Hello,” Fong said.

“Good morning, Doc. Thanks for taking the time to talk with us. What do you have?”

“Interestingly, the cause of death was a sharp blow to the back of his head.”

“The back? What about the cut in his temple?”

“That just wasn’t deep enough to cause death. He may have hit it when he fell, but it didn’t kill him.”

“I see. It sounds like it wasn’t an accident to me.”

“We’re inclined to agree, so let’s assume that for now.”

“Was there any trace of drugs in his system, specifically cocaine or heroin?”

“No trace at all. We tested both blood and urine.”

“How long do drugs typically stay in a body?”

“That varies on the drug. For these two, it’s usually about four to seven days.”

“And there was nothing. That could mean that he hadn’t taken any since he arrived here. Very interesting. Can you estimate the time of death?”

“Not with certainty. But based on body temperature and rigor, I’d guess between twelve and twenty hours before I examined the body in the crater, which was about ten yesterday morning.”

## Death Inside Diamond Head

"So that would put it somewhere between two and ten on Thursday," Hogan calculated quickly. "I don't have any other questions." Hogan looked at Kathy and Keoki, who shook their heads. "That should do it for now. Thanks, Dr. Fong." Hogan handed the receiver to Tanaka. "So it seems that it's now murder." Tanaka nodded as Hogan took their new-made list from his pocket. "One other question, Keoki. Were there any cars in the parking lot when you got to Diamond Head yesterday morning?"

"Just two. One belonged to the toll booth employee; we sent him home when we got there, as the monument was going to be closed for a few hours. The other belonged to the three hikers."

Hogan wrote the additional information on the paper. Then he slowly shook his head. "The wife still bothers me. What happened to her?"

"Maybe she was also killed, but her body was removed from the area. Maybe she wasn't with him."

"But she walked in with him," Kathy interrupted.

"Right," Tanaka replied. "But since things apparently were not perfect between them, maybe she left alone. There could be a number of explanations. I've found that if we focus on what we do have, the rest will eventually fall in place."

"That makes sense, so that's what we will do. Thanks, Keoki, I'll be in touch, probably tomorrow. Will you be in the office?"

"Don't worry about that. Call me anytime." Tanaka smiled at them. "I'd prefer it not to be in the middle of the night, however."

"Got it," Hogan chuckled as they left the office.

"Wait a second, Matt. I forgot about your badges."

"Right, I did too."

Tanaka led them into another room with a camera on a tripod and various photography equipment.

"Don't tell me this is where you take mug shots?"

"The same," Tanaka smiled. "But it'll be different today."

Ten minutes later, Hogan and Kathy went to the parking lot with their personalized identification badges and got in their rental car. Hogan looked at Kathy. "Let's think about this. Since it's now a murder and not an accident, we're looking for a killer."

"Or killers."

## Death Inside Diamond Head

Hogan nodded. "Right. But the real mystery right now is the three walkers. We know that one of them didn't leave the crater." Kathy nodded. "The second – Justin's wife – wasn't found anywhere by Keoki, so she either suffered a fate similar to her husband's, or she did leave on her own at some point."

"I understand what Keoki's saying, but would she leave without her husband, especially if she knew he was dead?"

"That just doesn't make sense, does it?" Kathy shook her head. "And the third, the blonde guy with a mustache, whether he's involved in the murder or not, either left before 6 or he found another way out."

"Maybe he met a friend there and left with that person. Or maybe he found that way to climb over the rim of the crater."

"That's the next challenge. Let's check what we can see from higher up."

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Hogan parked the car in the lot at the wayside 25 minutes later, and he and Kathy walked along the path to the Tantalus lookout. The sky was perfectly clear, and the view was magnificent; they stood next to the railing for about five minutes, just enjoying the spectacular scenery, from Koko Head and Haunama Bay on the left to Diamond Head and Waikiki in front to Punchbowl Cemetery and Pearl Harbor on the right.

Kathy let out a deep sigh. "It's so beautiful, Matt!"

