

Señora de Moche and Alfonso, behind me, could only gasp their astonishment. Much as she would have liked to have the affair end in a general vindication of the curse she could not control a single, triumphant thrust.

"His blood," she cried, transfixing Norton with her stern eyes, "has cried out of Titicaca for vengeance from that day to this!"

"Want any help?"

We all turned toward the door as Burke, dust-covered and tired, stamped in, followed by a man whose face was bandaged and bloody.

"I heard shots. Is it all over?"

But we paid no attention to Burke.

There was Whitney, considerably banged up by the fall, but lucky to be alive.

"I tried to shake him," he explained, catching sight of Norton. "But he stuck to us, even on our detours. Finally he grew desperate—forced my car off the road. What happened after that, I don't know. He must have carried me some miles, insensible, and dumped me in the bushes again. I was several miles up the hill, tramping along, looking for a road-house, when this gentleman found me and said I had gone too far."

Señora de Moche turned from Lockwood and Inez who were standing, oblivious to the rest of us, and stared at Whitney's bruised and battered face.

"It is the curse," she muttered. "It will never——"

"Just a moment," interrupted Craig, drawing the