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## CY WHITTAKER'S PLACE

The city had changed greatly. He would scarcely have known it. He went to the hotel where he had stayed before and found a big modern building in its place. The clerk was inclined to be rather curt and perfunctory at first, but when he learned that the captain was not anxious concerning the price of accommodations, but merely wanted a "comfortable berth" somewhere on the saloon deck, and appeared to have plenty of money he grew polite. Captain Cy was shown to his room, where he left his valise. Then he went down to dinner.

After the meal was over he seated himself in one of the big leather chairs in the hotel lobby, smoked and thought. In the summer, before Bos'n came and before her father had arisen to upset every calculation and wreck all his plans, the captain had given serious thought to what he should do if Congressman Atkins failed, as even then he seemed likely to do, in securing that appropriation. The obvious thing, of course, would have been to hunt up Mr. Atkins and question him. But this was altogether too obvious. In the first place the strained relations between them would make the interview uncomfortable, and in the second if there was anything underhand in Heman's backsliding on the appropriation Atkins was too wary a bird to be snared with questions.

But Captain Cy had another acquaintance in the city, the son of a still older acquaintance, who had been a wealthy shipping merchant and mine owner in California. The son was also a congressman from a coast state, and the captain had read of him in the papers. A sketch of his life had been printed, and this made his identity absolutely certain. Captain Cy's original idea had been to write to this congressman. Now he determined to find and interview him.

He inquired concerning him of the hotel clerk, who, like all Washington clerks, was a walking edition of "Who's Who at the Capital." "Congressman Everdean?" repeated the all-knowing gentleman. "Yes, he's in town. Has rooms at the Gloria, second hotel on the right as you go up the avenue—only a short walk. What can I do for you, sir?"

The Gloria was an even bigger hotel than the one where the captain had his "berth." An inquiry at the desk of another important clerk was answered with a brisk:

"Mr. Everdean? Yes, he rooms here. Don't know whether he's in or not.

Evening, judge. Nice winter weather we're having."

The judge, who was a ponderous person, vaguely suggesting the great Heman, admitted that the weather was fine, patronizing it as he did so. The clerk continued the conversation. Captain Cy waited. At length he spoke.

"Excuse me, commodore," he said. "I don't like to break in until you've settled whether you have it snow or not, but I'm here to see Congressman Everdean. Hadn't you better order one of your fo'mast hands to hunt him up?"

The judge condescended to smile, as did several other men who stood near. The clerk reddened.

"Do you want to see Mr. Everdean?" he snapped.

"Why, yes, I did. But I can't see him from here without strainin' my eyesight."

The clerk sharply demanded one of the captain's visiting cards. He didn't get one, for the very good reason that there was none in existence.

"Tell him an old friend of his dad's is here on the main deck waitin' for him," said Captain Cy. "That'll do first rate. Thank you, admiral."

Word came that the congressman would be down in a few moments. The captain beguiled the interval by leaning on the rail and regarding the clerk with an awed curiosity that annoyed its object exceedingly. The inspection was still on when a tall man of an age somewhere in the early thirties walked briskly up to the desk.

"Who is it that wants to see me?" he asked.

The clerk waved a deprecatory hand in Captain Cy's direction. The newcomer turned.

"My name is Everdean," he said. "Are you— Hey! Great Scott! Is it possible this is Captain Whittaker?"

The captain was immensely pleased.

"Well, I declare, Ed!" he exclaimed. "I didn't believe you'd remember me after all these years. You was nothin' but a boy when I saw you out in Frisco. Well, well! No wonder you're in congress. A man that can remember faces like that ought to be president."

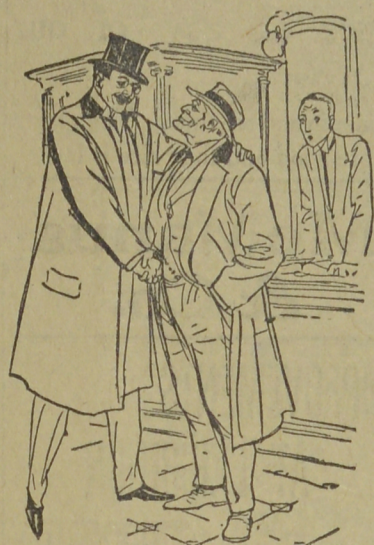
Everdean laughed as they shook hands.

