

The Only Way

A Fascinating Romance by Alan Adams

CHAPTER V

A daisy, untidy lodging in an English slum. An unkempt man, with all the signs of drink and dissipation upon his low face; such was the man and such was the surroundings of a man whom Alan Mackenzie used to visit in his beautiful estate of La Paz.

Alan Mackenzie's denunciation of him had been his ruin. He had tried to retrieve himself, had speculated, and had floundered deeper into the mire. He made even Rio too hot for him, and returned to England. Veronica's disappearance meant nothing to him. He would have got rid of her to the highest matrimonial bidder, that was all.

He was just now sitting at the corner of a very dirty bed, with a glass of some spirits at his elbow. He looked pleased with himself. "So he married her!" he said, and burst out into rude laughter. "He married her and she got drowned! Who would have thought it of them, both so innocent! Now there is only one thing to be considered. Shall I let him marry the other, and bleed him afterwards, or shall I stop it now? Which will hurt him most, I wonder? I think he loves this girl. Shall I separate them?"

He thought a moment. A look of cunning came over his face. "No," he said. "They shall get married. I will give him six weeks, and then he shall either bribe me or be exposed!"

He rubbed his hands with glee and then pulled himself up again. "But he can't go to cheat me of my revenge!" he cried. "That would be nothing—a man soon forgets a woman. After all, it will be the woman who suffers most; but he—she has beguiled me! He has deprived me of my very life! He shall suffer for it. I shall never rest until my knife is driven into his very heart!"

Hutchinson took a draught at his glass. "There's nothing left me but this," he said—"nothing! And I have so much—carriages and horses, and fine living and everything going well. I should have been the richest man in this the most powerful Englishman over there. There is no need for me to grieve my memory lest I forget; the wonder is that I did not come across him before. Let me see, he is such a soft, he will have told this girl all about it before. No, no! My best plan will be to wait until after the marriage—his second marriage! And Veronica?"

"Well, she does not know where to find either him or me. I can drop her for a week or two. She has more cunning in her than I should have thought possible, for she never mentioned Mackenzie's name to me. I had my idea that he knew anything about her. It was the merest guesswork; but what a chance! I haven't had a chance for more than four years. Perhaps the luck has turned, and the man who ruined me is destined to put me on my legs again. But no quarter! Whatever he does I shall still take my revenge!"

Meanwhile, the object of all these plots and plans had gone home a little disturbed. Alan Mackenzie could not look unmoved at the picture of the wreck of a man's life. He knew that he counted for something in Hutchinson's ruin—nay, for a great deal. Hutchinson had never been a good man; but there had been a difference between the man who schemed at La Paz, surrounded by every luxury, and the dirty, drunken scoundrel he had met in the streets of London.

Then, too, the mention of Veronica disturbed him. He had never thought so much about her as he had lately, perhaps because he had never understood before what love meant. Now, in his love for Joyce, he began better to understand the poor dead girl's feelings. He did not regret that he had not loved her better; he rather rejoiced that his best love should go to Joyce. And he knew that he had always been perfectly kind to her, as he was to most women; but he knew now what the separation from him must have meant to Veronica, and how, when she was drowning even, her one regret would be that she should see his face no more!

The preparations for the wedding went on apace. Joyce was very popular among her friends, and quite recognized to be a pearl among womanhood. The General Grenville, her father, had a large acquaintance who were all disposed to make much of the beautiful, bright girl. Not a few men were victims of Alan's look. There was quite a little stir in the circle of which Joyce was the ornament. It only needed a further step in the wedding

and Joyce and her betrothed were driving down Regent street together. It was the beginning of May, and they were to be married on the seventeenth. Both Joyce and Alan were willing to forego the details of the London season. They had taken a charming house in the country, where they intended to spend the summer in honeymooning. If they liked the neighborhood, and it suited them, they thought of buying it, as a little country house where they could live when tired of London. But for this season it was to be their home as soon as they had returned from abroad. They were on their way to Liberty's to buy hangings for their new abode when a block occurred in the traffic. Joyce and Alan were laughing at some foolish joke, and waiting for their hansom to be allowed to move on. A slight woman with a child in her arms attracted his attention.

The child was about three, and Alan could see that his head was covered with rich brown curls. He could not see the woman, but the pose of her head seemed familiar to him. In an instant the color forsook his face, and everything seemed to turn black before his eyes. When he had regained control over himself the woman was gone. Joyce turned quickly and saw the pallor on his face.

"Alan," she cried, in alarm, "my darling, what is it? Are you not well?"

"A passing faintness," he said. He could not tell her that this strange woman carrying a child, and whom of course he had never seen before, reminded him of Veronica, and it gave him a shock.

