

# **AN OLD DUSTY'S STORY**

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An old dusty's story by W. O. Williams

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**W. O. WILLIAMS**

**AN OLD  
DUSTY'S STORY**



WILLIAMSON  
CALIFORNIA

AN  
OLD DUSTY'S STORY



*Williamson*  
BY  
W. O. WILLIAMS

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Abbey Press

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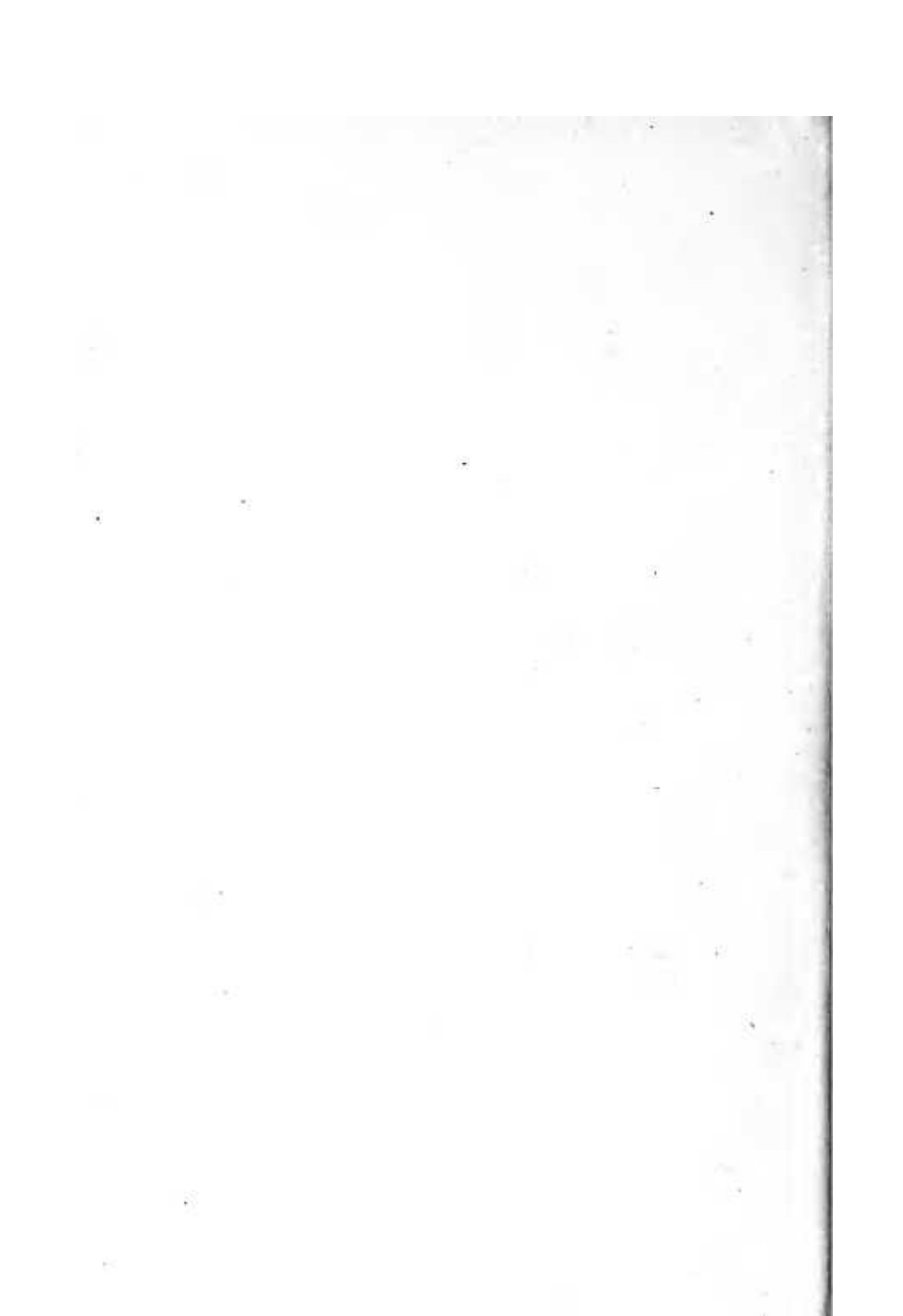
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UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

