

4 THE MYSTERY OF THE GREEN HEART

was gowned, in the words of those round about, as though for a ball or a party. And this rich gown of pansy chiffon embroidered in flowers of pink and gold, over a skirt of white silk, spoke of tragedy so surely that even the doctor began to admit its possibilities.

"Bring the boat round," he cried in a stern tone; and then to one of the lads, "Run to the police station, my boy, and send an inspector here. Tell him it is urgent."

The lad was only too willing to escape a scene so grim, and went headlong upon his errand. The boat meanwhile was brought round very gently to the bank and the body lifted to the grass. There they laid it upon the cushions from the skiff while Dr. Travis put his fingers upon the pulseless wrist and then pressed his ear to a heart which would never beat again.

"She is quite dead," he said, rising at length, and then, "Poor lady, there has been foul play here; it is a case for the police."

They heard him with awe. The lock-keeper was now upon the scene, and eager questions were addressed to him. When the inspector from the station at length arrived, he drove the merely curious away, and then talked aside with Dr. Travis.

"I have sent for the ambulance, sir. The surgeon has been telephoned. Do you make anything of it?—do you know the lady?"

"I can tell you nothing," said the doctor. "They awoke me a little after five, and I came at once. She has been dead some hours, though. I leave it to your surgeon to say how many."

"But it is not a natural death."

"I think not, though it might be the heart. She has suffered much—the lower limbs were paralysed before she died."

"Poor thing—and a very beautiful woman, sir. You can see she comes of a class." The doctor then listened to the lock-keeper. For the first time some whisper of identity was to be heard, and the mention of a name.

"The boat's from Highlands Castle, sir—the prince's place."

"How do you know that?"