

# Beauchampe's Double

## THE PRIMA DONNA.

Story of Mystery, Love and Devotion.

BY DAVID LOWRY.

CHAPTER V.—(Continued.)

Draw as you please, heads as you please, (Car-

Beauchampe's name is not Carrick, Doctor. It

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Then the attendant who brought him  
his food entered, carrying a tin filled  
with water and a wooden bowl, in which  
there was a strange compound of meat  
chopped in pieces about the size of a  
marble, potatoes, and onions.

The attendant deliberately emptied  
the contents of the wooden bowl into the  
pewter dish that was lying on the floor,  
placed the tin beside it, and was walk-  
ing to the door, when Beauchampe said,  
pointing to the pewter dish:

"Am I to have neither spoon nor  
knife? I cannot kill myself with a  
spoon."

The attendant did not even vouchsafe  
a look at him, but unconcernedly closed  
and locked the door.

Although Beauchampe's stomach rose  
in revolt, he resolved to eat all that was  
given to him. He must not lose his  
strength—he resolved rather to husband  
his physical resources. The time might  
come soon when he would need them—  
when they might prove his sole depend-  
ence.

He lifted the pewter dish, and ate the  
contents like a man famishing. Then he  
drank all the water. He was better sat-  
isfied with himself after he had cleaned  
the pewter dish.

There were pieces of paper lying on  
the floor; he stooped and picked them  
up, and once more began to draw.

But now he drew scenes he had looked  
upon when abroad. He was striving to  
think of something that would make him  
forget his sister. But his sister's eyes  
looked up at him from the white paper.

At last, in sheer despair, he resolved to  
draw his sister's face. Perhaps in that  
way he might be able presently to think  
of something else.

Futile attempt.

The face when half drawn was laid on  
the bed, and Beauchampe suddenly burst  
into tears. He walked to the window,  
gazing out with tear-dimmed eyes.

Gradually he became aware of the fact  
that he was looking out on a roadway.

There was a house opposite him, but  
at a considerable distance. Then Beau-  
champe discovered that the building he  
was in was made of stone. And now,

he observed, there were a number of  
iron bars outside the windows. The  
spaces between these bars were so small  
that it was impossible for a boy, let  
alone a man, to squeeze through them.

Strange that all this had escaped his  
notice the previous day.

If he had observed the iron bars, they  
made no impression upon him. Now they  
angered him.

Suddenly Beauchampe leaned for-  
ward. What was that between the  
stones, just inside the broad stone sill,  
beside the foot of one of the strong iron  
bars, bedded in lead? Beauchampe

pushed the window with all his might.  
It was immovable. He turned, looked  
at the door of his room, then, suddenly  
flung himself against the window, with  
both palms outspread. The jar moved  
the lower half of the sash. He exerted  
himself again.

Now the large window moved.  
"It moved!" Beauchampe said inward-  
ly. He succeeded in lifting it nearly two  
inches. Then he put two fingers under  
it, but the object he strove to reach was  
as far from him as though it lay in an-  
other world.

Beauchampe struck his forehead re-  
peatedly. If he failed to secure this  
object, he would become insane. He  
must have it!

He seized the wristband of his shirt  
between his teeth, and tore it off. Then  
he twisted the ragged edge downward,  
bent one end in such a way that the cor-  
ner would drop in the crack between the  
stones, and pushing the strip under the  
window, drew it along slowly until the  
end was over the object he sought.

Nine times did Beauchampe repeat  
this, each time jerking the strip sud-  
denly inwards, and each time his face ex-  
pressed bitter disappointment.

The tenth time he was very delib-  
erate.

This time he was successful. Beau-  
champe suddenly seized the win-  
dow, and pulled at it, but it refused to  
move. He bent his fingers until the  
nails caught in the sash that was flat  
and beveled towards the panes. At the  
risk of tearing his nails out, he succeed-  
ed in closing the window.

Then he stooped and picked up a  
small iron tack, such a tack as is used  
in fastening carpets.

This was the object that he had ex-  
erted himself to secure.

