

CHAPTER XIII

THE RELEASE

It was morning, and they still sat in Ralph's cell.

The attendant had brought in stools and a tall chair with a broken back, and these were grouped round the low wooden bed ; the old man in the chair on one side, from where he could look down on his son's face, with Beatrice beside him, Chris and Nicholas on the other side. Mr. Morris was everywhere, sitting on a form by the door, in and out with food and medicine, at his old master's bedside, lifting his pillow, turning him in bed, holding his convulsive hands.

He had been ill six days, the Lieutenant told them. The doctor who had been called in from outside named the disease *phrenitis*. It was certain that he would not recover ; and a message to that effect had been sent across on the morning before, with the usual reports to Greenwich.

They had supped as they sat—silently—on what the gaoler brought ; and had slept by turns in the tall chair, wakening at a sound from the bed ; at the movement of the light across the floor as Morris slipped to and fro noiselessly ; at the chirp of the birds and the noises of the stirring City as the daylight broadened on the wall, and the narrow window grew bright and luminous.

And now the morning was high, and they were waiting for the end.

A little table stood by the door, white-covered, with