

*The Adventure of the Aluminum Crutch - Alum*  
*The Chronicles of Solar Pons, 1973*

Date

Copper/October, 1921  
Patrick/NA

Quotes

- *I respect intuition in the fairer sex. I am wary of it in our own.*

The Case

Fiona Porteous, a friend of Mrs. Johnson, tells Pons that her house has been broken into, but nothing was taken. Several other neighbors have experienced the same problem. Pons connects her deceased husband's lameness with the recent killing nearby of a one-legged painter and agrees to look into the matter.

Comments

- This case was inspired by one of Dr. Watson's famous untold tales. In *The Musgrave Ritual* he refers to 'the singular affair of the aluminum crutch.'
- Early in the tale, Pons has an exchange concerning an umbrella with the widow Porteous. Beginning with "And the umbrella, Mrs. Porteous..." through "You know your premises, I do not," it very much reads in the style Douglas Adams used in his Dirk Gently novels. If you have listened to Adams himself reading the books aloud, it is very easy to read this exchange in the Gently voice. There are other instances in this case that remind one of Dirk Gently, the 'Holistic Detective.' I can't help but wonder if Adams was a fan of Solar Pons.
- Pons attitude towards Scotland Yard seems rather harsh in this case. He tells Parker that the official force rarely appreciates his efforts unless they specifically ask for his assistance. He then says of the police, "They may on occasion be guilty of extraordinary stupidity, but in the main they are conscientious and not without skill, however plodding they may seem to be."

This is certainly a backhanded compliment. In essence, Pons is saying, "Well, they're not *always* stupid and slow. Neither Jamison nor Parker seems to have any grasp of this case. Only Pons has made the necessary connections and deductions. Perhaps because his own light was shining so much brighter, Pons gives his unflattering assessment.

- Jamison mentions that he has not made progress on the 'Midlands Murder' or the 'Aylesbury Triple Murder.' These crimes are not overtly mentioned in the Pontine Canon again. Perhaps Pons later became involved in these cases and some account of them could be found in Dr. Parker's notebooks.