

THE SEA SHALL NOT HAVE THEM

The tide had been high on that fateful day. Garth remembered every second of what was now an obsession with him.

How he had gone into his mother's room and found his open brief case on her bed, the black velvet drawstring bag and several box containers all emptied of their valuable and graded contents.

He quickly ran downstairs calling his mother's name, his voice trying not to show panic, for that would upset her and make her nervous.

'Molly' he called repeatedly, that's what he had always called her, and since Alzheimer's had been diagnosed almost two years before, Molly was the only name she answered to from anyone.

The house was a couple of hundred yards from the windswept sand dunes. beyond which was the North Sea; temperamental as always with its many moods, and on that occasion crashing along the shore with white crested waves, even though there was still some late autumn sunshine.

He quickened his pace realising she was not in the house, a sick gut feeling telling him she had gone over the dunes towards the sea. Her greatest pleasure was running along the edge of the sea and the sand trying to dodge the waves at high tide.

He stumbled onto the top of the highest dune where he could see the shore line stretching away in both directions and saw her silhouette dancing along the edge of the froth left by the spent waves, As he drew nearer, he could hear her singing, childlike, her thin chemise wet with spray clinging to her frail but somehow ethereal form.

He was horrified to see her raise her arms and toss a handful of sparkling shapes that caught the sunlight as they rose high in the air before cutting down through the waves, and even as they entered that seething element they flashed and glinted reflecting the sun's rays before sinking to the tossed sand beneath.

It had been four years since his mother had taken her last breath. She died completely oblivious of the devastation she had caused by throwing over three million pounds worth of graded diamonds, newly bought from Amsterdam and destined for London's Hatton Gardens. There was no insurance to cover this event, and Garth was declared bankrupt.

He had recovered one diamond shortly after Molly's demise, worth several thousand it had caught his eye as it lay amongst the flotsam washed up on the sand after a winter storm. Since then he had hardly missed a low tide – beach combing had a new meaning and he was determined the sea should not have them. He was obsessed and sadly now his sight was beginning to fade. However a year later he found a large two carat stone worth almost a million. It was just lying on the water line glinting in the light of a fabulous sunset, and almost laughing at him with his seemingly impossible quest.