***Woman in White***

***Part 3***

***Section 1***

***Chapter 4***

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

***Summary:***

* Mr. Kyrle meets with Walter and listens to his story.
* Kyrle thinks Walter is freaking nuts.
* He also says that even if what Walter says is true, there's pretty much no way to prove it.
* What, there's no Victorian Crime Lab to do some DNA testing? Oh wait. Too bad this novel weren't set in the 1890s rather than the 1850s, because [**Sherlock Holmes**](https://www.shmoop.com/sherlock-holmes/) would be all over this case and have it solved in about fifty pages, max.
* Walter says thanks for nothing to Kyrle and heads on out.
* He decides he's just going to have to take on Percival and Fosco himself.
* When he arrives home, Marian has bad news: Fosco has sent her a letter warning her and Walter to stop poking around.
* The gang pack up and move to new digs.
* Walter says they must be on the right track by looking into the date, since Fosco is worried.
* Then Walter hits on an idea. He says they have to find out Percival's secret so they'll have something to hold over the man.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) arrives safely at the law firm and is shown into [Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle)’s office. Mr. Kyrle listens amazedly to Walter’s case and at first seems not to believe him. After asking Walter some questions, Mr. Kyrle’s doubts seem somewhat appeased but he is still adamant that Walter does not have enough for a legal case.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Mr. Kyrle is a skeptical man and relies primarily on evidence and facts to confirm what he believes. Since Walter does not have enough of these to convince him, Mr. Kyrle knows that Walter will never get his case approved in court because the legal system also relies on evidence.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle) makes it clear to [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) that, besides his lack of proof, there is too much evidence against him for a trial. There is, on the other hand, mountains of official evidence which “proves” that [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) is dead: her medical certificate, her death certificate, even the inscription on her tomb. All he has to go on, besides this, is the word of a woman whom almost everyone believes to be [Anne Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman), whom they know to have been mad and escaped from an asylum. Mr. Kyrle argues that “an English jury” will never side with Walter’s case if there is so much “surface” evidence to contradict what he says. Besides this, Mr. Kyrle points out, a legal case against [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) would be extremely expensive and Sir Percival could afford to hire the best legal advice.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Although Walter is telling the truth, his case is contradicted by too much evidence to be taken seriously. This showcases the limitations of the law and a worldview which is based in evidence and facts alone. It allows people to accept the most straightforward version of events, rather than looking below the surface to find out possible deceits. It also suggests that the law is biased against poor or vulnerable members of society like Anne, as they are considered unreliable and cannot afford legal representation. Sir Percival, on the other hand, is considered extremely reliable because of his reputation and because he can afford legal help. This is not evidence of his virtue, but only of his wealth and the fact that the law can be bribed.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle) thinks that a case may be possible if [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) can prove the date that [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) traveled to London. If it is after the date on the death certificate, then this will prove that it was [Anne Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman) who died and not Laura. Walter at present has no way of finding this date.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The whole case hinges on the date. If the date can be found out, and if it is after the date of Anne’s death on the 25th of July, it will prove that Laura could not have died in Count Fosco’s house because she was not yet in London.

***Summary Part 4:***

Disheartened and certain that the lawyer does not believe his story, [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) makes to leave, and [Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle) asks if he will deliver a letter that he received for [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe). Walter takes the letter and asks Mr. Kyrle if he has heard anything of [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde). Mr. Kyrle thinks that he is back in London. Walter’s suspicions of this are confirmed when he leaves the lawyer’s office and is followed by the same men who tailed him before he left for America. He takes a long, confusing route home and manages to shake the men.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Sir Percival is still spying on Walter and obviously knows that Laura has been broken out of the asylum. Sir Percival clearly suspects Walter’s involvement in this—he already hated Walter because of Laura’s love for him.

***Summary Part 5:***

The letter that [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) carries home for [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) is from [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco). It warns Marian—in flowery language—to remain where she is, in hiding. He says that nothing will happen to her, as long as she does not continue with what she has started and as long as she has nothing to do with Walter Hartright, if he returns to London. The Count warns that, if he ever meets Walter, he will be forced to take drastic action, and that he is in control of [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) and can make this gentleman act on his behalf.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Count Fosco’s flowery prose supports his use of façade to hide his true, vicious character. Just as he presents a veneer of sensitivity and refinement to the world, Count Fosco uses pretty language to disguise the implicit threat in his words. The Count does not seem to know that Walter is in London or that Sir Percival has Walter followed.

***Summary part 6:***

[Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) is enraged by [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco)’s threatening and manipulative tone and makes [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) promise that, if he ever has the chance to kill [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) or Count Fosco, to make sure that it is the Count he kills. Walter tells Marian that he is resolved to continue to uncover the truth for [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie); he will no longer rely on others, like [Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle), but will “act for” himself.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Marian recognizes how dangerous the Count is, so she wants him dead more than Sir Percival. Their strange connection leads her to hate the Count especially, even as she also respects him. Walter’s decision to act for himself is an early prototype of the fictional private detective who works alone. It also supports Collins’s belief in the power of the “self-made” man who uses his own initiative to succeed rather than relying on others.

***Summary Part 8:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) plans to question [Mr. Dawson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-dawson), the doctor who attended [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) during her illness at Blackwater, to see if he knows the exact date that [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) left for London. He also plans to ask around in the village to see if anyone knows the date when [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde) left for London in the night, as discussed in [Mrs. Michelson](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mrs-michelson)’s testament. If this course of action fails, he intends to track down Sir Percival’s secret because he knows that Sir Percival would be ruined if the secret was widely known.

***Analysis Part 8:***

Walter knows that Laura left Blackwater for London on the same day that Sir Percival left in the middle of the night. He thinks this may be a way of discovering the date of Laura’s journey. If he cannot find this out, he intends to find out Sir Percival’s secret in order to blackmail him. The novel here takes on its definitive form as a “battle of wits” between the individual detective (Walter) and the criminals, Count Fosco and Sir Percival.