

The Miners Rest

The main street of Coulby Ridge looked much the same as the main street of any other half-forgotten mining town left over from the gold rush days. Apart from the strip of asphalt that quickly petered out and a scattering of new shops, the town hadn't changed much over the last hundred years. However, a rush of a different type, and bringing greater riches than gold, was being felt throughout the country—tourism.

It was the new rush that brought George Carter, his wife, Terri, and their children, Christie and Daniel, to this out-of-the-way, semi-ghost town one Saturday morning. A quick drive around the area soon had them back in the main street and talking to the owner of a small hardware shop who, as well as running hay and grain supplies, acted as the local real estate agent.

Mr Blair's face visibly paled as he squinted at the polaroid photograph that George presented. As a long-time resident, he knew only too well the building in question.

'Yes,' he said carefully. 'That's the Miners Rest Hotel. I don't think it's really suitable. Now if I could suggest . . . ' Mr Blair started to fumble through the pages of a large book.

George cut him short. 'Is it for sale?'

Mr Blair looked over the rim of his glasses. 'Oh yes. It's for sale all right,' he said, lowering his voice. 'The Council have been trying to sell it for years. I think they'd give it away.'

'Good,' said George. 'That puts it right in our price bracket. Let's have a look at it.'

Mr Blair's face turned pale again.

from *The Miners Rest* by Robert L. Muddyman
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