***Woman in White***

***Part 2***

***Section 1***

***Chapter 6***

***Summary:***

* The next day Laura sneaks out to meet Anne again, but she ends up coming back with a furious Sir Percival.
* Marian tracks down Laura's maid Fanny, who says she's been fired.
* Margaret Porcher is guarding Laura's door and won't let Marian in to see her.
* Marian threatens Sir Percival with legal action and Count Fosco intervenes to talk Percival down.
* So Marian gets access to Laura.
* But Laura, ironically enough, decides to shoot her mouth off for once and calls the count a spy in Countess Fosco's hearing.
* Bad move, Laura.
* Laura goes to meet Anne but only finds a note from her saying that she's being watched and will try to contact Laura later.
* Then Sir Percival appears and says he'd read the note.
* Terrified, Laura confesses everything Anne said to Sir Percival, who proceeds to threaten Laura. This guy really is a prize.
* Fortunately, Marian keeps her head in a crisis and says she's going to write to Mr. Kyrle and Uncle Fairlie for help.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) goes out early the next morning. [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) and [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) plan to keep their meeting with [Anne Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman) and Laura sets out alone, while Marian prepares to follow her. After waiting a short time, Marian sets out into the plantation. While she is moving through it, she hears footsteps—they sound like a woman’s followed by a man’s—and tries to find the source. She cannot locate them and becomes confused and, eventually, without finding Laura or Anne, returns to the house.

***Analysis Part 1:***

This suggests that the women are being spied on and followed by the men in the house.

***Summary Part 2:***

When [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) arrives back at the house, the housekeeper tells her that [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) brought [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) back to the house not long ago. She says that they have had a huge argument and Sir Percival has fired Laura’s maid, [Fanny](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters). He has given no reason for this, and Marian is concerned, as Fanny is one of the only people they can trust in the house.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Sir Percival’s behavior seems irrational but also suggests that he wants to keep Anne and Laura from meeting. His dismissal of Fanny is more evidence that Sir Percival is isolating Laura from her friends and connections so that he can totally control her.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) runs to [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s room and finds the door guarded by [Margaret Poacher](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/margaret-poacher), a stupid, spiteful servant. Furious, Marian flies to the library and finds [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde), [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco), and [Madame Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/madame-fosco) there. Marian tells Sir Percival that there are laws in England which prevent men keeping their wives as prisoners, and Sir Percival cautions her that he may lock her up too.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Although there were some laws that protected women from domestic abuse in the 1860s, the woman here are still relatively powerless since Sir Percival and Count Fosco have separated them from all their friends and prevented their communication with the outside world.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Madame Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/madame-fosco) suddenly announces that she will not stay in a house where ladies are mistreated—something [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) feels she would not do without her husband’s permission—and [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) enthusiastically agrees with her. [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) is furious and confused, but he reluctantly agrees to free [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie), and Marian rushes to Laura’s room to see if she is alright.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Madame Fosco makes a show of standing up for the rights of women, but Marian suspects that this is part of a ploy by Count Fosco—that he has put her up to this and that she does not really believe what she says (although perhaps she once did, before her marriage). This is tragically ironic, since she only makes her stand for women’s rights at the command of her husband.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) is distressed but unharmed. She asks [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) why she has been set free and Marian says that, of course, [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) has intervened. Laura replies in disgust that the Count is a spy and, just then, there is a knock on the door; [Madame Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/madame-fosco) has come up to return Marian’s handkerchief. When she opens the door, her face is white and livid, and Marian knows that she has overheard.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Laura agrees with Marian that Count Fosco has not intervened for their benefit but for some unknown reason of his own. Madame Fosco’s dramatic reaction when she overhears Laura suggests either that she is horrified by this slander against her husband or that Laura has accidentally hit upon the truth.

***Summary Part 6:***

[Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) tells [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) that, when she arrived at the boathouse that morning, [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman) was not there but had left a note for her buried in the sand. The note explained that Anne had been followed by a fat man—who must be [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco)—and that she dared not return to the spot. She wrote that she would tell Laura [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s secret at another time. Just as Laura was reading this, Sir Percival appeared behind her, confiscated the note, and dragged her back to the house, leaving bruises on her arms. All the way, he questioned her violently about the secret. When [Fanny](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters), Laura’s maid, came upon them by accident as they entered the house, Sir Percival immediately dismissed her.

***Analysis Part 6:***

Count Fosco and Sir Percival seem to be working together against Laura and Marian, but it is unclear what Count Fosco wants with Anne. Sir Percival is driven to distraction by the idea that Laura might have learned his secret, and this provokes his violent treatment of her. It also causes his dismissal of Fanny, as he is worried that she has overheard them or that Laura may tell Fanny his secret.

***Summary Part 7:***

[Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) now tells [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) that she plans to write secretly to [Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle) and [Mr. Fairlie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-fairlie) for help. The bruises on Laura’s arms are evidence of mistreatment that she will use to free Laura from her marriage. As they cannot use the postbag—which [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) spies on—Marian will try to get the notes to [Fanny](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters) in the village. She advises Laura to lock her door and then hurries out of the room.

***Analysis Part 7:***

If women were able to provide physical evidence of abuse (such as bruises), then the law could protect them against domestic abuse. However, because women did not have property rights or as many civil rights as their husbands, this law did not protect them from more subtle and coercive forms of abuse, such as imprisonment or exploitation, which their marriages could expose them to. Marian is now certain that Count Fosco intercepts her letters and knows that she must try to evade him if she writes again for help.