

## Dozmary Mine Extract

Alex walked through Port Tallon, past the Fisherman's Arms public house and up the cobbled street towards the library. It was the middle of the afternoon but the village seemed to be asleep; the boats bobbing in the harbour, the streets and pavements empty. A few seagulls wheeled lazily over the rooftops, uttering the usual mournful cries. The air smelled of salt and dead fish.

The library was red-bricked, Victorian, sitting self-importantly at the top of a hill. Alex pushed open the heavy swing-door and went into a room with a tiled, chessboard floor and about fifty shelves fanning out from a central reception area. Six or seven people were sitting at tables, working. A man in a thickly knitted jersey was reading *Fisherman's Week*. Alex went over to the reception desk. There was the inevitable sign – SILENCE PLEASE. Beneath it a smiling, round-faced woman sat reading *Crime and Punishment*.

"Can I help you?" Despite the sign, she had such a loud voice that everyone looked up when she spoke.

"Yes..."

Alex has come here because of a chance remark made by Herod Sayle. He had been talking about Ian Rider. *Spent half his time in the village. In the port, the post office, the library.* Alex has already seen the post office, another old-fashioned building near the port. He didn't think he'd learn anything there. But the library? Maybe Rider had come here looking for information. Maybe the librarian would remember him/

"I had a friend saying in the village," Alex said.

"I was wondering if he came here. His name's Ian Rider."

"Rider with an I or a Y? I don't think we have any Riders at all," The woman tapped a few keys on her computer, then shook her head. "No."

"He was staying at Sayle Enterprises," Alex said. "He was about forty, thin, fair hair. He drove a BMW."

"Oh yes." The librarian smiled. "He did come here a couple of times. A nice man. Very polite. I knew he didn't come from around here. He was looking for a book –"

"Do you remember which book?"

"Of course I do. I can't always remember faces, but I never forget a book. He was interested in viruses."

"Viruses?"

"Yes. That's what I said. He wanted some information..."

A computer virus! This might change everything. A computer virus was the perfect act of sabotage: invisible and instantaneous.