The Moonstone

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF WILKIE COLLINS

The son of a prominent painter, Wilkie Collins was expected to either follow in his father's footsteps or become a clergyman during his comfortable upbringing in London, Italy, and France. Although he tried his hands at his father's profession and later went to law school, his interest in writing grew during a stint doing clerical work in his late teens. His career took off in 1951 when he met and befriended Charles Dickens, who would later publish nearly all of Collins's novels (including *The Moonstone*) in his weekly magazine *All the Year Round*, in the serial format common in Victorian England. During the 1850s, Collins and Dickens acted together in a number of prominent plays and collaborated on fiction and playwriting projects. Collins also began publishing in a variety of genres during this period, writing stories and travel narratives, essays and criticism, as well as his first four novels. He won acclaim for the last of these, *Hide and Seek* (1854), and far more for his 1860 novel *The Woman in White*, which remains his best-remembered work alongside *The Moonstone* (1868). These novels cemented his reputation for developing complex plots and are considered foundational texts in the Victorian tradition of "sensation novels," meaning works aimed at invoking emotional reactions in the reader (much like modern-day thrillers or telenovelas). From the 1870s onward, Collins's work focused increasingly on social issues like class inequalities and the abuses of the British aristocracy—such as one novel, *Man and Wife* (1870), dedicated to exposing the absurdity of Scottish and Irish marriage and inheritance laws. In fact, he famously disliked marriage and orthodox organized religion, both of which he replaced with his own, more liberal variants: he lived most of his life with his partner Caroline Graves, but refused to marry her, and then started another family with another woman, Martha Rudd, in 1868. He also claimed to be religious but eschewed and criticized British Christianity throughout his life (including through the character of Miss Clack in *The Moonstone*). Collins made a prominent tour of the United States in 1873-4, but most scholars and critics agree that his work worsened from this period onwards. This decline is likely related to the progressively worse attacks of gout (a painful joint disorder) Collins suffered throughout his life; these eventually led him to grow addicted to the laudanum (opium) he took as a painkiller, which also plays an important role in the plot of *The Moonstone*. His condition progressively worsened until he died of a stroke in 1882.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Moonstone is set in the mid-19th century, which was a time of immense social, economic, and political transformation in England as well as a crucial period in the history of British colonialism in India. From Miss Clack and Betteredge's differing forms of Christian moralism and Godfrey Ablewhite's women's charities to the economic pressures that threaten the old-money, landed Verinder family, the Industrial Revolution lays in the background of *The Moonstone* just like the imperial conquests in India that Collins directly cites as the source of the mysterious, cursed Diamond. With the rise of an economically powerful upper-middle class that challenged the old aristocracy and an increasingly miserable working class in Britain's industrial centers, much Victorian literature responded to the changing social norms that accompanied these transformations both by reaffirming traditional morality (like the moral tracts Miss Clack obsessively collects in *The Moonstone*) and making progressive calls for social equality (like Collins's own works). In fact, the rise of sensation novels—largely characterized by their length, intricacy, and serialized publication in newspapers—is often tied to the rapid expansion of the British newspaper media during this era, particularly after taxes on paper were greatly reduced in 1855. *The Moonstone* was daring not only for intervening in its time's moral debates, but even more so for addressing India—arguably with a favorable eye—at a time when the mere mention of the colony threw many Britons into a fury. This is because the British had recently defeated their own Indian soldiers in the incredibly violent First Indian War of Independence (traditionally called the "Sepoy Mutiny" or "Indian Rebellion") in 1857. The British used the conflict as an excuse to indiscriminately kill and torture civilians, as well as raid the treasuries of remaining Indian leaders and replace the East India Company that formerly ruled India with direct rule by the British Crown. However, most British commentators considered this completely justified and cheered the slaughter of Indians, who remained a sore subject for decades after. This makes Collins's depiction of the three Indian Brahmins in *The Moonstone* as not just criminals, but also as noble men performing a mission to restore honor to their nation and religion, all the more astonishing. The 1799 Siege of Seringapatnam, in which Colonel John Herncastle steals the Diamond in *The Moonstone*, is an actual historical event that played a crucial role in the consolidation of British power in South India. The Diamond's theft, as Collins explains in his Preface, is also based on the historical examples of the Koh-i-noor, a famous Indian Diamond taken and never returned by Britain, and especially the Orlov Diamond, which was formerly in the eye of a Hindu temple god but stolen by a rogue French soldier.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

It is difficult to mention the work of Wilkie Collins without also mentioning his friend, collaborator, and publisher Charles Dickens, who remains widely-read and considered emblematic of his literary era. Some of Dickens's most popular works were and remain *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-7), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *David Copperfield* (1849-50), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), and *Great Expectations* (1860-1). Collins's other most prominent work is *The Woman in White* (1859-60), but he is also celebrated for his two of his other novels from the 1860s, *No Name* (1862) and *Armadale* (1864-6), all of which (like *The Moonstone*) take up questions of inheritance, fraud, and personal identity in the controversial mystery format—known as "sensation fiction"—that Collins pioneered. Sensation fiction eventually set the scene for most later detective fiction, introducing tropes like mistaken identity, poisoning, love triangles, and the crime that uproots an otherwise ordinary British country house. A number of underacknowledged female novelists wrote prominent works of sensation fiction, including Ellen Wood (*East Lynne* (1861)) and Mary Elizabeth Braddon (*Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) and *Aurora Floyd* (1863)). More prominent men captivated the Victorian readership with their works in the genre, including Charles Reade with *Griffith Gaunt, or Jealousy* (1866) and Thomas Hardy with his early *Desperate Remedies* (1871). An important predecessor genre is the Newgate Novels, a number of works like Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1837) and William Harrison Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard* (1839-40), which focused on and sometimes glorified the exploits of criminals, both imagined and real. The now-forgotten George W.M. Reynolds was the Victorian era's bestselling author, with his lengthy popular thriller *The Mysteries of London* (1844-8) foreshadowing many of the mainstays of the sensation genre. And well-known works by the Brontës (especially Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* and Emily's *Wuthering Heights* (both 1847)) also foreshadowed the sensation novel's rise. Recent tributes to the genre include Margaret Drabble's *The Radiant Way* (1987) and Eleanor Catton's *The Luminaries* (2013).

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** The Moonstone
- **When Written:** 1868
- **Where Written:** London
- **When Published:** Originally serialized Jan 4-Aug 4, 1868; first complete edition 1871
- **Literary Period:** Victorian Novel
- **Genre:** Sensation Fiction, Detective Fiction, Victorian Novel
- **Setting:** Yorkshire, London, India
- **Climax:** The protagonists discover the corpse of the disguised Godfrey Ablewhite and learn that he stole the Diamond from Franklin Blake
- **Antagonist:** Godfrey Ablewhite, the three Indians, the cursed Diamond
- **Point of View:** First person, multiple narrators

EXTRA CREDIT

Adaptations. Owing to its fame, *The Moonstone* has seen numerous adaptations to formats ranging from the stage (first by the author in 1877) to films (most prominently the celebrated 1934 version), numerous radio plays (in the 1940s and 1950s), and various television series (including in 1959, 1996, 2011, and 2016 by the BBC alone). In fact, there is now even a novel about Collins writing *The Moonstone*: *Drood* by Dan Simmons (2009).

Opium and the Author. Opium is not only an important plot point in *The Moonstone*; Wilkie Collins was also deep into opium addiction while writing the book, so much so that he reported after publishing it, "I was not only pleased and astonished at the finale, but did not recognise it as my own."

Forgotten First Novel. Wilkie Collins wrote his first novel at the age of 20, when he found himself utterly bored working for a London tea merchant. The book, *Iolani: Or, Tahiti as It Was*, met universal rejection from publishers and did not resurface until more than 150 years later, when Princeton University Press published it in 1999. Unfortunately, Collins never went to Tahiti in his life, and the book's exaggerated, stereotyped depiction of a hedonistic, murderous nonwestern civilization lacking "mental virtues" lacks all the grace a modern reader might expect from a writer lauded in his time for his social awareness and progressivism.

PLOT SUMMARY

The novel begins in India, with a Prologue written by an anonymous member of the Verinder family, a cousin and fellow soldier to the Colonel John Herncastle. The anonymous narrator begins by tracing the **Moonstone**'s history, which begins in the ancient temple of Somnauth, where the Diamond was embedded in the head of a statue of the Hindu moon god. When the temple was plundered in the 11th century, the stone's protectors moved it to the holy city from Benares, where the god Vishnu commanded them and their descendants to guard it "to the end of the generations of men." In the 18th century, a Mughal emperor had the Diamond stolen, and in 1799, the devilish Herncastle stole it from Seringapatnam, in the process killing a man who promised that "The Moonstone will have its vengeance yet on you and yours!"

The novel's long first section is set in Yorkshire in 1848, at the residence of the Lady Julia Verinder and her wealthy family. It is

narrated by the Verinders' butler Gabriel Betteredge, who begins with a quote from his favorite book, **Robinson Crusoe**, and goes on to explain that the family lawyer Mr. Bruff and Mr. Franklin Blake (a cousin of Rachel Verinder) are putting together a written record of the Diamond's theft. After some digressions, he recounts the multi-talented but spendthrift "universal genius" Franklin Blake's return to England at the age of 25, after more than a decade living and attending schools in Europe, to which his eccentric father had sent him. The same day as Franklin's arrival, three Indian men who appear to be traveling magicians come to the Verinder estate, presumably looking for a place to stay, which Betteredge's daughter Penelope plans to give them. Betteredge then tries to comfort the distraught ex-convict maid Rosanna Spearman at the **Shivering Sand**, an expanse of sinister quicksand on the coast near the Verinders' house, but Franklin Blake shows up unexpectedly and Rosanna leaves.

At the Shivering Sand, Franklin reveals a secret to Betteredge: he has the Moonstone, which the late Colonel Herncastle has willed to Rachel Verinder as her 18th birthday present. Franklin proclaims that the Diamond carries a curse or at least a conspiracy—Herncastle lived the rest of his "solitary, vicious, underground life" estranged from his family, receiving death threats, and paranoid that he would be killed for the Diamond. Herncastle may have given Rachel the Diamond as a gesture of goodwill and reconciliation, but may have also sought revenge by gifting them a curse. Indeed, Franklin has noticed a suspicious Indian-looking man follow him to the bank whenever he has business concerning the Moonstone, and he thinks he might have something to do with the three jugglers who have mysteriously shown up in Yorkshire. But the bank is still the safest place for the Diamond, and Franklin leaves it there for the month until Rachel's birthday. During this month, the Indians disappear and Rachel and Franklin grow very close, painting her bedroom door together for hours and inciting suspicion about whether they might marry. But Franklin has competition: the wealthy, handsome, and charitable Godfrey Ablewhite, another cousin of Rachel's, will come for her birthday and is clearly seeking her hand.

On Rachel's birthday, Franklin gives Rachel the Diamond, and Lady Julia is immediately distraught to hear it has come from her estranged brother. At dinner, 24 guests join the family, including the eccentric and socially inept doctor Mr. Candy, who argues with Franklin about the value of his profession, and the mysterious Anglo-Indian traveler Mr. Murthwaite, who scares away the three Indians when they return to the house that night and tells Franklin and Betteredge that the Diamond puts its owner in serious danger. Sure enough, the next morning, someone has stolen the Diamond from Rachel's cabinet, although the Indians could not have possibly entered the house.

Local police officer Superintendent Seegrave comes to the scene and declares that the thief is "some person in the house." He ruthlessly interrogates everyone, infuriates Rachel, and searches the servants' possessions. Fortunately, the illustrious London detective Sergeant Cuff soon arrives, fires Seegrave, and begins a more tactful investigation; he immediately realizes that a paint smear on Rachel's door will lead to the killer's identity, since it must have happened late the previous night, the same time as the Diamond's disappearance. Inexplicably, Rachel is the only one who refuses to let Cuff search her possessions. She also grows furious with Franklin Blake despite their budding relationship, and refuses to talk with him until his departure. Rosanna, who also seems to have feelings for Franklin, begins behaving erratically and arouses everyone's suspicion. Cuff investigates Rosanna, who he learns has recently replaced her nightgown (likely the one stained with the paint from Rachel's door) and was also planning to leave her job. But when Rachel decides to leave home for some time, Cuff determines that the Diamond was never stolen, and that Rachel still has it.

The same day, Cuff discovers that Rosanna has drowned herself at the Shivering Sand. He reports to Lady Julia that he believes Rosanna and Rachel were working together and develops a detailed plan to expose their partnership; Julia instead decides to tell Rachel about Rosanna's death. Rachel declares "she has never spoken a word in private to Rosanna." Julia takes her to London and fires Cuff, who leaves dutifully after predicting that Betteredge will soon hear from the three Indians, a London gem dealer named Septimus Luker, and Rosanna's friends, the Yolland family. Astonishingly, all three come true: Limping Lucy, the Yollands' daughter, leaves a letter for Franklin Blake (who has already left for Europe), and the newspaper reports that "three strolling Indians" have been harassing Mr. Luker in London. Betteredge's narrative, and the first section of the book, ends here.

The novel's second narrator is the hypocritical Christian fanatic Miss Clack, Julia's estranged niece. As soon as Julia and Rachel arrive in London, Clack attaches herself to them, as she wants to convert them to her moralistic religious thought, looks forward to partaking in their gossip, and desperately needs money. She next reports that the three Indians attacked, restrained, and searched not only Mr. Septimus Luker, who apparently deposited the Moonstone in his bank for safekeeping, but also Clack's beloved Godfrey Ablewhite, whom she considers a "Christian Hero" and who serves on the committees for women's charities alongside her. This has aroused suspicion about Godfrey's possible role in the theft, but when he tells Rachel (whom Clack considers dishonorable and unladylike), she signs a document declaring him innocent.

In private, Julia reveals to Miss Clack that she is terminally ill and asks Clack to serve as a witness for the signing of her will; Clack is excited by Julia's impending death, because it means she has an opportunity to save Julia's soul by converting her to

Christianity in her remaining days. Clack begins at once by offering Julia numerous religious pamphlets, which she rejects, and then hiding them strategically around her house. When Clack discovers that Godfrey is visiting but does not want to speak with her, she hides in the curtains and is astonished to watch Godfrey propose marriage to Rachel, and then persuade her to accept. Just minutes thereafter, Julia dies downstairs (but Clack decides not to attend her funeral).

Rachel moves to Brighton with the Ablewhites, and Clack decides to save her soul instead. One day, the lawyer Mr. Bruff visits and talks with Rachel; the next day, Rachel declares she "*shall never marry Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite.*" She tells Godfrey and he wholeheartedly agrees to cancel the engagement, but his parents do not: Mr. Ablewhite yells furiously at Rachel and then at Miss Clack when she tries to intervene with some Christian pamphlets. Desperately, Clack offers to become Rachel's new guardian, and Rachel immediately refuses. Clack ends her narrative "reviled by them all, deserted by them all," and "never [sees] Rachel Verinder again."

The novel's next narrator is the lawyer Mr. Bruff, who first explains why Rachel and Godfrey really ended their engagement: Godfrey only wanted Rachel's money, which Julia's will prohibited him from getting. Secondly, Bruff explains that one of the Indians visited him at his office to request a loan; in fact, Septimus Luker received the same visitor (but Bruff notes that the Indian was far more respectful and professional than Luker). After talking with an adventurous colonist named Mr. Murthwaite, Bruff realizes that the Indian man really wanted to learn what a normal loan repayment term would be, in order to determine when Luker will have to take the Moonstone out of the bank. Murthwaite is sure that the Indians will try to steal it at this time—late June of the following year, 1849.

Franklin Blake, editor of all the narratives, takes over the story with his return to England upon his father's death in 1849. When he arrives, he remembers his history with Rachel and determines to win back her heart, or at least discover why she so suddenly turned against him after the Moonstone's theft and has refused to contact him since. He goes to Yorkshire and receives the letter Rosanna has left with Limping Lucy, in which Rosanna directs him to pull up a chain at the Shivering Sand. At the end of this chain, he finds a tin case with a letter and a paint-stained nightgown inside. But the nightgown is not Rosanna's; it is his own.

Astonished, Franklin begins to drink while he and Betteredge read Rosanna's letter. She proclaims her love for him and explains that she hid his stained nightgown and made him a new one as a "means of shielding [him] from being discovered." Franklin feels guilty for unwittingly contributing to Rosanna's suicide, but also still does not understand how he could have stolen the Diamond, since he was not drunk and does not sleepwalk. However, this does help explain Rachel's behavior towards him after the theft, and he visits her, whereupon she confirms that she "*saw [him] take the Diamond with [her] own eyes!*" She is still furious at him, but also clearly still loves him. After their meeting, Franklin returns to Yorkshire, where he meets with the old family doctor Mr. Candy, who fell sick on the night of Rachel's birthday and has never recovered—unable to hold a train of thought, Candy insists he has something to tell Franklin but cannot remember what it is.

Fortunately, Candy's assistant Ezra Jennings, a hideous and terminally ill but sincere and ambitious fellow doctor, has managed to piece together Candy's disconnected thoughts and learned that, on the night of Rachel's birthday, Candy slipped laudanum (opium) into Franklin's drink after dinner as a practical joke; they had been arguing about the value of medicine, and Franklin had been sleeping badly because he recently quit smoking. Jennings, who happens to be addicted to laudanum, believes that Franklin could have easily taken the Diamond under the influence of the drug, but known nothing of it the next morning. He proposes an ambitious experiment: they will recreate the events of the previous year, from Franklin quitting smoking to resetting the house exactly as it was on the night of the theft, and then slip Franklin laudanum again and see what happens. Franklin agrees, and they begin preparing for the experiment, which Ezra Jennings recounts in detail in his journal.

Ezra Jennings's journal, the next section of the narrative, covers the preparations leading up to his "experiment" with Franklin Blake; most importantly, he enlists Gabriel Betteredge and Mr. Bruff to act as witnesses to the experiment, although they are both quite reluctant and lack faith in Jennings's science. Rachel herself also insists on being present, as she hopes the experiment will exonerate Franklin, and her new guardian, the histrionic Mrs. Merridew, insists on accompanying her as a "chaperone." On the night of the experiment, Jennings slips Franklin the laudanum and talks to him about the Diamond; at night, Franklin gets up in a daze and walks to Rachel's room, grabs the experiment's decoy Diamond, and falls asleep in Rachel's sitting-room. The experiment both succeeds and fails: it proves that Franklin did initially, unwittingly steal the Diamond; but it does not give any clue as to where the Diamond might be now. Jennings ends his journal despairing about his "friendless and lonely life," but pleased to have brought Franklin and Rachel back together.

Franklin Blake picks up the narrative again for the next section, in which he goes with Mr. Bruff, Bruff's young assistant Gooseberry, and Sergeant Cuff to search for the Diamond in London. They watch Mr. Luker take the Moonstone out of the bank and then follow various suspects for the rest of the day; Gooseberry turns out to have picked the right one, a suspicious man "dressed like a sailor" whom the others thought was a spy for the Indians, but was actually the man with the Diamond. The group of investigators goes to the pub where Gooseberry

saw the sailor check in and another man follow him. Surely enough, the sailor has not been heard from—and then is found dead in his room, from which the Indians seem to have stolen the Moonstone. Cuff realizes, however, that the sailor is wearing a disguise; he pulls it off and reveals the man he had come to suspect of the crime: Godfrey Ablewhite.

The novel ends with a series of brief narratives. In the first, Cuff presents the evidence confirming that the Indians murdered Godfrey Ablewhite and left England with the Diamond, before explaining Godfrey's motives for stealing the Diamond in the first place: despite his public image as a morally upstanding philanthropist, in reality Godfrey had a mistress and villa outside London, and spent 20,000 pounds of money from a trust that was not his, and that he needed to replace immediately. He had two options: take from Rachel's estate, or sell the Moonstone. The next short narrative is a letter from Mr. Candy, in which he recounts Ezra Jennings's death and burial in an unmarked grave. The final narrative is from Gabriel Betteredge, who praises *Robinson Crusoe* yet again before announcing that Franklin and Rachel have married, and Rachel is now pregnant. The novel's Epilogue, in three short narratives, explains how the Indians brought the Moonstone back to their country and managed to evade the British authorities who tried to intercept them along the way. The last of these narratives comes from the traveler Mr. Murthwaite, who gets caught up in a mass pilgrimage to the temple of Somnauth, where he watches the three Indians he had last seen in Britain unveil the statue of the moon god, restored to its proper glory with the Moonstone in its forehead.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Franklin Blake – Rachel Verinder's cousin and love interest, as well as one of the novel's chief detective figures, and the compiler and editor of all the first-person narratives that comprise it. Educated abroad, he returns to Yorkshire at the beginning of the novel after more than a decade, at the age of 25, with **the Moonstone** that his uncle John Herncastle has left for Rachel as a birthday present. The other characters mostly remember his mischievous boyhood and the rumors about his wasteful spending habits and monumental debts. Having heard about the Diamond's alleged curse, Franklin is unsurprised when it disappears and quickly throws himself into the search for it, but far later he is astonished to learn that *he* was the Diamond's thief. In the meantime, during his search, he is struck by Rachel's increasing distance from him and the increasingly odd behavior of the servant Rosanna Spearman—both, it turns out, are in love with him, know he stole the Diamond, and want to cover his tracks. In the last third of the book, Franklin leads the push to prove his innocence and uncover what happened to the Diamond after he unwittingly took it. Eventually he is successful, and he and Rachel marry at the end of the novel. Other characters have much to say about him—most notably, Betteredge calls him "a sort of universal genius" but finds his indecision problematic (which Betteredge attributes to his conflicting English, French, German, and Italian sides). Nevertheless, Franklin's own narratives are comparatively dry and straightforward. Yet, precisely because of his editorial hand, it is impossible to know how much has been left out, or removed, from the novel's various narratives.

Miss Rachel Verinder – The young woman at the center of the novel, the daughter and heiress of Julia Verinder and the cousin and love interest of both Godfrey Ablewhite and Franklin Blake (whom she eventually marries). Curious, freethinking, and far from conventionally attractive (too small and dark-skinned in Gabriel Betteredge's eyes), Rachel is in no way a portrait of the conventional, submissive, "honorable" Victorian womanhood that people like Miss Clack believe in. And yet this unconventionality is ultimately Rachel's strength: she speaks her mind, resolutely ending her engagement with Godfrey Ablewhite despite his father's furious attempt to intervene, and enthusiastically collaborating with Ezra Jennings on the experiment that exonerates Franklin Blake, whom she saw steal her Diamond from her bedroom late at night. In fact, watching her beloved commit a crime against her devastates her, but she still guards Franklin's secret in an attempt to save his reputation—although this inadvertently delays the investigation that eventually reveals he stole **the Moonstone** unwittingly, after being drugged by Mr. Candy. The theft of her Diamond—by both Franklin and Godfrey, her two love interests, on the night of her 18th birthday—stands symbolically for a loss of innocence, and Rachel matures throughout the book, coming of age in part by coping with this trauma (as well as the death of her mother). At the end of the novel, she marries Franklin and gets pregnant, even though the Moonstone is never recovered.

Gabriel Betteredge – An old, respected worker at the Verinder household, who was the family's bailiff (land manager) for decades until becoming something like a butler in his old age, a year before the events of the novel begin. The only character fully capable of moving among the servants as well as the Verinders and their elite acquaintances, Betteredge plays an important role as a mediator of class in the book. As the novel's first and most significant narrator, Betteredge is also an essential mediator for the reader, who learns about nearly all the other characters and the disappearance of **the Diamond** from him alone. Perhaps unsurprisingly given his age and position, Betteredge is relatively socially conservative and prejudiced—especially against women, whom he considers fragile, emotional, and incapable of making rational decisions, with the exceptions of Julia and Rachel Verinder. But he also has a strong sense of duty and cares deeply and sincerely about his employers, as well as his daughter Penelope. Entranced by

the search for the Moonstone, he frequently mentions his "detective-fever," naming the sensation Collins hopes to evoke in the reader—and the one at the base of detective fiction as a genre. A fanatical devotee of the novel **Robinson Crusoe**, which he uses to predict the future by opening to random passages, Betteredge nevertheless admonishes both Hindu fortune-telling and Ezra Jennings's medical "experiment" as "hocus-pocus." Through Betteredge's contradictions, Collins criticizes the split consciousness of Victorian England's moral and social traditionalists, but also sets the stage for the numerous future mystery and detective novels that place a gentlemanly butler, who is privy to everything and everyone by virtue of his job, at their center or as their narrator.

Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite – Rachel Verinder's cousin and another of her love interests, who is revealed at the end of the novel to be the actual thief of **the Moonstone**. An outwardly charming, honorable, attractive, and charitable man, Godfrey contrasts sharply with the more intellectual, awkward, and uncertain Franklin Blake. Indeed, Gabriel Betteredge is convinced that Rachel will choose to marry Godfrey over Franklin, and then astonished when she rejects Godfrey's proposal. After the Diamond's theft, Godfrey returns to London to work with the women's charities he runs—which, despite their dubious contributions to society, win him an honorable reputation around London. The three Indians later search him for the Diamond, but those around him—and especially his devoted friend Miss Clack, who worships him as a "Christian Hero"—believe them to be in error. He proposes once again to Rachel, but only in an attempt to get the money he needs to cover his debts. However, because Julia Verinder's will prohibits Rachel's eventual husband from making such withdrawals, Godfrey and Rachel agree to call off the engagement. Eventually, Sergeant Cuff discovers that the dead sailor from whom the Indians took the Moonstone is actually Godfrey, who was secretly keeping a mistress and villa outside of London, and recklessly spending the money of a trust he was supposed to oversee. He sees selling the Moonstone as an easy way out of his debt; after taking the stone from its original unwitting thief, Franklin Blake, Godfrey pledges it to Mr. Septimus Luker, then withdraws it a year later in hopes of selling it in Amsterdam. The contrast between Godfrey's external image and his secret vices is an important vehicle for Collins's critique of Victorian society's vanity, including its tendency to substitute claims of moral righteousness for actual social change.

