

The Buried Treasure of Cobre

"He has been so good to me," she said; "always so gentle. He has been mother and father to me. He is the first person I can remember. When I was a child he put me to bed, he dressed me, and he comforted me. When we became rich there was nothing he did not wish to give me. I cannot leave him. He needs me more than ever I need him. I am all he has. And there is this besides. Were I to marry, of all the men in the world I would be harder for him if I married you. For if you succeed in what you came here to do, the law will punish him, and he will know it was through you he was punished. And even between you and me there always would be that knowledge, that feeling."

"That is not fair," cried Everett. "I am not an individual fighting less fortunate individuals. I am an insignificant wheel in a great machine. You must not blame me because I——"

With an exclamation the girl reproached him.

"Because you do your duty!" she protested. "Is that fair to me? If for my sake or my brother's you failed in your duty, if you were less vigilant, less eager, even though we suffer, I could not love you."

Everett sighed happily.

"As long as you love me," he said, "neither your brother nor any one else can keep us apart."