"Don't suppose I'd forget the chap who used to dine with us and tell me those sea stories, do you?" he said. "I'm mighty glad to see you. What are you doing here? The last father and I heard of you you were in South America. Given up the sea, they said, and getting rich fast."

Captain Cy chuckled.

"It's a good thing I learned long ago not to believe all I hear," he answered. "Else I'd have been so sure I was rich that I'd have spent all I had and been a permanent boarder at the poorhouse by now. No, thanks; I've had dinner. Why, yes, I'll smoke if you'll help along. How's your father? Smart, is he?"

The congressman insisted that they should adjourn to his rooms. An unmarried man, he kept bachelor's hall



"IS IT POSSIBLE THIS IS CAPTAIN WHITTAKER?"

at the hotel during his stay in Washington. There in comfortable chairs they spoke of old times, when the captain was seafaring and the Everdean home had been his while his ship was in port at Frisco. He told of his return to Bayport and the renovation of the old house. Of Bos'n he said nothing. At last Everdean asked what had brought him to Washington.

"Well," said Captain Cy. "I'll tell you. I'm like the feller in court without a lawyer—he said he couldn't tell whether he was guilty or not 'count of havin' no professional advice. That's what I've come to you for, Ed—professional advice."

He told the harbor appropriation story. At the incident of the "committee of one's" his friend laughed heartily.

"Rather put your foot in it that time, Captain, didn't you?" he said.

"Yup. Then I got t'other one stuck tryin' to get the first clear. How'd it look to you? All straight, do you think, or is there a nigger in the wood pile?"

Mr. Everdean seemed to reflect.

"Well, Captain," he said, "I can't tell. You're asking delicate questions. Politicians are like doctors—they usually back up each other's opinions. Still, you're at least as good a friend of mine as Atkins is. Queer he should bob up in this matter. Why, he—but never mind that now. I tell you, Captain Whittaker, you come around and have dinner with me tomorrow night. In the meantime I'll see the chairman of the committee on that bill—one of the so called 'pork' bills it is. Possibly from him and some other acquaintances of mine I may learn something. At any rate, you come to dinner."

So the invitation was accepted, and Captain Cy went back to his own hotel and his room. He slept but little, although it was not worry over the appropriation question which kept him awake. Next morning he wrote a note to Georgianna giving his Washington address. With it he inclosed a long letter to Bos'n, telling her he should be home pretty soon and that she must be a good girl and "boss the ship" during his absence. He sent his regards to Asaph and Bailey, but Phoebe's name he did not mention. Then he put in a miserable day wandering about the city. At 8 that evening he and his western friend sat down at a corner table in the big dining room of the Gloria.

(To be Continued)

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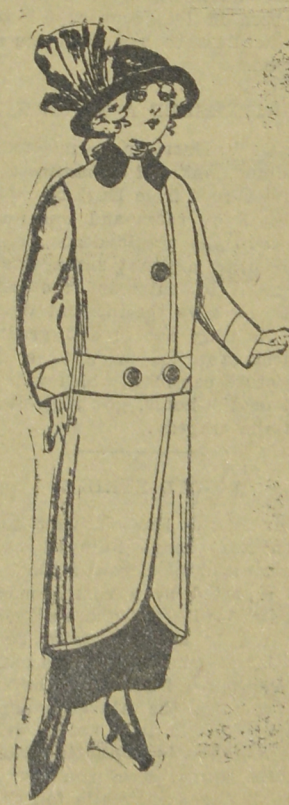
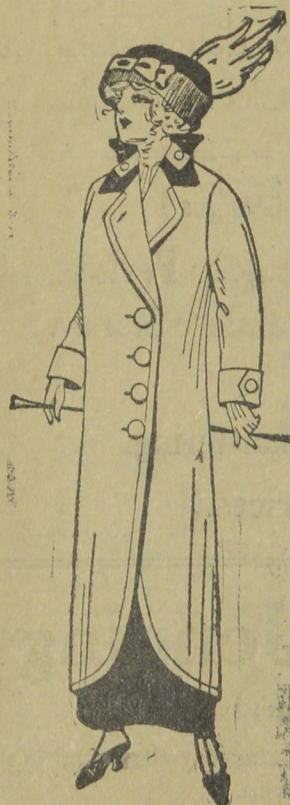
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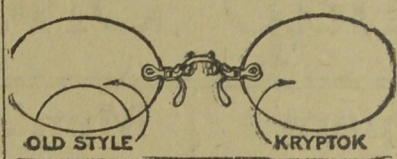
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