The Three Indians – The group of Brahmins (Hindu priests) who, like generations of men before them, have been charged with following **the Moonstone** wherever it goes in an attempt to retrieve it (which requires them to give up their caste, or social honor, in India). Throughout the book, they make various attempts to recover the stone; they show up at the Verinder estate just when Franklin Blake arrives there with the Diamond and then again on the night of Rachel's birthday; they violently search Godfrey Ablewhite and Mr. Septimus Luker for the stone in London, and they ultimately kill the dark-skinned sailor (whom Sergeant Cuff reveals to be Godfrey) in order to bring the Moonstone back to India, which they successfully do in the Epilogue narrated by Mr. Murthwaite. The Indians are at once sinister, supernatural, and arguably bloodthirsty—a characterization that takes advantage of Western stereotypes about Asia—but also brilliant, shrewd defenders of their culture who beat England's best investigator at his own game. Through this double depiction, Collins also pushes back against stereotypes to a degree by showing how the Indians outdo Britons in terms of politeness, intelligence, and loyalty to a higher cause—something most British citizens of the time would have assumed the ostensibly inferior Indians incapable of doing.

Sergeant Cuff – A "renowned and capable" detective from London who takes over the case from Seegrave and plays an important part in unearthing the mystery surrounding **the Moonstone**'s theft. Honest and wise, Cuff manages to win people's trust, collaborate with other detective figures (namely Gabriel Betteredge, Franklin Blake, and Mr. Bruff), and gather crucial information through casual conversations with people connected to the crime, a strategy which contrasts with Seegrave's ruthless interrogations and refusal to collaborate with anyone in the household. In contrast to his dutiful and unsentimental attitude toward his work, Cuff is inexplicably obsessed with roses, and so spends most of his free time at the Verinder estate arguing with the gardener about the best way to grow them. After his lengthy, detailed investigation, he realizes that Rachel is hiding something and admits that he thinks she still has the Moonstone. In response, although she appreciates Cuff's work, Lady Julia dismisses him to protect her family's honor. He soon goes into retirement, moving to a countryside cottage with a rose-garden, but not before making a series of accurate predictions about what will happen at the Verinder estate in the week after his departure. A year later, he comes out of retirement to help resolve the case, and ultimately he is the one to unmask the disguised Godfrey Ablewhite, the Moonstone's true thief. In his short narrative just thereafter, Cuff reveals Godfrey's secret double life and financial motivations for the crime. Cuff is in many ways the classic detective figure and sets the bar for such characters—although, unlike many of these later detectives, he does not single-handedly solve the case.

Lady Julia Verinder – The wealthy noblewoman who presides over the Verinder estate and social circle at the center of the novel. Julia (née Herncastle) is mother to Miss Rachel Verinder, husband to the late Sir John Verinder, sister to John Herncastle and Caroline Ablewhite (among others), and the employer of Gabriel and Penelope Betteredge, Rosanna Spearman, and numerous other servants. Levelheaded, honest, widely

respected, and deeply protective of her daughter, not to mention a much better manager of her estate than her husband ever was, Julia is the opposite of her vicious, immoral brother John Herncastle. While she tries to protect Rachel—for instance, by encouraging her daughter to safeguard **the Moonstone** in a locked cabinet, and later by firing Sergeant Cuff when he begins to suspect Rachel was involved in the theft—she also seeks for Rachel to become independent and allows her to make her own decisions. When she falls terminally ill during Miss Clack's narrative, Julia spends her final days arranging Rachel's future and fighting off Clack's attempts to save her soul through religion.

Rosanna Spearman – A maid at the Verinder estate, an ex-petty criminal who met and found work with Lady Julia after she was sent to a reformatory. Her shameful "past life," deformed shoulder, and propensity to randomly fall ill belie her fundamental benevolence and sincerity; in fact, she believes she does not deserve the "too quiet and too good" life she gets working for the Verinders. She falls tragically in love with Franklin Blake, who essentially never notices her during his more-than-month at the Verinder estate. After she finds Franklin's smeared nightgown on his bed, she buries it in the **Shivering Sand** (her favorite place) and makes him a new one as a gesture of her love; when Sergeant Cuff and Betteredge discover her unusual behavior, she becomes the theft's prime suspect. When she learns this and finds that Franklin continues to ignore her, she writes him a long letter and commits suicide at the Shivering Sand, foregoing her plans to move to London with Limping Lucy and start a new, independent life. Like Ezra Jennings, Rosanna's character shows the disconnect between people's true nature and others' perception of them; Collins's sympathetic, multidimensional, and attentive portrait of a poor servant girl also demonstrates his sense of the arbitrariness of class hierarchy.

Mr. Bruff – A respected London attorney, who encourages Franklin Blake to make a written record of **the Diamond**'s theft—which turns out to be *The Moonstone*. He initially becomes involved in the Diamond's loss because he is nearly everyone's lawyer and trusted advisor: John Herncastle, John and Julia Verinder, and Franklin Blake all retain his services. He is also the first to suspect Godfrey Ablewhite of the theft, and while he is a loyal servant to the family (housing Rachel after Julia's death, for instance), he is generally a sober and pragmatic presence, including in the section of the novel he narrates (which revolves around other people he meets with: the recently-engaged Rachel and Godfrey Ablewhite, the Indian man who visits Bruff at his office, and Mr. Murthwaite, who mentions an interesting theory at dinner). He serves as a witness to Ezra Jennings's "experiment" and goes with Franklin and Sergeant Cuff to investigate the Diamond when Mr. Luker withdraws it from the bank at the end of the book.

Miss Drusilla Clack – Rachel and John Verinder's estranged, talkative, fanatically religious niece who imposes herself on the family's affairs in London and contributes the novel's second narrative. Her version of events is full of digressions and exaggerated religious appeals, which adds a comic dimension to the novel and allows Collins to ridicule the hypocritical evangelism of his time. Although she claims to have no impure desires, her obvious financial motives for sending in her narrative and sexual attraction to Godfrey Ablewhite betray her hypocrisy. Ironically, she detests the novel's protagonists—Gabriel and Penelope Betteredge, Franklin Blake, Mr. Bruff, and most of all Rachel Verinder—for what she considers immoral and immodest behavior, while lauding its villain, Godfrey Ablewhite, for his apparent moral purity and contributions to the women's charities Clack helps run. Her religiosity also gets her in trouble, including with the dying Julia Verinder (whose soul Miss Clack tries to save by hiding religious pamphlets around her house) and with Mr. Ablewhite, whom she infuriates when she interrupts an argument about Rachel and Godfrey's engagement with a reading from "the blessed, blessed, blessed words of [fictional Christian writer] Miss Jane Ann Stamper." In fact, Clack's attempt to include these pamphlets in the text of her narrative annoys Franklin Blake, whose frustrated responses she includes instead. After the novel's events, penniless and ostracized by her family, she moves to Brittany because she cannot afford to continue living in London.

Ezra Jennings – An aloof and pessimistic but brilliant, polite, and loyal opium-addicted doctor who serves as Mr. Candy's assistant. Haunted by his mixed-race background, childhood in an overseas British colony, and "a horrible accusation" that has cost him his reputation—not to mention his addiction and bizarre appearance (he is described as physically hideous), which Franklin Blake says makes him "look old and young both together"—the terminally ill Jennings feels hopelessly misunderstood and persecuted by the world, and takes delight in caring for Mr. Candy when he falls ill. During this time, Jennings develops a scientific theory about the relationship between "the faculty of speaking connectedly" and "the faculty of thinking connectedly" by noting that Mr. Candy's disconnected words actually represent underlying, connected thoughts; this leads him to realize that Mr. Candy had drugged Franklin Blake with laudanum (opium) on the night of **the Diamond**'s theft. Based on his own extensive experiences with the drug (which are in turn a fictionalization of the author's), Jennings spearheads the "experiment" that proves Franklin stole the Diamond unwittingly while under the laudanum's influence. He sees the chance to help bring Franklin and Rachel together as an opportunity to create "a last gleam of sunshine" and prove his moral character to the world. His journal is the only part of the novel narrated in present tense, and he dies in Mr. Candy's arms some time after the novel's protagonists solve the mystery of the Moonstone's disappearance. Incorporating both caricatured features of a Gothic villain or

mad scientist—his ugliness, isolation, and brilliant experiment—and autobiographical details—Collins's terminal illness and laudanum addiction—the tragic figure of Ezra Jennings, like Godfrey Ablewhite, allows Collins to illuminate the contrasts between the internal and external dimensions of character (intentions and reputation, respectively).

Colonel John Herncastle – Rachel Verinder's sinister and selfish brother, who robs **the Moonstone** from the palace of Seringapatnam during his time in the British Army, as recounted in the novel's prologue, and brings it back to England, where it seems to curse him for the rest of his life: his family and friends shun him and he receives a number of death threats, even though he never publicly reveals that he still has the Diamond. At the end of his "solitary, vicious, underground life," he gifts the Moonstone to Rachel in what he claims is an act of charity and forgiveness but the Verinders quickly identify as a final attempt at vengeance. (Indeed, he makes this gift upon his death on the sole condition that Julia is still living; otherwise, he planned to have the stone cut up into smaller ones and sold.) He shares the nickname "the Honourable John" with the British East India Company, which ruled and plundered India until 1857—Collins uses this name to make Herncastle's behavior an allegory for the British Empire's systematic bloodthirstiness, immorality, and greed in India.

Mr. Candy – The Verinder family's goofy family doctor, whose social tactlessness gets him into an argument with Franklin Blake at Rachel Verinder's birthday dinner. (Although he does not reveal this until late in the book, Candy secretly drugs Franklin with laudanum as a practical joke to get his revenge.) On his way home from the dinner, he falls sick due to the heavy rain, and his illness—while cured by his brilliant assistant Ezra Jennings—ultimately debilitates him. When Franklin visits Mr. Candy again at the end of the book, the doctor is withered and sickly, unable to remember what he means to say or hold a coherent conversation. However, the letter he writes notifying the Verinders and reader of Ezra Jennings, which forms one of the book's final narratives, is completely coherent. This appears to prove Ezra Jennings's theory: Candy can think coherent thoughts, just not express them.

Mr. Murthwaite – A daring, adventurous, aloof Anglo-Indian (Englishman raised in India) who spends most of his time traveling around Asia but, when in England, intervenes frequently to help investigators and the Verinder family understand and fend off the three Indians who have come to take **the Diamond** back from England. From translating the Indians' language to predicting their next move, he embodies an archetype of the British colonist who studies and respects Indian culture only insofar as it allows him to outsmart Indians. His swashbuckling travel stories also point to British ideals of masculinity. His most important role comes at the very end of the book: he narrates the final section of the Epilogue, in which he follows a flood of Hindu pilgrims to Somnauth and watches the three Brahmins return the Moonstone to its rightful place in the statue of their deity.

Mr. Septimus Luker – A London moneylender and gem dealer who takes possession of **the Moonstone** some time after its theft from the Verinder estate, although he firmly denies any involvement with the Diamond whenever he is asked publicly. He pledges the Diamond to his bank for a year and gets mugged by the three Indians shortly after. Later, one of the Indians visits him with a strange question about a loan, and he pays a visit to Mr. Bruff, who considers him "so vulgar, so ugly, so cringing, and so prosy" compared to the Indian. When it is time for him to take the Moonstone out of the bank, Bruff, Franklin, Cuff, and Gooseberry keep an eye on him in an attempt to uncover the Diamond's thief. It turns out that this was Godfrey Ablewhite, who made a mistake by going to Luker with the stolen gem: because Luker knew about his crime, the dealer was able to offer Godfrey very unfavorable terms in exchange for safeguarding it.

Mr. Franklin Blake, Senior – Franklin Blake's father, whose principal obsession in life is proving that he is the rightful heir to a dukedom. In pursuit of this goal, he involves himself with "the wicked Colonel" John Herncastle, who offers him important legal documents so long as Blake agrees to help guard **the Moonstone** and become the executor of Herncastle's will (which means delivering the Diamond appropriately after Herncastle's death, and ultimately leads Blake to send his son to bring Rachel Verinder the Diamond on her birthday). He dies the year after the Moonstone's theft, which propels Franklin Blake to return to England and take back up his investigation.

Selina Goby – Gabriel Betteredge's wife, who started as the caretaker of his cottage but whom he decided would be "cheaper to marry […] than to keep [paying]." After getting cold feet, Betteredge failed to break off their engagement, and he and Selina Goby proceeded to have a long, disinterested marriage until her death.

Penelope Betteredge – Gabriel Betteredge's beloved daughter, as well as Rachel Verinder's personal maid and close confidant. She helps Betteredge edit his narrative and serves as both a voice of reason and source of comfort in the Verinder household. She is the first to learn about **the Diamond**'s theft, and Superintendent Seegrave suspects of her committing it; later, Penelope defends her fellow maid Rosanna Spearman from the others' suspicion, and is more distraught than anyone else when Rosanna commits suicide.

Mr. Ablewhite – Godfrey Ablewhite's father, a wealthy man who worries constantly about his social status because of his low birth and the fact that he made his money rather than inheriting it. In an effort to address this perceived defect, he champions Godfrey's engagement to Rachel and explodes in a fury when Rachel reveals she has decided to cut it off. He nearly

attacks the "impudent fanatic" Miss Clack when she uses his rage as an opportunity to teach him about the immorality of curse words.

Superintendent Seegrave – The humorless local police officer who is first assigned to investigate **the Diamond**'s disappearance. By declaring that the thief must be inside the house and ruthlessly interrogating everyone present, he manages to alienate the family and servants enough to make his replacement Sergeant Cuff's job much harder. His failure to uncover any real clues and marked contrast with the patient, insightful Cuff sets up a prominent trope in detective fiction: the celebrated higher-up detective coming in to replace the incompetent local officer.

Mrs. Yolland – A local woman who lives in the fishing village of Cobb's Hole near the Verinder estate. Because Yolland's family—and especially her daughter Limping Lucy—is close to Rosanna Spearman, Betteredge and Sergeant Cuff visit Mrs. Yolland a few times during the latter's investigation. While Betteredge is frustrated by her low class and his task translating her "Yorkshire language" into proper educated English, Cuff masterfully sweet-talks her into revealing virtually everything she knows about Rosanna.

Limping Lucy – Mrs. Yolland's daughter, whose leg injury, resultant limp, and disheveled appearance lead Franklin Blake to describe her as "a wan, wild, haggard girl." She is close friends with Rosanna and, despite her thorough pessimism and particular hatred for Franklin (whom she holds responsible for Rosanna's death), has a plan to move with Rosanna to London and make a living working independently. Through this plan, she offers Rosanna an alternative to conventional romance, as well as the opportunity to overcome the trappings of their gender and low class status.

Mrs. Merridew – Rachel Verinder's widowed aunt on her father's side, with whom she goes to live after her mother Julia's death. When it is time for Rachel to attend Ezra Jennings's "experiment" with Franklin Blake, Mrs. Merridew insists on coming along, because she finds it inappropriate for the 19-year-old Rachel to travel alone without a "chaperone." When she arrives at the Verinder estate with Rachel, she is overcome with anxiety because she is convinced the Jennings's science must involve an explosion. The other guests lie that the explosion will be the next morning, and she spends that morning waiting and searching for it, only to be astonished that this alleged explosion (which, of course, never happened) was too quiet for her to notice. As a character foil who contrasts with the young, intelligent, independent-minded Rachel, Mrs. Merridew's character demonstrates the absurdity in the Victorian assumptions about gender that suggest someone like Rachel needs a guardian or husband's "protection." Mrs. Merridew's comical fixation on the nonexistent "explosion" also allows Collins to ridicule many of his contemporaries' anxieties and misunderstandings about science and technology.

Gooseberry – A young boy with enormous bug-eyes, whose real name is "Octavius Guy." Gooseberry helps Mr. Bruff with legal investigations and proves crucial in Bruff, Franklin, and Cuff's attempt to trace **the Moonstone** after Mr. Septimus Luker withdraws it from his London bank. While all the adults follow false leads, Gooseberry follows the dark-skinned sailor who turns out to be Godfrey Ablewhite in disguise, and to have truly taken the Moonstone from the bank. Cuff declares that Gooseberry has a promising future in detective work.

The Dark-Skinned Sailor – A curious man present at the bank when Mr. Septimus Luker takes out **the Moonstone**, and whom Franklin, Bruff, and Cuff initially suspect to be working for the Indians due to his skin color. Gooseberry follows him to the Tower Wharf, where he takes a room at a pub called "The Wheel of Fortune" and is found dead the next morning. The jewelry box in his room suggests that he did indeed have the Moonstone, and that the three Indian Brahmins murdered him and took it sometime the night before. At the end of Franklin Blake's second narrative, Sergeant Cuff realizes that the sailor is wearing a mask, which he pulls off to reveal the man's true identity: he is Godfrey Ablewhite.

MINOR CHARACTERS

The Narrator of the Prologue – John Herncastle's unnamed cousin, who explains the myth of **the Moonstone** and recounts watching Herncastle plunder it during the Taking of Seringapatnam in 1799. His identity and the origin of his narrative add to the mystery surrounding the Moonstone and its curse.

Caroline Ablewhite – Julia Verinder's sister who marries into the Ablewhite family, and Godfrey Ablewhite's mother, whom her niece Miss Clack declares "has never been known to do anything for herself." She grows furious at Rachel for rejecting Godfrey's proposal.

Sir John Verinder – Julia Verinder's husband, who is deceased throughout the text but notable for writing up an incredibly simple will: "Everything to my wife." Fortunately, Julia Verinder's good judgment proves this a logical choice.

Nancy – The kitchen-maid at the Verinder estate.

Samuel – Gabriel Betteredge's assistant.

TERMS

The Russian Imperial Scepter A golden, gem-studded staff owned by the Russsian monarchy since its creation in 1774. Set inside the Russian Imperial Scepter is the infamous Orlov diamond, which was stolen from India by a French soldier in 1747. Collins claims this diamond, along with the Koh-i-Noor, as inspiration for **the Moonstone**—in fact, the Orlov diamond was also set in the head of a statue of a god in a Hindu temple.

The Koh-i-Noor Like the Orlov diamond in the Russian Imperial Scepter, a famous large Indian diamond that inspired the novel's **Moonstone**. Its recorded history stretches back to at least the 14th century, and the untimely and violent deaths of many of the stone's temporary owners have led many to see it as bringing bad luck. The British seized the diamond in the 19th century and, although India and Pakistan have continually called for the stone's return since 1947, Britain refuses to this day.

Somnauth Conventionally spelled Somnath, which means "Lord of the Moon," a famous ancient temple to the Hindu god Shiva in what is now the western Indian state of Gujarat. In *The Moonstone*, Somnauth (which Collins refers to as a "sacred city") is the original home of **the Moonstone**. However, Collins writes that the 11th-century Persian raid of the temple (a historical fact) caused the Moonstone to be uprooted and moved to another temple in Benares. At the end of the novel, the three Indian Brahmins manage to return the Moonstone to Somnauth, as Mr. Murthwaite observes when he stumbles upon a massive pilgrimage to the site.

Benares Now officially called Varanasi, an ancient city on the Ganges River that remains the holiest city in Hinduism. After its theft from Somnauth, **the Moonstone** was taken to Varanasi from the 11th to 18th centuries, where another temple was constructed to house it.

Vishnu One of the three most important Hindu gods, considered the deity who preserves the world.

Seringapatam – A town in the present-day south Indian state of Karnataka, which is an important pilgrimage center for Vishnu worshippers and contains a fort that was the capital of the Kingdom of Mysore until its destruction by British forces in 1799. Colonel John Herncastle steals **the Moonstone** at this battle.

Brahmin The Indian caste of teachers and priests. The three men who come to England in order to retrieve **the Moonstone** are Brahmins, probably descendants of the original three priests charged by the Lord Vishnu to follow and defend the Moonstone after its move to **Benares**.

Mughal The Indo-Persian Muslim empire that ruled much of the Indian subcontinent from 1526 to 1857.

Aurungzebe A militaristic, controversial Mughal emperor who expanded the Empire to its largest territorial extent in the second half of the 17th century. In *The Moonstone*, Aurungzebe (conventionally spelled Aurangzeb) steals **the Moonstone** from Benares in the 18th century.

Bailiff In 19th-century England, the overseer who managed a landed family's estate. This was Gabriel Betteredge's job for most of his life, until he grew old and Lady Julia Verinder made him something of a butler instead (the post he occupies during the events of the novel).

Reformatory – In Victorian England, reformatories were prison centers and schools designed to teach young criminals marketable skills (rather than relegating them to a life of crime). Rosanna, the maid at Julia Verinder's estate, went to a reformatory after living as a petty criminal for many years.

Blackguard – An archaic British word for someone dishonorable or untrustworthy.

Yorkshire – A large county in northern England where the Verinder family's estate is located.

Frizinghall – A fictional town near the Verinder estate. Its name is taken from a real area of the Yorkshire city of Bradford.

Brittany – A historically Celtic region in northwestern France, where Miss Clack moves after economic changes push her out of England.

Brighton – A city on the southern English coast, to which Rachel Verinder moves during her brief, ill-fated engagement to Godfrey Ablewhite.

Laudanum – An extremely addictive liquid opium solution commonly used for a variety of ailments in Victorian England. Based on the author's own opium addiction, the novel's plot ultimately revolves around the laudanum-addicted doctor Ezra Jennings giving Franklin Blake the drug to prove that, under its unwitting influence a year earlier (thanks to Mr. Candy), Franklin stole **the Moonstone**.

Tower Wharf – A boat docking area by the Tower of London in central London, to which Mr. Bruff, Franklin Blake, and Sergeant Cuff follow the man dressed as a sailor (actually Godfrey Ablewhite) after Mr. Luker removes **the Moonstone** from the bank.

Rotterdam – A large city in the Netherlands, and the most important port city in Europe.

Kattiawar – A peninsula region of the present-day Indian state of Gujarat, in which the temple of Somnauth is located.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

DETECTIVE METHODS AND GENRE STANDARDS

Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* follows Lady Julia Verinder's family and employees in their attempt to retrieve the priceless **diamond** of the book's title—which was first plundered by her brother, "the wicked Colonel" John Herncastle, during a violent colonial conquest in India, then

gifted to Julia's daughter Rachel on her birthday, and finally stolen from the Verinder estate that same night. T.S. Eliot famously called the book "the first, the longest, and the best of modern English detective novels," a reputation that is well-deserved: although Arthur Conan Doyle's detective Sherlock Holmes and the works of Agatha Christie remain the detective genre's best-known exemplars, *The Moonstone* not only predated and influenced these subsequent works, but in fact singlehandedly set the template for mystery novels for at least the next century. From the realization that the thief must be in the family's inner circle to the eccentric, shrewd character of Sergeant Cuff, who sees damning evidence in details others fail to detect, and finally to the hidden feuds, divisions, and romances exposed as the investigation takes over the family's lives, *The Moonstone*'s emphasis on uncovering the hidden truth of events by interpreting and following the clues—and on forcing the reader to do this alongside the book's litany of detective figures—turned it into the foundation for an entire, massively popular genre.

The novel's plot revolves around the search for the lost Moonstone, a thrilling and suspenseful process of investigation that proceeds through the careful investigation and analysis of evidence. Nearly all of Collins's characters find themselves suspected of the theft at one point or another, including the disfigured maid and reformed convict Rosanna Spearman, the three Indian Brahmins who mysteriously show up at the Verinder estate after the Diamond's theft, Rachel Verinder's cousins and love interests Franklin Blake and Godfrey Ablewhite, Rachel's maid Penelope Betteredge, and even Rachel herself. Everyone is under suspicion and everything is a possible clue, and the Verinder estate turns from a normal manor into a sea of possible evidence and red herrings. Indeed, when the prototypically savvy detective Sergeant Cuff gets involved in the case, he determines that a small smear on the paint of Rachel's door will lead to the thief.

This kind of investigation is the template for the rest of the novel: characters discover a new clue, follow it until it reveals something about another character, and then revise their theory of the theft accordingly. Later, Franklin Blake discovers an incontestable piece of evidence naming *himself* as the culprit, which leaves the case seemingly insoluble. He then makes a breakthrough when the doctor Ezra Jennings figures out that his actions can be attributed to opium—but Jennings only does this by analyzing his own set of clues: the ill doctor Mr. Candy's disjointed words that are actually Candy's attempt at telling a coherent story. This means of investigation is a powerful metaphor for the detection process whose unraveling forms the centerpiece of the book.

By highlighting the similarities between literary interpretation and the investigation of clues—both of which involve picking significant information out of a sea of possible clues and using that information to develop a holistic theory—the novel also turns the reader into the detective. First, although the entire novel is narrated in retrospect (after the Diamond has long been lost and the culprits discovered), the reader is made to follow along with the investigation, learning each bit of information as it is revealed to each narrator. The narrators repeatedly insist that they must refrain from offering more details and instead limit themselves to what they knew at the time about which they are writing. Indeed, the novel's multiple narrators add to the investigative work the reader must undertake in order to figure out what really happened, just as the multiple suspects add to the detectives' work. From the stoic, traditional, sexist Gabriel Betteredge to the obstinate, moralistic Miss Clack, to Franklin Blake, who edits and compiles the narratives but is also partially responsible for the crime, all of the narrators have their own biases and perspectives on one other. The novel's internal twists, turns, and cliffhangers are also products of its original serialized format: like many Victorian novels, it was published through weekly installments. Not only did this mean that the novel's dedicated readers quite literally spent a year guessing and waiting to learn who was the culprit, but it also means that Collins had a chance to respond to the novel's growing popularity and the readers' suspicions.

Through both its subject matter and its relationship to the reader, *The Moonstone* set important precedents for subsequent detective fiction. The characters' attitudes toward clues—everything is a potential clue, and no stone may be left unturned—is a central trope in nearly all the mystery fiction that followed. So is the realization that the thief must be among the apparent protagonists, and the discovery that he or she is one of the least suspicious of all. Even the book's setting has become a cliché: to the cotemporary reader, an English country manor is often synonymous with mystery, suspense, and horror stories. And, of course, the reading experience of the detective novel—which extended in the twentieth century to the viewing experience of police and crime thrillers on TV—remains deeply indebted to Collins's decision to bring the reader along with the investigation.

Perhaps unbeknownst to its author, *The Moonstone*'s "detective fever" would catch on for generations to come. And yet it is much more than the typical detective novels that followed it: not only is it the novel that made these subsequent works possible, but by turning detective into reader and reader into detective it also makes an important commentary on the nature of literary interpretation: one must consider everything as a possible clue and follow those which produce a coherent story about the intentions underlying a text—or crime.

INTENTION, IDENTITY, AND PERSONALITY

The theft of the Moonstone from Julia and Rachel Verinder's estate is far from an ordinary crime not only because of the Diamond's immense value, but also

because—unlike most stereotypes of precious gem heists—it was not executed by a master thief according to a master plan, but rather resulted from the confluence of various circumstances and actions that complicate the question of who is truly guilty, and to what extent. In fact, both the crime and the investigation disrupt straightforward notions of character and identity, suggesting that people, like events (the Diamond's theft) and innovations (the Diamond's discovery), are in fact the intersection of often-conflicting desires, relationships, and beliefs, both conscious and unconscious.

