

The Buried Treasure of Cobre

most urgent. Whether from Washington the agents had warned them, whether in Camaguey they had deciphered the cablegram from the State Department, Everett could only guess, but was certain the cause of their visit was the treaty. That Mendoza also believed this was most evident.

Into the darkness, from which the two exits might emerge, he peered guiltily. With an oath he tore the treaty in half. Crushing the pieces of paper into a ball, he threw it at Everett's feet. His voice rose to a shriek. It was apparent he intended his words to carry to the men outside. Like an actor on a stage he waved his arms.

"*That is my answer!*" he shouted. "Tell your Secretary the choice he offers is an insult! It is blackmail. We will not sign his treaty. We do not desire his visit to our country." Thrilled by his own bravado, his voice rose higher. "Now," he shouted, "do we desire the presence of his representative. Your usefulness is at an end. You will receive your passports in the morning."

As he might discharge a cook, he waved Everett away. His hand, trembling with excitement, closed around the neck of the brandy-bottle. Everett stooped and secured the treaty. On his return to Washington, torn and rumpled as