

CHAPTER ONE

Mystery at Kradmoor

In which we meet Pulitzer-winner *Molly Sloan*, her intrepid assistant *Timmy Mendez*, the world-famous mesmerist *Mysterion the Magnificent*, and a *mysterious stranger* with the skinny on the
STORY OF THE CENTURY.

1933.

SOMEWHERE IN THE CARPATHIAN
MOUNTAINS OF EASTERN EUROPE.







OVER HERE,
WE CAN TALK
PRIVATELY.



I'M AFRAID YOUR
STORY HAS COME TO
A DEAD END.



DON'T TELL ME
I'VE TRAVELLED OVER
HALF THE GLOBE
TO THE MIDDLE OF
NOWHERE FOR
NOTHING.



FOR NOTHING?
PERHAPS NOT.

THERE ARE RUMORS OF
TERRIBLE MONSTERS
LIVING IN THE HILLS
AROUND THIS TAVERN.



GIVE ME
A BREAK.



AS LONG AS MEN
HAVE LIVED IN THESE
HILLS THERE HAVE BEEN
SUCH TALES TO
SCOFF AT.

WEREWOLVES,
VAMPIRES,
GOBLINS.



BUT THIS TIME IS
DIFFERENT. THIS
TIME IS REAL!



AND THEN,
THERE IS
THIS...



THE MAP IS WRITTEN IN SOME KIND OF CODE.

CENTRAL HIVE



I DISCOVERED IT WITH A BODY IN THE SNOW. HIS SKIN WAS **BURNED**, AS IF BY ACID.



SOMEONE WISHES THIS TO REMAIN SEC---

THWAK



VLAD?

MR. VALDIMER? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



TIMMY! LOOK OUT!



GET UNDER THE TABLE!



THUD

MOVE!