# AN OLD DUSTY'S STORY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE WANDERER.

It was a dark, stormy night in the latter part of November. The day just closed had been unusually bleak and bitter. The clouds that had drifted about through the day had now formed into one solid mass, and sent their fine, round snow on mountain and valley. The wind took hold of the snow as it fell and sent it flying hither and thither.

"By George! I made a mistake in coming down to-night, and wish I was back at the mine. This is a nasty, miserable night, and I shall have a rough time climbing that hill."

This exclamation came from W. C. Shepard, the engineer at one of the mines in the hills above.

It was pay day, and he had come down to the dirty little mining town to cash his check. This being done and his little bills paid, he was starting back to the mine. Not that he need go alone if he would "wait a while," for there were many of the boys down, and miner-like, were filling up on poor whiskey.

A steady man was Mr. Shepard, and he had too much respect for himself, and too much native pride and manhood, to drink and act worse than a beast.

His foreman, who was fond of a drop, had said: "I will give ten dollars to see Shepard drunk."

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But so far, Mr. Shepard had kept his manhood and the foreman his money. Not that Mr. Shepard was a teetotaler, but he cared little for strong liquors.

But I must leave for another chapter a description of the man and his ways. It would be hard indeed to tell what the man was like as he stood there in the storm fastening the lower buttons of his great coat. He paused one moment to adjust, more closely, his comforter about his head, and then stepped out in the storm.

He had hardly gone a dozen yards when he heard a voice call: "Stop, sir, please stop!"

He turned and saw standing in the dim light of the store window, a tall, broad-shouldered man, thinly clad and shivering with cold.

"I beg your pardon, sir," exclaimed the stranger, "but would you please take pity on a poor devil, and give him enough to pay for a supper and a bed? Don't think I want it for drink, sir. I am a drunkard and waste all my money, but I never beg money for drink, as bad as I am. I would not ask money for a bed if I knew where to find a shed. I am a stranger here and have walked a long distance to-day, and I am hungry and tired."

The pleading voice and the pitiful look went right to the heart of Mr. Shepard, for he saw by the dim light that this was no common beggar. He took five dollars from his purse and asked the stranger if he had come to camp after work. The stranger said he had, and would take anything he could get.

"Well, take this, my good fellow, and I hope you may strike something soon. You see that light over there, that is our hotel. I advise you to go to it at once and keep away from the saloons. Never mind thanks; you are quite welcome. I bid you good night." And Mr. Shepard started off to the mine.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE BLACKSMITH.

It was the first of December; the snow glistened on the mountains, and the deep blue sky above made a picture as sweet and lovely as a poet's dream. So thought Mr. Shepard as he took a fond look around at the grand mountains and lovely sky, before he went to the works to his engine.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "Zion is indeed beautiful!"

I must inform my reader that this was Utah, the land of the saints.

"Yes," continued Mr. Shepard, "this is a beautiful land, and would be a good place to live in, if it was not for the cursed priesthood that rules its people."

He spoke the last words with much bitterness. Taking another fond look at the lovely scene, he went down to his seat by the engine, and smiled to see the miners flock around the boiler to get warm.

The foreman comes and stands with watch in hand, and presently pulls a string. Ah, there goes the whistle, and the miners, those rough sons of toil, jump on the cage and go down, once more to search for the precious metals.

"Good morning, Sammy."

"Good morning, Mr. Shepard. Say, did you know we've got a new blacksmith."

"No; what's the matter with George?"

"Oh, he got his back up and quit."

"Yes? Is your new man as good as George?"