Having secured it, he very deliberately  
gathered up all the pieces of paper, the  
lead pencil, the pewter dish, seated him-  
self on his iron bed, and holding the  
tack firmly between his thumb and fore-  
finger, began to scratch the bottom of  
the pewter plate.

At intervals he would lay the dish  
aside and take up a piece of paper. And  
all the while he inclined an ear lest  
some one should surprise him.

He was seated thus on his bed, draw-  
ing a child's face, when the door opened  
without a warning sound, and Dr. Verek  
stood before him. The door stood open.  
Presently Hawkins stood near the door,  
but did not enter.

The pewter dish was lying on the  
floor, pieces of paper were lying near it,  
all covered with drawings.

The Doctor stooped and lifted them  
one by one, looked at them, and then  
beckoned Hawkins.

Hawkins walked straight to the win-  
dow, look at it, then motioned to the  
Doctor, who advanced to his side.

"There is the mark of his nails."

They both turned from the window,  
then, and looked at the artist. Beau-  
champe returned their look, in which  
suspicion was manifested as plainly as it  
could be expressed in words, with a  
feigned indifference.

The Doctor and his assistant looked  
around the room slowly. Then Hawkins'  
eyes settled on the pewter dish. He  
kicked it over with his foot, picked it  
up, and was on the point of dropping it  
upon the floor again, when his attention  
was arrested.

He looked at the bottom of the dish,  
compressed his lips a trifle more, and  
handed the dish to the Doctor, pointing  
to the bottom with his forefinger.

Dr. Verek looked at the bottom of  
the dish earnestly. The perspiration

stood like beads on Beauchampe's fore-  
head now.

"Very clever, indeed—very," said the  
Doctor, as he looked at the artist. "I  
shall preserve this as a specimen of your  
talent and perseverance. You have suc-  
ceeded in this as well as in the drawing  
on the pieces of the bowl you broke. It  
is plain to me now. You found a knife-  
blade or a nail on the sill there. Let  
me have it."

"I have neither a knife-blade nor a  
nail," said Beauchampe.

"No matter. I will have you stripped  
if you do not produce it; and when we  
find it if it is, as I believe, a nail, mark  
my words, I will compel you to swallow  
it. Choose now, on the instant."

Beauchampe handed them the tack in  
silence, and both started when they  
saw it.

"Nevertheless, Carrick, you shall be  
stripped, you head combed—shaved if  
necessary. If nothing more is found, I  
will believe you made these pictures  
with a tack. This shall be laid away  
with my silverware; it is a greater cur-  
iosity every way than the drawings on  
the pieces of the broken bowl."

"You are fiends; you are not men!"  
exclaimed Beauchampe furiously.

They did not reply. They walked  
away, locking the door carefully, while  
Beauchampe flung himself face down-  
ward upon the bed, cursing them and  
gritting his teeth in the impotency of  
his rage.

Now, for the first time since he en-  
tered Dr. Verek's establishment, Leslie  
Beauchampe sank into sleep while it  
was yet daylight. He roused himself  
once, turned over and looked at his  
window.

The gray of dusk fell on the floor.  
Beauchampe welcomed the fanciful  
shadows cast upon the bare walls by the  
trees near the house; he wanted rest,  
craved sleep, for sleep meant brief  
oblivion.

CHAPTER VI.  
IN A FOG.

It was broad daylight when Livingston  
and Simmons separated.

In the meantime Simmons had accom-  
plished wonders. His familiarity with  
the city and the heads of the depart-  
ments he found it necessary to visit,  
Livingston regarded as great factors in  
his success, but making due allowance for  
those, Simmons "came out strong," to  
employ the language Livingston used  
when the affair was discussed in all its  
phases afterwards.

In the first place, he knew more of the  
murder of Major Dabney than the re-  
porter who wrote up the account. Living-  
ston had corrected in the *Record*. Sim-  
mons' informant was a placeman who  
was under obligations to the municipal  
manipulator. He gathered as much  
from two or three men occupying re-  
sponsible positions as they had learned  
concerning the crime, and was prepared,  
the moment he rejoined Livingston, to  
re-appear to the scene of the murder.