

*The Adventure of the Ricoletti of the Club Foot - Rico*  
*The Memoirs of Solar Pons, 1951*  
*The Memoirs of Solar Pons*

Date

Copper/September 18, 1920

Patrick/September, 1921

Quotes

➤ *I loathe a blackmailer above all other criminals; he preys upon the weakness of his fellow humans.*

➤ Bancroft Pons: *If I were to tell you, furthermore, that you had just delivered a nine-pound boy to a dark-haired woman in her late thirties in a comparatively easy delivery, which you had expected to be difficult, you would no doubt be amazed.*

Parker: *I would indeed.*

Bancroft Pons: *Yet it is perfectly simple. For the delivery was made to the wife of one of our officials in the consular service and a report of it duly reached our office just before I set out for these quarters.*

*That, I submit, is evidence of the triumph of instruction over deduction, but my brother would go through a comprehensive recital of each of little clue; the long dark hair adhering to your trousers, the contented satisfaction so evident on your features, and so on – until he had reduced the whole to such patent absurdity that you would not help being disappointed in yourself for having failed to draw similar conclusions and thus, of necessity, angry at Solar for having so underscored your manifest shortcomings.*

Solar Pons: *I can hardly believe you came through wind and rain to instruct Parker.*

The Case

Bancroft Pons weathers a terrible storm to have his brother visit Orso Ricoletti's workspace at the Foreign Office. Ricoletti's office, presumably unassailable, had been entered the previous evening. Pons is employed to find who broke in and why.

Comments

➤ This was one of Watson's famous "untold tales" of Sherlock Holmes, mentioned in *The Musgrave Ritual* as "A full account of Ricoletti of the club foot and his abominable wife."

➤ This is another adventure where Pons finds the guilty party, but chooses to let the killer go free; in this case, not informing the Foreign Office as well as the police. Parker tells Pons he has an obligation to lay the evidence before the authorities, but Pons dissents. There are several such instances in which we find that Pons puts justice before the law.

- Pons genuinely despises blackmailers and Parker does not chronicle any case in which the detective comes out on the losing end against one. He also encounters blackmailers in *The Adventure of the Norcross Riddle*, *The Adventure of the Lost Holiday*, *The Adventure of the Spurious Tamerlane* and *The Adventure of the Perfect Husband*.
- Andrew Walton is found in his room, strangled. Presumably he was sleeping, but it must have been difficult for Mrs. Ricoletti to sneak into his room and kill him without the man waking. Walton was a seaman and presumably at least a little of the 'rough and tumble' variety. She also snuck into her husband's office and knocked a guard unconscious. A woman who stayed at home, hiding her affliction from the world, does not, on the surface, seem likely to perform the feats of an agent or professional criminal.
- Parker meets Bancroft Pons for the first time. Like Mycroft Holmes, Bancroft is large, an important government official and at least as observant as his detective brother. Bancroft seems much more amenable to physical effort and deviations from his normal activities than Mycroft was.