The theft of **the Moonstone** is not a conventional crime, masterminded and committed by a single person, and neither is the investigation. Rather, it is a product of different people's interlocking circumstances, and each of these people ends up partially responsible for the crime. Franklin Blake actually takes the Moonstone, but he does so unwillingly after the doctor Mr. Candy secretly slips him laudanum (opium) to treat his restless sleep. Rachel sees Franklin take the Diamond, but declines to confront him and shuts down Sergeant Cuff's search to protect him. The man with the guiltiest intentions, Godfrey Ablewhite, in fact neither plans nor intends to steal the Diamond; rather, he sees an opportunity because of the other characters' circumstances. Just like the theft, the investigation into the Diamond's loss is far from a conventional, hierarchical affair; despite the involvement of the crack detective Sergeant Cuff, the mystery of the Diamond's loss is only resolved because of the confluence of different interested parties' knowledge, ability, and circumstances. Cuff only enters the picture after the local officer Superintendent Seegrave alienates everyone, and after Cuff does the same and gets fired, Mr. Bruff, Franklin Blake, and Gabriel Betteredge take over the investigation in their own ways, and Ezra Jennings's scientific insights propel this collective investigation forward. In *The Moonstone*, then, it is never easy to assign responsibility for the crime and for uncovering the criminal(s); these are both collective efforts, and by writing them as such Collins begins to challenge the very value of individual intention.

Collins's decision to show a crime and investigation not attributable to any particular agent allows him to make a more fundamental point about human acts and personhood: contrary to stereotypes of Victorian characters as one-dimensional moral archetypes, he depicts conflicted, complicated people struggling to understand their own identities and adapt to imperfect situations. The novel lacks a prototypical, morally pure hero—Franklin Blake is reckless and partially responsible for the theft, and the characters who believe themselves most moral, Miss Clack and Godfrey Ablewhite, are frauds. All of Collins's characters grapple with internal contradictions; for instance, Miss Clack insists that any kind of sensual thought is sinful and yet swoons in carnal ecstasy every time Godfrey Ablewhite kisses her hand; her conscious moralism is in fact a way of covering up her unconscious sexual desire. Rachel feels obligated both to resolve the case (for her family's sake) and to protect Franklin (who she believes to be the thief, but loves dearly). Betteredge turns this sense of conflict into comedy when he declares that he is delighted to accommodate Ezra Jennings's experiment "speaking as a servant," but personally thinks that Jennings's "head is full of maggots." Rachel and Betteredge are both torn between conflicting obligations to themselves and others, so much so that they struggle to decide which part is their true self; Collins's fixation on internal contradictions gives way to an examination of identity itself.

In fact, the novel frequently pushes the boundaries of human identity, with characters who lose track of who they are, multiply or divide themselves, or turn out to be other characters. When he discovers that he stole the Diamond from Rachel's room, Franklin begins to reckon with the possibility that he might not truly know himself, and that there is some unconscious, foreign entity in his personality. Conversely, the doctor Mr. Candy becomes completely unable to speak after an accident, and Franklin hardly recognizes him on a visit; if Franklin finds out he is harboring a secret personality, Candy loses the only one he had. The novel is full of characters who mirror one another: Godfrey Ablewhite and Franklin Blake have opposite personalities, fight for Rachel's heart, and both (in their own way) steal the Diamond, yet one ends up dead and the other happily married; later, Franklin Blake and Ezra Jennings undergo drug withdrawal at the same time, both hoping to repent for the "horrible accusation[s]" that hang over their heads. During the final section of Franklin Blake's narrative, the problem of identity gets completely twisted: the young prodigy Gooseberry investigates the case narratively as a stand-in for Sergeant Cuff, who then shows up the next day, just before Mr. Bruff sends a surrogate in his place. The sailor who they believe has the Diamond turns out to be Godfrey Ablewhite, wearing a mask. With people constantly replaced by and replacing themselves with others, *The Moonstone* turns individuals themselves into as much a mystery as the disappearance of the Diamond.

Ultimately, Collins's novel is a peculiar precursor of the mystery genre because he chooses to show an ambiguous crime with multiple perpetrators, solved by multiple detectives (one of whom is one of the perpetrators), after which nobody is punished and everyone celebrates a happy resolution even though they never get the Diamond back. This is possible only because Collins's characters are not united in their desire to retrieve the Diamond, but rather all confront their own individual demons, desires, obligations, and loyalties throughout the search for the stone—they are not sure about themselves and their plans, but in fact constantly grappling with their own identities and trying to make sure they have become the people they meant to be.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The Moonstone was published during the mid-nineteenth century, a momentous time in the history of British science, Christianity, and the relationship between the two. With the English economy's transition to industrial capitalism, the controversy surrounding Darwinian theory, and the simultaneous acceleration of medical, transportation, and communication technologies alongside religious concern for society's disadvantaged, science and religion began to grow antagonistic. It was no longer clear to most educated people that complex biology and technology were signs of God's existence; rather, science had begun to challenge religion's monopoly on explaining the history and development of the world and human species. With its exaggerated evangelical narrator Miss Clack, meditations on Hindu mysticism and "hocus-pocus," and eventual dependence on a medical experiment for its plot, *The Moonstone* puts this emerging conflict front and center. The novel ultimately makes a case for putting scientific methodologies (including that of detective work) above blind faith—including the blind faith many technology-minded Victorians put in science itself.

The novel takes a satirical and critical stance toward religion—and especially Victorian Christianity. The most obvious example is the sanctimonious figure of Miss Clack, who considers spreading (her version of) the gospel as her primary purpose in life and increasingly alienates the entire Verinder family by doing so. Her narrative is replete with caricatures of nineteenth-century evangelism and ironic twists (like when she hides a pamphlet on "Satan among the Sofa Cushions" between Julia's own sofa cushions—and inadvertently reveals her proselytizing as the devil's work). She continually insists that she is looking out for people's best interests before hounding them and violating their privacy in order to distribute such pamphlets. The emergent conflict between science and religion is clearly staged when Julia refuses to see a clergyman and insists on seeing a doctor for her terminal illness. This horrifies Miss Clack, who sees religion as an absolute authority and science as a "heathen profession" that only gets in the way. Of course, contemporary readers can see that Julia is sick and needs a doctor, not a blessing. Despite his and Clack's mutual disdain for one another, Betteredge also sees Christianity as synonymous with all that is good and noble in the world; he declares Julia Verinder respectable because she is "a Christian woman, if ever there was one yet," and later a "merciful and Christian mistress." Ironically, of course, Julia turns down Miss Clack's offer of spiritual advice and has no interest in religion during even her final days. And while both Betteredge and Miss Clack seem to think Christianity contains *the* truth, they are both deeply skeptical of Hinduism, the religion that gave the Moonstone its value in the first place; Betteredge calls it "hocus-pocus."

In contrast to religious "hocus-pocus," Collins positions scientific thinking as realistic and truly descriptive of reality; he clearly retains faith in the technological advancements of his day. The most obvious example of this is the scientific experiment on which the novel's plot turns: Ezra Jennings is able to recreate Franklin Blake's unwitting theft of **the Moonstone** by replicating the conditions under which he did it the first time. The unfulfilled plan that would have presumably banished the Diamond's curse—breaking it up by cutting it into different stones in Amsterdam—also would have used technology to resolve the case once and for all. A more subtle example is the scientific Reformatory that turns Rosanna from a criminal into a law-abiding servant, which contrasts comically with the religious foundations run by Godfrey and Miss Clack—for instance, they find God's work in a foundation that tailors delinquent fathers' pants for their sons. Finally, the detective method is also a proxy for scientific investigation, a process of following concrete evidence to workable conclusions, which is on display from when Cuff traces the paint smear on Rachel's door to when Franklin Blake traces and unearths Rosanna's hidden letter.

But Collins also criticizes many characters' misunderstandings of science, and excessive faith in it—he argues more for a scientific way of thinking than for science itself as the solution to every problem. During Ezra Jennings and Franklin Blake's attempt to reconstruct the theft through a science experiment, the impressionable and histrionic Mrs. Merridew cannot sleep because she remembers that every science experiment in school was accompanied by an explosion—her comical misunderstanding of science only turns more ridiculous when she insists that the explosion was so quiet that technology must be progressing (of course, there simply is no explosion). This episode allows Collins to mock common misunderstandings of science, including the blind belief in progress. Further, the experiment is only necessary to account for the original theft of the Moonstone, which was also the product of science: Mr. Candy slipped Franklin Blake laudanum to prove that medicine worked after Franklin told Candy that his occupation was unnecessary and pointless. While this offers unquestionable proof that science works, here it is creating a problem rather than solving one. Ultimately, while Collins astutely recognizes the growing division between science and religion, his criticism of religion's excesses does not prohibit him from also criticizing science's.

Many prominent critics have argued that one of Collins's great achievements was his ability to combine realism and romance, a scientific portrait of the world and an otherworldly fantasy that captures the reader's attention. While his clear elevation of science over religion might suggest that he prefers this world over fantasy, in fact he shows how remarkable, romantic, and mysterious events are all accessible through the realist form—that a linear police investigation can inspire faith and wonder, and that a science experiment can reignite love.

GENDER AND VICTORIAN MORALITY

Numerous critics and observers have noted that the theft of **the Moonstone** (from Rachel's bedroom, in the night, on her birthday as she comes of age) is a metaphor for the symbolic loss of Rachel's innocence, or virginity; in fact, with Rachel's broken engagements and the Verinder family's female leadership, the novel comments extensively on Victorian England's strict, codified gender hierarchy, whether by mocking those who enforce it or showing how women are capable of far more than men anticipate. Ultimately, although the novel ends in a happy marriage, Collins clearly understands that it is possible to reject gender hierarchy without rejecting the value of love.

Many of Collins's characters expose the rigid gender roles and ideologies that confined women in Victorian England. For instance, Betteredge repeatedly and openly voices his belief that women are weak, inferior beings in need of protection from men. He thinks of his wife Selina Goby as property and labor, marrying her because "it will be cheaper to marry her than to keep her [as a maid]." He frequently and extensively evaluates Rachel's appearance, which he considers the most important thing about a woman, and treats her intelligence as a character defect. Finally, he is quite incapable of empathizing with women, whom he thinks fundamentally lack reason and treats like replaceable objects: he declares that, if "you choose a woman, you try her, and she breaks your heart [...] throw her away, and try another!" Even Miss Clack feels she is bound to fit the customary position of a woman, which leads her to avoid topics that are outside the "proper limits of female discussion." This applies to men, too: Betteredge contrasts Franklin's awkward intellect and indecision with Godfrey Ablewhite's confidence, assertiveness, and chivalry—and especially his service to women's charities. Of course, the prototypically masculine character turns out to be the villain—just like the daring, adventurous John Herncastle, who bestows the Moonstone's curse on the family. While Betteredge does his best to reinforce regressive gender roles, Collins ultimately throws them out the window.

Indeed, Collins's women prove far cleverer and more powerful than men imagine them, while men often prove weak and ineffectual. After her husband John Verinder's death, Julia Verinder manages the family's estate diligently and fairly, far better than he ever did. Beyond ruling the house authoritatively and commanding the respect of all the men around her, she structures her will so that Godfrey cannot steal Rachel's inheritance, and Betteredge considers her "one in a thousand" as far as women go. Rachel, too, takes after her mother; men like Betteredge consider her stubbornness and intelligence as disadvantages, but to the contemporary reader she is clearly a feminist figure; she singlehandedly shuts down Cuff's investigation, ends her own engagement to Godfrey, and continually dictates the terms of her relationship with Franklin.

The majority of Collins's men also overturn gender roles—his main detectives Cuff, Franklin Blake, Mr. Bruff, and Ezra Jennings, in addition to Betteredge, are all weak, infirm, old, or otherwise far out of line with traditional muscular masculinity. With most of his characters going against the social grain, Collins offers an implicit critique of Victorian gender roles.

Collins is also remarkably progressive in his attitudes about sex and marriage, even if they still more or less determine his female characters' fates. In contrast to most Victorian novelists, Collins is remarkably open about sex. He writes about Franklin Blake and Godfrey Ablewhite's illicit relationships, as well as Rachel and Rosanna's desire for Franklin, in a time when novelists usually only confronted these themes through metaphor. But the fact that the novel's "happily ever after" conclusion relies on Rachel's marriage to Franklin and eventual pregnancy shows that Collins does not necessarily shun marriage, and Rosanna's suicide shows that Collins's faith in love is less than complete. In fact, in killing herself, Rosanna not only gives up on Franklin, but also abandons her plans to move to London with Limping Lucy and try to make a living together—a kind of surrogate marriage. Crucially, this is a tragic ending for her: caught up in the fantasy of having a normal, married life, Rosanna gives up on an alternative that would have let her and Lucy be independent without men. Rachel's near-marriage to Godfrey Ablewhite is also clearly a disaster: he is only interested in money, and he facetiously offers his love in exchange for her respect, an arrangement that recalls Betteredge's dreadful marriage to Selina Goby. Collins does not make a case against all marriage, then, but more of a case for love: he clearly thinks it can work in the right circumstances, but also that forcing relationships into the mold of marriage can prove a recipe for disaster.

Although the hunt for the Moonstone may symbolize the quest to restore Rachel Verinder's honor, it is even more significant that she preserves her dignity and standing in her family through her own efforts, and takes a series of bold stands—hiding her knowledge of Franklin's guilt, bringing her mother to London, making and breaking her engagement to Godfrey—in order to influence the investigation without losing her family's respect. By the end of the story, it is simply comical when the naïve and girlish Mrs. Merridew insists on being a "chaperone" to Rachel; their relationship shows underlines Rachel's maturity and ability to far exceed the circumscribed role offered to her by Victorian English society.

CLASS, WEALTH, AND NOBILITY

When they lose **the Moonstone** forever, Rachel and Julia Verinder are distraught not because they have lost something worth 20,000 pounds—they scarcely need the money—but rather because the Diamond's loss signifies a violation of their family honor and dignity. The tension between these different modes of valuation—money

and status—reveals the class differences that divide the wealthy, powerful Verinder family (who simply live off income from their land and do not work) from everyone else: their somewhat less wealthy and powerful relatives (who are constantly fighting debt to maintain their leisurely lifestyle), the professionals who serve them (like Mr. Bruff, Sergeant Cuff, and the doctors Mr. Candy and Ezra Jennings), and the working-class servants who keep their house. By portraying lower-class characters' struggle sympathetically and showing how upper-class characters' private lives do not at all measure up to their public personas, Collins challenges his era's popular theory that class has anything at all to do with a person's moral value.

Although most of them live in the same house, the novel's characters have radically different experiences of the world, a set of differences that is unjustly determined by social class. Rosanna Spearman and the other servants work their whole lives but never earn enough to marry, take on better work, or move up socioeconomically. After giving up a life of petty theft, Rosanna is mortally bored and hopeless working at the Verinder estate; when she falls in love with Franklin Blake, who never even pays attention to her interest because she is only a servant, she can no longer stand her despair and drowns herself at **the Shivering Sand**. Rosanna's friend Limping Lucy puts it plainly: the poor are forced to live "miserably" so that lazy rich aristocrats like Franklin Blake and Godfrey Ablewhite can avoid working, but fortunately "the day is not far off when the poor will rise against the rich."

The novel's middle-class characters fare better: Sergeant Cuff gets to comfortably retire after a long career, and Betteredge is an interesting, transitional character in terms of class: while he is technically one of the Verinders' servants, he also takes on the dress, habits, and mannerisms of the upper class and is highly respected in the Verinder household, in part because he managed the family's lands for a long time. For instance, even though Franklin Blake is technically of a higher social class than Betteredge, he takes loans from him and looks to him for advice. Betteredge is the only figure who mediates between the family and their servants and the only one with access to both the upper and working classes, because he can speak the languages of both classes. He practically worships the rich, however, whom he considers better than himself in every respect. Because he shows characters across the socioeconomic spectrum, Collins is able to show the severe inequality among them in a system that not only disproportionately benefits the wealthy, but also treats wealth as synonymous with honor and moral character.

However, Collins's treatment of the upper class shows that their status is more about public appearances than private realities; they tend not to deserve their wealth at all, and often squander it. While Franklin Blake and Godfrey Ablewhite never have to work, it is because of their status and not their bank accounts: they are constantly getting further in debt to fund their lifestyles. Julia and Rachel worry about the Diamond's loss because it signifies a violation of their family's honor, and then fire Sergeant Cuff for the same reason: he questions whether Rachel herself might be guilty, crossing a line by questioning the family's honor. Collins thus shows that the public conflation of class, honor, and morality has nothing to do with people's actual character. Ezra Jennings and Godfrey Ablewhite's contrasting personalities demonstrate this: Jennings is physically hideous, disrespected and disdained by his community, and addicted to opium, but secretly yearns for love and acceptance and spends his last days doing everything possible to prove Franklin innocent of the Moonstone's theft; meanwhile, Godfrey is outwardly chivalrous, pious, and charitable, but secretly steals everything of value he can get his hands on—including the Diamond itself, and the inheritance of a young man for whom he serves as trustee—so that he can pay for his mistress and villa outside London. Through these characters, Collins shows how people wrongly prioritize the public appearance of class over the private reality of action and personality.

However, Collins does not merely think some rich people do not deserve their wealth; he also shows how the very means of gaining wealth—inheritance and credit—end up undermining upper-class people's lives and moral character. In other words, many of the novel's characters are destroyed by their own wealth. Most obviously, the family immediately recognizes John Herncastle's decision to leave the Moonstone to Rachel Verinder as a double-edged sword: it is at once a gesture of reconciliation and a way of getting revenge by passing on the Moonstone's curse to his niece. Unlike her reckless husband John, Julia organizes her will so that her daughter Rachel will be protected from greedy suitors like her nephew Godfrey Ablewhite—who backs out of his engagement with Rachel once he learns that he will not grow rich by marrying her. He needs the money because he has leveraged his public-facing trustworthiness to get the credit and influence to access enormous sums of money he privately squanders, and will never pay back. While Collins does not demonize the wealthy aristocrats at his novel's center, like Julia Verinder, her daughter Rachel, and Franklin Blake (who, like Godfrey Ablewhite, has debts of his own), he does make a case against the position, generally accepted but decreasingly viable in Victorian England, that wealth, nobility, and moral character are one and the same.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

Although *The Moonstone* focuses on the eponymous Diamond's theft and attempted recovery once it has reached England, it is telling that the novel proper is bookended by the stories of **the Moonstone**'s initial theft from its ceremonial position in India

and ultimate return to that place. Even though the novel's characters never travel to India and view the three Indian Brahmins who come to retrieve the Moonstone as sinister thieves, the novel is suffused with Collins's sympathy for the Indian victims of British imperialism and tellingly ends with the Diamond being restored to its proper place—not pinned to Rachel Verinder's dress, but in the statue of the moon God in the Somnauth temple. While Collins does not use *The Moonstone* to explicitly outline his political beliefs, his portrayal of Indians is remarkably sympathetic and progressive compared to his contemporaries', which in turn suggests that he understood and sought to reveal the brutality and shortsightedness of British colonialism.

The Moonstone's theft and return are a clear metaphor for the British plunder of India, which the novel presents in a way that was uncommon for Victorian England. The novel's preface tells of "the wicked Colonel" John Herncastle's involvement in the 1799 taking of Seringapatnam, a battle during which the British overthrew the powerful Indian princely state of Mysore. Collins shows the English as brutal and cruel, taking pleasure in murdering Indians and looting the palace treasury; Herncastle is even called "the Honourable John," which was a colloquial term for the British East India Company. The Moonstone becomes a symbol of his excesses, and in turn British violence in India, something many of Collins's contemporaries simply refused to acknowledge, preferring instead to believe that the Empire was India's benevolent protector.

When the Moonstone arrives in England, Franklin Blake and Gabriel Betteredge immediately learn about its apparent curse—the product of both the stone's value and the three Indian Brahmins' tireless attempts to return it to India. While the British talk about this curse as a mystical legend, to Indians it is simply a practical attempt to undo the plunder done by English (and other foreign) invaders. The stone's real-life counterparts, such as the Koh-i-Noor and Orloff Diamond in the Russian Imperial Sceptre, have also been stolen under suspicious or downright unlawful circumstances from India and left in the possession of powerful overseas interests centuries later. Collins carefully ties the details of the Moonstone's theft back to the reality of British colonial exploitation at every stage, using the Diamond's backstory to reveal the history of the British Empire.

At the same time, many of Collins's characters see Indians as at once exotic, backwards savages and cunning, mystical rogues. This exemplifies common European stereotypes about India and highlights the mindset Britons used to justify colonizing peoples they considered lesser than themselves. For instance, Franklin Blake cites British anthropological studies of "Oriental races" to support his speculation about why the Indians somehow value their Diamond more whole than cut up into smaller diamonds, even though to the Indians it would be strange to destroy and divide something so beautiful and valuable. At the same time, Betteredge berates Franklin for his foreign education and everyone's distrust in Ezra Jennings seems to relate to his mixed racial background, itself a product of British colonialism. Collins invokes stereotypes in order to bash them; while his British characters are baffled and frightened by any trace of foreignness, his non-British characters reveal the foolishness in their counterparts' stereotyping and xenophobia.

In fact, Collins shows the Indians as intelligent and sophisticated, contradicting most of his countrymen's prejudices and betraying his critical view of Empire. When one of the three Indian Brahmins visits Mr. Bruff in his office, Bruff is astonished at the man's "excellent" English, his unparalleled manners, and the fact that (unlike nearly all Englishmen) "he respected my time." While the protagonists are delighted to have the Anglo-Indian traveler Mr. Murthwaite translate for them and help them understand Indian culture, the Indians already know far more about the English people and outsmart them at every turn. They are always one step ahead of the protagonists: they find out that the Diamond is in London first and immediately search Godfrey Ablewhite, who the reader only finds out to have been the thief some 200 pages later. Indeed, when the Indians search Godfrey and Mr. Luker for the Diamond, they leave "an ancient Oriental manuscript, richly illuminated with Indian figures and devices, [...] open to inspection on a table" and attack the men while they are entranced with the book. The Indians are astute enough to self-consciously evoke stereotypes in order to get the Englishmen to stop in their tracks.

In the book's closing passage, Mr. Murthwaite discovers the Moonstone being returned to its rightful place during a mass pilgrimage to Somnauth, a surreal episode that is clearly part of the book's happy ending—just as the Verinder family has resolved its conflicts, the return of the Moonstone to its rightful owners is a sign that the world has returned to its proper, balanced order. Wilkie Collins likely could not have openly come out against the British Empire in his book—after all, Britain had crushed India in the infamous First Indian War of Independence a decade before, and prominent intellectuals like Collins's friend Charles Dickens openly advocated genocide in India. In Collins's time, to celebrate the Moonstone's return to India—indeed, to celebrate India's victory over Britain in any respect—was incredibly radical, and Collins gets away with it only because the Diamond was "cursed" (by British colonialism) while on British soil. While the involvement of India may have only added a level of exotic intrigue for many Victorian readers, and while it is difficult to precisely track Collins's political beliefs, his very willingness to depict the senseless brutality of British violence in India and write noble, intelligent, and honorable Indian characters shows that he saw the issue in a far more complex light than most of his contemporaries.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE MOONSTONE

Although it is the stolen treasure at the center of the novel, the Moonstone is notable less because everyone agrees why it must be retrieved than because various characters attach various kinds of value to it, ranging from the religious and aesthetic to the social and financial. For Colonel Herncastle, the Diamond is originally a spoil of war, valuable presumably because of its monetary worth, but when he gifts it to his niece Rachel, it becomes transformed into a means of opening back up Herncastle's relation with the family he has been cut off from. Even when gifted, however, the stone's value is ambiguous: nobody can tell if he is genuinely trying to make amends with his family or seeking vengeance by passing on the stone's curse. Indeed, Franklin Blake's obsession with the curse ironically leads him to take the stone in his opium-influenced stupor; he steals the Diamond precisely because he worries someone else will, and to him the Diamond signifies danger and vulnerability. Rachel proudly pins the stone to her dress, showing it off as a symbol of her beauty on her 18th birthday, as she turns from a girl to a marriageable woman. Godfrey Ablewhite, one of the men she is likely to marry, tellingly calls the Diamond "mere carbon" just before stealing it: he sees the stone as a mere source of money—a misunderstanding that eventually costs him his life, when the three Indians who see it as a priceless religious artifact kill him to take it back. And during the entire investigation, the stone stands for loyalty and trust, as the drama surrounding its theft unravels the Verinder family—indeed, it is telling that the novel's happy ending is about banishing the stone's curse and reestablishing trust among the innocent members of the family (especially Rachel and Franklin), but not recovering the Moonstone.

In fact, the Moonstone is, in one sense, recovered to its rightful place at the end of the novel: it returns to India, from which Herncastle plundered it. Although the novel's investigation focuses on the Moonstone's disappearance from Rachel's room in the Verinder estate, in fact "the Diamond" (as the novel's British characters, mostly ignorant of its religious significance, call it) is actually stolen a number of times, including three times during the Prologue alone. When its original home, the temple at Somnauth, is raided, the Moonstone's guardians take it to Benares and build another temple for it; some centuries later, it is stolen from Benares and taken to Seringapatnam, from which "the wicked Colonel" John Herncastle steals it in 1799. In Britain, it is stolen three more times: from Rachel's bedroom by the opium-dreaming Franklin Blake, from Franklin by the scheming Godfrey Ablewhite, and finally from Godfrey by the three Indian Brahmins, the stone's true guardians, who finally return it to Somnauth some 800 years after its original theft. This series of thefts complicates the question of the Diamond's ownership: Rachel has no more claim to the Diamond than the Sultan of Seringapatnam, and Godfrey Ablewhite no more than its original thief, his uncle Colonel Herncastle. The Diamond's brilliance lies in its capacity to transform: to mean different things to different people at the same time, as well as to transform the relations of the people who come into contact with it—something perhaps most saliently expressed at the very end of the novel, when the three Brahmins who have spent their lives hunting down the Moonstone are required to turn in opposite directions, never see one another again, and spend the rest of their lives in pilgrimage.