"Are you often like this?" she asked, anxiously. "Oh, Alan, there is only a fortnight more, and then I shall be able to come and take care of you always! I am sure you do too much," she added, tenderly.

He gripped her hand hard. It would be exquisite to have her with him always; but he was truthful above all things. "I have never been faint before," he said.

"Then it is the prospect of spending life with me that alarms you," she said, gaily. Alan had regained his usual color and his usual manner. The cab stopped at the door of the shop, and he sprang out to help her down. They were both very much interested over their purchase. Joyce had exquisite taste, and Alan was deeply interested in getting all that she wanted; but he was conscious all the time of a feeling of strain. Do what he would he could not get the woman's figure out of his head. It was an utter absurdity that this strange woman with her child should have so upset him, and he hated himself for the thought that he must always keep something from Joyce. Although she knew all about it, yet he felt that he should not have liked to tell her why he turned faint when the hansom stopped. He did so years to be entirely one with the girl who had promised herself to him, and how could he with the shadow of the past over him? And all the time that he criticized Joyce's hangings, and the colors and tints that would do well with her fair skin and light hair, he felt an undercurrent of restlessness.

"It's only because my happiness has made me nervous. I feel like the old Greeks, who made libations to their gods when some great good fortune happened to them. If I could only give something—a thank-offering—for what I have got!"

Joyce was too much in sympathy with him not to know that something was worrying him. They went to lunch at some quiet place, and when she had got her gloves off she put her hand in his and said: "Now, what is worrying you? I must know!"

He looked at her, and, to her surprise, his eyes were full of tears. "Joyce," he said, "I cannot quite tell you, because it is difficult to make you understand. When our cab stopped in Oxford street, and I turned faint, I saw a woman—with a child who reminded me of poor dead Veronica. Mind you, I did not see her face, but something in her walk was like, and—"

Joyce was as pale as Alan had been. "It has made you sad, Alan. You loved her more than you thought."

"No, no!" he said. "It is not that at all, Joyce, but the sight of that strange woman made me realize how necessary you are to me. Darling, it is because I love you so that I cannot bear to think of losing you. If I had to wait another two months instead of two weeks I think I should go mad!"

He pushed his hair from his brow and leant his head on his hand. Joyce saw that he was overdone and nervous, and that she must brace him up a little. She recognized, with a gasp of thankfulness to God, that here was a man who loved her as few men love women, and that the poor dead girl could never have had his heart. It was only pity, as he had said. She saw this in a flash even as she looked at him.

"Alan," she said softly, "put away these fears, sweetheart. She has been a little sick in the circle of which Joyce was the ornament. It only needed a further step in the wedding

and blood would contain the story! Not we belong to each other for always, and—Here comes our lunch, and you will have to eat it."

And he did eat it, cheered by the sunshine of her eyes and the music of her voice. And after lunch they set up in one of the balconies and watched the boats go down the grimy but sunlit bosom of Mother Thames, for the hotel looked out upon the river. And Alan smoked, and they made plans for the future. Where they would go, and what they would do, and what they would see, together, together, together always. And they talked of the folly of married men and women who go their separate ways, not recognizing the divinely blessed link between husband and wife. And when they rose to go they knew that they were nearer to each other than they had ever been before. It had been a golden afternoon, although now the sun had gone from the river, and the mist was rising a little. Still, as Joyce said, "No mist can blot the sun out forever." She meant it as an allegory, and as an allegory Alan understood it.

And then they drove home again together, and that evening Alan spent quietly, doing a little work which was necessary, seeing that he had spent a good many hours doing nothing but making love to Joyce. And on the morrow he had forgotten the strange turn that the woman had given him. Nothing happened during the next fortnight, which went all too slowly for him, until his wedding day. On the contrary, each day his heart became lighter, and he looked forward each day to that which would see the consummation of his dearest desire.

And so the wedding day came, and Alan forgot everything but that the sweetest woman in the world was going to belong to him from that day forward forevermore. His responses rang out clear and fluent, as did hers. He forgot Hutchinson and Hutchinson's enigmatic prophecy—that there might be a strange wedding guest—though he could not have known that Hutchinson had changed his mind, and that there would be no strange wedding guest that day.

He forgot everything, save that the time was coming nearer and nearer when the carriage door would be closed behind him and Joyce, and he would whisk her off, his own dear bride. And it is no exaggeration to say that the sun had never shone on two happier people than Alan and Joyce MacKenzie.

(To be continued.)

