

# **The Phantom Miner**

## **Horriſying Tales From The Dead I**

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I can still remember the story my grandfather used to tell me on a stormy night at bedtime. When he tucked me in, I would pull the covers over my head and close my eyes, and shake like a leaf, and pray for daylight to arrive soon. What a story he could tell, now that I'm all grown up now, I feel I should share it with the rest of the scary story fans.

This story dates back to the mid-1800s around the Gold Rush days when everyone had gold fever running through their veins. The town where it all happened was a little town called Clantondale, and Tom Barkley had the gold fever

like no one else. He didn't have many friends or even a pretty woman to keep him company. All Tom thought about was striking it rich and keeping it all to himself. Tom got lucky a few times to keep his gold fever going, but it wouldn't be long before his gold fever would run out for good. Tom's luck got better, but at a high price. He couldn't get enough, the more he got the greedily he got and more violent he became. Booze and gold were a bad mixture for Tom. Tom started spying on other prospectors and decided if he could knock them off just as they found the gold, then he could take all their gold, and no one would ever find out.

Tom liked the idea of not having to prospect, „Why not let someone else do it, and once they find the gold just kill them, and run off with the gold.” It wouldn't be long before some other prospector caught Tom in his dirty tricks, and decided to set him up and knock him off. Tom Watson and his friend lured Tom Barkley to an abandoned mine shaft and told him there was lots of gold, and they would share it with him. Tom Barkley said, „Sounds like a good idea,” so they went in the old abandoned mine shaft with their brightly lit lanterns and were drinking heavily. The other two men had water in their bottles, but Tom Barkley's was 100 percent alcohol, and he was too far gone to know what was really in store for him.

All three men proceeded farther down the shaft and told Tom Barkley, „Look over there! There are two old mining cars; let's get in and ride down farther, so we can get to the gold quicker,” said Tom Watson. They helped Tom in his and unlocked the car so it would start rolling down the shaft not knowing where it would lead him. They assured him he was close, and they would follow behind in the other car, but they both turned around and got out of the mine as fast as they could. When they reached the entrance to the mine, they decided they would blow up the entrance to the cave to seal old Tom Barkley's fate. That's just what they did, and the dynamite sealed Tom in tight as a drum never to be seen again.

Urban legend has it, around midnight, you can see a headless phantom swinging a lantern at the entrance of the mine looking for his head. Sometimes, if you're brave enough to go to the entrance, you can hear moaning and hear a mining car roll down the tracks. There have been tales of curious ghost hunters trying to follow the sound of the moans and the rolling car down the shaft only never to return. There have been many photos taken of the Phantom Miner at the entrance that would scare any non-believer. So, if you're ever near Clantondale and aren't afraid of a ghost, then plan on going to the old abandoned mine and see for yourself if it's an Urban legend or not!

