

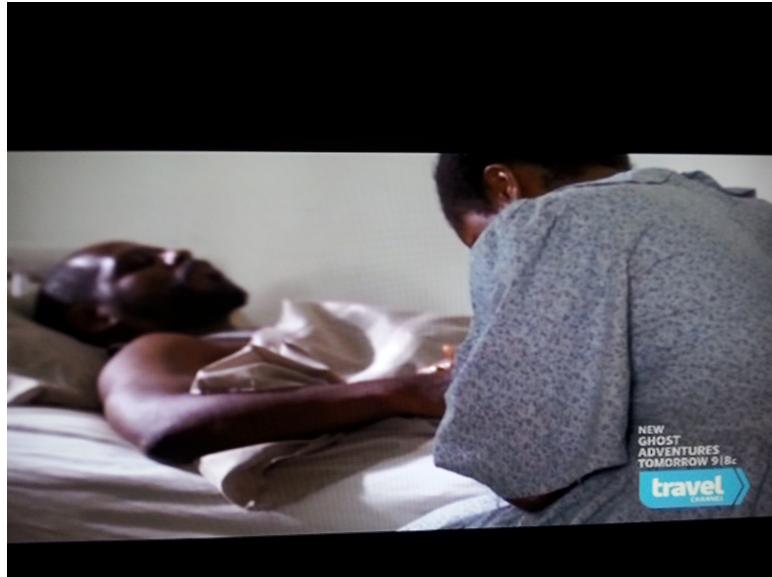
This story was taken from the Travel Channel's "Mysteries at the Museum"

The Greek revival, Colonial and Queen Ann style buildings that dot the city of New Orleans, form the famous backdrop for author, Anne Rice's terrifying tales of vampires. But this Louisiana city has long been a draw for those with an interest in the strange and unusual and no place offers a better taste than the New Orleans Historical Voodoo museum. Its riveting collection includes some of the Nation's most intriguing artifacts from this unique religious practice from cursed dolls and human skulls to a large voodoo alter. But according to the museum director, there is one rather crude artifact here that served the most sinister purpose. It's about 4 feet long and it's not particularly artistic but it does the job it's intended to do which is to inflict pain.



This instrument of torture was used in a horrifying mystery that stunned scientists and skeptics alike. The truth here is stranger than fiction. What role did this whip play in turning people into the waking dead?

Lastair, Haiti, 1962, after falling violently ill, a farmer named Clavious Narceese checks into a local hospital. Doctors are unable to diagnose his mysterious disease and Narceese family can only watch helplessly as he coughs up blood. After he was admitted, his condition got distinctively worse and just 3 days after arriving at the hospital, this poor man succumbs to this devastating disease and is pronounced dead. His family was very upset when he died, particularly his sister Angela. His body is promptly burned and his grieving family is left to wonder how a seemingly healthy man could suddenly fall prey to an unknown disease. It's a question they would be unable to answer for nearly 2 decades.



1980, Angelina Narceese is walking through her village when she sees a disheveled man on the road ahead. As she passes by, the stranger makes a seemingly

unbelievable claim. He says he is Clavious Narceese. Even though the man bears a striking resemblance to her long dead brother, Angelina is immediately suspicious because she was there when he died and saw him buried with her own eyes. But the stranger says he has proof of his identity. He began talking about things from their childhood and tells her his childhood nickname that only she would know. The intimate details convince Angelina the man is her brother but the sudden reunion raises a far more terrifying question....How has her brother seemingly returned from the dead?

Clavious said his chilling tale began 18 years ago, shortly before he fell ill and seemingly passed and it's an extreme case of sibling rivalry. His family owned property that his family wanted to sale and he refused to go along with it and apparently this upset one

of his brothers. To get him out of the picture, his brother enlisted the services of a voodoo priest who dealt in black magic. Narceese believed it was this priest who exposed him to a voodoo potion that educed his mysterious illness and even though he was unresponsive, Narceese was awake through every terrifying second of his terrifying ordeal. Clavious had to explain to his sister that he never died and that he was conscious the whole time they pronounced him dead but he could never move or speak, even as he was buried alive. Shortly after his own funeral, he was dug up and brought to a sugar plantation where in a strange daze,



he was forced to work as a slave at the mercy of a brutal master, he was beaten with a crudely made whip, the same kind now on display at the New Orleans Historic Voodoo museum. For years Narceese toiled on this plantation but one day, fate conspired to set him free. Eventually the person who was his slave master died. No longer under his master's sway, Narceese wondered off and



the mysterious fog that plagued his mind and body slowly faded. He roamed Haiti for years before this chance meeting with his sister finally allowed him to tale his astonishing tale, but the question remained, what kind of voodoo concoction could have induced this zombie like condition in Narceese. Analyzing the contents of common potions used by Haitian witch doctors, scientists later discovered that some contained traces of a neuro-toxic called tetrodotoxin or TTX and it came from an unexpected source. They found the toxin in a fish that commonly called a puffer fish. In small doses, TTX can suppress a person's vital signs to the point where even a doctor might not be able to distinguish the living from the dead. Their vital signs go down very, very low so there's very little respiration even. The effects can also linger causing a strange haze that overtook Narceese mind and body. Narceese had actually been turned into a zombie, not a B-grade movie zombie but a former collegial zombie.



Today the story of Clarvius Narceese continues to fascinate researchers. With this whip on display at the New Orleans Historic Voodoo Museum, serving as a reminder of one man's harrowing journey into the world of the living dead.