



**The Adventure  
of the Table  
Foot**

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE TABLE FOOT

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First published in "The Bohemian" magazine, January 1894

I CALLED one morning a crisp cold wintry December day on my friend Thinlock Bones, for the purpose of keeping him company at breakfast, and, as usual about this time of the morning, I found him running over the agony columns of the different newspapers, quietly smiling at the egotistical private -detective advertisements. He looked up and greeted me as I entered.

"Ah, Whatsoname, how d'you do? You have not had breakfast yet. And you must be hungry. I suppose that is why you drove, and in a hansom too. Yet you had time to stay and look at your barometer. You look surprised. I can easily see any fool would see it that you've not breakfasted, as your teeth and mouth are absolutely clean, not a crumb about. I noticed it as you smiled on your entry. You drove it's a muddy morning and your boots are quite clean. In a

hansom don't I know what time you rise? How then could you get here so quickly without doing it in a hansom? A bus or four-wheeler couldn't do it in the time. Oh! The barometer business. Why, it's as plain as a pikestaff. It's a glorious morning, yet you've brought an umbrella thinking that it would rain. And why should you think it would rain unless the barometer told you so? I see, too, some laborer pushed up against you as you came along. The mud on your shoulder, you know."

"It was a lamppost that did it," I answered.

"It was a laborer," quietly said Bones.

At that moment a young man was shown in. He was as pale as death and trembling in every limb. Thinlock Bones settled himself for business, and, as was the usual habit with him when he was about to think, he put his two long tapered hands to his nose.

"What can I do for you, sir?" asked Bones. "Surely a young swell like you, with plenty of money, a brougham, living in the fashionable part of the West End, and the son of a Peer, can't be in trouble."

“Good God, you’re right, how do you know it all?” cried the youth.

“I deduct it,” said Thinlock, “you tell me it all yourself. But proceed.”

“My name is St. Timon—”

“Robert St. Timon,” put in Bones.

“Yes, that is so, but—”

“I saw it in your hat,” said Bones.

“I am Robert St. Timon, son of Lord St. Timon, of Grosvenor Square, and am—”

“Private Secretary to him,” continued Thinlock. “I see a letter marked Private and Confidential addressed to your father sticking out of your pocket.”

“Quite correct,” went on St. Timon, “thus it was that in my confidential capacity I heard one day from my father of an attachment,  
an infatuation that someone had for him, an elderly—”

“Lady,” said Thinlock Bones, from the depths of his chair, showing  
how keenly he was following the depths of the plot as it was unfolded to him by  
his peculiar habit of holding his bloodless hands to  
his nose.

“Right again,” said the young man. “Mr. Bones, you are simply  
marvelous. How do you manage it?”

“It is very simple,” Bones replied, “but I will not stop to explain.  
Whatsoname here understands my little methods quite well now. He  
will tell you by-and-by.”

“It was an elderly and immensely wealthy lady, then,” Robert St.  
Timon continued, “named the Honorable Mrs. Goran—”

“A widow,” Bones interrupted.

“Wonderful,” said St. Timon, “the Honorable Mrs. Goran, a

widow. It was she who was simply head over ears in love with my father, Lord St. Timon. He, although a widower, cared little for her but—”

“A lot for her money,” said the quick-witted detective.

“How do you divine these things? You guess my innermost thoughts, the words before they are out of my mouth. How did you know it?” St. Timon asked.

“I know the human race,” Thinlock Bones answered.

“Well, if he could manage he wanted to inherit her money without marrying her. Would she leave him her riches if he did not propose, was the question ? How to find out ? He was a comparatively young man and did not unnecessarily wish to tie himself to an octo-genarian, although a millionairess. But he mustn't lose her wealth.

If when she died he was not her husband, would he get the money ?

If the worst came to the worst he must marry her sooner than let the gold slip out of his grasp. But he must not espouse the old lady needlessly. How was he to find out? A project struck him, and the

means offered itself. We were both asked to a dinner party at the Countess Plein de Beer's where we knew the Honorable Mrs. Goran would be present, and-

"You both accepted," interrupted Bones. "Oh," he went on before the other could ask the reasons of his swift and accurate deductions, "oh, it's very simple. I saw in 'The Daily Telegraph's London Day by Day.'"

"Yes, we accepted," continued St. Timon, "and this was our plan of campaign: I was to take the old doting lady down to dinner and to insinuate myself into her confidence aided by good wine, of which she was a devoted admirer in a subtle fashion and thus to extract the secret out of her. I was to find out by the time she had arrived at the Countess's old port whether my father was her heir or not. Whether she had left him her money without being his wife. Time was short, and if she had not my father was to propose that very night after dinner. The signal agreed on between my father and me was that if he was her heir without being her husband I was to kick him under the table and he would not propose otherwise he would. Oh! Mr. Bones," he sobbed, turning his piteous white

face to Thinlock, “this is where I want your great intellect to help me, to aid me and explain this mystery.

“The plan worked admirably,” he went on, “I gleaned every fact about the disposition of her money after her death from her when she was in her cups or rather her wineglasses. My father was her absolute and sole heir, and I thanked the heavens with all my heart that I was spared such a stepmother. I kicked, as arranged, my father under the table, but oh! Mr. Bones, immediately after dinner my father went to her and asked her to be his wife and she has accepted him! What does it all mean, what does it all mean?!”

“That you kicked the foot of the table instead!” quietly replied the greatest detective of modern times as he unraveled the intricate plot and added another success to his brilliant career.