"It is, isn't it? The book's description doesn't do it justice, though. I've never seen anything like it, except maybe for the Grand Canyon." He took the small binoculars from his pocket. "These things aren't bad, but they're not great. Let me try to find our hotel." He slowly scanned the area where he thought Kalakaua Avenue would be. "I can see the Sheraton Waikiki. The Outrigger is not too far from that, but all the buildings are so tall that I can't tell which one is ours. Want to have a look?"

He handed the binoculars to Kathy and guided her about where to look. After another minute or so, she moved her field of vision to Diamond Head. "Wow! The crater looks so much bigger through these. And there's the top, where we climbed to yesterday." She moved the binoculars slowly from right to left. This is interesting, Matt. There's kind of a notch along the far side of Diamond Head. I didn't notice it when we were inside the crater." She

## Death Inside Diamond Head

handed him the binoculars. "Look almost all the way on the left of Diamond Head. Do you see that dip in the ridge?"

"Yeah. It's hard to tell from here how deep it is, but it's definitely lower than the rest of the ridge. I'll get a few shots." He handed the binoculars back to Kathy, took his cell phone and started taking pictures while zoomed in to the area. "Wow, it's really windy up here. It's hard enough to get good resolution while zooming in this far, and the wind just makes it harder. Maybe if I rest the phone on the railing, it will stay still long enough." He did his best to hold the phone still while he snapped several more photos. "Hopefully, that did it. But it's too bright out here to check." He let his cell phone screen go dark. "I really wish we had better binoculars. Those would really help."

"Maybe Keoki has some we can borrow," Kathy suggested.

"You're right! If he does, we can come back here to take a look at the crater. I'll call him when we get back to the hotel. But let's check the pictures on my phone before we leave."

"Let's try the restroom we passed on the way in," Kathy said. "If your pictures aren't good enough, we'll be close enough to come back for more."

They drove the short distance to the restroom. Hogan went in and checked the gallery in his phone. He had a couple of clear shots of that section of the crater. "Got it," he said loudly as he walked to the door.

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It was almost 1:00 when they walked into their room at the Outrigger. "Are you hungry?" he asked, sitting in the easy chair in the corner.

"Starved."

"There's a burger place down the street which is said to have great burgers and other dishes. Are you up for it?"

"Hmmm, that sounds great! Give me a few minutes."

Hogan sent the photos of Diamond Head to his e-mail while he waited, then stood when Kathy came out of the bathroom. "Let's stop at the business center again. I want to print the pictures, so we can look at them over lunch."

They walked into Cheeseburger in Paradise about 20 minutes later and were seated after a short wait. They sat next to each other at the table and both ordered iced tea, Hogan asked for the Kalua Pig Sandwich, and Kathy

## Death Inside Diamond Head

the Shrimpburger. When the server left, Hogan took out his cell phone and the photos. "Let's see if we can find that low spot on the ridge." He looked through the five photos and picked the one with the best clarity.

"This looks like the lowest point," Kathy said, pointing to a place on the left side of the photo.

"You're right, I think that's it. Let me see if I can zoom in any more on my phone." He pulled up the photo on his phone and was able to get a little closer to that point. "You can't really tell too much from this. We'll have to go back into the crater to check it out in person. I just want to make sure we remember exactly where it is."

Kathy took her phone out. "Let me check Maps online. Maybe we can pinpoint the location that way." After a few minutes she uttered, "Yes!" She handed her phone to Hogan. "I found a topographical map of Diamond Head. That looks like the spot we want," she said, pointing to the map.

"It sure does. Nicely done." He enlarged the image on the screen. "And there's a Pokapahu Place at that point just on the other side of the crater. That might also be worth a visit. We can go back tomorrow." He jumped when Kathy's phone suddenly rang, and he chuckled and handed the phone back to her. "I'll call Keoki while you're on the phone," he said as he went outside.

Kathy put her phone to her ear. "Hello."

"Hi, Kathy, this is Tracy."

"Hi, Tracy, thanks for getting back to me. First, I apologize for interrupting your weekend."

"No need. When I started this business, I knew it would be a full-time job. It sounds like you and Matt are enjoying yourselves."

"Absolutely! Hawaii is beautiful, the hotel is great, we even enjoyed the flight!"

"That's what I like to hear from a customer. And a friend. Now it sounds like it's a working vacation. What happened?"

