

the narrator's voice as he made this statement. "He is a very rum old party, and when we had finished our interview he insisted on my lunching with him—there. After the Lucullian feast was over it came into my mind that I had never properly inspected the Watson Bequest, which has lately been installed in one of the upper galleries, so I went to have a look at it." Logan paused.

"Well?" said Merton. "Well?"

His partner got up and took a turn round the room. "Merton," he said, impressively, "do you remember hearing Mr. Basil Grant say at our last club dinner, that coincidences were 'the sole splendid certainties of life, the warp of romance but the whole web of reality?'"

"I don't think you've got it quite right," returned the person addressed, "though he certainly used the word coincidence. For heaven's sake don't walk about like a hyena."

"Well, whatever it was that he said," proceeded Logan impatiently, "I never felt the truth of it so strongly as when I bent over that case of relics. I've seen them before, and you've read about them in the *Athenæum*, so you know what's there—Holmes's monograph on the multitudinous varieties of tobacco ash, and some of his old pipes, and Irene Adler's photograph. It is always impressive to come into contact with the master-minds of the past, and a thrill ran through me as I gazed upon those trivial possessions of a personage whose name and influence, with all their splendid traditions, will endure, I am certain, as long as the illustrated periodicals of our island race. Yes," said Logan reflectively, though Merton showed signs of restiveness, "we must acknowledge, after all, how much our generation—nay, you and I ourselves—owe to that great man. In my madder moments I feel that we owe him our profession, almost our very existence, and that only you and I are thus indebted, but——"

Merton stretched out a wrathful arm and seized from the sofa a ponderous cushion, weighty as the spear of Turnus. To