ROBINSON CRUSOE

A landmark, wildly popular 1719 novel by Daniel Defoe that many consider the first true English novel, Robinson Crusoe is Gabriel Betteredge's favorite novel—and appears to be the only thing he has ever read (although he is on his seventh copy during the events of the novel). *Robinson Crusoe*'s title character spends 28 years stranded on a remote Caribbean island and has become a profound symbol of the British imperial attitude and Puritan Christian morality, as well as the most important figure in the long tradition of castaway fiction. Although he considers himself a serious and unsuperstitious man, Betteredge believes so deeply in *Robinson Crusoe* that he reads it over and over again (but does not seem to ever read anything else), places no trust in people who have not read the book (like Ezra Jennings), and even turns to the book for advice, opening to random pages and inevitably discovering hidden predictions and messages in the passages he encounters. "If *that* isn't prophecy," Betteredge writes after referring to one relevant passage, "what is?"

Robinson Crusoe's immense popularity allows Collins to make an important argument about the role of literature in life—not only does life often imitate art, but art can also offer a lens through which to interpret life. Betteredge's search for moral advice and clues about his future in *Robinson Crusoe* also parallels the way the reader must try to interpret the clues encountered throughout the search for **the Moonstone** in order to reconstruct the truth about its theft—Betteredge's reading offers the reader a template to follow.

Indeed, the great pleasure Betteredge takes in relaxing with *Robinson Crusoe* and his pipe at the end of the day points to the changing role of literature in the mid-19th century, as reading became a popular pastime for people of all classes—a transformation without which *The Moonstone* could never have ignited a frenzy in London when its next installment came out every week (as many popular movies and television series do in

the 21st century). Finally and most prophetically, *Robinson Crusoe* foreshadows the impact of Collins's own novel, which has essentially defined the genre of detective fiction ever since.

THE SHIVERING SAND

A tumultuous, sinister, gurgling stretch of quicksand along the coast near the Verinder family's Yorkshire estate, the Shivering Sand is connected from the start with **the Moonstone**'s alleged curse, as well as with the tragic character of Rosanna Spearman, who goes there to ponder her dissatisfaction in life—her discomfort at the Verinder estate, her sense of guilt and shame about her "past life" as a thief, her unrequited (and unacknowledged) love for Franklin Blake, and her fruitless search for a fulfilling future. Rosanna ultimately commits suicide there when, under Sergeant Cuff's suspicion and after realizing she has no hope of winning Franklin Blake's heart, she abandons her plans to move to London with Limping Lucy and drowns herself.

The Sand's constant churning and uncertain depths make it, in Rosanna's eyes, a symbol of the inevitability of her suffering: it "looks as if it had hundreds of suffocating people under it—all struggling to get to the surface, and all sinking lower and lower in the dreadful deeps." This stands in stark contrast to the manicured Verinder estate, as though to show the underside of the comfortable, leisurely life that Rachel, Julia, and their relatives get to live (at the expense of those who work for them and suffer the Industrial Revolution's bitterly unequal effects). Ultimately, the clue Rosanna leaves buried in the Sand leads Franklin Blake to realize *he* was actually guilty of stealing the Diamond—that he, the detective at this point, is the true criminal (both because he stole the Diamond and because his indifference drove Rosanna to suicide). In this sense, too, the Sand points to the invisible negative half of the investigation: the devastation that can follow from good intentions—and, in turn, the unanticipated twists, turns, and truths that drive the novel's sensational plot.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Penguin edition of *The Moonstone* published in 1999.

Prologue: 3 Quotes

❝ The Moonstone will have its vengeance yet on you and yours!

Related Characters: Colonel John Herncastle

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 14

Explanation and Analysis

In the Prologue to The Moonstone, set in 1799, the soldier John Herncastle learns about the legendary Moonstone before participating in the sacking of the Seringapatnam palace, where the Sultan has set the stone in the handle of a dagger. Although he is initially entranced by the story and disgusted by the "terrible slaughter" committed by his fellow soldiers, when he suddenly sees the Moonstone and its dagger, everything changes: he rushes for the dagger and kills an Indian man with it. These are the Indian man's final words, in his local language.

The Indian man's warning foreshadows the rest the novel, presenting the mythical perspective on the Moonstone: the Diamond is cursed, and danger befalls its owners. Of course, this proves true when Herncastle spends the rest of his life carefully guarding his Diamond, but friendless and out of touch with his family. Then, when he gifts it to his niece Rachel, nobody can tell if the Diamond is a token of reconciliation or a means of passing on his own misfortune to the family that spited him.

While the Moonstone's mythical curse frightens many of the characters who come into contact with it (especially Franklin Blake), there is a constant tension in the book between this metaphysical explanation for the Diamond's propensity to constantly switch hands and a more straightforward, factual explanation—people are willing to do vile things for a valuable gemstone. The metaphysical explanation (and the fact that the Diamond is stolen over and over again throughout history) suggests that people are not responsible in an ordinary moral sense for pursuing the Moonstone, but rather (like Herncastle, who turned from tender to bloodthirsty in a moment upon seeing the Diamond) are somehow compelled by a force in the Diamond itself. Indeed, when the Diamond is stolen from the Verinder estate, various characters are actually responsible, to various extents and with various degrees of evil intention, for the crime. And the Diamond's theft is also symbolic of the British colonial plunder of India, as well as based on an actual historical example (the Orloff Diamond that remains set in the Russian Imperial Sceptre).

The Loss of the Diamond: 1 Quotes

❝ You are not to take it, if you please, as the saying of an ignorant man, when I express my opinion that such a book as *Robinson Crusoe* never was written, and never will be written again. I have tried that book for years—generally in combination with a pipe of tobacco—and I have found it my friend in need in all the necessities of this mortal life. When my spirits are bad—*Robinson Crusoe*. When I want advice *Robinson Crusoe*. In past times, when my wife plagued me; in present times, when I have had a drop too much—*Robinson Crusoe*. I have worn out six stout. *Robinson Crusoe* hard work in my service. On my lady's last birthday she gave me a seventh. I took a drop too much on the strength of it; and Robinson Crusoe put me right again. Price four shillings and sixpence, bound in blue, with a picture into the bargain.

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 22-3

Explanation and Analysis

Early in his narrative, the Verinders' house-steward Gabriel Betteredge proclaims his undying love for the novel *Robinson Crusoe*, Daniel Defoe's 1719 classic about a British man who is stranded on a remote island for 28 years. For Betteredge, the novel performs a number of functions. First, it is his primary tool for relaxation after a long day, and he does not bore of it even after reading it over and over for decades. Second, he judges people's intelligence, maturity, and trustworthiness by their acquaintance with the novel. Third, he uses it to make predictions about the future by opening to a random page and waiting for the passage he sees to somehow come true in the real world.

Betteredge's obsession with *Robinson Crusoe* reveals volumes about his character and Collins's theory of what literature was and could be. Betteredge's fixation on reading and rereading the classic novel speaks to his exaggerated consistency and addiction to routine, as well as his advanced age and rigid belief in a single truth. He dismisses Ezra Jennings for not having recently read the novel, even though Jennings is a brilliant scientist—but to most of the British public in the 1850s, *Robinson Crusoe* was probably much more familiar than recent advances in pharmacology, since the book was one of the English-speaking world's first major bestsellers. To Betteredge, of course, the book is better than any drug, and to Collins, it is a model for the popular fiction he hopes to write. Betteredge's use of the novel for fortune-telling also speaks to the process of interpreting clues and predicting suspects that lies at the core of *The Moonstone* and the detective genre that emerged from it.

The Loss of the Diamond: 4 Quotes

❝ "Do you know what it looks like to *me*?" says Rosanna, catching me by the shoulder again. "It looks as if it had hundreds of suffocating people under it - all struggling to get to the surface, and all sinking lower and lower in the dreadful deeps! Throw a stone in, Mr Betteredge! Throw a stone in, and let's see the sand suck it down!"
Here was unwholesome talk! Here was an empty stomach feeding on an unquiet mind!

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge, Rosanna Spearman (speaker), Franklin Blake

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 39

Explanation and Analysis

After the three Indians first arrive in Yorkshire, Betteredge takes a detour to find the Verinders' new maid, Rosanna Spearman, at her favorite place in the area, the tumultuous and perilous quicksand beach known as the Shivering Sand. She turns the swirling sand into a metaphor for her own despair—a criminal in her "past life," she passed through a reformatory before coming to work for the Verinders, but she feels alienated and unfulfilled in her new lawful life as a servant. She lacks independence and dignity, cannot relate to her colleagues, and presumably is slotted for spinsterhood—which becomes even more unbearable for Rosanna when, at the end of this scene, Franklin Blake arrives and she falls in love with him on first sight.

The sands symbolize Rosanna's feeling of sinking into a miserable (but, according to others, "good") life, and perhaps the general condition of the British working classes, who have no way out of a lifetime of drudgery. While Betteredge's explanation for Rosanna's condition is far more straightforward—he thinks she needs a meal and perhaps some medicine—he clearly does not understand that he, too, is living out this drudgery, with the crucial difference being that he unconditionally accepts that his bosses, the Verinder family, are always right, and accordingly he believes that he is incredibly lucky to work

for them.

The Loss of the Diamond: 5 Quotes

If he was right, here was our quiet English house suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond—bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues, set loose on us by the vengeance of a dead man.

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Colonel John Herncastle, Franklin Blake , The Three Indians

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 46

Explanation and Analysis

After Franklin Blake shows Betteredge the Moonstone and explains how he came to possess it, Betteredge makes this declaration to the reader, setting the stage for the events to come: the Diamond's theft, the crime's impact on the Verinder home and family, and the protagonists' long campaign to recover the stone or at least repair the damage it has incurred on them.

As Betteredge expresses it, this is a plot full of scandal. After all, an ordinary "quiet English house" is suddenly thrown apart by the arrival of a diamond that appears to be valuable but really carries a curse. Moreover, this valuable gem is from India, a place associated with magic and intrigue, which Britain rules with an iron fist. The Diamond is being pursued by brilliant criminals, and the entire scandal is a vile, estranged, dead relative's way of getting revenge on the family that rejected him. This kind of conjunction of emotionally charged, dramatic plotlines was Collins's specialty, and it is why his works were called "sensation novels." Although such a plot might now be more common in daytime television and dime-a-dozen mystery novels, Collins arguably originated the particular kind of intricate, complex, now-clichéd plot that is their provenance.

The Loss of the Diamond: 9 Quotes

Lord bless us! it roar a Diamond! As large, or nearly, as a plover's egg! The light that streamed from it was like the light of the harvest moon. When you looked down into the stone, you looked into a yellow deep that drew your eyes into it so that they saw nothing else. It seemed unfathomable; this jewel, that you could hold between your finger and thumb, seemed unfathomable as the heavens themselves. We set it in the sun, and then shut the light out of the room, and it shone awfully out of the depths of its own brightness, with a moony gleam, in the dark. No wonder Miss Rachel was fascinated: no wonder her cousins screamed. The Diamond laid such a hold on *me* that I burst out with as large an 'O' as the Bouncers themselves.

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Franklin Blake , Miss Rachel Verinder

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 74

Explanation and Analysis

When Franklin Blake gifts Rachel Verinder the Moonstone on the night of her 18th birthday, everyone present grows enraptured by the stone, which even the austere Gabriel Betteredge describes here as "unfathomabl[y]" beautiful. It seems to harness the power of the sun, and to contain the power of the moon for which it is named. It exceeds and captures the human imagination. In other words, after seeing the Diamond, even Betteredge understands the extraordinary, overwhelming power that has led many to consider the gemstone cursed and capable of destroying its owners' lives. While he refuses to believe in what he calls Indian "hocus-pocus," Betteredge does see the otherworldly quality in the Diamond that has led generations of Indians to perceive it as an embodiment of the moon god. Curiously, there is one quality Betteredge does not mention about the Diamond: the flaw it allegedly holds at its heart, which he does not seem capable of seeing.

The Loss of the Diamond: 16 Quotes

"Do you mean to tell me, in plain English," I said, "that Miss Rachel has stolen her own Diamond?"

"Yes," says the Sergeant; "that is what I mean to tell you, in so many words. Miss Verinder has been in secret possession of the Moonstone from first to last; and she has taken Rosanna Spearman into her confidence, because she has calculated on our suspecting Rosanna Spearman of the theft. There is the whole case in a nutshell. Collar me again, Mr. Betteredge. If it's any vent to your feelings, collar me again."

Related Characters: Sergeant Cuff, Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Rosanna Spearman, Miss Rachel Verinder

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 143

Explanation and Analysis

Partway through the eminent London detective Sergeant Cuff's investigation into the Moonstone's disappearance, Rachel Verinder, the theft's victim, mysteriously decides to leave the house and stay with her cousins, the Ablewhite family, in a different town. On top of her open suspicion toward the police investigating the case and her refusal to talk with Sergeant Cuff, this evasive behavior finally alerts Betteredge to the fact that something is wrong with Rachel. He confronts Cuff, who explains his theory of his case, which he has insisted on keeping secret so far.

Cuff's astonishing and improbable theory, the revelation of which is a stunning twist in the novel, is quite possibly the least intuitive solution possible to the case. Not only did Rachel already have the Diamond she apparently stole, but she is also the family's closely-guarded sweetheart, the last person anyone would expect to commit an unspeakable crime. But this theory is also perfectly consistent with the evidence (which, throughout his investigation, remains the eccentric Cuff's primary concern—although his intuitions are often spot-on, he never relies on them for his job). According to Cuff, Rachel must have some secret debts, which she wanted to pay using the Moonstone (necessitating that the stone mysteriously disappear).

However, the reader eventually encounters the only turn of events more surprising than Rachel's possible guilt: Cuff, Britain's most illustrious and prophetic detective, turns out to be completely wrong. Rachel has nothing to do with the crime—although she has played a part in covering it up.

The Loss of the Diamond: 17 Quotes

It is a maxim of mine that men (being superior creatures) are bound to improve women—if they can. When a woman wants me to do anything (my daughter, or not, it doesn't matter), I always insist on knowing why. The oftener you make them rummage their own minds for a reason, the more manageable you will find them in all the relations of life. It isn't their fault (poor wretches!) that they act first, and think afterwards; it's the fault of the fools who humour them.

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Penelope Betteredge

Related Themes:

Page Number: 153

Explanation and Analysis

When Penelope, Betteredge's daughter and Rachel Verinder's maid, approaches her father to report that she is concerned about Rosanna Spearman's mental state and reaction to the news that Franklin Blake is leaving Yorkshire, Betteredge offers this aside explaining why he chooses to condescend to women. Ironically, Penelope proves completely justified: after Betteredge tells Rosanna to "cheer up" (to no avail), Rosanna drowns herself in the ocean.

Betteredge's attitude about gender, which today is considered horribly regressive and patronizing, was probably not uncommon in Victorian England. Deeply committed to the idea of a fundamental difference between men and women, as well as a natural hierarchy that charged men with protecting and making decisions for women (while effectively treating women as mindless property), Betteredge exemplifies the unwitting misogyny Collins decries throughout *The Moonstone*. Betteredge pities women because he cannot understand them, and as a result he does not take them seriously or learn from them—his characteristically unhappy marriage is proof enough. In contrast, Collins's women characters are far more astute and independent-minded, especially Rachel and Julia Verinder, but also even the stereotypically histrionic Rosanna, whose inability to get Franklin Blake's intention only multiplies the misery of her job as a servant.

The Loss of the Diamond: 20 Quotes

People in high life have all the luxuries to themselves—among others, the luxury of indulging their feelings. People in low life have no such privilege. Necessity, which spares our betters, has no pity on as. We learn to put our feelings back into ourselves, and to jog on with our duties as patiently as may be. I don't complain of this—I only notice it.

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Franklin Blake , Miss Rachel Verinder, Sergeant Cuff, Rosanna Spearman, Penelope Betteredge

Related Themes:

Page Number: 167-8

Explanation and Analysis

Although he practically worships his wealthy employers, Betteredge allows himself to notice the absurdity of the British class system, albeit without an explicit tone of criticism, and perhaps also without really understanding what he is saying. Because of the division of property in Victorian England, a small but wealthy class does not need to work for a living (people like Rachel and Julia Verinder, Franklin Blake, and Godfrey Ablewhite) and can hire workers to take care of all their practical needs. As a result, Betteredge realizes, the wealthy can force their employees and environments to respond to even their most capricious whims, whereas those employees and other working-class people like them do not have this power, and must simply suck up their own feelings and cope with whatever they are told to do in order to earn their paychecks.

Betteredge makes this observation just after Julia Verinder fires Sergeant Cuff on the spot and with a generous paycheck after he declares that he thinks Rachel must be the culprit, and then Rosanna commits suicide. But he is also talking about Rosanna Spearman's love for Franklin, which is transgressive because it occurs across this class divide: violating the emotional rules of servitude, Rosanna falls hopelessly in love with the aristocratic Franklin, whose indifference toward her breaks her heart, but whom Betteredge cannot blame for never noticing her. While Betteredge is far from a motivated or scathing critic, the fact that he can recognize the social and emotional inequalities created by the British class system attests both to that system's rigidity and power (which is necessary to spark the conservative Betteredge's interest) and the value of figures like Rosanna, who refuse to comply with it.

The Loss of the Diamond: 21 Quotes

I am (thank God!) constitutionally superior to reason. This enabled me to hold firm to my lady's view, which was my view also. This roused my spirit, and made me put a bold face on it before Sergeant Cuff. Profit, good friends, I beseech you, by my example. It will save you from many troubles of the vexing sort. Cultivate a superiority to reason, and see how you pare the claws of all the sensible people when they try to scratch you for your own good!

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Miss Rachel Verinder, Sergeant Cuff, Lady Julia Verinder

Related Themes:

Page Number: 174

Explanation and Analysis

Betteredge's fierce dedication to serving the Verinders often leads him into absurd declarations of loyalty, but this is doubtlessly the most extreme of them all. Betteredge is delighted to be able to reject what his rationality tells him—that there is some issue with Rachel and that Sergeant Cuff may be right that she has something to do with the theft—in order to be able to take his employer Julia's side. In this case, he considers it a disadvantage to be forced to stay tied to reality. In the first place, then, Betteredge's decision to side with Lady Julia reflects the profound degree to which his work determines his personality and sense of self: he is inseparable from his job.

Throughout *The Moonstone*, Betteredge's "superiority to reason" conflicts perennially with the rational, scientific, and evidence-based methods of the novel's investigators and doctors. On one level, this is an expression of the tense relations between popular (especially religious) belief and the new Victorian sciences that, while still sometimes based on guesswork, were quickly becoming people's preferred means of explaining and analyzing the world. After all, the Christian "Rampant Spinster" Miss Clack is the only character in *The Moonstone* to express this sentiment even more strongly than Betteredge.

The Loss of the Diamond: 22 Quotes

"Her ladyship has smoothed matters over for the present very cleverly," said the Sergeant. "But this family scandal is of the sort that bursts up again when you least expect it. We shall have more detective-business on our hands, sir, before the Moonstone is many months older."

Related Characters: Sergeant Cuff (speaker), Miss Rachel Verinder, Lady Julia Verinder, Gabriel Betteredge

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 184

Explanation and Analysis

After Rosanna Spearman commits suicide and Lady Verinder fires the eminent Sergeant Cuff, Betteredge sees him off and Cuff leaves him with an unsolved case and this warning. Despite Lady Julia's attempts to bury the case—which she successfully does until her own death—Cuff knows that the question of the Moonstone, because of the family drama surrounding it, will inevitably resurface in the future. And, of course, it does—not only does the longstanding controversy over the culprit dominate all the characters' lives for the next year, but the investigation restarts one year later, when one character finds himself accused of the crime and sets out on a quest to exonerate himself, and another discovers that the Moonstone will turn up on a predetermined date in London.

Cuff's declaration that the crime will resurface not only illustrates his preternatural predictive skills and creates a sense of suspense and excitement for Collins's reader, but also outlines what the real trouble with the Moonstone turns out to be: not merely the loss of something worth a lot of money, but more importantly the "family scandal" that arises around it.

The Loss of the Diamond: 23 Quotes

"Where's this gentleman that I mustn't speak of, except with respect? Ha, Mr. Betteredge, the day is not far off when the poor will rise against the rich. I pray Heaven they may begin with him. I pray Heaven they may begin with him."

Related Characters: Limping Lucy (speaker), Mrs. Yolland, Rosanna Spearman, Franklin Blake , Gabriel Betteredge

Related Themes:

Page Number: 192

Explanation and Analysis

After her close friend Rosanna Spearman's death, Mrs. Yolland's daughter, Limping Lucy, approaches Betteredge with a letter for the man she holds responsible for Rosanna's fate: Franklin Blake. Rosanna's obsessive love for Franklin led her to give up on Lucy, who was a sort of surrogate partner for Rosanna, and abandon their plan to move to London together and make a living working independently. To Lucy, Franklin Blake kept Rosanna trapped in the lower class, working an unfulfilling job while completely dependent on the Verinder family. When Betteredge insists that Lucy call Franklin "*Mr.* Franklin Blake" (she prefers "Murderer Franklin Blake"), she rejects his fixation on nobility and respectability, and ridicules him for his inability to understand the bigger picture of the labor system and society in which he lives.

As a character, Lucy is dark and misunderstood, the neglected Other of the novel's protagonists: she is poor while they are rich, deformed while they are beautiful, and irreverent while they trip over themselves trying to speak with the appropriate respect. Rosanna was caught in the middle of this dynamic, and her death signifies that the Verinders won her over by the end, but only because of her attachment to Franklin. Justifiably, then, Lucy feels robbed of her best friend and future, by Franklin and by the grossly unequal class system he represents.

The Discovery of the Truth 1: 1 Quotes

Pecuniary remuneration is offered to me—with the want of feeling peculiar to the rich. I am to re-open wounds that Time has barely closed; I am to recall the most intensely painful remembrances—and this done, I am to feel myself compensated by a new laceration, in the shape of Blake's cheque. My nature is weak. It cost me a hard struggle, before Christian humility conquered sinful pride, and self-denial accepted the cheque.

Related Characters: Miss Drusilla Clack (speaker), Franklin Blake

Related Themes:

Page Number: 202

Explanation and Analysis

At the beginning of her lengthy, rambling narrative, Sir John Verinder's nephew Drusilla Clack proclaims her Christian moral purity and explains how she ended up involved in the Moonstone investigation despite her distant connection to the Verinder family and current poverty. Because Clack remains the only available witness to both Julia Verinder's death and Godfrey Ablewhite's tumultuous relationship with Rachel, Franklin Blake has no choice but to ask Clack for her story in exchange for money, even though he and

Rachel both despise her.

In this passage, Clack admits that Franklin is paying her for her services, but she absurdly tries to spin her decision to take the "lacerati[ng]" money she dearly needs as "self-denial." Apparently, she would have considered it wrong to reject the check out of "sinful pride" and therefore a moral victory to admit she wants the money. Of course, from any outside perspective, not only does Miss Clack only write her narrative because she wants money, but this is actually the foundation of her relationship with the Verinders, whom she bothers incessantly whenever they are in London because she wants their money. This passage foreshadows the rest of Miss Clack's narrative, throughout which she portrays her vicious and self-serving deeds as proof of her moral purity, and invents sins and demons to defeat where they do not exist.

> *NOTE. *Added by Franklin Blake* — Miss Clack may make her mind quite easy on this point. Nothing will be added, altered, or removed, in her manuscript, or in any of the other manuscripts which pass through my hands. Whatever opinions any of the writers may express, whatever peculiarities of treatment may mark, and perhaps in a literary sense, disfigure, the narratives which I am now collecting, not a line will be tampered with anywhere, from first to last. As genuine documents they are sent to me—and as genuine documents I shall preserve them; endorsed by the attestations of witnesses who can speak to the facts. It only remains to be added, that "the person chiefly concerned' in Miss Clack's narrative, is happy enough at the present moment, not only to brave the smartest exercise of Miss Clack's pen, but even to recognize its unquestionable value as an instrument for the exhibition of Miss Clack's character.

Related Characters: Franklin Blake (speaker), Miss Drusilla Clack

Related Themes:

Page Number: 202

Explanation and Analysis

In one of his only editorial interventions, Franklin Blake adds a footnote to Miss Clack's claim that she fears Franklin will distort or edit her narrative. (Of course, this might even be justifiable, given that she repeatedly insults him and accuses him of the Moonstone's theft, without any evidence, in addition to harassing Rachel and singing the praises of Godfrey Ablewhite.) Franklin insists that he is compiling, not changing, the documents that form the novel. Of course, despite this claim, the reader can never know if he truly did leave something out or modify some or all of the story. The novel's series of unreliable narrators are, in other words, in turn subject to an unreliable editor.

Nevertheless, Franklin's claim to objectivity is telling about his theory of reliability and evidence, which closely resembles those central to science and detective work: he wants to compile truthfully-reported observations and allow readers (be they judges and lawyers, interested family members, or contemporary readers of Collins's novel) to interpret these witness statements to come up with a comprehensive narrative of what happened. But Clack's narrative pushes truth to its limit, forcing the reader to consider whether witnesses can really be trusted to tell the truth, and how it might be possible to make a record of the case otherwise. Franklin realizes this and challenges the reader to evaluate "Miss Clack's character" through her overwrought narrative.

> "Is it written by a man or a woman, Miss? If it's written by a woman, I had rather not read it on that account. If it's written by a man, I beg to inform him that he knows nothing about it."

Related Characters: Penelope Betteredge (speaker), Miss Drusilla Clack

Related Themes:

Page Number: 203

Explanation and Analysis

When Miss Clack comes to the Verinder residence in London, she first meets Penelope, whom she refuses to name but instead calls the "insolent [...]daughter of a heathen old man named Betteredge." (Ironically, Betteredge is the novel's second most religious figure, after Clack, and Clack's description of Penelope contrasts sharply with what the reader already knows of Penelope's caring and loyal personality.) When Miss Clack offers her a pamphlet "addressed to young women on the sinfulness of dress," Penelope expertly manipulates Miss Clack's sexism—another thing she shares with Betteredge—to get out of accepting it without rejecting Clack outright.

Miss Clack might not realize Penelope's point: the assumption that only men's voices are worth listening to shuts women out of writing about even their own problems,

and Clack's belief that women should remain subordinate to men in fact threatens her own credibility. Through Penelope, Collins explicitly condemns the chauvinism he exposes through the characters of Betteredge and Miss Clack.

❝ When the Christian hero of a hundred charitable victories plunges into a pitfall that has been dug for him by mistake, oh, what a warning it is to the rest of us to be unceasingly on our guard! How soon may our own evil passions prove to be Oriental noblemen who pounce on us unawares!