"Well, it seems that a cop from New York was murdered here a couple of days ago, and Matt was contacted by a close friend in NYPD."

"That doesn't sound good. What do you need from me?"

"The guy who was killed came here with his wife a week ago. We're trying to verify flight information."

"I should be able to do that. Names and date?"

## Death Inside Diamond Head

“He was Justin Fisher. His wife was – or is – Lena Fisher. They flew here last Saturday, and I think they were scheduled to return to New York next week.”

“Okay, let’s see.” Kathy waited quietly while she heard the clicking of Tracy’s keyboard. After less than a minute, Tracy said, “Got it. They flew there on Hawaiian Flight 51, getting there at 2:50 in the afternoon last Saturday. They’re booked on Hawaiian Flight 50 to JFK a week from today, leaving Honolulu at 3:15 in the afternoon.” Hogan returned to the table.

Kathy finished writing the information down. “Perfect, that’s exactly what we needed.”

“Anything else?”

“No, I don’t think so.”

“Just let me know if there is anything else you need.”

“I will. Thanks so much, Tracy.” Kathy handed the paper to Hogan. “I knew she could get it!”

“Great, thanks, Kath. We’ll put everything together when we get back to the room.” Hogan cleared the papers off the table just as their meals arrived.

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Back at their room after some store browsing, Hogan added the latest information to their lists: flight and drug information, cause of death, info about cars in the parking lot. He also added to their WHAT WE NEED list:

“It just occurred to me that we should get some gloves and plastic bags,” he said. “I didn’t expect this to be a working vacation, after all.” Hogan jotted down a note for himself, then checked his cell phone. 6:30. “Let’s not work tonight. Do you want to get some drinks and dinner?”

“Sure. Anything in mind?”

## Death Inside Diamond Head

"I've heard about the Mai Tai Bar at the Royal Hawaiian. It's right on the beach, you can get a drink served in a pineapple, and they have food and Hawaiian entertainment."

"Love it!"

Twenty minutes later were sitting at a table in the Mai Tai Bar, enjoying their Mai Tais, the relaxing view of the evening sun, gentle surf of Waikiki Beach, and the soothing Hawaiian music.

Kathy sighed. "I could really get used to this, Matt."

Hogan nodded. "Yeah, I could, too. Now affording it is another matter." He took another sip of his drink. "This is really good."

Kathy sat quietly for about a minute, then said, "I really like this song. I wonder what it's called?"

"I like it too. I don't know the name, but he's said Honolulu City Lights several times. Let's ask him when he takes a break."

That happened only two songs later, and Hogan went to talk with the singer, returning to the table soon after. "It is Honolulu City Lights, after all."

"Maybe we can find a CD in some store," Kathy suggested. "And I'm getting hungry."

Hogan looked at the menu for several moments, then handed it to Kathy. "See anything you like?"

She looked at all of the options. "I think I'll try the Lobster Roll."

"You mean Lobstah?"

She chuckled. "Yes. I guess that's in keeping with Bruddah."

"And I just have to try that Ali'i Burger. How bad can it be, with pepperjack and mushrooms?"

"Very appropriate."

"What do you mean?"

"I think Ali'i means royalty."

Hogan groaned, signaled their server, and they ordered.

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An hour later, they were strolling barefoot in the surf of Waikiki Beach, enjoying the spectacular sunset.

Hogan looked at Kathy. "I'm glad we came here." He leaned toward her and kissed her on the lips. "I love you, Kathy."

## Death Inside Diamond Head

"I love you too," she whispered, squeezing his hand and resuming their walk. She smiled and looked at him for a few seconds. "Matt, do you ever think about the future?"

"What do you mean?"

"What's in the future for us?"

Realizing that it was not the time for humor or coyness, Hogan said softly, "Almost all the time." He looked into her eyes. "And what do you think about us?"

"I sometimes think I want more."

"So do I," he said, smiling. "But I want us both to know that it's the right time."

"I do, too. But how will we know?"

"I'm not really sure. I just think we'll know when it is the right time."

Kathy smiled and nodded. Hogan let go of her hand and put his arm around her waist. "And I think the right time will be pretty soon." Kathy also put her arm around his waist and laid her head against his shoulder as they continued their stroll along the mild surf.