***Woman in White***

***Part 3***

***Section 3***

***Chapter 2***

### ***The Story Continued by Mrs. Catherick***

***Summary:***

* Walter reunites with Laura and Marian.
* Marian fills him in on her adventures. One day she saw Fosco lurking around with the owner of the asylum.
* Marian then got a note from Fosco asking for a meeting.
* She rushed outside to meet him, hoping Laura wouldn't see him.
* Marian and Fosco had a tense encounter.
* Fosco warned her, and Walter, to stop poking around and asking questions.
* He also informed Marian that he had a crush on her, which alarmed Marian even further.
* The two then discuss Sir Percival, and Marian says she'll tell Laura herself that Percy is deader than a doornail.
* She does so the next day and Laura—no surprise here—actually takes it pretty well.
* Walter and Marian turn their attention to Fosco, but they also keep investigating who Anne's father might be.
* Walter learns, to his surprise, that Philip Fairlie was hanging out at Major Donthorne's house around the time the future Mrs. Catherick got knocked up.
* Given Anne's resemblance to Laura, it isn't hard to put two and two together.
* Walter decides to just let that one go, too.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) arrives in London late that night and is relieved to see [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe) and [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) safe and well. It is clear that Marian has not told Laura the reason for their move or about [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s death, and Laura seems perfectly happy and content. When Laura has gone to bed, Walter and Marian sit down to talk, and Marian tells him that she has seen [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco).

***Analysis Part 1:***

Walter and Marian treat Laura with care after her time in the asylum. Ironically, although the asylum is meant to be a place to treat mental illness, it has caused it in Laura. This again suggests that locking ill people away from society is not an effective way to treat them.

***Summary Part 2:***

[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, a few days ago, she looked out of the living room window and saw [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) across the street talking to the owner of the asylum from which [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) had escaped. Fortunately, Laura was involved in her drawing and did not see the Count. Marian thought that he had not seen her, but then she received a note from Count Fosco which asked her to meet him. She agreed to meet him downstairs in the shop beneath their house so that Laura would not see him or hear his voice.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Count Fosco, unlike Sir Percival, is very restrained. He intimidates Marian by appearing outside her window but does not act immediately, and is very slow and calculating in everything he does.

***Summary Part 3:***

[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 [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) was sickeningly kind towards her. He informed her that he had no interest in pursing them until his own interests were threatened. He takes [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde)’s death—which he believes to have been caused by Walter—as a sign that Walter will next come after him and so, now perceiving himself to be under attack, he means to take action. He told Marian that he had originally planned to lead the owner of the asylum to them and have her and Walter arrested. Count Fosco then told Marian that he changed his mind at the last moment because of his strong feelings for Marian; sentiments which she is repulsed by. He could not bear to cause her grief by separating her from [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) again.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Although Marian is disgusted by Count Fosco’s advances, it seems there is something genuine about them. He really is reluctant to cause Marian pain and proves this when he lets the women go. However, because Count Fosco is such a thoroughly brutal and vicious person, his love for Marian is a twisted kind of love. He is seemingly attracted to her because she is difficult to control, and therefore presents him with a challenge, rather than for any true romantic reason.

***Summary Part 4:***

[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 after [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco) left, she decided to leave the house immediately and find a new one in an unknown neighborhood. Walter can see that her meeting with Count Fosco has shaken her and he promises that he has not forgotten the vow he made in [Mr. Kyrle](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mr-kyrle)’s office: that he will restore [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s identity and kill the men who are behind the conspiracy. He decides that he should tell Laura about her husband’s death. Marian trusts his judgement and agrees.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Walter is even more determined to have his revenge on Count Fosco now that Sir Percival has been killed. Count Fosco is the only person who can provide evidence of his and Sir Percival’s crimes against Laura.

***Summary Part 5:***

After [Marian](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/marian-halcombe)’s meeting with [Count Fosco](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/count-fosco), they do not see or hear from him again. [Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) returns to his work at the engravers shop and privately continues his investigations, but keeps this from Marian and [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie) so that he does not worry them anymore. He enquires about the house Count Fosco has rented and learns that the Count has let the house until the following summer. He also goes to see [Mrs. Clements](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mrs-clements) again—as he promised he would—and tells her the truth about [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman)’s death. This interview reminds him that he still does not know who Anne’s father is, and he sets about trying to solve this mystery.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Walter is prepared to take his time to catch Count Fosco. He knows the Count is an extremely careful and clever man, and does not wish to act rashly and expose his plans.

***Summary Part 6:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) writes to [Major Donthorne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters) at Varneck Hall—where [Mrs. Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mrs-catherick) worked as a maid in her youth—and asks if he knows [Sir Percival](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/sir-percival-glyde), and asks some other questions about the Fairlie family. Walter does not know if Major Donthorne is still alive or not and is pleasantly surprised to receive an enthusiastic and helpful letter from the Major. The Major writes that he has never met Sir Percival and that Sir Percival has never been to Varneck Hall, where he lives. [Mr. Philip Fairlie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters) though, [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s father, was a close friend of the Major’s and came to Varneck Hall often. He was there in the year when Mrs. Catherick worked there and came again with his wife, Laura’s mother.

***Analysis Part 6:***

It is likely that Laura’s father, Mr. Philip Fairlie, met Mrs. Catherick as a young woman when she was working as a maid at Varneck Hall.

***Summary Part 7:***

[Walter](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/walter-hartright) remembers [Mrs. Catherick](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/mrs-catherick)’s letter, in which she describes Mrs. Fairlie, [Laura](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/laura-fairlie)’s mother, as a “plain woman” and [Mr. Philip Fairlie](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters) as an extremely handsome man. Walter deduces from this, and Mrs. Catherick’s apparent dislike of Mrs. Fairlie, that she was jealous of her. [Anne](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-woman-in-white/characters/anne-catherick-the-woman)’s physical resemblance to Laura also convinces him that Mr. Philip Fairlie was Anne’s father and that Anne and Laura were sisters. Walter thinks sadly about the way in which Laura and Anne paid for the mistakes and secrets of their parents. He remembers Anne’s wish that she could be buried in the tomb with Mrs. Fairlie, and thinks mournfully that she finally got her wish.

***Analysis Part 7:***

Although Mrs. Catherick wants to keep the identity of Anne’s father a secret, she accidentally reveals herself when she shows that she is jealous of Laura’s mother. Laura and Anne are half-sisters, which explains the likeness between them. The theme of children who suffer because of their parents’ mistakes was common in nineteenth-century literature. This reflects a society in which certain things, such as nobility and class, were hereditary and in which a person’s good or bad reputation (or luck) could be passed down through generations.