Related Characters: Miss Drusilla Clack (speaker), The Three Indians, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 207

Explanation and Analysis

When she learns that the three Indians have mugged and searched Godfrey Ablewhite after seeing him meet with the gem dealer Septimus Luker at the bank where the Moonstone is being held, Miss Clack laments the horrible fate that has befallen her beloved friend. Clack not only considers Godfrey an exemplar of Christian virtue; she is also in love with him, as evidenced by her tendency to swoon whenever he touches her. Because of her religious and personal biases, then, she thinks it impossible that Godfrey would have anything to do with the theft. Of course, at the end of the novel the reader learns that Godfrey did, in fact, steal the Diamond, and that Miss Clack was completely fooled by his veneer of respectability and lip service to charitable Christian causes. In other words, although Clack believes her religious beliefs lead her to morality and truth, in fact they do just the opposite, which expresses Collins's profound distrust in organized religion.

The other interesting dimension of Clack's quote is her profound moral horror at and distrust in heathen "Oriental noblemen," whom she portrays as devious and deceptive invaders from a region she associates with the same traits. By translating this into an argument about "our own evil passions," she clearly exposes the common racist British stereotype of an evil East that is the West's subconscious and mirror.

The Discovery of the Truth 1: 4 Quotes

❝ "I'm afraid, Drusilla," she said, "I must wait till I am a little better, before I can read that. The doctor—"
The moment she mentioned the doctor's name, I knew what was coming. Over and over again in my past experience among my perishing fellow-creatures, the members of the notoriously infidel profession of Medicine had stepped between me and my mission of mercy—on the miserable pretence that the patient wanted quiet, and that the disturbing influence of all others which they most dreaded, was the influence of Miss Clack and her Books. Precisely the same blinded materialism (working treacherously behind my back) now sought to rob me of the only right of property that my poverty could claim—my right of spiritual property in my perishing aunt.

Related Characters: Lady Julia Verinder, Miss Drusilla Clack (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 232

Explanation and Analysis

Terminally ill Lady Julia turns down Miss Clack's offer of spiritual guidance (in the form of the pamphlet "Satan among the Sofa Cushions") because of her doctor's orders to avoid stress and heavy reading. (Of course, Lady Julia is really looking for a good excuse for turning down Miss Clack's increasingly desperate attempts to convert her.) Apparently, this has happened to Miss Clack before: she believes that "the notoriously infidel profession of Medicine" is condemning souls to Hell. She does not consider the possibility that people might be treated with medicine and also end their lives in prayer; rather, she insists that good Christians must reject medical advice, and that she has a "right" over someone else's beliefs. In reality, her sense of moral superiority is not only deeply annoying (as the doctors whom Clack hates have apparently told her), but also frankly dangerous. In this sense, Clack of course emblematizes the absurd Christianity that Collins so famously opposed, but also one of the most important reasons he opposed it: its rejection of the empirically proven science that was responsible for much of the social progress in the Victorian era (whereas Miss Clack's idea of moral progress is symbolically castigating poor men by destroying their pants and making new pairs for their sons).

The Discovery of the Truth 1: 8 Quotes

"Oh, Rachel! Rachel!" I burst out. "Haven't you seen *yet*, that my heart yearns to make a Christian of you? Has no inner voice told you that I am trying to do for *you*, what I was trying to do for your dear mother when death snatched her out of my hands?"

Related Characters: Miss Drusilla Clack (speaker), Miss Rachel Verinder

Related Themes:

Page Number: 269

Explanation and Analysis

At the very end of her narrative, Miss Clack tries to take guardianship of Rachel, to Rachel and Mr Bruff's surprise and disgust. When Bruff and Rachel are about to leave, Miss Clack makes one final, desperate plea, revealing her lengthy plot to convert Rachel after failing to convert Julia in her dying days. Rachel learns that Miss Clack does not actually care about the family, and has no interest in her as a relative except as a possible target for conversion. Rather than supporting, guiding, and caring for Rachel in the difficult time after her mother's death, Clack wants to take advantage of her vulnerability to win another adherent to her cause.

When Miss Clack says "death snatched [Julia] out of my hands," she shows Rachel that she was capitalizing on Julia's illness, hoping to manipulate her into becoming devout in her final days, but never actually cared about Julia's welfare, or whether she lived or died. Indeed, although she is at the periphery of the family (and perhaps because she does not realize this), Miss Clack's world revolves entirely around herself, and her attempts to convert people who could not care less about religion.

The Discovery of the Truth 2: 3 Quotes

"In the name of the Regent of the Night, whose seat is on the Antelope, whose arms embrace the four corners of the earth.

Brothers, turn your faces to the south, and come to me in the street of many noises, which leads down to the muddy river.

The reason is this.

My own eyes have seen it."

Related Characters: The Three Indians (speaker), Mr. Septimus Luker, Mr. Murthwaite, Mr. Bruff

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 293

Explanation and Analysis

When the attorney Matthew Bruff meets the daring Anglo-Indian traveler Mr. Murthwaite at a dinner-party, the subject of the Moonstone inevitably comes up. In fact, it was Murthwaite who translated the testimony of the three Indians who posed as jugglers at the Verinder estate and were then detained in the nearby city of Frizinghall. He reveals to Bruff that this cryptic message came for the three men in Hindustani, and sees this as evidence that they know from their emissary who works for Mr. Luker that the Diamond is in the bank in London. This message at once invokes stereotypes about India (cryptic, roundabout language, infiltration and conspiracy) and shows that the novel's Indian characters are much more intelligent than its British ones (even the illustrious Sergeant Cuff) and consistently ahead of them in the search for the Diamond.

"The Regent of the Night" is the four-armed Hindu god of the Moon, known as Chandra or Soma (but never named in *The Moonstone*), who rides in an antelope-driven chariot. Of course, as the Prologue reveals, the Moonstone was originally set in the forehead of this god in the Somnauth temple, and the three Indian Brahmins are priests in his service. Therefore, the first line of the message tells the three men that they are being called to act by the deity. The rest of the message implores them to go south (from Yorkshire to London, "the street of many noises, which leads down to the muddy river [the Thames]"). Because their only job is to track down the Diamond, there is no question, given this message, that it is in London. Indeed, they appeared to have known this well before any of the protagonists, and there is little doubt that the man who sent this letter was the same Indian employee of Mr. Luker's who was fired for tampering with an important artefact.

The Discovery of the Truth 3: 3 Quotes

"Do you feel an uncomfortable heat at the pit of your stomach, sir? And a nasty thumping at the top of your head? Ah! not yet? It will lay hold of you at Cobb's Hole, Mr. Franklin. I call it the detective-fever; and *I* first caught it in the company of Sergeant Cuff."

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker),

Rosanna Spearman, Sergeant Cuff, Franklin Blake

Related Themes:

Page Number: 308

Explanation and Analysis

When he returns to England to settle relevant affairs after his father's death, Franklin Blake goes immediately to visit Rachel Verinder, whom he still loves but who declines to see him, and then to see Betteredge in Yorkshire, where he hopes to take back up the Moonstone's investigation in an effort to win Rachel back. When he arrives, he learns that Rosanna Spearman has left a letter for him, and from here the investigation picks back up: Franklin and Betteredge retrieve the letter and begin following the trail of clues to which it leads.

On their way to get the letter, Betteredge mentions his "detective-fever" to Franklin. This is a feeling he has talked about over and over: a burning curiosity to figure out the mysteries of the case, to resolve the suspicions that linger in his mind and the suspense that pervades the investigation. "Detective-fever" is crucially important because it lets Collins model a response to the mystery for his readers. The implication is that the men and women reading a chapter or so of *The Moonstone* when it comes out in Charles Dickens's paper every week should themselves feel "detective-fever," and keep buying and reading the publication to follow the trail of clues to the inevitable conclusion. Betteredge is their guide, not only the novel's first and most substantial narrator, but also their model for how an amateur should feel in the company, literal or literary, of a famous detective and haunting mystery. This is why Collins's novel is considered an exemplar of the "sensation novel" genre: his purpose was to excite his audience, to exploit their nerves and turn reading into an emotional rollercoaster. (Of course, this feeling proved so powerful that an entire genre eventually emerged out of it.)

❝ The nightgown itself would reveal the truth; for, in all probability, the nightgown was marked with its owner's name.

I took it up from the sand, and looked for the mark.

I found the mark, and read —

MY OWN NAME.

Related Characters: Franklin Blake (speaker), Rosanna Spearman

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 314

Explanation and Analysis

Rosanna Spearman's letter directs Franklin Blake to the Shivering Sand, where he pulls up a tin case which contains his nightgown, smeared with the paint from Rachel's door. Sergeant Cuff had long ago decided that whoever smeared this paint must have been the culprit, and when Franklin finds his own name embroidered inside the nightgown he realizes the impossible: he, somehow, was the thief all along. The twist is designed to shock, both because Franklin is the investigator figure here, likely the last person the reader would suspect of the crime, and because the evidence of his guilt is now seemingly undeniable. There is no conflict between evidence and testimony: although Franklin does not remember committing the crime, he admits that the evidence means that some other, alien part of him must have done so.

The Discovery of the Truth 3: 7 Quotes

❝ "If you had spoken when you ought to have spoken," I began: "if you had done me the common justice to explain yourself—"

She broke in on me with a cry of fury. The few words I had said seemed to have lashed her on the instant in to a frenzy of rage.

"Explain myself!" she repeated. "Oh! is there another man like this in the world? I spare him, when my heart is breaking; I screen him when my own character is at stake; and *he*—of all human beings, *he*—turns on me now, and tells me that I ought to have explained myself ! After believing in him as I did, after loving him as I did, after thinking of him by day, and dreaming of him by night—he wonders I didn't charge him with his disgrace the first time we met: 'My heart's darling, you are a Thief! My hero whom I love and honour, you have crept into my room under cover of the night, and stolen my Diamond!' That is what I ought to have said. You villain, you mean, mean, mean villain, I would have lost fifty Diamonds, rather than see your face lying to me, as I see it lying now!"

Related Characters: Miss Rachel Verinder, Franklin Blake (speaker)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 352

Explanation and Analysis

After Franklin discovers the nightgown with his name, he returns to visit Rachel again at Mr. Bruff's house and try to figure out if her refusal to talk with him has something to do with the fact that, apparently, he unwittingly stole the Moonstone. It does—in fact, she watched him take the Diamond from her room in the night, and then pretend he knew nothing about it the next morning, call the police, and try to play a major role in the investigation. To her, this is an obscene lie, an attempt to cover up his crime before a family that does not know about his guilt. Franklin next asks Rachel why she did not say anything to him at the time off the crime, and this is her reaction—Franklin, the man who loved her and turned out to be a *thief*, is now trying to blame her for not treating him right.

Through this passage, the reader finally understands Rachel's perspective on the theft: the rage she has kept hidden, her sense of deception and disappointment, and her continual conflict while trying at once to save Franklin and give up on her love for him. Franklin, too, is forced to empathize with Rachel for the first time, to understand that he must make amends for something devastating he does not even remember doing. Rachel emphasizes that their conflict is no longer about—and has never been about—the Diamond or Franklin's debts; the broken trust between them is worth infinitely more to her.

The Discovery of the Truth 3: 8 Quotes

❝ If the excellent Betteredge had been present while I was considering that question, and if he had been let into the secret of my thoughts, he would, no doubt, have declared that the German side of me was, on this occasion, my uppermost side. To speak seriously, it is perhaps possible that my German training was in some degree responsible for the labyrinth of useless speculations in which I now involved myself. For the greater part of the night, I sat smoking, and building up theories, one more profoundly improbable than another. When I did get to sleep, my waking fancies pursued me in dreams. I rose the next morning, with Objective-Subjective and Subjective-Objective inextricably entangled together in my mind; and I began the day which was to witness my next effort at practical action of some kind, by doubting whether I had any sort of right (on purely philosophical grounds) to consider any sort of thing (the Diamond included) as existing at all.

Related Characters: Franklin Blake (speaker), Gabriel Betteredge

Related Themes:

Page Number: 360-1

Explanation and Analysis

Franklin Blake spends a night deep in thought, pondering how he possibly could have stolen a priceless Diamond without realizing it. As always, he gets caught in a web of his own contradictions and ends up stuck in indecision, completely lost and without intellectual recourse. He makes reference to Betteredge's firm belief that Franklin harbors various, competing selves in accordance with the various countries in which he has been educated—if Franklin's conflict were not enough of a signal that people are never of a single mind, then his simultaneous French, German, Italian, and English sides offer the image of a mind torn apart by its abundance of perspectives. Of course, Betteredge's theory about Franklin is also based on his firm belief in the supremacy of the English mind over those of Continental scoundrels—in this sense, Franklin's multiple personalities look to Betteredge like a noble English mind overrun with foreign invaders.

His reference to the "Objective-Subjective and Subjective-Objective"—a pair of perspectives he talks about endlessly throughout the book, but never fully explains—points both to these conflicting perspectives and, more deeply, to the book's fascination with the relationship between subjective experience (as remembered or recounted in the narratives) and objective fact (both the unknowable objective facts of what actually happened the night of the Moonstone's theft, and the desire to reconstruct that truth by recourse to concrete material evidence).

The Discovery of the Truth 3: 9 Quotes

❝ He had suffered as few men suffer; and there was the mixture of some foreign race in his English blood.

Related Characters: Franklin Blake (speaker), Ezra Jennings

Related Themes:

Page Number: 371

Explanation and Analysis

To Franklin Blake, Ezra Jennings's lifelong suffering is clearly tied to his "foreign" racial background (in addition to

his social isolation, the "terrible accusation" that haunts him, and his hideous appearance due to his opium addiction). Jennings's suffering is a sort of credential—it proves to Franklin that the man's desire to make amends with the world is genuine—but it is also a sign of the tragedy that befalls those with lives and traits outside the mainstream.

That said, while to contemporary readers it is clear that the tie between Jennings's "mixture of some foreign race" and his difficulties in life is about racism, Franklin appears to simply think that Jennings has inferior genes because he is not all British. Of course, this is no surprise in the era of British Imperialism. After all, one of the purposes of imperialism was the dissemination of white British culture (and DNA) in parts of the world inhabited by peoples the British considered racially inferior.

The Discovery of the Truth 4 Quotes

"Speaking as a servant, I am deeply indebted to you. Speaking as a man, I consider you to be a person whose head is full of maggots, and I take up my testimony against your experiment as a delusion and a snare. Don't be afraid, on that account, of my feelings as a man getting in the way of my duty as a servant! You shall be obeyed. The maggots notwithstanding, sir, you shall be obeyed. If it ends in your setting the house on fire, Damme if I send for the engines, unless you ring the bell and order them first!"

Related Characters: Gabriel Betteredge (speaker), Franklin Blake , Ezra Jennings

Related Themes:

Page Number: 405

Explanation and Analysis

When Rachel ropes him into Ezra Jennings and Franklin Blake's experiment, Betteredge is both furious and happy to help. He makes the split in his mindset clear here, when he divides his professional opinion from his personal one. Of course, this is also rather unusual for Betteredge, who sings his employers' praises and has never been anything but the Verinders' estate manager his entire life. And when he later takes on a comically condescending tone while dealing with Jennings, it becomes clear that he has not been able to completely separate his two halves. Nevertheless, his sense of division here shows that even Betteredge, at times, has to negotiate between competing tendencies in his character. And it strongly recalls his meditation in his own narrative on the upper classes' ability to live out their emotions, while the lower classes must ignore theirs and move on with their work.

"If Mr. Jennings will permit me," pursued the old lady, "I should like to ask a favour. Mr. Jennings is about to try a scientific experiment to-night. I used to attend scientific experiments when I was a girl at school. They invariably ended in an explosion. If Mr. Jennings will be so very kind, I should like to be warned of the explosion this time. With a view to getting it over, if possible, before I go to bed."

Related Characters: Mrs. Merridew (speaker), Ezra Jennings

Related Themes:

Page Number: 416

Explanation and Analysis

When she hears that a science experiment will soon be underway, Rachel's guardian Mrs. Merridew (who has insisted on accompanying Rachel as a "chaperone") immediately grows frightened of the explosion she *knows* inevitably accompanies any science experiment of any sort (simply because, to her, that is what science means). Not only is she unfathomably ignorant about what Jennings's experiment actually concerns, but she is also unfathomably ignorant about science in general and afraid of it precisely because she does not understand it. Besides providing comic relief amidst Jennings's excessively serious narration, Mrs. Merridew serves to illustrate what Collins sees as his fellow Brits' deep misunderstanding about and mistrust in science.

"I wish I had never taken it out of the bank," he said to himself. "It was safe in the bank."

Related Characters: Franklin Blake (speaker), Mr. Bruff, Gabriel Betteredge, Ezra Jennings

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 423

Explanation and Analysis

At this moment, during the "experiment" reenacting the

Diamond's theft, the opium-dreaming Franklin Blake wakes up and begins muttering about the Diamond's safety before walking into Rachel's room and taking it. The profound irony in Franklin's at least unconscious responsibility for stealing the Diamond is that he did so precisely because he wanted to keep the Diamond safe and check on it at night. The Moonstone's supposed curse actually becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, a direct conversion of myth into reality: Franklin endangers the Diamond because he worries it is unsafe. Similarly, Franklin is the one who originally brings the Diamond to Yorkshire, and then becomes the one to steal it. And he wants the Diamond to be safely kept in his bank, and then has to scramble in the next chapter when the thief withdraws the Diamond from his own bank. This again shows how Collins's rhetorical strategy and famous propensity for suspense rely on his ability to completely subvert the reader's expectations and invert the earlier condition in his book.

The Discovery of the Truth 5 Quotes

"It's only in books that the officers of the detective force are superior to the weakness of making a mistake."

Related Characters: Sergeant Cuff (speaker), Franklin Blake

Related Themes:

Page Number: 437

Explanation and Analysis

After Mr. Luker withdraws the Diamond from his bank, Sergeant Cuff suddenly leaves retirement to help Franklin solve the case in the eleventh hour. He admits that he was completely wrong about it before, but offers this statement as a disclaimer: investigators might be perfect in literature, but not in reality. Of course, he *is* in a book, and he has made a mistake; his off-hand statement is, first and foremost, a comment on the relationship between literature and reality. On one level, Cuff's statement allows Collins to emphasize the "realistic" elements of his novel—there is no perfect investigator, not even Cuff, and indeed Collins's protagonists' imperfection is what makes the novel so unpredictable and suspenseful. But on another level, Cuff also shows how literature *imitates* reality—how people come to expect all detectives are like the ones in novels (and now, films and television).

"Robbery!" whispered the boy, pointing, in high delight, to the empty box.

"You were told to wait downstairs," I said. "Go away!"

"And Murder!" added Gooseberry, pointing, with a keener relish still, to the man on the bed.

There was something so hideous in the boy's enjoyment of the horror of the scene, that I took him by the two shoulders and put him out of the room.

Related Characters: Franklin Blake , Gooseberry (speaker), Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite, Sergeant Cuff

Related Themes:

Page Number: 447

Explanation and Analysis

When Sergeant Cuff and Franklin Blake discover the disguised Godfrey Ablewhite laying dead on his bed in a London pub, with the Moonstone missing from its hiding place in his jewelry box, Mr. Bruff's errand-boy Gooseberry (a budding investigator of his own right) is fascinated and delighted to see "Robbery [...] And Murder!" Franklin finds this distasteful, but this is what his readers are doing all along.

Like Betteredge's "detective-fever," Gooseberry's awe mirrors the reader's own emotional reaction to the book's events. But Collins is subtly pointing out the grotesqueness of the reactions he is eliciting from his audience—it is, in some sense, fundamentally misanthropic to be delighted by robbery and murder, perhaps even in literature. At the same time that he sets the standards for the "sensation novel," then, Collins subtly critiques these standards.

Epilogue: 3 Quotes

The curtain between the trees was drawn aside, and the shrine was disclosed to view.

There, raised high on a throne—seated on his typical antelope, with his four arms stretching towards the four corners of the earth—there, soared above us, dark and awful in the mystic light of heaven, the god of the Moon. And there, in the forehead of the deity, gleamed the yellow Diamond, whose splendour had last shone on me in England, from the bosom of a woman's dress!

Yes! after the lapse of eight centuries, the Moonstone looks forth once more, over the walls of the sacred city in which its story first began. How it has found its way back to its wild native land—by what accident, or by what crime, the Indians regained possession of their sacred gem, may be in your knowledge, but is not in mine. You have lost sight of it in England, and (if I know anything of this people) you have lost sight of it for ever.

So the years pass, and repeat each other; so the same events revolve in the cycles of time. What will be the next adventures of the Moonstone? Who can tell!

Related Characters: Mr. Murthwaite (speaker), The Three Indians

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 472

Explanation and Analysis

At the very end of *The Moonstone*, the Diamond is finally returned—not to the Verinders (Franklin and Rachel are now married, and apparently could not care less about getting the Diamond back), but to its original home: the temple to the Moon god in the city of Somnauth. The Anglo-Indian adventurer Mr. Murthwaite ends up at the temple for an important mass pilgrimage, unaware that this involves the Moonstone's return, and when he sees the three Brahmins reveal the Diamond, he is astonished. Although he does not know how the Diamond returned to India, its repatriation is a monumental accomplishment, and thousands of pilgrims fill the surrounding areas to see the statue of the Moon god finally unveiled atop a hill. The three Brahmins, their life work fulfilled, go their separate ways to live the rest of their days in pilgrimage. The novel ends with the Diamond coming around to its original owner by a series of thefts, which challenges the English paradigm of property: the Diamond is *owned* by the Verinders, and then stolen from them, although it seems to belong more to the Indians the whole time. The novel's last line points to these cycles of theft and intrigue, which are predictable but still shocking in their time, and reminds Collins's readers to look out for his next sensational work.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

PROLOGUE: THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM: CHAPTER 1

The narrator writes to his English family from India in an attempt to explain how he and his cousin John Herncastle grew apart during their involvement in the attack on the Palace of Seringapatam in 1799. He explains that he will begin before the attack, with the stories his group heard about the palace's "treasure in jewels and gold."

With an anonymous narrator reporting about broken family ties and a "treasure" halfway across the world from Britain (indeed, in Asia, which at the time was popularly associated with mysticism and exotic intrigue), the novel jumps straight into the register of mystery, invoking many motifs that became tropes in the genre over the 100 years after this novel's publication.

PROLOGUE: THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM: CHAPTER 2

The narrator recounts one such story about a famous yellow diamond called **The Moonstone**, originally from a statue of the Indian moon god, which shone with the cycles of the moon. (There was a similar myth in Rome and Greece.) In the 11th century, Muslim invaders pillaged a famous temple in Somnauth and took everything but this statue, which three Brahmins preserved in a new shrine in Benares. That night, the lord Vishnu visited these Brahmins in a dream and told them to guard the Moonstone "to the end of the generations of men." Their descendants did this until the 18th century, when the Mughal emperor Aurungzebe ordered the new Benares temple pillaged and the Moonstone stolen. The next generations of priests followed the Moonstone in disguise; by the end of the 18th century, the Sultan of Seringapatam had set it in a dagger's handle.

In recounting the earliest history of the Moonstone, shrouded in secrecy and conflict, Collins's narrator makes a few moves that demonstrate an unusual attitude towards India for his time. First, he compares Indian religion to the Roman and Greek ones considered at the foundation of Western civilization, challenging the narrative of European cultural superiority that Britain used to justify colonizing India (an attitude which many of his characters share with his readers). Secondly, he points out that the Moonstone was already stolen various times, before it ever came to Britain, which (in addition to foreshadowing its violent plunder by the British) raises a fundamental question about who rightfully owns the Diamond. As it is stolen from the Benares temple, the Moonstone transitions from a symbol of religious power and the illustriousness of the divine into a store of material value, reflecting Aurungzebe and the Sultan's wealth and military power. Already, it is clear that it means different things to different people, who put different kinds of claims to ownership on it.

PROLOGUE: THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM: CHAPTER 3

When this story was told in the army camp, the narrator continues, John Herncastle was the only one to take it seriously, because of his "love of the marvelous." He ridiculed the others for treating the story as a myth and declared that **the diamond** would be on his finger by the end of the assault. On the critical day, the writer did not see Herncastle until the assault was over and the sultan, Tippoo, was dead. They were sent together to prevent the other officers from unnecessarily plundering the palace, and Herncastle was distraught at the "terrible slaughter" and behavior of the other soldiers. During their disgraceful plunder, the soldiers continually joked about the Moonstone.

Herncastle's appetite for "the marvelous" points to the fantastical, romantic dimension that Collins hopes to wed with realism: while everyone else sees the story of the Diamond as a fiction, an (Eastern) religious tale opposed to supposedly rational (Western) knowledge and governance, Herncastle takes the Moonstone's story seriously and appears to see Indians as human beings, unworthy of the cruel British soldiers' slaughter. Again, Collins shows the reality of indiscriminate slaughter and plunder that most British narratives of colonialism hid behind the guise of the "civilizing mission" or "white man's burden." This would have been particularly daring given the First Indian War of Independence, about a decade before the novel's publication, in which such slaughter was common—but seldom discussed and firmly supported by British public opinion.

The narrator heard a cry from across the palace and discovered John Herncastle holding the bloody dagger above the body of an Indian who proclaimed, "**The Moonstone** will have its vengeance yet on you and yours!" before dying. The frenzied Herncastle disappeared for the night, and in the morning, after the General threatened to have any thieves hanged, the narrator met his cousin again. He asked about the Indian's death the previous night, and Herncastle, now calm, proclaimed that he knew little, and that the man's last words were equally meaningless to both of them. The narrator asked if that was "all you have to tell me," and Herncastle said, "that is all." They "have not spoken since."

Suddenly, Herncastle loses the sympathy and regret the narrator just reported; his 180-degree turn to a treasure-hungry, cold-blooded killer seems to attest to the Moonstone's mystical power: it can break family ties, reform personality, and bind people to secrecy. The dying Indian's last words also point to the ostensible myth's incorporation into the novel's reality, as well as foreshadowing the events to come for Collins's audience. Of course, the gentleman Herncastle's sudden transformation into a murderer for the sake of money—and the Indian's promise of revenge—is also a metaphor for British colonialism as a whole.

PROLOGUE: THE STORMING OF SERINGAPATAM: CHAPTER 4

In the prologue's fourth and final section, the narrator explains that he could make no recourse to his superiors about Herncastle's behavior, and that Herncastle is trying to switch to another regiment in order to get away from the narrator. The narrator has "no evidence but moral evidence" because he did not see Herncastle kill anyone. And while he does not believe in "the fantastic Indian legend of the gem," he nevertheless believes that crime begets revenge, and that "he will live to regret" taking **the Diamond**.

