

11. AND I'VE BEEN SEARCHING CEASELESSLY FOR YOU EVER SINCE, MON AMOUR

1. Once, many years ago, I sat on the beach, reading and drinking a beer.
2. It was a breezeless afternoon so I decided to cool off by the water.
3. I left my book—a fat novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*—on my folding chair. I snugged my bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale deeper into its red coozie and screwed the coozie an inch or two into the sand.
4. It was pleasant by the water's edge. The running sandpipers, with their legs puncturing the silk of the receding surf, reminded me of the jackhammer needle of my mother's sewing machine.
5. Strolling back maybe ten minutes later, I could easily pick out my blue chair—the beach wasn't crowded—but not the dark lump of book.
6. Even standing beside my chair, I could see I couldn't see it.
7. I toed around in the sand. Nothing.
8. When I picked up my coozie, it was light, although the bottle hadn't tipped.
9. Someone had ignored my towel, my chair, my beach bag with its sunblock and keys and wallet.
10. But stole my fat Russian novel and drank my ale.