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"I know, I know," she murmured, tapping the little bundle of papers impatiently; "but all this doesn't help us in the least."

But Van Ost was wound up. He was declaiming as to a rubic meeting. "Drake," he cried impassioned tones, "this scoundrel Drake cares no hetween 40 and 50, as at that time they are more hable to be far from welling of my heighbors knows how they elpedime, and she is now using them."

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But Van Ost was wound up. He was declaiming as to a rublic meeting.

"Drake," he cried impassioned tones, "this scoundrel Drake cares no more for the native of the Lobanzo than he does for the Martian, certianly far less than either you or I, and certainly Sir Glare Monk. Bah! I am sick with su 'a man; he is not a man at all, madame—he is a turgid humbug, playing the fool with a silly public which is just sitting around him asking him to make a fool of it. Mon Dieu! I will expose him; I will justify all of us. Only give me time, madame, only give me a few days—that is all I ask. Why, this Drake creature, he has never been out of this country in his life; he has never once set foot in Africa."

the lust of gain and greed her eyes.

"You talk exactly like Glare," said ther eyes.

"Really, Van Ost, I am not in the least interested in all this. I don't care whether Drake has been to the Lobanzo or whether he has not. All I know is that he looks very much like the lust of gain and greed.

"You remind me," she said, "that I have to stick to this abominable business, though I am so sick of it. If it weren't that I want money, that I must have money, I should get out of it mow, at once."

"That is impossible," put in Van Cost. He took a little paper from a little pap

"Me is nothing," said Vam Ost airily.
"He is not to be considered."
"But, for all that, he is doing an unceascionable amount of harm," she

"Quite so; but that is because the public has been feeled with lies," retorted Van Ost excitedly.

"Are they lies?" asked Theodera wearly. "The Lebanze was such a

wearily. "The Lebanze was such a long way away."

"Why, certainly, madame. Can you doubt it? The African native of the Lobanze—ugh! whe shall speak of him without being fil? He is not a man; he is a creature; he is animal, worse than animal. He is gross; he is unspeakable! Hew is it to be considered possible for a moment to treat him, to regard him, in our minds even, as Monsieur Drake would have us treat him, eh? Our Christian brother? Mon Dieu! He knows no honor, no decency—he must be whipped, not spoken to. He is lazy—ah, how lazy no one so well as myself can tell. Argument with him has no avail. Punishment must be meted out to him—punishment, chere, madame, that he will understand. Imprisonment? It is fust what he most likes: it is a re-Punishment must be meted out to him punishment, chere, madame, that he will understand. Imprisonment? It is just what he most likes; it is a reward, not a penalty. European chastisement? Eh? Ha, ha, it is to him as a luxurious massage. We must take that no one has the faintest suspicion that I have anything to do with the B.I.R.C.—Glare least of all. I know I owe that to you. I know that since I started speculating in rubber and sit in their comfortable houses and talk reactions as human beings—

Lea the American as human beings—

Call genius is extraordinary. There has never been the slightest hitch; everything has run on wheels. But I am sick of it, all the same. I know that no one has the faintest suspicion that I have anything to do with the B.I.R.C.—Glare least of all. I know I owe that to you. I know that since I started speculating in rubber ahas never been the slightest hitch; everything has run on wheels. But I am sick of it, all the same. I know that no one has the faintest suspicion that I have anything to do with the B.I.R.C.—Glare least of all. I know I owe that to you. I know that since I started speculating in rubber approached the same of the properties of the properties of the same of the properties awimi as human beings— ey should just take a little bliday in the B.I.R.C., and summer h

Lady Monk shook her head impatiently.

"My good Van Ost," she said, "your opinion of the wratched niggers of the Lobanzo is of no interest to me." She moved her shoulders in a shrug that consigned those unimportant children of the human race to limbo. Nothing interested her at that precise moment Interested her at that precise moment except the papers that she held in her hand and wanted to destroy, and the place she found herself in, which she wanted to get out of. Yet it was noticeable that, for all her haughtiness and her scarcely veiled contempt for the strange specimen of humanity with whom she was thus incongruously but your processorily brought into contact. whom she was thus meongradusly wery necessarily brought into contact she eyed him with a certain curious deference, and waited for him to take the initiative in the destruction of the papers, which was obviously the purpose for which he had brought her to this uneavory spot

this unsavory spot.

But VanO st, like all foreigners, ever the most frivolous, was serious in matters of the brain, and of business, and, although he could thrust and parry verbally with the best, he did not feel inclined at the particular moment to lose the main point in a maze of obscure innuendo, which was Lady Monk's favorite mode of con-

maze of obscure innuendo, which was Lady Monk's favorite mode of conducting the conversation on the rare occasions when they met. He did not consider, like an Englishman would have done, that he owed a beautiful woman gallantry even in business.

"Tell me," he said, "if I am not right in thus designating the native as something much lower than an ordinary domestic animal? You know all about them, chere madame. You, with your immoderately brilliant mind,

all about them, chere madame. You, with your immoderately brilliant mind, must long ago have made yourself complete mistress of the situation."

"I don't know anything about the wretched creatures," she said. She spoke snappily; and, as she looked at him, she did not seek to conceal her distaste. In her own mind, she was not at all certain that a healthy, full-

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one of the natural healthy instincts and impulses of a man. She decided that no cannibal could be more revolting than Henri Van Ost, with his insufferable dandyism, his cosmetics, and his superlative conceit. She would probably have found him merely comic had she not been to a certain extent in his power.

"I think, madame, that you belittle your own great intelligence," he said with a smile.

"Well, anyhow, I don't

with a smile.

"Well, anyhow, I don't want to talk about the brutes," she retorted. "I'm sick to death of the whole thing."

"But Sir Glare, your good husband, the great over-lord of the Lobanzo, as they call him," persisted Van Ost, carrying out his line of thought quite regardless of her impatience, "does he not think as I do about the matter? In his heart and mind, into which, madame, you no doubt penetrate deeper than other human being, does he not hold exactly the same opinions?

Does he not realize that there is only Does he not realize that there is only

one thing to make these niggers work

—the whip?"

"Oh, Glare talks much as you do,"
she said indifferently. "He doesn't
think much of these niggers—nobody
does who's ever been out there. But,
then he's different He wouldn't

does who's ever been out there. But, then, he's different. He wouldn't countenance any of the awful things that you do."

"That we do," he corrected, with a smile and an exaggerated bow.

"Oh, we if you like. I'm not thinskinned. I'm talking about my husband. Ile has a great public position, and he has a conscience. And he's not so greedy as you are—"

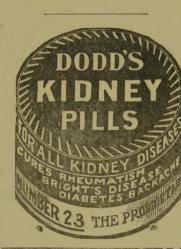
"As we are!" he reminded her again, with another bow, whose very exaggeration of respect was a delicate mockery.

mockery.

Theodora gave a harsh laugh, and a shadow swept across her face. For a second a light that was sheer lust—

Ost. He took a little paper from a small bundle and rolled himself a digarette with Lobanzo tebacco, that he carried in an oval silver box. He had extraordinary hands for a man; they were perfectly shaped, and almost transparent, and the veins showed blue. Their every movement was instinct with indescribable grace. "Allew me to make that very clear, madame. It is absolutely impossible. It would be fatal, indeed. At this point we must not have any distorbe.

(To be continued.)



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