Collins introduces the problem of what constitutes convincing evidence of a crime—one which proves crucial in the rest of the novel as the line between literal and moral culpability continues to grow. While the narrator sees "the fantastic Indian legend" and the fact of revenge as opposing beliefs, in fact they are different explanations for the same series of events: the Diamond's cycle of violent theft and loss.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 1

This division of the book is narrated by Gabriel Betteredge, who is the house-steward of Julia, Lady Verinder. He begins by citing the passage he discovered upon opening his copy of **Robinson Crusoe** at random the previous day: "Now I saw, though too late, the Folly of beginning a Work before we count the Cost, and before we judge rightly of our own Strength to go through with it."

The novel is divided in two periods; the first consists of Betteredge's lengthy narrative alone, and the second consists of eight separate narrations by seven separate authors. (All but the shortest narratives are divided into chapters, the openings of which will be marked throughout this guide.) By quoting Robinson Crusoe, Collins not only invokes a wildly popular precedent for his readers but also foreshadows Betteredge's trouble in his first few chapters and the constant dead ends and fresh starts that later drive the narrative.

In the morning, Mr. Franklin Blake (Lady Verinder's nephew) tells Betteredge that the family lawyer, Mr. Bruff, thinks they should make a written record about the Indian Diamond's disappearance from Lady Verinder's house two years before. So as to avoid incriminating the innocent, Blake explains, everyone related to the incident should tell the story "as far as our own personal experience extends, and no farther." The first document shall be the "prefatory narrative" about how Herncastle, Blake's uncle, obtained **the Diamond**. Two years ago, the Diamond came to Lady Verinder's house, and it disappeared within twelve hours. Since Betteredge knows more than anyone else, Blake thinks he should write the next account. Betteredge modestly insisted he was "quite unequal to the task imposed upon me," although he secretly knew he could do it, and Blake seemed to understand this hidden feeling.

Betteredge reveals that he is narrating retrospectively, relying on his memory after the novel's events have already concluded. Blake's plan speaks to both the necessity of having documentary evidence in the emerging British bureaucratic state and the rational, scientific belief in the reliability of personal experience, told under a promise of honesty (the same principle that forms the basis for legal evidence). Of course, the Preface's fantastical story already challenges the pure reliability of testimonial evidence. Betteredge demonstrates that his humility is a performance, one clearly associated with his job as a house-steward, which also makes him the best person to tell the story because it gives him access to everyone across the class line dividing servants from the Verinder family.

For the first two hours, Betteredge stares at a blank page, contemplating the passage from **Robinson Crusoe** and deciding that, "if *that* isn't prophecy, what is?" Although he is in his seventies, Betteredge explains that he reads actively and considers himself "a scholar in my own way," and *Robinson Crusoe* a consistent source of advice and inspiration. He is now on his seventh copy. But his writing "seem[s] to be wandering off," and he decides to start writing "the story of **the Diamond**" on a new sheet of paper.

For the first of many times, Betteredge's fantastical belief in the mystical power of Robinson Crusoe proves accurate, which points to the interplay between mystical and scientific forms of knowledge and prediction in this book, brought together in detective work's method of interpreting clues. Perhaps Betteredge simply interprets the vague passage in a narrow way that applies to his situation, or perhaps he unconsciously allows Robinson Crusoe to become a self-fulfilling prophecy—like the Moonstone's curse, an otherworldly proposition that really expresses a principle of reality: the violent and underhanded methods people will resort to in order to take an object of value.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 2

Betteredge writes that **the Diamond** was a gift to his "lady's daughter," and so an appropriate starting place will be the story of his lady herself. Anyone "of the fashionable world" knows about "the three beautiful Miss Herncastles," Adelaide, Caroline, and Julia. Betteredge explains that he began by working for their father, whose temper was notorious, and later moved to work with Julia and her husband Sir John Verinder (who has since died). Both John and Julia thought Betteredge indispensable, and Betteredge loved them both. Julia made Betteredge their lands' bailiff, and with a cottage, interesting work, and **Robinson Crusoe**, all Betteredge needed in life was a woman. He ended up marrying Selina Goby, who took care of his cottage, chiefly because he would no longer have to pay her room and board. Lady Julia broke out in laughter when Betteredge explained his motives.

Betteredge's meticulous, loquacious personality allows Collins to offer the reader important background information about the novel's central characters. As the Verinders' land manager and then butler, Betteredge virtually worships his employers, and clearly he is beloved by them, too. This illustrates how class relations transform into personal attitudes, but also how Betteredge sits in the middle between his aristocratic employers and the servants over whom he presides. His marriage shows both his utterly practical mindset (with everything except Robinson Crusoe, his one pleasure in life) and his regressive views on gender: he does not bother to include or consider Selina's perspective on the matter. Indeed, in Victorian Britain marriage was often more about property and class than about love, and these two tendencies remain in tension throughout the book.

And yet, Betteredge continues, everyone he talked to regretted marrying; he, too, got cold feet and "tried to get out of" the wedding. In accordance with British law, Betteredge offered Goby payment, but she refused. His marriage was neither satisfying nor unhappy—he and Goby just got "in another's way" all the time. He was glad when she died, Betteredge admits, and Lady Julia raised his only daughter, Penelope, to be the maid to her own only daughter, Miss Rachel.

Strangely, Betteredge begins to question his marriage not out of personal feeling but because others tell him about their own regrets. His practical, emotionless mindset never changes, and so Betteredge's ability to feel boundless reverence for things he respects (e.g. the Verinders, Robinson Crusoe) contrasts bizarrely with his inability to feel normal human emotions for and about his wife.

At Christmas in 1847, Betteredge recalls, Lady Julia gifted him a wool waistcoat for his 50 years of service. He was deeply grateful until he realized her offering was a bribe to get him to leave his job and work in the house instead, which he agreed to do after some persuasion. He read **Robinson Crusoe** to cope.

Again, Beteredge's personal pride drives him to internal conflict—but Julia clearly knows how to appeal to it in order to get him to take a less strenuous role. As he ages, Betteredge appears unwilling to acknowledge his own limits.

Betteredge remarks that Penelope read his writings so far; she finds his account "beautifully written," but complains that it tells his own story, not that of **the Diamond**. He decides to start over once again.

Betteredge's apparent self-absorption continues to complicate his outward humility, but also give the reader valuable background information. He evidently trusts his daughter Penelope, unlike his wife.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 3

Betteredge determines to follow his daughter Penelope's suggestion and recount the story of **the diamond**'s theft day by day, with her own journal entries as an aid.

Betteredge now turns to the loss of the Moonstone, which to the reader is a foretold conclusion—by Betteredge's introduction as well as by the Prologue, which argues that the Moonstone is cursed. Betteredge's day-by-day narration points to the contradictory kind of evidence—comprehensive, and yet limited by personal perspective—that detective work demands.

Betteredge begins on May 24, 1848, when Lady Julia informed him that Franklin Blake would be coming for a month after his return from Europe. Betteredge was astonished, as he had not seen Blake since his childhood. While Betteredge remembers Blake as kind, Miss Rachel remembers him as cruel and unempathetic. Blake spent so long out of England because his father spent years trying fruitlessly to prove himself the rightful heir to a Dukedom. With his wife and two of his children dead, the elder Blake decided he could no longer trust Britain, and so sent Franklin to be educated in Germany. Betteredge announces he is delighted to have this part of the story over with.

Betteredge's description of Blake initially recalls the character of Herncastle, and suggests that Blake may be a villainous figure, or bring trouble. His return foreshadows the Moonstone's arrival, both because of this character comparison and because his mysteriousness is tied to his apparent foreignness. And his father's attempt to prove his birthright points to the contradictory nature of class in this novel: class rigidly defines people's social status, but it is an amorphous category that people can enter and leave depending on what evidence and perception they can cultivate, even though it is supposed to be grounded in the black-and-white principle of birth and nobility.

Franklin Blake, after all, is the reason **the Diamond** came around in the first place. While he was away, he wrote home frequently, but usually to ask Betteredge for money, which he never repaid. Franklin went to France and Italy after Germany and proved himself "a sort of universal genius," trying out a variety of trades that he funded by greedily borrowing from whoever would give him money. At 25, he finally returned to England. On this day, Betteredge first encountered three Indians with drums and a "delicate-looking light-haired English boy" behind them. Envious of the Indians' good manners, Betteredge determined not to let them in, and then fell asleep in his chair.

Franklin's debts and recklessness with money suggest a tension between his apparent class status—as someone who is supposed to be nobility, and at the least has wealthy, landed relatives—and his personal habits and character. At the same time, it is unsurprising that the British upper classes are reckless with money, something they never learn to think of as scarce. The appearance of the Indians directly recalls the Prologue, and specifically the three Brahmins (religious leaders like priests) charged to defend the Moonstone "to the end of generations of men."

Penelope then wakes up her father Betteredge and insists they lodge the three Indians. She had watched them argue and ask the young English boy to "hold out [his] hand," lest they send him back to his old life, homeless on the streets of London. They poured ink on his hand and asked him questions about "the English gentleman from foreign parts." In some sort of hypnotic daze, the boy answered, confirming that the man would travel here and had "It," but he was unable to tell whether the man would arrive at the Verinder estate by nightfall. The men then went off. Betteredge tells Penelope that the men are rehearsing their scam: they plan to pretend to "foretell Franklin's arrival by magic." Penelope disagrees and wonders what "It" is; Betteredge insists they wait and ask Franklin himself. Ultimately, to Betteredge's surprise, Franklin also takes the men seriously: he thinks "It" is **the Moonstone**.

The homeless boy exemplifies the new kind of urban poverty that arose in Victorian Britain, and the Indians' apparent exploitation of him by mystical means plays into the British public's stereotypes about India (the sinister otherworldly magic of the East, dishonest tricks to make money, and Indians' alleged desire to enact brutal revenge on their colonial masters). Collins's contemporary reader would likely therefore connect this scene to the Prologue's discussion of the Moonstone's Hindu curse, while Betteredge interprets what appears to be magic as a perfectly innocuous, rationally explicable scam.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 4

Preparing for dinner, Betteredge chastises the kitchen-maid Nancy for her "sulky face." Nancy complains about her tardy colleague Rosanna, whom Betteredge goes to retrieve. Lady Julia has employed Rosanna Spearman—who used to be a petty thief in London—after meeting her in a reformatory. Rosanna proved a competent worker, but did not grow close to any of the other servants, who grew angry with her for her lack of interest in their gossip. This particular day, Rosanna had gone for fresh air to the ugly expanse of quicksand by the sea, the **Shivering Sand**, which is inexplicably her favorite route to walk in the area, even though all the other walks are nicer.

Rosanna, like the young boy with the Indians, also exemplifies the plight of the new British poor; but her transformation from thief to servant points to the Victorian hope for moral reform and belief that poor criminals can be taught respectability and subservience to the rich. Nevertheless, Rosanna's alienation from the other servants suggests that this narrative may be missing something, and that she (perhaps unlike the others) does not see being a rich family's maid as fulfilling or dignified work.

When Betteredge encounters Rosanna at the **Shivering Sand**, she is crying about her "past life" and declines dinner. She explains that she always returns to the sands because she "think[s] that [her] grave is waiting for [her] here." She feels entranced by the place and thinks about it nonstop. Rosanna fears her new life is "too quiet and too good" for someone like her; she resents and feels lonely around the other honest, boring servants. She loves the quicksand, which looks like people are "suffocating" underneath. Betteredge nearly chastises her, but they hear a cry from behind and turn to see a handsome gentleman approaching—the man announces that he owes Betteredge money and sits down beside him. It is Mr. Franklin Blake. They both look at the blushing Rosanna, who suddenly walks off, to the men's confusion. Betteredge promises that the chapters to come will explain her motives.

Rosanna's morbid fascination with the tumultuous sands confirms her sense of "1uffocate[ion]" as a servant and forces the reader to confront the possibility that the moral "reform" she underwent might not be the best solution to inequality. She at once believes she is morally unworthy of a normal life and hates the life she has taught to see as "normal"; if Betteredge is the well-oiled cog in the British class machine, Rosanna shows the injustice built into the labor system. Her reaction to Franklin's arrival foreshadows her later fixation on him, and Betteredge's final assurance that future events will explain this reaction again shows how the novel uses a unique, reverse kind of dramatic irony well-suited for a detective story: the characters narrating The Moonstone *already know the whole story, but the reader does not.*

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 5

Franklin implores Betteredge to stay seated and declares that he has a story to tell. Betteredge dislikes Franklin's moustache and beard, his "lively" but not "free-and-easy" disposition, and his unexceptional stature. At least his eyes remind Betteredge of the boy he used to know. Franklin explains that a "dark-looking stranger" had followed him the last few days, and Betteredge immediately thinks of the Indian jugglers who passed by earlier that day. Franklin asks about these jugglers, whom Penelope mentioned to him earlier. Franklin mentions he finds Penelope quite attractive, much more than her mother (and Betteredge agrees). They return to discussion of the Indians, and Franklin pulls out a parcel to reveal the mysterious "It" the men were talking about: **the Diamond**, originally owned by Franklin's uncle "the wicked Colonel" Herncastle, who has sent Franklin to bring it to Rachel as a birthday present.

Betteredge immediately sizes Franklin up, making a holistic and seemingly definitive assessment of the man that, nevertheless, he will soon abandon—this again demonstrates the comical contradiction between Betteredge's self-assurance and suggestibility. And Betteredge's narrow standards for masculine respectability, to the modern reader, look like a caricature of British narrow-mindedness—indeed, Betteredge's skepticism toward Franklin clearly has something to do with Franklin's apparent foreignness after living most of his life in Europe. The reader learns that the Indians' appearance does definitively have to do with the Diamond, and that (given the man following Franklin) they are likely more sinister than Betteredge initially imagined.

Betteredge is astonished at Franklin's revelation—and most of all the fact that Franklin's father became Herncastle's executor. But Franklin says he has more information and asks Betteredge why he called Herncastle "the wicked Colonel." Betteredge obliges and reproduces his explanation in his narrative—but warns the reader to pay close attention. He explains that Julia and her sisters also have two older brothers, Arthur (who inherited the family's property) and "the Honourable John," who was a total blackguard (a scoundrel) and got kicked out of the Army at 22. In India, he participated in "the taking of Seringapatam" and switched from one regiment to another, and then another. When he returned, the whole family shunned him for his lack of character, and for the rumors about him—the most notorious being his alleged possession of **the Diamond**, which he never admitted or showed to anyone. Nobody truly knows why.

The novel now turns to a narrative-within-a narrative recounted by Franklin Blake, who is in fact the novel's compiler. The layers of reported speech in this section demonstrate the novel's complex relationship to evidence: it is already clear from Betteredge's story thus far that The Moonstone*'s narrators are far from reliable. Herncastle's nickname, "The Honourable John," was also a common name for the East India Company that ruled for the British crown until just a few years before this novel's publication. Collins is clearly drawing a parallel between John Herncastle's abuses and those of British colonial rule in general.*

It is, however, suspected that John Herncastle's two death threats in India and ostracism in England had something to do with **the Diamond**. And yet he refused to give it up. The family only knew him through rumors about his "solitary, vicious, underground life." Betteredge only saw him once more, when he showed up unexpectedly for Rachel's birthday two years before Franklin's return. He asked Betteredge to send Julia his best wishes, and Betteredge was frightened enough by his "devilish look" to comply. Julia told him to tell John she would refuse to see him; when Betteredge told him, John laughed "in a soft, chuckling, horridly mischievous way" and left. 18 months later, the family received word that John had died and forgiven his whole family—although Betteredge still thinks this must have been a sinister act.

Franklin reveals that Herncastle was never the same after stealing the Diamond. Strangely, there is no mention of the cousin who wrote the Prologue, who seems to have faded into anonymity. The family's reasons for isolating itself from Herncastle are just as inexplicable as this disappearance and Herncastle's change in personality, and it seems undeniable to the attentive reader that this has something to do with the Moonstone's "curse" (whether it is magical, or a metaphorical way of describing the threats to the gem's safety or paranoia that accompanies wealth).

Franklin is intrigued by Betteredge's story, but before offering his own perspective, he poses three questions: was there a conspiracy about **the Diamond** in India, has this conspiracy come to England, and is the Colonel using this conspiracy to scorn Julia? Betteredge is shocked and wonders if it was possible for their "quiet English house [to be] suddenly invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond—bringing after it a conspiracy of living rogues, set loose on us by the vengeance of a dead man." Mr. Franklin notices Betteredge's discomfort and asks, "What do you want?" His pipe and **Robinson Crusoe**, Betteredge admits to the reader.

Like any classic detective figure, Franklin—who soon takes on that role more extensively—turns an amorphous mystery into a concrete question, and in the same breath offers another possible interpretation of the Moonstone's curse: the "conspiracy" of Indians seeking to repatriate their gem. Betteredge's image of the "quiet English house […] invaded by a devilish Indian Diamond" again plays on anxieties about foreignness and national purity, something he tries to assuage with symbols of Britishness (the classic British novel and addiction).

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 6

Betteredge tries to faithfully recount what Franklin learned after revealing to the family lawyer Mr. Bruff that he was to deliver Herncastle's present to Rachel. It turned out that, when Herncastle came back to England, Franklin's father learned that Herncastle had papers that would help him prove the Dukedom he so desperately sought. Herncastle immediately saw through the elder Franklin's intentions and proposed an exchange: Herncastle would give Franklin the papers if Franklin would arrange protection for **the Diamond**. Herncastle would send Franklin periodic notes confirming that he was still alive; if he were murdered, Franklin would get rid of the Diamond. Thinking this is all as absurd as it looked—and that Herncastle must have simply been taking too much opium—Franklin readily agrees.

Indeed, Herncastle involves Franklin Blake and his father in his plot through a mutually self-interested transaction, not because of any good feeling between relatives. Although Franklin and Betteredge are already beginning to confront the apparent Indian conspiracy, they believe Herncastle's methods to be inexplicable and irrational (even though they themselves will eventually resort to similar ones). And the reference to opium foreshadows its later importance in the book—not as a tool of absurdity, but rather as a means of scientifically proving an important proposition.

Everything went as planned—Franklin the Senior guarded **the Diamond**, and Herncastle sent his periodic letters—until a few months before Betteredge's meeting with Franklin the Junior. At this time, Herncastle's letter ordered Mr. Bruff, the lawyer, to visit him in the rural villa where he lived in complete isolation (except for his animals). Herncastle dictated his will to Mr. Bruff; there were only three items: his animals would be cared for, he would fund a chemistry professorship (he had already spent nearly all his wealth on chemistry experiments), and the Moonstone would be a birthday present to Rachel (with Franklin the Senior as the executor). The senior Franklin figured this would be harmless, and so he agreed. And in his will, Herncastle even explained why he was giving Rachel the Moonstone—but the younger Franklin does not want to share this with Betteredge before reaching that part of the story.

By giving Franklin's father the Diamond, Herncastle not only distances himself from the danger foretold by the Moonstone's guardians (endangering the unwitting Blake family in the process) but he also tries to throw those guardians off his trail. By passing the Diamond on to Rachel, he appears to be seeking to pass on this curse to the family that scorned him. And his ultimate isolation is the clearest sign of the toll the Diamond took on his psyche. His inexplicable interest in chemistry points to the sinister dimension of science in Victorian England, which rapidly and fundamentally changed popular understandings of the world and its origins.

To the elder Franklin's delight, the jewelers he consulted agreed that **the Moonstone** was almost inconceivably valuable, although it had an imperfection at its heart. Out of curiosity, he read the sealed instructions to be followed in the case of Herncastle's murder: the Moonstone would be cut into a number of smaller stones and sold away. The younger Franklin explains to Betteredge why this is brilliant: the Colonel's message was: "Kill me — and **the Diamond** will be the Diamond no longer." The point was not to reduce its value—divided up around its imperfection, the Diamond would be worth even more. The point was that, for the Indians seeking to get their Moonstone back, the gem as a whole was sacred. Betteredge now understands why the Indian jugglers' visit was noteworthy. (And Franklin thinks the whole story is consistent with what his fellow Brits claim to know about "Oriental races.")

Ultimately, in an ironic twist of fate, Herncastle spends his whole life guarding a priceless Diamond whose value he never gets to spend: not only does he end up giving it up, but he has nothing valuable to spend it on (no family and no worldly ambitions). It is unclear why he guarded the Diamond for so long if it only brought him pain—in fact, it seems probable that Herncastle's wickedness and desire for vengeance are products of the desperation and paranoia into which the Moonstone drove him. His quest for power and wealth—whether through the Moonstone's monetary value or its symbolic importance—ended up undermining itself and depriving his life of all value.

Franklin remarks to Betteredge that the critical question is whether this conspiracy has continued, and will begin following Rachel now instead of the Colonel. Every time he went to the bank for **the Diamond**, Franklin noticed "a shabby, dark-complexioned man" following him. He thinks the jugglers' ink-pouring is "hocus-pocus," but he wonders whether the Indians truly are able to keep track of and follow the Diamond. Betteredge and Franklin joke about throwing the Diamond into the **Shivering Sand**. Franklin returns to the question of the Colonel's motives, and Betteredge includes the full third clause of Herncastle's will in his testimony, which specifies that the Diamond will only be gifted to Rachel if Julia is still living—and that a copy of the will shall be given to Julia as a "token of my free forgiveness" of her for so insulting him and damaging his reputation.

Franklin and Betteredge simultaneously denounce the Indians' apparent magic and deeply fear it; they refuse to believe in what they do not rationally understand, but also fear that the Moonstone might prove that myth is reality, and therefore reveal the limits of their very capacity for understanding. Herncastle's will strongly suggests that he is seeking to taunt Julia through his gift, which is far from "free," especially since Rachel is unlikely to understand its danger.

Betteredge is baffled. Franklin asks whether Betteredge thinks he is carrying out Herncastle's vengeance or repentance, but he dodges the question. Franklin asks why Herncastle would leave the gem to Rachel, not Julia, and yet condition it on Julia being alive. Franklin sees both vengeance and repentance as equally probable explanations, and Betteredge chalks his indecisiveness up to his multinational education and inability to settle into one way of thinking. Franklin asks Betteredge's advice; Betteredge suggests they wait—they have four weeks until Rachel's birthday. In the meantime, they can store **the Diamond** in the nearest bank, and Franklin takes off on a horse in order to do so.

In fact, the question of the dead Herncastle's motives can never be settled—it is a perfect crime with perfect plausible deniability, in which retribution masquerades as repentance and guilt as innocence. This is the one of the first places in which the novel muddies the distinction between these apparent opposites, but Franklin Blake's character also exemplifies this tendency to contradiction—one which the adamant defender of "pure" British culture Betteredge blames on the admixture of foreign thinking.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 7

Betteredge recalls lying to Penelope about his conversation with the younger Franklin, assuring her that they merely talked politics, and then to Rachel and Julia, whom he told that Franklin came and left simply because of his personal quirks. Penelope then asks about Rosanna, who apparently returned to the house from the **Shivering Sand** in an emotional frenzy and demonstrated her curiosity about Franklin. Penelope declares it "love [...] at first sight" but Betteredge laughs in Penelope's face until she calls him cruel and he begins to feel guilty.

Although he deeply loves his daughter, Betteredge's inability to take her seriously or fully empathize with her becomes clear here when he ridicules her hypothesis about Rosanna's feelings for Franklin. Of course, this also reflects his own apparent incapacity for romantic love, as illustrated by his bland marriage to Penelope's mother Selina Goby. He publicly contrasts this ostensibly female emotionality with men's apparent stoicism (talking politics) even though, in private, he and Franklin got quite emotionally worked up about the Moonstone.

Franklin deposits **the Diamond** at the bank and returns without issue. Rachel looks more beautiful than ever at dinner, and she and Franklin sing together into the night. He calls her "the most charming girl I have seen since I came back to England." That night, Betteredge gazes at the full moon before noticing a shadow approaching and jumping into the bushes; he takes out a gun and searches for the apparent intruder but notices only a bottle of black, sweet liquor, which reminds him of the jugglers' ink.

Franklin and Rachel's childhood cousin animosity seems to have disappeared; just as Rosanna falls for Franklin, Franklin quickly falls for Rachel, although Betteredge seems to take this latter romance far more seriously. Betteredge begins to discover more clues of foul play—the phantom intruder and liquor bottle—which foreshadow the later importance of ambiguous or seemingly miniscule pieces of evidence to uncovering the Moonstone's thief.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 8

Betteredge notes that, in the days from Franklin's arrival to Rachel's birthday, "nothing [...] worth recording" happens on almost every day, and so he will only recount the relevant events on a few days. The day after Franklin's arrival, Betteredge shows him the bottle of liquor and they agree it was the Indians' "hocus-pocus" tool, although they also wonder whether the Indians might be able to see magically through the iron bank safe that now houses **the Diamond**. Ultimately, the Indians do not return to the house—although Betteredge believes they must have heard rumors of Franklin's visit to the bank, and that they could not have seen his visit through their "clairvoyance."

Betteredge keeps true to his promise to exhaustively record everything of any relevance to the Moonstone's theft; the liquor bottle remains an ambiguous clue, and nobody knows whether it was left by accident or as a warning. Betteredge and Franklin continue to waffle between rational and otherworldly explanations of the Indians' behavior; "hocus-pocus" increasingly describes what they fear might be possible, rather than (as earlier) what they found ridiculous and impossible.

On May 29th, Rachel and Franklin Blake discover a new hobby—something necessary for "gentlefolks" who often spend their long, luxurious lives bored, idle, or taken to cruel hobbies like dissecting insects and plants or ruining the house for the sake of art. Franklin and Rachel get into "decorative painting," covering Rachel's bedroom door with a putrid-smelling mixture.

Betteredge recognizes (but does not denounce) the futility of aristocratic life—people like the Verinders live off property holdings, without anything to do, and their excesses contrast with the poverty and backbreaking work relegated to the British lower classes.

On June 4th, Betteredge writes, the servants begin debating whether Rachel and Franklin would get married. While Franklin is certainly in love with Rachel, Betteredge considers many of Rachel's features inadequate (despite her immense grace) and he feels that her independent-mindedness is her singular personality defect, although she is honest without fail—these contradictions, Betteredge thinks, are typical of any woman.

