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"wny. yes: 'bout as good as there is. What makes you look so glum?" Asaph hesitated.

"Phoebe was here yesterday, too, wan't she?" he asked.

'Yup. What of it?"

"And the day afore that?" "No, not for three days afore that. But what of it, I ask you?"

"Well, now, Cy, you mustn't get mad. I'm a friend of yours, and friends ought to be able to say most anything to each other. If—if I was you I wouldn't let Phoebe come so often—not here, you know, at your house. Course I know she comes with Bos'n and all, but"-

"Out with it!" The captain's tone was ominous. "What are you drivin'

The caller fidgeted.
"Well, Whit," he stammered, "there's

consider'ble talkin' goin' on, that's all.' "Talkin'? What kind of talkin'?" "Well, you know the kind. This town does a good deal of it, specially

after church and prayer meetin'. Seem's if they thought 'twas a sort of proper place, I don't myself. I kind of like to keep my charity and brotherly love spread out through the week, "Ase, are the folks in this town say-

in' a word against Phoebe Dawes because she comes here to see-Bos'n?" "Don't—don't get mad, Whit. Don't look at me like that. I ain't said nothin'. Why, a spell ago at the boardin'

He told of the meal at the perfect boarding house, where Miss Dawes championed his friend's cause; also of the conversation which followed and his own part in it. Captain Cy paced the floor.

"I wouldn't have her come so often, Cy," pleaded Asaph, "honest I wouldn't. Course you and me know they're mean, miser'ble liars, but it's Dentist her I'm thinkin' of. She's a young woman and single, and you're a good rille and Pokiok. At Stanley office many years older'n she is. And so, of course, you and she ain't ever goin' to get married. And have you thought what effect it might have on her keepin' her teacher's place? The committee's a majority against her as 'tis. And-you know I don't think so, but a good many folks do-you ain't got the best name just now. Darn it all, I ain't puttin' this the way I'd ought to, but you know what I mean, don't you,

> Captain Cy was leaning against the window frame, his head upon his arm. He was not looking out, because the shade was drawn. Tidditt waited anxiously for him to answer. At last he

"Ase," he said, "I'm much obliged to you. You've pounded it in pretty hard, but I cal'late I'd ought to have had it done to me. I'm a fool-an old fool, just as I said awhile back-and nothin' nor nobody ought to have made me forget it. For a minute or so I- But there; don't you fret. That young woman shan't risk her job nor her reputation on account of me-nor of Bos'n, either. I'll see to that. And, see here." he added fiercely, "I can't stop women's tongues, even when they're as bad as some of the tongues in this town. but if you hear a man say one word against Phoebe Dawes, only one word. you tell me his name. You hear, Ase? You tell me his name. Now run along, will you? I ain't safe company just

Asaph, frightened at the effect of his words, hurriedly departed. Captain Cy paced the room for the next fifteen minutes; then he opened the kitchen

"Bos'n," he called, "come in and set in my lap awhile. Don't you want to? I'm-I'm sort of lonesome, little girl." The next afternoon, when the schoolmistress, who had been delayed by the inevitable examination papers, stopped at the Cy Whittaker place she was met by Georgianna. Emily, who stood behind the housekeeper in the doorway, was crying.

"Cap'n Cy has gone away, to Wash-in'ton," declared Georgianna, "though what he's gone there for's more'n I know. He said he'd send his hotel address soon's he got there. He went on the 3 o'clock train."

Phoebe was astonished. "Gone?" she repeated. Why, he told me he should certainly be here to hear some news I expected today. Didn't he leave any message for me?"

The housekeeper turned red.
"Miss Phoebe," she said, "he told me to tell you somethin', and it's so dreadful I don't hardly dast to say it. think his troubles have driven him crazy. He said to tell you that you'd better not come to this house any

CHAPTER XVIII.

N the old days, the great days of sailing ships and merchant fleets, Bayport was a com-munity of travelers. Every ambitious man went to sea and eventually, if he lived, became a captain. Then he took his wife and, in most cases, his children with him on long voyages. To the stay at homes came

letters with odd foreign stamps and postmarks. Our whatnots and parlor mantels were filled with carved bits of ivory, gorgeous shells, alabaster candlesticks and plaster miniatures of the leaning tower at Pisa or the Coliseum at Rome. We usually began a conversation with, "When my husband and I were at Hongkong the last time" -or, "I remember at Mauritius they

always"- New Orleans and Frisco

were the nearest domestic ports the

mention of which was considered

worth while. But this is so no longer. A trip to Boston is, of course, no novelty to the most of us, but when we visit New York we take care to advertise it beforehand. And the few who avail themselves of the spring "cut rates" and go on excursions to Washington plan definite programmes for each day at the capital and discuss them with envious friends for weeks in advance. And if the prearranged program is not scrupulously carried out we feel that we have been defrauded. It was the regret of Aunt Sophronia Hallett's life that on her Washington excursion she had not seen the "diplomatic corpse." She saw the president and the monument and congress and "the relics in the Smithsonian institution,' but the "corpse" was not on view. Aunt Sophronia never quite got over the disappointment.

Probably no other Bayporter in recent years has started for Washington on such short notice or with so ill defined a program as Captain Cy. He went because he felt that he must go somewhere. After the conversation with Asaph he simply could not remain at home. If Phoebe Dawes called he knew that he must see her, and if he saw her what should he say her? He could not tell her that s must not visit the Cy Whittaker p again. If he did she would in upon the reason. If he told her of "town talk" he felt sure, knowing that she would indignantly refus heed the malicious gossip. And was firmly resolved not to permit to compromise her life and her futur by friendship with a social outcast like himself. As for anything deeper and more sacred than friendship, that was ridiculous. If for a moment a remark of hers had led him to dream of such a thing it was because he was as he had so often declared, an "old

So Captain Cy had resolved upon flight, and he fled to Washington because the business of the "committee of one" offered a legitimate excuse for going there. The blunt message he had intrusted to Georgianna would, he believed, arouse Phoebe's indignation She would not call again. And when he returned to Bos'n it would be to take up the child's fight alone. If he lost that fight, or when he lost it, he would close the Cy Whittaker place and leave Bayport for good.

He had been in Washington once be fore, years ago, when he was first mate of a ship and had a few weeks' shore ure trip with some seagoing friends and had a jolly time. But there was precious little jollity in the present visit. He had never felt so thoroughly miserable. In order to forget he made up his mind to work his hardest to discover why the harbor appropriation

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