***Woman in White***

***Part 3***

***Section 1***

***Chapter 10***

### ***The Story Continued by Hartright***

***Summary:***

* On his way to Knowlesbury, Walter is followed by some of Percival's goons.
* The men provoke Walter into a fight and then stage a citizen's arrest and haul him to the magistrate.
* Walter asks that they write Mr. Dawson as a character reference.
* Dawson writes back and Walter is able to make bail.
* Once freed, Walter heads to the church and meets with a Mr. Wansborough.
* He goes through the copy registry and discovers that the marriage entry for Sir Percival's parents isn't there.
* Sir Percival totally forged the entry in Welmingham to disguise the fact that he's illegitimate, which means that Blackwater Park isn't even *his.* Scandal!
* In case we were unsure about the fact that this is a scandal, Walter spends the next few pages saying, "No really, this is a major scandal!"
* We now enter the action-adventure phase of the novel.
* Our intrepid hero encounters more goons (possibly the same stupid ones) on his way back to Welmingham and gets into a fight (again).
* Walter wisely runs like mad from further fighting, because he is outnumbered (and a bit rusty with his street-fighting skills).
* Our favorite drawing teacher/amateur detective/boxer (for two seconds)/Olympic running star hightails it to Welmingham.
* He rushes to find the clerk, who is flipping out over the fact that his keys are gone.
* Walter heads to the church and encounters a man who mistakes him for Sir Percival.
* Turns out it's Sir Percival's servant, which probably means that Sir Percival is in the house.
* Or church, as the case may be.
* Suddenly the church catches on fire. No, really. And Sir Percival is trapped inside.
* Some very tense scenes follow as Walter leads a rescue effort for the man who monumentally screwed over his one true love and his BFF Marian.
* But the fire is too strong, and Sir Percival dies.
* Talk about cosmic justice.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The men follow [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) along the road. Suddenly, one of them rushes past him and, startled, Walter pushes him away. The man falls to the ground and cries out for help and the other two rush up to Walter and seize him. A farmer in a field nearby also comes to help and Walter is taken to the jail in town and taken to court. He is put on bail by the judge and suspects that [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) has planned this so that he can get rid of the evidence of his secret while Walter is locked up.

***Analysis Part 1:***

The men finally succeed in their aim and surprise Walter so that he lashes out and hits one of them. This keeps suspicion away from themselves, and by extension Sir Percival, and prevents Walter from investigating further by locking him up.

***Summary Part 2:***

Luckily, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) remembers that [Mr. Dawson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-dawson) lives in the neighborhood and writes to him for assistance. Mr. Dawson kindly provides the bail money and Walter is freed the same night. Aware that [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s men will be watching him, Walter hurries to the town to visit the clerk who keeps a copy of the register.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Walter is able to make friends relatively easily. This rewards him here because he is able to call on Mr. Dawson for help.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) meets the clerk and is given a copy of the register to examine. He is shocked to find that the entry which documented the marriage of [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s parents is not there—it has been written in to the other and is a forgery. Sir Percival Glyde is not a Baronet at all, but either an illegitimate child with no inheritance or a complete stranger masquerading as nobility. Walter is amazed at the boldness of Sir Percival in adopting a new identity in this way. He determines to run back to the old church in case Sir Percival should try to destroy the evidence. He stops in the village to buy a club in case he is followed.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Walter knows that the marriage entry on the vestry register is the forgery and the copy held by the clerk is the genuine copy, which does not include a record of Sir Percival’s parent’s wedding, because the vestry copy is unguarded and would be easy to access privately. If the marriage was official, the clerk would have copied this entry into his version of the registry too. Sir Percival is the quintessential Gothic villain: a man of low birth masquerading as nobility. This was a common trope in Gothic novels of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, as this was a period in which there was widespread anxiety about the class system beginning to break down.

***Summary Part 4:***

On the road, in the dark, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) is attacked by several men whom he cannot see clearly. He suspects these are [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s men and manages to outrun them, escaping across the fields in the direction of the village. He reaches [the clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk)’s house and is about to knock on the door, when the clerk bursts out of the house in a panic, because the key to the vestry has been stolen. Walter runs to the church with the clerk. On the way, he bumps into a servant who, in the dark, addresses him as Sir Percival. Walter tells the man he has made a mistake and the man tells him that Sir Percival—“his master”—ordered him to wait nearby.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Sir Percival has had Walter followed and, therefore, knows that Walter has been to the vestry and has likely discovered the forgery. He has broken into the clerk’s house and stolen the key to break into the vestry himself and destroy the evidence. He has then left his servant outside to keep watch in case Walter or the clerk return.

***Summary Part 5:***

The servant, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright), and [the clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk) run to the church. As they approach, they realize that the vestry is on fire. Walter charges to the door and hears someone bang on the door and scream out from inside. The servant cries out that it is [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde), and the clerk is horrified; Sir Percival has broken the troublesome lock and is trapped inside.

***Analysis Part 5:***

In his desperation to hide the evidence of his crime, Sir Percival has acted rashly and trapped himself in the burning vestry. Previous details about the vestry like the difficult lock and the abundance of straw now help to seal Sir Percival’s fate.

***Summary part 6:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright), in an instant, forgets his hatred for [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) and tries to save him from being burnt alive. He shouts through the door for Sir Percival to try the passage into the church on the other side of the vestry. He hears the lock rattle and then silence. Acting on impulse, Walter climbs onto the roof and breaks the skylight, but the fire is too high, and he cannot see or reach Sir Percival.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Walter’s humane and decent nature is immediately evident when, even though he hates Sir Percival, he tries to save his life. Walter is also incentivized to save Sir Percival because, if Sir Percival dies and the evidence burns with him, it will be extremely difficult to prove his crimes against Laura.

***Summary Part 8:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) summons several villagers who live nearby, and they break down the door. They cannot get into the vestry, however; it is totally consumed by the fire. [The clerk](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/the-clerk) begs them to “save the church” and the fire engine arrives to put out the blaze. Once the fire is extinguished, the body of [Sir Percival Glyde](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) is brought outside, and Walter sees his enemy for the first and last time.

***Analysis Part 8:***

Even though Walter has not physically harmed Sir Percival, he has driven him to the desperate actions that brought about his demise. Sir Percival’s death is ironic and fitting because he has tried to destroy the evidence of his false identity and, although he succeeds in this, he also destroys himself, his own literal identity, in the process.