The servants' gossip about Rachel and Franklin's love life reminds the reader that they are intimately connected to the Verinders, even if they are working-class people whom the family would never see as equals. Betteredge evaluates Rachel like he does Franklin, but according to a set of distinctive criteria for women that now looks extraordinarily chauvinistic, but speaks volumes about the Victorian insistence that woman should be silent, obedient, and conventionally beautiful. Of course, there is no real contradiction between being beautiful and freethinking—there is only one in Betteredge's mind, because one is feminine to him and the other is not. Betteredge's further belief that women are contradictory—but, presumably, not men—proves itself contradictory, since he continually talks about the contradictions among the different aspects of Franklin's personality (which he ties to different European education systems).

On June 12th, Rachel writes to invite another of her cousins—Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite, with whom she seems enamored—to her birthday. Betteredge explains that Julia's sister Caroline married an Ablewhite, who was "very rich and very respectable," despite his low birth (although Betteredge, in line with "the progress of modern enlightenment," thinks this is a surmountable defect). Godfrey is the second son of Caroline and this Mr. Ablewhite, and Mr. Franklin hardly stands a "chance of topping [him]." Godfrey is taller and more handsome, a noble and popular barrister who works with many organizations focused on uplifting poor women (and who, in Betteredge's estimation, makes sure the rich women in charge of such organizations do not get out of hand). Franklin, Betteredge thinks, has no chance.

Godfrey Ablewhite is a clear character foil for Franklin: Godfrey is handsome, upwardly-mobile, and respected in Britain, while Franklin is short and awkwardly-bearded, squanders his money, and has spent almost none of his life in his native country (not to mention never having done charity work). Betteredge's assumption that Rachel will choose to marry Godfrey because of these concrete advantages reflects his belief in marriage as a primarily economic and social decision, not a personal one based on emotions or interpersonal connections. (Of course, as he notes in regards to Godfrey's birth, such norms do happen to be changing.)

Godfrey Ablewhite writes to accept Rachel's invitation on the 14th, and includes some poems that Rachel and Franklin mock at the dinner table. Franklin puts up a good fight, too, even quitting smoking for Rachel. Penelope is convinced Rachel will choose Franklin, but Betteredge thinks she will pick Godfrey, whose photo she even keeps in her bedroom. On the 16th, Franklin's chances worsen when a foreign man comes to speak to him about some old unsettled business (unrelated to **the Diamond**) and Rachel begins to criticize his foreign ways. And yet, on the 17th, Franklin and Rachel are back to usual, painting the bedroom door.

Contrary to Betteredge's initial assumptions, Rachel seems skeptical of Godfrey's overly formal and showy attempts to court her; meanwhile, she and Franklin share a genuine connection and commitment, despite his apparent debts. The apparently universal disdain for Franklin's foreignness again points to a (particularly, but not uniquely) British xenophobia, the conflation of foreignness with inferiority and blind national pride that many of Collins's readers likely feel.

On the 19th, a doctor comes to treat Rosanna, who has clearly fallen for Franklin—no matter how much Betteredge insists he is reluctant to admit it, Rosanna is pursuing Franklin and getting in Rachel's way, so Betteredge calls the doctor to treat her nerves. While the doctor proposes sending Rosanna to another estate, Betteredge heeds Rosanna's pleas and lets her stay—which later proves a horrible mistake. On the 20th, Godfrey sends notice that he will arrive the next day, alongside a present pricier than anything Franklin has ever given Rachel. Betteredge writes that he is elated to have finally reached the eve of Rachel's birthday, which he will recount in the next chapter.

Betteredge's decision to treat Rosanna's unrequited love with medicine evidences his complete misunderstanding of what she must be feeling, as well as the common notion (even today) that women's strong reactions are pathological (or "hysterical") and not to be taken seriously. This also shows the reliance on medicine to treat this alleged disorder—in other words, to help men manage the normal emotions of the women in their lives.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 9

Betteredge prepares for Rachel's birthday, including his speech in her favor—which he compares to the Queen's speech before Parliament, for it is the same every year. After this speech, Betteredge convinces the conflicted Franklin to simply gift Rachel **the Diamond** as originally planned, with no undue warnings. Franklin and Rachel spend the morning finishing the bedroom door; before dinner, Betteredge awakens from **Robinson Crusoe** to find Franklin arriving alongside Godfrey Ablewhite, who is surprisingly surly, and his two rotund and jolly sisters. Franklin affirms that he has the Diamond and has not seen the Indians.

Betteredge clearly thinks highly of his employers and by extension of his own role managing the house. But he also exposes its futility by humbly admitting that his speech is a mere meaningless formality. Everything starts off as planned, although Godfrey's manner does not seem to match Betteredge's expectations of him.

Sometime later, Betteredge hears a scream from the drawing-room, where he discovers Rachel holding **the Diamond** and the rest of the guests examining it ecstatically. Julia reads the will and, looking confused, asks Betteredge to talk with her in her room a half hour later. On his way out, Rachel shows Betteredge the Diamond, which reminds him of the moon and is as "unfathomable as the heavens themselves." (Godfrey remarks that it is "mere carbon" and carries on with grace.) At their meeting, Julia is deeply pessimistic about Herncastle's gift; Franklin confronts Betteredge on his way out, asking about Rachel and Godfrey's whereabouts. And just before dinner, Penelope delightedly informs Betteredge that she witnessed Rachel refuse Godfrey's proposal in the garden. Betteredge prepares to reprimand Penelope for what he considers misplaced enthusiasm, and then the first guests' arrival interrupts him.

Although Franklin hands over the Diamond without a hitch, Rachel strangely never appears to ask where it came from, and of course Julia's knowledge of its origins immediately launches her into a panic. The Diamond's appearance attests to its mystical, otherworldly quality, but Godfrey's remark suggests that he has a different perspective on the Diamond's value, compared to everyone else: while Rachel is ecstatic about its beauty, Godfrey sees it as just one physical object among others, and his grumpiness strangely contrasts with his sudden and unexpected proposal to Rachel.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 10

At dinner, Betteredge informs the reader that only two of the 24 guests are worth noting, and this because they were the only ones to make remarkable comments about **the Moonstone** that Franklin had managed to turn into a brooch for Rachel. The first was the talkative and irreverent doctor Mr. Candy, who joked that he would burn the Diamond away for the sake of science, and so that she would not have to worry about guarding it. The second notable character was Mr. Murthwaite, an aloof Anglo-Indian traveler who hardly spoke except to warn Rachel against ever bringing the Diamond to India—for he knew such gems could be sacred, and their bearers' lives expendable.

Whereas Godfrey referred to the Moonstone as "mere carbon," Franklin turns it into jewelry for Rachel. Their differing attitudes parallel their opposite kinds of investment in Rachel (Franklin's is emotional, Godfrey's more practical). Murthwaite, the representative of the British Empire, offers the Verinders an insight into the Diamond's origins and true, religious value in India—whereas their other information about these subjects comes from myth and rumor, Murthwaite's expert opinion elevates Betteredge and Franklin's fears to the level of verifiable fact.

The dinner proceeds awkwardly: Mr. Candy, for instance, boorishly suggests that the husband of another guest, Mrs. Threadgall, visit some skeletons at a college—without realizing (or listening to Mrs. Threadgall loudly insist) that the man himself was deceased. Godfrey only speaks to the woman beside him, Miss Clack, who worked with one of his charity groups, and Mr. Franklin—due, Betteredge promises, to his foreign education—manages to offend nearly everyone at the table, which culminates in a shouting match with Mr. Candy.

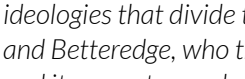
Mr. Candy and Franklin's mutually-boorish argument exemplifies the Victorian debates over the validity of science that resurface in the narratives of Miss Clack and Ezra Jennings; yet again, Betteredge assumes that Franklin's pollution by foreignness makes him unable to gracefully navigate English high society, all while the man he compliments for his grace, Godfrey Ablewhite, seems uninterested in displaying his famous sociability.

After dinner, as Betteredge arranges the men's drinks, he hears a sound outside and goes to the terrace to see the Indian jugglers performing outside. Before Betteredge can banish them, the dinner guests follow him outside and grow entranced by the performance—including Rachel, brandishing **the Diamond** on her dress. Mr. Murthwaite, however, begins talking to the Indians "in the language of their own country" and frightens them, leading them to stop their performance.

The reappearance of the Indian jugglers confirms that the men are following the Diamond, and seem to have understood that it would return to the Verinder residence on the night of Rachel's birthday. And Rachel remains completely in the dark about the greater significance of the night's events.

Everyone returns inside except Franklin and Murthwaite, who call Betteredge over. Murthwaite explains that the Indians are not jugglers, but "high-caste Brahmins," and that when he told them he knew their true identities, the men recoiled. They must have left their privileged lives at the top of Indian society for a "very serious motive," Murthwaite explains, and Franklin decides to tell Murthwaite the whole backstory about **the Diamond**. Murthwaite responds that Franklin has been lucky to survive so far, and that the Brahmins have certainly come to retrieve and return the Moonstone. Franklin has only succeeded because he has traveled in public, with others, and at unplanned times, Murthwaite argues. Betteredge asks whether the Indians would really be willing to kill Franklin; Murthwaite insists they would not think twice about it and suggests the Diamond be divided up, as Herncastle had planned in the case of Rachel or Julia's death.

The aloof and mysterious Murthwaite—whose personality incorporates some elements aligned with Indianness in this novel, but whose loyalties unquestionably lie with his British friends—comes to the rescue, translating between the two ideologies that divide the British from the Indians. He helps Franklin and Betteredge, who think of the Diamond in terms of its beauty and its monetary value, understand the depth of its religious value to the Indians who have sacrificed their caste (their honor and social status) to make recovering the Diamond their life's work. While Franklin and Betteredge have previously thought of the Indians as "conspirators" seeking to "steal" the Diamond, now they understand that the Indians are seeking to return it to its origin. However, they never raise the question of the Diamond's rightful *place, and only think about how they might ensure that Rachel holds onto it.*



Franklin, Murthwaite, and Betteredge decide that they will release the dogs if the Indians return, and then they head back inside. Betteredge turns to **Robinson Crusoe** and stumbles upon a passage that insists the "Fear of Danger is ten thousand times more terrifying than Danger itself." Penelope visits to report that the guests are, at last, enjoying themselves, and Betteredge makes a round of the grounds—finding nothing—before everyone takes their carriages home through the evening rain.

Given Robinson Crusoe's apparent predictive power for Betteredge, he likely expects this passage to demonstrate that he need not worry about the Diamond, even though at the outset of his narrative he revealed that the Diamond was stolen less than a day after Franklin gave it to Rachel. Nevertheless, for the time being, nothing appears out of order.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 11

Betteredge turns to the events after Rachel's party. In the drawing-room, Rachel decides that she plans to safeguard **the Diamond** in her Indian cabinet. Julia protests that this cabinet does not have a lock and proposes that she take charge of the Diamond herself, but Rachel refuses. Julia insists they talk in the morning, and Rachel flirts with Franklin in the corner before heading off to bed. Franklin tells Betteredge and Godfrey that he perhaps "took Mr. Murthwaite too seriously," and Betteredge points out that Franklin and Godfrey get along despite their competition over Rachel. After the others go to bed, Betteredge sets loose the dogs and does his rounds. He is nervous and cannot sleep until sunrise, but hears nothing in the house.

Although Julia has detailed knowledge about the threat of the Diamond and Rachel has none, she stops short of overriding her daughter, which shows her great (and perhaps unusual) respect for Rachel's autonomy. While in the past Betteredge was caught between his (supposedly evidence-based) belief that the Indians were innocuous and the Diamond could not be "cursed," now this has switched: Mr. Murthwaite has given him cause to believe the whole family is under threat because of the Diamond, while Robinson Crusoe has told Betteredge not to worry. In short, Collins has flipped the previous association of irrational or religious belief with the Indians and rational, verifiable belief with the British.

Only a few hours after he falls asleep, Betteredge awakens to find Penelope screaming: "**The Diamond** *is gone!*" Upstairs, Rachel stands mortified beside her open Indian cabinet, and then locks herself inside her room, although she lets her astonished mother inside. When they hear the news, Godfrey and Franklin are also shocked and mystified, although after taking his coffee, Franklin orders the servants not to lock or unlock any of the doors and windows, looks around Rachel's room to ensure the Diamond has not fallen, and sends Penelope to fetch Rachel for questioning. However, only Julia comes out; she reports that Rachel is too "overwhelmed" to speak, and that the family must call the police. Franklin offers to do it, and to make sure the Indian jugglers are apprehended at once. He suggests to Betteredge that one of the Indians might have hidden in the house all evening.

The crime at the center of the novel is reported, surprisingly, first by Betteredge's daughter Penelope, his most important confidant and liaison to Rachel (whom he nevertheless treats with a condescension that contrasts with Julia's respect and concern for her daughter). Rachel appears paralyzed, almost traumatized, and the theft of the Diamond on the night of her 18th birthday (when she comes of age and is on the brink of marriage) clearly evokes tropes of sexual innocence and violation. Franklin, who brought the Diamond to the Verinder estate in the first place, immediately takes charge as an investigator figure, pursuing the obvious potential culprit: the Indians he knows hoped to steal the Diamond.

Betteredge wonders how one of the Indians could have stolen **the Diamond** when the doors and windows stayed locked and the dogs were running around all night. After breakfast, he explains the story of the Indians to Julia, who remains "far more perturbed about her daughter [Rachel]," whose fixation on the Diamond was uncharacteristic of her personality. Godfrey and the servants also grow withdrawn and ponder the theft. Then Franklin comes back and declares, inexplicably, that he feels sorry for "the poor ill-used Indians" who are now in jail for the crime, but whom he has determined must be innocent. He reports that the police confirmed the Indians were in the nearby town of Frizinghall all night—meaning they could not have been at the Verinder estate—but the police threw them in jail anyway on a petty, unrelated charge.

Franklin's fear that one of the Indians may have hidden in the house plays on stereotypes about deceptive conmen from the East, hidden in plain sight, waiting to take advantage of Europeans (and especially British women). Thinking practically, Betteredge realizes that this was impossible, and Franklin immediately switches sides after conducting his own, comically conclusive "investigation." Julia's overarching focus seems to be on restoring a sense of normalcy—protecting her daughter and continuing with daily routine (like a normal breakfast)—rather than immediately finding the gem. The police's ability to throw the Indians in jail without evidence against them reflects the British upper classes' power to bend the law to their own purposes.

After a few minutes, the austere police Superintendent, Seegrave, comes to the estate and investigates. He determines that "some person in the house" must have been responsible for the robbery. The servants are the first suspects, and he questions them before turning to Penelope (who first learned about the robbery), and then Rachel, who claims through her bedroom door to "have nothing to tell the policeman." After talking to the men, Seegrave returns to Rachel's room. Surprisingly, Rachel walks out and goes to talk with Franklin outside (or, as it looks from Betteredge's position at the window, yell at him). She returns in a fury, kicks Seegrave out of her room, and locks herself back inside. Betteredge assumes she must be "mortally offended by our sending for the police," but is confused that she would not do everything possible to try to get her diamond back.

Seegrave quickly catches up to and publicly announces the conclusion Betteredge and Franklin have already reached privately: the notion that the culprit is in the house, likely a character already known to the reader, is a classic trope of mystery fiction, a twist to be repeated many hundreds of times over the century following The Moonstone. *Rachel remains oddly distant and uninterested in contributing to the investigation. Her relationship with Franklin also seems to have turned on its head, as instead of going to him for comfort, she takes her frustration out on him. Both these factors suggest she knows more about the theft than meets the eye, despite Betteredge's facile explanation for her reaction.*

Although Franklin, Godfrey, and Julia all probably know exactly what Rachel was yelling at Franklin about, none of them are willing to tell Betteredge or Seegrave, who begins interrogating Betteredge about the other servants. Betteredge defends them all, although he has his doubts about Rosanna Spearman. On his second round of questioning, Seegrave appears to begin suspecting the increasingly distraught Penelope of the crime. Finally, he asks Julia for permission to search the servants' possessions—although she objects to their being "treated like thieves," Betteredge offers his own keys and the other servants also oblige. There is "no Diamond or sign of a Diamond" anywhere in the house. Betteredge goes to the library in search of Franklin but instead, to his surprise, runs into Rosanna.

For once, Betteredge's position in the Verinder household becomes a disadvantage *to his receiving important information. As a result, the reader, too, gets left in the dark about Rachel and Franklin's conflict. In turn, Seegrave's questioning puts Betteredge's loyalties to the test, forcing him to choose between his desire to find the Diamond (for Julia and Rachel) and his desire to protect the family and servants alike (one of whom, nevertheless, is likely the culprit). The disappearance of the Diamond adds another layer of mystery, since everyone who was in the house when it was stolen remains there during Seegrave's investigation.*

Betteredge "charged [Rosanna] with a breach of domestic discipline," but she explains that she had gone to the library in order to deliver a ring Franklin Blake left upstairs. Betteredge sees her as peculiarly "out of [her] natural character." He then meets Franklin, who explains that he is going to London to enlist the Chief Commissioner of Police in the search for **the Diamond** and then mentions that he, too, thinks that something is off with Rosanna. After bringing Franklin his ring, she declared that the Diamond—and its thief—would certainly never be found. Franklin worries that she will get herself into trouble with the police. Betteredge says he will tell Julia to rein in the foolishly pessimistic Rosanna. He soon discovers that she has fallen ill and returned to bed, and then wonders if maybe Rosanna just wanted an excuse to talk to Franklin.

Betteredge's overly formalistic complaint against Rosanna stands in stark contrast to her apparently quite practical and justifiable reason for visiting Franklin, suggesting that there might be a gap between Betteredge's understanding of what goes on at the house and reality. Rosanna's line to Franklin appears to be a confession, but is quite inexplicable because she would be revealing the thief in the same breath as she says the thief will never be revealed. Again, from the men's perspectives, Rosanna's actions are hysterical and irrational; the reader later learns about the logic behind them.

Seegrave tells Betteredge that he believes the thief was collaborating with the Indians, whom he now plans to interrogate in prison. He goes with Franklin, Godfrey, and one of his inferior policemen to Frizinghall; beforehand, Franklin implores Betteredge to keep watch on Rosanna, but stops short of describing his conversation with Rachel. Rosanna soon has "what they call an hysterical attack;" for the rest of the day, Rachel remains locked in her room and Penelope remains convinced that she is the prime suspect. At night, Godfrey and Franklin return, reporting that, despite Mr. Murthwaite's help with translation, the police's interrogation of the Indians "had ended in nothing." Betteredge promises that his next chapter will recount how "the darkness lifted a little" a few days later.

While Seegrave's theory makes perfect sense (explaining the Indians' presence but also how the Diamond could have been stolen while they were outside the house), it also implies the troubling conclusion that one of Rachel's dinner guests was working to steal the Diamond for the Indians. Interestingly, a day after the theft, the characters' reactions are split by gender: Betteredge, Franklin, and Godfrey are pursuing the investigation that Rachel, Rosanna, and Penelope are anxious for being embroiled in.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 12

Betteredge notes that "two pieces of news" arrive the third day after **the Diamond**'s theft. First, "the baker's man declared" that he saw Rosanna wearing a veil outside the previous day, even though Betteredge knows she was inside all day. Secondly, the postman brings news that Mr. Candy, the doctor, has fallen ill from traveling in the rain and was "talking nonsense," which troubled the family because Rachel might have needed his medical help.

Rosanna's veil suggests that, unless the baker's man saw incorrectly, she was covering something up after the theft, and either way this gives the novel's group of detectives cause to investigate. Mr. Candy's illness plays no important role in the novel until much later, but it is worth mentioning that the Verinders' house has turned from a normal estate into a charged environment, where every piece of information potentially points to the culprit and everything and everyone is under suspicion.

After breakfast, a third piece of news arrives: Sergeant Cuff from London, a "renowned and capable" detective, is coming to investigate **the Diamond**'s disappearance. Betteredge is astonished to meet "a grizzled, elderly man" who looks more like an undertaker than a police officer. Cuff does not even mention the theft to Betteredge, but instead advises him at length about the estate's rose garden and discusses his plan to keep one of his own after retirement.

Cuff does not exude authority—like Franklin and Betteredge, he is far from the traditional masculine hero, but this may be associated with his wits and investigative skills. Nevertheless, his initial uninterest in the case is also surprising given his job, and his fascination with the roses warns that he might not be as serious as he is reputed to be.

When Julia comes out, Cuff inquires about the previous investigation and asks to speak with Seegrave. After they chat, Seegrave emerges as an eager assistant to the weary and suspicious Cuff, who proceeds to ask Betteredge a series of confusing questions as they walk through Rachel's room. He dwells on the smear on Rachel's door, which he considers a crucial piece of evidence. After talking with Franklin, he confirms that the paint must have been smeared before 3:00 AM the night of the theft, not the day after, as the family thought. Suddenly, Rachel emerges, and Cuff asks her about the paint smear next—but rather than answering his inquiry, she asks him who he is, and then insists he "don't allow Mr. Franklin Blake to help" in his investigation. She insists she knows nothing about the smear, locks herself back in her room, and begins crying loudly.

Cuff's takeover is another event that becomes a trope in later detective fiction: the famous, brilliant, eccentric officer puts the local detective in his place. Cuff's realization about the paint smear is also a trope: the whole case comes to revolve around an otherwise inconsequential, miniscule detail that everyone else missed. Betteredge's inability to guess Cuff's intentions suggests that Cuff's unorthodox methods work by gently coaxing information out of his witnesses (unlike Seegrave, who alienated Rachel and the servants with his confrontational approach).

Cuff seems to have gleaned new insight from Rachel's reaction. Turning back to the paint, he asks to speak to Penelope, whom he thinks may have been the last to see it before the smear. Recognizing that Seegrave alienated the servants, he asks Betteredge to explain to the servants that there is "no evidence […] that **the Diamond** has been stolen" rather than lost, and that their job is merely to "lay their heads together and help [Cuff] find it." Betteredge confirms that he can also let the woman servants freely wander the house, rather than keeping them confined in their rooms (as Seegrave had done). Betteredge transmits the message.

Cuff quickly gets Betteredge on his good side, turning him and his unparalleled access to all the house's members into a valuable tool in his information-gathering quest—even though Cuff is about to question Betteredge's daughter, whom Seegrave suspects of the crime. By sticking exclusively to provable facts—the Diamond is gone, but it may not have been stolen—Cuff also embodies the theory of evidence at the heart of the novel and the detective genre.

Cuff interviews Penelope, who claims to have seen the paint unsmeared at midnight and proves there is no smear on the dress she was wearing that night. Betteredge confirms that the dogs could not be responsible, and so Cuff determines "that somebody […] must have been in the room, and done the mischief, between midnight and three o'clock on the Thursday morning." He announces that his next order of business is to search for a smeared dress, and he sends Seegrave—who is still convinced the paint is irrelevant—back to Frizinghall. After a period of deep thought, Cuff asks to speak to Rachel, and then tells Franklin, "*Nobody has stolen* **the Diamond**." "The pieces of the puzzle," he suggests, will come together soon enough.

While the useless Seegrave based his investigation on guesswork and judgments of credibility, Cuff focuses primarily on the physical evidence, which allows him to narrow down precisely when the crime occurred. His apparent intuitions seem to come out of nowhere—owing to his ostensibly superior reasoning abilities. However, it is also important to consider whether Cuff sincerely believes that "Nobody has stolen the Diamond" or is only saying this to influence Franklin.


THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 13

Julia protests that Betteredge should speak to Cuff for her, for her "nerves are a little shaken" and she feels that Cuff "is bringing trouble and misery with him into the house." She requests that Betteredge accompany her during the interview. Cuff agrees to this proposal before explaining that he has "already formed an opinion on this case" (which he will not yet share) and outlining his plan to find the smeared dress by searching the servants' possessions. He believes that it cannot be proven **the Diamond** was stolen, only that it "is missing."

Like Rachel, Julia begins to push back against the investigation, which overturns the usual boundaries of public and private space in her house, turning everything into a possible clue and putting everyone under suspicion. Unlike Seegrave, Cuff recognizes the impact of his own presence—and, of course, his suspicions—on those around him, and chooses to hide his clearly unconventional theory in order to avoid alienating the family. In doing so, Cuff disrupts the reader's usual process of discovery about the theft, leaving them in the dark and turning the investigation itself into part of the mystery the reader is supposed to solve.

Julia again resists the prospect of searching the servants, which Cuff insists must happen (although he laments Seegrave's initial search for showing the servants they were under suspicion). Cuff proposes explaining the whole case to the servants and promising to search everyone in the house, regardless of status. As he leaves for London, Godfrey also agrees to leave his possessions for the search. Cuff asks for a record of the washed linen (so he can determine if any is missing) and again laments that Seegrave openly advertised his suspicions to the servants. Rosanna brings the relevant records, and Cuff asks about her, since he had seen her in prison in the past. He assures that he does not suspect her, or "any person in the house [...] up to the present time."

Cuff's decision to be completely transparent about what he knows for certain seems to contrast with his insistence on keeping his suspicions a secret—this contrast draws a sharp line between evidence-based knowledge and speculative inference, a distinction that is crucial in detective fiction (where a reader must have at once a concrete sense of what can be known based on the clues and an unprovable suspicion that gets either confirmed or denied upon the revelation of the culprit).

Rachel refuses to let Cuff examine her wardrobe—he is not surprised, and calls the whole search off, since "we must examine all the wardrobes in the house or none." Cuff is also not at all disappointed; he simply implores Betteredge to "wait a little." Betteredge writes that he failed to understand what Cuff was thinking, although "cleverer heads than mine might have." Cuff leads Betteredge back to the rose garden.

Cuff diplomatically insists on treating everyone equally, breaking down the previous hierarchical divide between the servants (who, under Seegrave, were automatically under suspicion) and the family (who were not). Accordingly, even though Rachel is the purported victim of the crime, she does not get special treatment or evade suspicion.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 14

Betteredge is in the garden with Cuff, who confirms he has reached a certain conclusion about the matter and asks Betteredge about the servants' responses to **the Diamond**'s loss. He then changes the subject and takes Betteredge away to a safer location before asking him about Rosanna, whom Cuff claims to have noticed eavesdropping from the bushes just before. If Rosanna has a "sweetheart," Cuff thinks, her hiding is explicable; otherwise, it is "highly suspicious." Reluctantly, Betteredge repeats Penelope's suspicion that Rosanna is in love with Franklin, and Cuff responds with amusement and pity for "ugly women" like Rosanna. Cuff asks if anything else suspicious happened, and Betteredge simply responds that everyone—including himself—"lost our heads" after the theft. Cuff thanks and compliments Betteredge, they shake hands, and then Betteredge starts sending the servants in for one-on-one interviews with Cuff.

