

"You did very well, sir," put in Mr. Herries ironically. "You terrified his Grace, I think."

Chris glanced at the lawyer; but Nicholas took it all with the greatest complacency; tilted his hilt a little forward, smoothed his doublet, and sat smiling and well-pleased.

They reached the Stairs presently and put Mr. Herries ashore.

"I will be at your house to-morrow, sir," he said, "when you go to take Mr. Ralph out of prison. The order will be there by the morning, I make no doubt."

He bowed and smiled and moved off, a stiff figure deliberately picking its way up the oozy steps to the crowded street overhead.

Beatrice's face was at the window as they came up the tide half-an-hour later. Chris stood up in the wherry, when he saw it, and waved his cap furiously, and the face disappeared.

She was at the landing stage before they reached it, a slender brilliant figure in her hood and mantle, with her aunt beside her. Chris stood up again and cried between his hands across the narrowing space that all was well; and her face was radiant as the boat slipped up to the side, and balanced there with the boatman's hand on the stone edging.

"It is all well," said Chris again as he stood by her a moment later. "He is to go free, and we are to tell him."

He dared not look at her; but he was aware that she stood very still and rigid, and that her eyes were on his father's.

"Oh! Mistress Beatrice——"