Miss Elizabeth Alden Curtis, the talented niece of United States Attorney General Griggs, and one of the latest verifiers of the Kurbatov, has a penchant for scientific pursuits, and takes great pleasure in mountain climbing, forest searching and geologizing, says the Philadelphia Post. Last summer, while rustling at Lake George, she went walking with a party of friends, chiefly college men and women, and came across some of the beautiful minerals which abound in that district. They picked out a number of specimens which they carried back to the hotel. Here they exhibited their treasure-trove to the other guests, more especially a piece of rose quartz, in which were many flakes of plumbago. Miss Curtis, after explaining, left the veranda, giving the quartz to a benevolent-looking, spectacled old lady. She had scarcely departed when the latter, who had been scratching the specimen with her scissors, broke out: "That girl is either fooling us or else she is crazy. Plumbago, indeed! It is nothing but an old stone with some black pencil lead in it!"

There is a variety of grebe (colymbus minor) which hatches its young on a regular raft. Its nest is a mass of strong stems of aquatic plants closely fastened together. These plants contain a considerable quantity of air in their cells and set free gases in the process of decaying. The air and the gases imprisoned in the plant make the nest lighter than water. The bird usually sits quietly on its eggs, but if any intruder approaches or any danger is feared the mother plunges one foot in the water, and, using it as a paddle, transports her floating nest to a distance, often dragging along with it a sheet of water plants. A naturalist who frequently watched this remarkable removal says: "The whole structure looks like a little floating island carried along by the labor of the grebe, which moves in the center of a mass of verdure."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Most people are familiar with the famous whispering gallery in St. Paul's, but there are other instances of curious, if less well known, echoes in churches. In a Sussex church there is said to be one of the most remarkable ever known, while in a Hertfordshire church the tick of a watch may be heard from one end of the building to the other. It is also stated that the cathedral of Gargenti, Sicily, the slightest whisper is borne with perfect distinctness from the great western door to the cornice behind the altar, a distance of about 150 feet.

Two of the largest Ruhmkorff coils ever made have been ordered in the United States for a foreign government, and will give an electric spark forty-five inches in length expending energy amounting to three or four horse power, and having a potential of half a million volts.

THOUSANDS DIE BY FLOOD AND WIND. Coast Cities of Texas Visited by West Indian Hurricane.

Advised regarding the awful effects of the storm which raged along the Gulf coast of Texas began to arrive Sunday and the story they told was fraught with horror. First in importance was the news that Galveston was struck by a tidal wave and that the loss of life there was between 2,500 and 3,000. The water was fifteen feet deep over Virginia point. Every effort was made to get telegraphic or cable communication with the wrecked city, but to little avail.

From the Red river on the north to the Gulf on the south and throughout the central part of the state, Texas was

south of Waco, every town on the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe south of Temple, and every town on the Houston and Texas Central south of Herne has been badly injured.

Early telegrams were received at Houston from most of these places except those still further south than Houston, and hardly one failed to report some deaths, along with a story of many buildings wrecked, in some cases even to the destruction of all the buildings in the town.

The only serious railroad accident reported as due to the storm occurred south of Houston Saturday night. A

trade in 1892 exceeded \$70,000,000, and since then has largely increased. It shipped to domestic and foreign ports more than 1,000,000 bales of cotton in 1893, and these figures have since been greatly exceeded. According to the census of 1890 it had a population of almost 30,000 and contained 187 manufacturing establishments, representing a capital of almost \$5,000,000, and an annual product of about the same amount. The population in 1900 is 37,789.

W. S. Wall of Houston, who has a summer home at Morgan's Point, relates the escape of Mrs. Wall during Saturday night's tidal wave:

"My wife had not been long at the hotel, where she was taking supper," said he. "James Black, a merchant, rushed into the dining room and called upon all to flee for their lives. The tidal wave was on them in an instant, and almost before they could leave the hotel to go to a higher point, the rushing waters were all about them more than three feet deep. Mr. Black, struggling against the elements, bore my wife in safety to the Vincent home.

"Returning immediately to the hotel, Mr. Black in a like manner brought safely to the Vincent home his aged father and mother. His next act of heroism was to rescue Mrs. Rushmore,

SECTION OF TEXAS DEVASTATED BY HURRICANE.



stormswept for thirty hours by a West Indian hurricane, which laid waste property, caused great loss of life, and effectually stopped all telegraphic and telephone communication south of Austin, while the operation of trains was seriously handicapped. Starting with the hurricane which visited Galveston and the coast Saturday noon, and which prevailed there to such an extent that no communication was had with the island to ascertain what the loss to life and property were, the hurricane made rapid inroads into the center of the state, stopping long enough Saturday night at Houston to get the buildings of the city and to cause much loss to property interests there. Advancing inland the storm swept into the towns of Hempstead, 50 miles above Houston, thence to Chaparral Hill, 20 miles farther; thence to Brenham, 20 miles further, wrecking all three towns and terrorizing the people beyond expression. The storm was so destructive at those points as to blow over quite a number of houses and several persons were killed.

3,000 People Drowned.

