***Woman in White***

***Part 1***

***Section 1***

***Chapter 10***

***Short Summary:***

At breakfast one fine Thursday, Laura and Walter stay apart until Marian and Mrs. Vesey enter the dining room. After breakfast Marian invites Walter to the garden to speak privately. A lad who works in the garden delivers a letter from an old woman for Laura by way of the garden. Marian sends the lad to the house. Marian confronts Walter about his feelings for Laura and tells him that he has to leave on Saturday because Laura is engaged and her fiancé is to arrive on Monday. Marian says that Laura is engaged to the Baronet from Hampshire named Sir Percival Glyde.

***Short Analysis:***

Collins introduces the first major obstacle to Walter's happiness. Laura is engaged to a man twenty-five years older. This scene also brings the Woman in White back into the story through a letter. Marian observes the growing attraction between Laura and Walter, so she intervenes to cut it off.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

One morning [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) comes down to breakfast and finds that [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) is not there. [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) is out on the lawn but there is so much mutual embarrassment between them, because of their feelings for each other, that he does not go out and speak to her. When Marian comes back and Laura comes inside for breakfast, Marian tells Laura that she has had heard from [Mr. Fairlie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-fairlie) and that the “purple room” is to be prepared. This news makes Laura begin to cry and, as the group get up from the breakfast table, Walter feels a terrible premonition that he is soon to be separated from Laura.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Walter and Laura feel awkward with each other because of their mutual attraction and because they cannot express how they feel about each other. It would be improper for a wealthy woman like Laura to marry a poor drawing master and, therefore, they cannot admit their feelings. Walter then begins to suspect something else is amiss when Marian mentions the guest. His intuition tells him that he will soon be forced to leave Laura.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) takes [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) aside as he is leaving the dining room and asks for a private word. They go into the garden, but before Marian has spoken to Walter, a lad approaches them with a letter for [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie), which he tells her was given to him by an old woman at the gate. Marian thinks this is strange but takes it nonetheless and then leads Walter to the [summer house](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/symbols/the-summer-house).

***Analysis Part 2:***

It seems likely that Marian is about to deliver some bad news to Walter about his future with Laura. She takes him to the summer house, which is, ironically, the place where he first met Laura. This highlights the contrast between Walter’s previous happiness at Limmeridge and the separation and unhappiness he foresees.

***Summary Part 3:***

Once inside, [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) tells [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) that she knows he is in love with [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie). She sympathizes with him and knows that he is well intentioned towards her sister, but she feels that she must tell him to leave Limmeridge House because Laura is engaged to be married.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Marian feels that, for the sake of propriety, Walter must leave Limmeridge so that Laura’s fiancé does not find out about their feelings for each other.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) is heartbroken and begins to cry, but [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) urges him to “crush” his affections for [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) here “where they started” in the [summer house](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/symbols/the-summer-house). She explains that Laura is not in love with her future husband but that she is bound to marry him because she promised her father on his deathbed. Therefore, it will be better for Laura if Walter leaves Limmeridge immediately, since she is unlikely to break off her engagement and go against her father’s wishes. The room that she spoke of at breakfast is for Laura’s future husband, who will arrive the next week.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Walter behaves in a stereotypically feminine way by giving in to his emotions. Marian, however, demonstrates her ability to separate her emotions from the practical necessity of the situation; something which was considered a masculine trait. She encourages Walter to be strong and to act in Laura’s best interests by leaving. Laura feels obliged to fulfil her father’s dying wish and it would be painful for her to break off the engagement, even though she does not love her fiancé.

***Summary Part 5:***

Devastated, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) agrees that it would be best for him to leave Limmeridge. The pair get up to leave the [summer house](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/symbols/the-summer-house) and [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s maid rushes up to them and begs [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) to come into the house. Walter lingers in the garden feeling depressed and embarrassed, and anticipating his mother’s disappointment when he returns early from his job. Marian returns and seems distracted and distressed. She tells Walter that Laura is very upset by the letter she has received.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Walter agrees with Marian that it will be best for Laura if he leaves; it will allow her to focus on her fiancé and forget her feelings for Walter, which can never be acted upon. Walter worries about disappointing his mother because he has lost a good position in a wealthy household: a rare opportunity for a poor, young man.

***Summary Part 6:***

As they make their way back towards the house, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) questions [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) about [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s future husband. Marian tells Walter that he is a gentleman from Hampshire. Walter remembers that Mrs. Fairlie’s letter revealed that [Anne Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman) came from Hampshire too and he is unnerved by the constant reappearance of the woman in [white](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/symbols/white-clothes) in his circumstances. Marian tells him that the man’s name is [Sir Percival Glyde](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde). Walter suddenly remembers the woman in white’s complaint about a “certain Baronet” and asks Marian what Sir Percival’s Glyde’s title is. Irritable, and in a hurry to comfort her sister, Marian answers sharply that he is a Baronet.

***Analysis Part 6:***

Walter remembers the woman in white’s suspicion of noble men. He is concerned when he hears that Laura’s fiancé, also a noble man (and specifically a Baronet), is from the same county as the woman in white because he worries that there may be some connection between Anne (who he and Marian believe may have been falsely imprisoned) and Laura’s fiancé. The situation makes him uneasy.

***Important Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

"Crush it!" she said, "Here, where you first saw her, crush it! Don't shrink under it like a woman. Tear it out; trample it under foot like a man!" (1.1.10.43)

***Explanation:***

Marian gets downright scary here when she orders Walter to stop being a namby-pamby crybaby. The idea that men shouldn't express their emotions and should "control" them is a rather dangerous stereotype, though one that proliferated in the Victorian era for sure.

***Quotation 2:***

"It is an engagement of honour, not of love—her father sanctioned it on his death-bed, two years since—he herself neither welcomed it, nor shrank from it—she was content to make it." (1.1.10.46)

***Explanation:***

Marian's description of Laura's engagement makes it sound practically medieval. Laura's stubborn decision to cling to that engagement was out of step with the times even in the 19th century… especially given the fact that she didn't have anyone pressuring her to follow through with it.