The city of Galveston, flooded many feet deep with water, with half its buildings wrecked and perhaps 3,000



GALVESTON JETTIE.

of its inhabitants drowned, is the chief sufferer in the hurricane horror of southern Texas.

Port Arthur, its rival further to the east, has escaped with a drizzling from a foot of water in the streets and with the loss of a few piers.

But many other towns and villages and cities have suffered as well as Galveston, and, in proportion to their size, suffered almost as severely.

The situation for all of southern Texas is a terrible one, but for Galveston it is one of horror.

The bridge across the bay from the mainland to the island on which Galveston is built are either wrecked or too badly damaged to use. The only one that may by any chance be standing is that of the Galveston, Houston and Northern railroad, and it cannot be used because the drawbridges over creeks to the north are gone.

As to the country north of Galveston it is thought that every town on the Missouri, Kansas and Texas railroad

Santa Fe train was lifted bodily and blown off the tracks about two miles north of Alvin. Mrs. Prather of Rosenberg, Texas, was killed and half a dozen people were injured.

The train was running slowly at the time of the wreck, which accounts for the comparatively small loss of life. The car in which Mrs. Prather was riding was thrown into the water and she was pinned down with her head out of a window in such a manner that she drowned before help came.

Not a House Standing.

Among other towns south of Houston, Hitchcock is reported to have suffered severely, while Alva Loma, a little village, is said to be without a single house still standing. Pearland met the same fate.

At Seabrooke four persons are



BRIDGE OVER GALVESTON BAY.

known to have been killed, but as only two houses are still standing there it is supposed that the loss of life was greater than this. Seventeen persons are missing. A Laporte relief train that got as far as Seabrooke picked up three bodies on the way.

Suffer Very Heavily.

At Brookshire also four deaths are reported, and there four houses are still standing.

Towns further north add to the stories of horror. Cypress, Hockley, Waller and Hempstead are thought to have lost about 20 per cent of their buildings.

At Taylor the Missouri, Kansas and Texas depot was destroyed and several lives are reported lost.

Bastrop, Smithville and Temple also suffered very heavily, both in lives and property.

Galveston a Beautiful City.

Galveston, the second largest city in Texas and the commercial metropolis of that state, is situated at the northeast extremity of Galveston island, at mouth of the bay of the same name. It is a beautiful city, laid out with wide and straight streets, bordered with numerous flower gardens, magnolias, flowering shrubs and trees. The streets are only a few feet above the sea and have been frequently swept by surging waves stirred up by cyclones and tornadoes.

The city is the third cotton shipping port in the United States. Its foreign and domestic trade is large. Its total

THE COTTON DOCKS AT GALVESTON.



THE COTTON DOCKS AT GALVESTON.



BIT OF WHARF AT HOUSTON.

her two daughters, two grandchildren, and a woman whose name I cannot recall.

Louis Braquet, manager of the Black hotel, was engulfed in the waves and gave his life up in the successful rescue of his wife and a colored servant girl."

Among the refugees which the Galveston, Houston & Henderson train picked up at Lamarque, four and one-half miles south of Virginia Point, was Pat Joyce, who lived in the west end of Galveston.

"It began raining in Galveston Saturday morning early," said he. "About 9 o'clock work was discontinued by the company and I left for home. I got there about 11 o'clock and found about three inches of water in the yard. The water rose and the wind grew stronger until it was almost as bad as the gulf itself. Finally the house was taken off its foundation and entirely demolished. People all around me were scurrying to and fro, endeavoring to find places



STRAND STREET, GALVESTON.

of safety and making the air hideous with their cries. There were nine families in the house, which was a large two-story frame, and of the fifty people residing there myself and niece were the only ones who could get away."

Historic Hurricanes in the Southern States.

1840—Adams county, Mississippi; 317 killed, 100 injured; loss, \$1,260,000. 1842—Adams county, Mississippi; 500 killed; great property loss. 1890—Barry, Stone, Webster and Christian counties, Missouri; 100 killed; 400 injured; 200 buildings destroyed; loss, \$1,000,000. 1890—Noxubee county, Mississippi; 22 killed, 72 injured; 55 buildings destroyed; loss, \$100,000. 1890—Fannin county, Texas; 40 killed, 25 injured; 45 buildings destroyed. Henry and Saline counties, Missouri; 8 killed, 53 injured; 247 buildings destroyed; loss, \$300,000. 1883—Kemper, Copiah, Simpson, Newton and Lauderdale counties, Mississippi; 51 killed, 200 injured; 100 buildings destroyed; loss, \$200,000. 1882—Isard, Sharp and Clay counties, Arkansas; 5 killed, 182 injured; 40 buildings destroyed; loss, \$250,000. 1884—North and South Carolina, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, Louisiana and Missouri; 10 killed, 25 injured.