Rosanna's suspicious behavior keeps her in the spotlight, although Cuff is slower than Seegrave and Betteredge to declare her under suspicion for the theft. Betteredge increasingly feels left behind by Cuff's intellect, as Cuff is usurping Betteredge's former role as the man in the house most knowledgeable about its inhabitants. His and Cuff's pity for "ugly women" is ironic because they are both elderly and described as unattractive, and it reflects a Victorian gender ideology in which a woman's primary value is her physical appearance in the eyes of men (which translates to her likelihood of marrying well and maintaining or improving her and her family's economic and social status). At the same time, by pitying *"ugly women" (instead of outright judging them) they show their hope that things might be otherwise.*

Each of the servants reacts strongly after their short interview with Cuff, except Rosanna, who stays "longer than any of them" and has "no report on coming out." Cuff asks to be notified if Rosanna asks to go for a walk outside—which she does almost immediately—and follows her. Betteredge is frustrated that Cuff seems to suspect her. Betteredge chats with the other servants about their interviews over tea and discovers that two maids—"two devils," in his estimation—told the skeptical Cuff about Rosanna's suspiciously locked door and the suspicious sight of a fire in her room in the middle of the night.

Betteredge pities Rosanna because of her status as a pariah, not just in society at large but also in the Verinder estate (whose other servants turn against her). At the same time, her behavior is undeniably suspicious, and Betteredge feels powerless to help her because of Cuff's newfound power over the house.

Outside, Betteredge meets Franklin, whom Julia has just updated about the day's events and who declares in a frenzy that he wishes he had "thrown [**the Moonstone**] into the quicksand" when he first arrived with it. Betteredge recounts the details of Cuff's investigation and Franklin immediately grows convinced that Rosanna has stolen the Moonstone and burned her paint-smeared dress in the night. Just as Franklin threatens to tell Julia, Cuff shows up and warns him against it, and against questioning his authority; if Franklin tells anyone, Cuff threatens, he will leave the case. Betteredge realizes that Franklin and Cuff seem to understand one another on unspoken terms, and that Penelope seems crucial to their understanding. Cuff reprimands Betteredge for undertaking his own "little detective business" and asks for the way to the **Shivering Sand**, for which they set out together at the chapter's close.

Again, the well-meaning but amateurish detectives Franklin and Betteredge get in the way of the professional Cuff and have their roles in the household challenged; although they do their best to help the investigation, they realize they have nothing to contribute except by obeying Cuff. And again, Betteredge realizes that he—and therefore the reader—is out of the loop in regards to critical information to which even his daughter is now privy. Cuff and Betteredge go to the Shivering Sand because that is where they expect to track down Rosanna, who seems their best lead regarding the paint smear—although Betteredge still does not know why Cuff thinks this.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 15

As Betteredge and Cuff approach the **Shivering Sand**, Cuff explains that Betteredge need not defend Rosanna, who "is not in the slightest danger of getting into trouble" because, if involved in the theft, she was "simply an instrument in the hands of another person." Betteredge and Cuff both ask one another if they know who this person might be. Cuff then asks if Rosanna bought any new linen clothes recently, and Betteredge admits that she has. Cuff laments the misery of human life and explains his theory: Rosanna discovered the paint-stain on her gown and made herself a new one by firelight in the night. But Cuff decided to let her go and follow her to the sea rather than "give the alarm [...] to a certain person who shall be nameless between us." He hopes the sands will reveal where she has gone.

Cuff's new revelation throws Betteredge—and likely the reader—completely off their previous suspicion that Rosanna might have stolen the Diamond for her own benefit, owing to her past as a criminal and desire for a more interesting life. This is a powerful rhetorical move because this chapter was the beginning of another one of Collins's weekly serial publications, and beginning this new installment with such a twist was sure to keep his readers captivated. Apparently, Cuff thinks her role in the theft might be connected to her ostensible beloved, or someone else in the house, but he continues to keep the reader and Betteredge in a state of suspense.

As Cuff investigates, Betteredge remembers meeting Rosanna at the same place on the **Shivering Sand** a month earlier. The sun sets and everything but the quicksand falls still; Cuff declares there are no signs of Rosanna, whom he saw earlier that day walking north from the nearby village of Cobb's Hole. On their way, they encounter a number of discordant footprints pointing in all directions, which Cuff sees as proof of Rosanna trying to cover her tracks and hide her true direction. He suggests they visit the cottage of Rosanna's friends in Cobb's Hole, a family Betteredge recognizes as the Yollands and which makes Betteredge think that Rosanna was merely taking her usual walk, rather than doing something sinister.

Rosanna's behavior is full of ambiguous clues that can be interpreted either as damning evidence of her guilt or, alternatively and just as plausibly, as the comings and goings of everyday life. Betteredge's recollection of his conversation with her—when she said she imagined she would die at the Sands and then abruptly left upon Franklin Blake's arrival—is another such clue, and the reader must decide if these are significant or mere red herrings (irrelevant details intentionally incorporated to distract from the truth).

When they arrive at the Yollands' cottage, Cuff and Betteredge meet Mrs. Yolland, who offers them gin and a pipe. Cuff embarks on a long monologue and eventually arrives at the matter of Rosanna, whom he claims to be defending, while Betteredge watches the performance tacitly. On his way out, Cuff proclaims that Rosanna should leave her job, and Mrs. Yolland enthusiastically agrees in her thick "Yorkshire language," proclaiming that "she is *going* to leave it!" Betteredge grows confused and "smell[s] mischief in the air," so decides to get Cuff out—but Cuff sits right down and continues talking to Mrs. Yolland, who admits that Rosanna had come that day to write a lengthy letter to a friend, outside the purview of the other servants. Mrs. Yolland sees this as proof that Rosanna "has got [a friend] somewhere" and will be leaving to join them "as soon as she can."

Cuff's meandering conversational style allows him to win Mrs. Yolland's trust and disguise his most important questions about Rosanna as casual interest. Betteredge grows uncomfortable with this most of all because he realizes that Cuff might have been doing the same thing in befriending him. Ironically, then, the detective appears to be the novel's most disingenuous and untrustworthy character. Just as Rosanna is a foil for Rachel, Mrs. Yolland is a foil for Julia, and this makes Betteredge uncomfortable because he is so used to tying honor and respect to class status, something Cuff stubbornly refuses to do.

Betteredge interjects to insist that Rosanna would have told him if she were planning to travel, but Mrs. Yolland insists that Rosanna already "bought some things she wanted for travelling" and gives Cuff some money that she wants refunded to Rosanna for a small tin case and some chains Rosanna had insisted on paying for. Unwilling to help Cuff incriminate Rosanna, Betteredge tries again and again to leave, but Cuff continues talking with Mrs. Yolland about the money, which he convinces her to take back.

Betteredge grows even more frustrated when he learns that Rosanna, whom he believes he has treated well and whose trust he thinks he has earned, has not been completely forthcoming with him and the Verinders. At the same time, Betteredge remains deeply loyal to her and conflicted about the possible effects of Cuff's questioning.

Finally, Cuff and Betteredge go outside, and Cuff admits that he is "puzzled" by Mrs. Yolland. However, he finds it "clear enough" that Rosanna is hiding something in the tin case, sinking it somewhere under the water or quicksand, and leaving the chain available to pull it up in the future. However, Cuff thinks it cannot be **the Diamond**. And yet this makes no sense: if Rosanna were, say, trying to get rid of her stained dress, she could just drop it in the quicksand from which nothing has ever emerged. Cuff wants to go to Frizinghall and figure out what Rosanna bought for her new dress, but also feels he should stay at the house. Rosanna, too, he admits, "puzzle[s]" him.

What Cuff realizes, in short, is that Rosanna has hidden something so that it may be found later. While the Diamond seems like the most obvious possibility, his unspoken theory continues to stand between the truth and Betteredge/the reader. His admission of "puzzle[ment]" is important because it shows that confusion is a necessary part of the discovery process, a strength rather than a weakness. Of course, Cuff's attitude contrasts strongly with Seegrave's aggressiveness and Franklin's attempts to control the entire house.

When they return to the house, Cuff stares at Rachel's room from outside. He sees "lights […] passing backwards and forwards" and seems to make "another discovery." He tells Betteredge that Rachel has likely "resolved to leave the house […] within the last hour." When they enter, Cuff is proven right: Rosanna has just returned, and Julia has been waiting to speak with Cuff for an hour. Betteredge is flabbergasted at Cuff's incredible predictions—and then Cuff declares that he expects "scandal" that night.

Yet again, Cuff makes an inexplicable "discovery" that looks more like the prophecies from Robinson Crusoe or the Indians' "hocus-pocus" than detective work. The reader is challenged to not only discover what happened to the Diamond but also to retrace Cuff's mysterious insights, which now explicitly foreshadow sinister future events.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 16

Betteredge and Cuff walk into Julia's room, and Julia explains that Rachel informed her about an hour ago about her desire to stay with the Ablewhites for some time. Betteredge's heart begins to race; Cuff requests that Julia try to keep Rachel around the house until the following afternoon, so they can talk, instead of letting her leave in the morning, when he is also planning to be in Frizinghall. Julia agrees and Cuff asks her not to tell Rachel about his involvement in her departure plans. Outside, Cuff compliments Julia, and Betteredge grows furious: he grabs Cuff and yells that "there's something wrong about Miss Rachel—and you have been hiding it from me all this time!" Betteredge feels guilty for his reaction and reassures the reader that it was only because of his loyalty to the family and care for Rachel.

Rachel's desire to get away from the investigation suggests even more strongly that she has something to hide, but Cuff already seems to know what this is and has a plan to circumvent it. Betteredge's reaction to his new prediction, in a rare loss of composure, shows his inability to cope with losing the power to keep the household in check. Indeed, both Betteredge and Rachel's personality shifts prove that Cuff's investigation (even more than the Diamond's theft) has upended the normal order of the Verinder estate, turning people into their opposites—or, perhaps more precisely, exposing their contradictions.

In Betteredge's sitting room, Cuff reveals the truth: Rachel still has **the Moonstone** and was trying to throw suspicion onto Rosanna. Cuff will lay out his case tomorrow, before Rachel leaves for Frizinghall, and he wants Betteredge to be present. As dinner comes and goes, Betteredge feels "restless and miserable" and even starts thinking about his own death, but continues to insistently believe that Rachel must be innocent.

Cuff's explanation is as stunning as it is initially improbable, but it truly does explain all the relevant details of the case. Just as Cuff's detective work reveals people's contradictions and undersides, it reveals the victim as the thief. Betteredge, ever the champion of consistency and order, cannot bear this.

Julia asks Betteredge to inform Cuff that the three Indian jugglers are going to be released soon, and that it is their last opportunity to question them. When he goes outside, Betteredge finds Cuff engaged in a passionate argument about roses with the gardener. He gives Cuff a written note about the Indians, and Cuff asks for Mr. Murthwaite's contact information before returning to his argument.

Cuff again spends his free time focusing on how to keep a rose garden, a personal obsession that reflects his desire to move beyond the cynical world of crime and punishment that consumes his days, and grow something beautiful of his own accord rather than continue resolving other people's problems forever.

Inside, Betteredge encounters Penelope, who explains that Rachel grew furious upon hearing that she would not be leaving until the next afternoon and laments the "changed state of things in the house." Then, Rosanna runs past Betteredge "with a miserable look of pain" and insists that he "don't speak to me." As Cuff passes by, no longer reliant on the surly Betteredge for his investigation, Franklin explains to Betteredge that Rosanna approached him while he was playing billiards and lamented his lack of interest in her. Franklin admits that he "almost hoped" Rosanna would be found responsible for stealing **the Diamond**, and Betteredge at once sees that saving Rachel requires blaming Rosanna, and that Rosanna's strange behavior justifies Franklin's suspicion. Thinking she may have a better explanation, Franklin asks Betteredge to tell her she is welcome to visit him in the library, but she has already gone to sleep.

Identities and the distinction between public and private continue to get jumbled as Rachel, Betteredge, and Rosanna all react with misery and discomfort to their individual problems, all of which secretly differ from what the others expect—and all of which also intersect with one another: Rachel says she cannot stand the changes since Cuff's investigation, while Cuff thinks she is actually worried about her apparent role in the theft; Rosanna is apparently worried about her role in the theft, but secretly concerned about Franklin; and Betteredge is apparently preoccupied with Rachel and Rosanna's safety, but also secretly worried about the changing hierarchy in the house.

Betteredge is surprised to discover that Cuff is not sleeping in his room, but rather on three chairs in the hallway leading to Rachel's room. The Sergeant awakens and explains that he is hoping to prevent Rosanna and Rachel from secretly communicating throughout the night. Betteredge yells that he wishes "**the Diamond** had never found its way into this house," and Cuff agrees.

Cuff's full theory becomes apparent—Rachel enlisted Rosanna to pretend to steal her Diamond, which accounts for Rachel's surliness and Rosanna's shiftiness. All he is missing is a motive. Betteredge's reply—that he wishes the Diamond never came to the Verinder estate—shows that, for almost everyone involved, the loss of the Diamond is less important than the curse of the Diamond: the recent upheaval within the family.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 17

The next morning, after a quiet night, Cuff meets Betteredge and Franklin in the garden to remind them that, although he has incurred the family's anger by suspecting Rachel of stealing **the Diamond**, he is still "an officer of the law" and therefore everyone is required "to assist [him] with any special information" they know. Betteredge realizes that Cuff knows that Franklin was speaking to Rosanna, but Franklin loudly insists that he "take[s] no interest whatever in" her, as he knows she is listening. Cuff leaves for Frizinghall, and Franklin asks Betteredge to help him "mak[e] it right with Rosanna." Rachel stays locked in her room and, after breakfast, Franklin goes for a walk by the windy seashore. Afterward, Penelope tells Betteredge that Franklin's loud commentary in the garden might have hurt Rosanna, who continues to grow more and more distraught about Franklin.

When he starts to lose the family's loyalty, Cuff invokes his official status in order to reassert his control over the situation. He slips between the roles of friendly collaborator and authoritative "officer of the law" with a comfort that unsettles the rest of the characters. While Franklin thinks he is defending Rosanna by distancing himself from her, he does not recognize her feelings for him and how she will be likely to interpret his statement. The sensitive and astute Penelope serves as a foil to her father in this sense, relaying the emotions of other characters back and forth in the same way as Betteredge relays factual information and orders.

Betteredge decides to fulfill Franklin's request and talk with the dazed and solemn Rosanna, whom he tells to "cheer up" and offers "comforting words." Her only response is to tell Betteredge to thank Franklin, whom she promises to talk to, despite Betteredge's attempts to send her to Julia instead. Betteredge thinks about calling Mr. Candy's assistant, Mr. Ezra Jennings, to take a look at Rosanna—but nobody "liked him or trusted him." He decides to go to Julia, but she remains occupied with Rachel until after Sergeant Cuff returns from Frizinghall.

Rosanna's apparent spiral into despair again confounds Betteredge, who interprets it as a medical condition requiring a doctor's intervention, rather than a rational response to events. Like in Cuff's investigation, his inability to do anything undermines his genuine concern. He does have one real option: he can go to Penelope, but strangely he does not appear to trust her competence to address the situation.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 18

Cuff meets Betteredge at the front door and explains what he learned. First, he knows that the Indians came to steal **the Moonstone**—and will continue trying, although they were not responsible for its initial disappearance. Secondly, he learned that Rosanna bought "a piece of long cloth […] to make a nightgown" to replace the plain one she presumably stained the night of the Moonstone's disappearance, which is now hidden—and not destroyed. Cuff explains that he will search for the nightgown's hiding place, which he plans to discover with the help of a search warrant and refuse to share with anyone.

Cuff's conclusion about the Indians confirms that Franklin and Betteredge were, at the least, right about one thing. While Betteredge and the reader can see why Cuff would reasonably tie the nightgown to Rosanna, there is still no clear evidence that she hid the nightgown (rather than burning it in her room), except for Cuff's conversation with the Yollands—but the reader does not yet know if Cuff considers them related. By now, Cuff is operating completely on his own, often against the wishes of those in the house, despite their initial enthusiasm about resolving the case.

Before Rachel's departure, Cuff informs Betteredge's assistant Samuel that he will be sending a "friend" with Rachel in the carriage. When she comes out, Betteredge describes Rachel's fine clothing and beautiful face at length, and as she climbs into her carriage, Cuff tells her that her departure "puts an obstacle in the way of my recovering your **Diamond**." She tells the coachman to drive, ignoring both Cuff and Mr. Franklin, who runs outside to bid her goodbye. Franklin asks Julia to let him return home, and she agrees—on the condition he talks with her first.

Betteredge's detailed description of Rachel's appearance allows him to try to compensate for Cuff's suspicion, building up her ladylike dignity by affirming her beauty at the moment when her character is most under attack. Whereas Cuff watches her sinisterly and secretly through his emissary, Betteredge does so openly and out of respect. Although he believes her to be behind the theft, Cuff does not accuse Rachel directly, but rather tests how much she really hopes to see the Diamond recovered—and her response appears to affirm her guilt.

Only Cuff and Betteredge remain outside. Cuff calls Joyce, the other policeman Seegrave had left at the house, and while waiting for him declares to Betteredge that Rachel has brought **the Diamond** with her in the carriage. When Joyce arrives, he admits he has lost track of Rosanna, failing the duty Cuff had assigned him, and Cuff fires him on the spot. Betteredge grows bewildered, but Cuff assures him that Rosanna has escaped to meet Rachel in Frizinghall, and that the investigation will have to follow them there.

Again, Cuff insists on working alone to circumvent the incompetence of other police officers; nevertheless, he appears to be perfectly confident about what happened, and it is time for his intuitions to be put to the test.

In the meantime, Cuff asks Betteredge to assemble the servants, and Betteredge admits that he feels "another attack of the detective-fever"—and is curious about exactly what Cuff is planning. Cuff explains that he wants to figure out which servant saw Rosanna last, to determine if she is at the **Shivering Sand** or has gone straight to Frizinghall. Nancy the kitchen-maid saw Rosanna last, and reports that Rosanna gave the butcher's man a letter to be sent to Cobb's Hole. Cuff declares that he will go to Frizinghall before the letter gets mailed out, that this letter will reveal Rosanna's hiding-place, and that he will visit the Yollands again when the letter is due to arrive on Monday.

Betteredge's "detective-fever" is an important trope both for Collins's readers and the future of the mystery novel. It describes the burning curiosity that has driven the genre's popularity and got Wilkie Collins labeled the most famous writer of "sensation novels."

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 19

Betteredge recounts Cuff setting off for the **Shivering Sand** with Duffy, a local boy who works at the Verinder family estate and has just seen Rosanna rushing in that direction. Betteredge occupies himself with some "needless" house work until Duffy returns with a note from Cuff asking Betteredge to send a boot of Rosanna's with Duffy. Betteredge does, but he decides to follow Duffy as well.

Despite Cuff's attempts to distance him from the case, Betteredge inevitably gets drawn back into the drama surrounding the Moonstone, which is rather convenient for the reader. The boot suggests that Cuff must be seeking to match footprints.

A storm brews as Betteredge arrives on the beach and encounters a horrified Cuff, who matches Rosanna's boot to a series of marks that all point at a spit of rocks. At once, Betteredge realizes what Cuff is thinking, and the detective exclaims that "some fatal accident has happened to" Rosanna on the rocks. Betteredge recalls Rosanna's solemn manner that morning but cannot bring himself to tell Cuff that he thinks she committed suicide—he then thinks back to the first time he met her on the **Shivering Sand**, when she declared that she thought she might die there. Mortified, Betteredge imagines losing Penelope, who is the same age as Rosanna.

Unlike last time Cuff and Betteredge visited the Shivering Sand, now Rosanna's footsteps tell an unambiguous story: she seems to have fulfilled the prophecy she presented to Betteredge upon their first trip. Again, for one of the few times in the book, Betteredge is genuinely overwhelmed with emotions and unable to process what he has just experienced.

The Yollands and the outdoor servants all congregate on the beach, where Cuff reveals what he has discovered about Rosanna's fate. The fishermen explain that no boat could have picked her up, but that the other side of the rocks would have been empty of water an hour before. Betteredge blurts out his suspicion that Rosanna might have committed suicide, but Cuff asks everyone to ignore him. A fisherman explains that, given the topography of the area, she must have waded out into deeper water—and deeper quicksand—after falling off the rocks.

Betteredge's fall out of Cuff's graces leads Cuff to ignore his one accurate prediction, although it is completely speculative. At the same time, Cuff suddenly switches back to a communal mode of investigation, crowdsourcing the information he needs to prove *what could have actually happened to Rosanna. It is telling that she dies just after Rachel's departure and Franklin's declaration that he plans to leave—this suggests that one of them might be tied to her fate.*

A servant comes to the **Shivering Sand** with a suicide note from Rosanna thanking Betteredge for his kindness and asking his forgiveness. Betteredge "burst[s] out crying" and blames Cuff. Together, they set out for the house.

A clue Cuff did not ask for proves the worst-case scenario true. Rosanna recognizes Betteredge's concern for her, but yet again he finds himself privy to everything, but with power over nothing.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 20

When Betteredge returns to the house, the servants are panicking and Julia blames Cuff for Rosanna's death, firing him on the spot—but he asks her to wait a half hour before making a final decision, and then asks Penelope to talk with him and Betteredge. Penelope cries to her father and explains to Cuff that Rosanna's motive for committing suicide likely related to her feelings for Franklin, who never actually learned of those feelings and is just preparing to leave the estate, after giving up on Rachel. He asks if Cuff might leave, but Cuff insists that it is his job to complete a thorough investigation, and that he will not leave until he explains the case to Julia. Unwilling to hear Rachel insulted, Franklin decides not to follow Betteredge and Cuff to talk with Julia.

Rosanna's suicide officially shuts down the investigation, which has proven even more catastrophic than the theft, tearing Rachel from Franklin, distancing her from her mother, and devastating Julia, Betteredge, and Penelope, among others. While Betteredge does not, Cuff knows exactly when to turn to Penelope for advice, and she explains the tragic quality of Rosanna's fate. Because of their difference in class, Franklin simply never noticed Rosanna's attempts to connect with him as equals, and so while Rosanna ultimately exemplifies the trope of an overly-emotional woman whose entire life depends on the man she loves, she also makes a powerful claim against the emotional gap created by Victorian social stratification.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 21

Julia apologizes to Cuff for her "inconsiderate manner" and Cuff explaining that he spent his whole investigation doing whatever possible *not* to scare or tip off Rosanna, and therefore cannot be responsible for her death. He also suggests that Rosanna's suicide may have something to do with **the Diamond**, and that only Rachel can know. Upon hearing this, Julia puts away her checkbook and tells Cuff that he has "gone too far to go back" and must stay to complete his investigation.

Cuff's defense allows the reader to reinterpret his decision to hide so much from Betteredge as a means of protecting Rosanna by containing his theory—the same thing Betteredge was trying to do. However, Rosanna's death is also consistent with his theory, and he still has cause to believe Rachel was involved—and would now feel doubly guilty for hurting Rosanna, all over the man they both love.

However, Julia finds it completely impossible that Rachel has lied to everyone and hidden **the diamond**; instead, she thinks that "circumstances have fatally misled" Cuff's suspicions. Cuff, in contrast, insists that "young ladies of rank and position do occasionally have private debts" and Rachel refused to acknowledge or help precisely the people attempting to get the jewel back (himself, Seegrave, and Franklin Blake). This reminds him precisely of the actions of secretly indebted women, as did Rachel's refusal to have her clothing searched and insistence on leaving when Cuff explained it would impede his investigation. (Betteredge thanks God for making his faith in Julia stronger than his sense of reason.) Cuff explains that he chose Betteredge to assist him because Franklin seemed to see his suspicion of Rachel early on, and Betteredge loudly protests that he "never […] helped this abominable detective business."

With Julia's retort, someone—indeed, the only person in a position to do so—finally openly challenges Cuff's thinking, although it is clear that she is more preoccupied with defending her daughter's honor than discovering what happened to the Diamond. The demands of the family and the law, or loyalty and truth, diverge; Betteredge knows without a doubt which side he means to stand on (even if he inadvertently played a key role in the investigation). His absurd insistence that he is proud to have a limited sense of reason (despite the esteem in which he holds his own judgment) points to the social distortions of the Victorian class structure (in which "truth" often simply means faith in the word of the wealthy, and Cuff's scientific method of investigation is therefore of contestable validity). So does Cuff's postulation of the potential motive behind the crime: secret debts, which suggest that Rachel is hiding much more than is already apparent from her evasiveness during the investigation.

When he first saw Rosanna, Cuff explains, he immediately identified her as Rachel's accomplice—as well as the person Rachel wanted to frame for the crime. He thinks Rosanna likely helped Rachel sell **the Diamond**, using her old connections in the London criminal underworld. Cuff declares that he has a certain way to close the case, as well as "a bold experiment" that may or may not work. The first entails monitoring Rachel, bringing in a new servant in Rosanna's place to spy on her, and "mak[ing] an arrangement" with the money-lender whom she owes. Enraged, Julia rejects this idea. Cuff then proposes the "bold experiment": tell Rachel about Rosanna's death and, given that her emotions so often overwhelm her self-control, hope she admits to the crime. Astonished, Julia agrees, on the condition that she gets to tell Rachel herself. Cuff is speechless, and Julia rides away to Frizinghall.

Cuff's theory of the crime turns Betteredge, Penelope, and Julia's vision of Rachel's character on its head, portraying her not only as a secret spendthrift and liar but also as a cold-blooded schemer willing to turn against her accomplice. Instead of buying into further deception to fight this alleged deception, Julia prefers the direct and confrontational tactics of the long-gone Seegrave and takes matters into her own hands. While this may further traumatize Rachel, Julia's decision to reveal Rosanna's death also allows her to inform Rachel that the investigation is over.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 22

After Julia leaves the estate, Betteredge finds Cuff unwilling to keep talking about the case, and instead fixated yet again on the garden and its roses. Having decided to postpone his departure until he receives news of Julia's confrontation with Rachel, Franklin wanders about the house, monologuing about his and Rachel's failed relationship to Betteredge, the only person who will listen. Betteredge tries to offer advice from **Robinson Crusoe**, but Franklin simply insists his monologue not be interrupted and continues to speak contradictory nonsense. But when Franklin smells Betteredge's pipe, he decides to take up smoking again and comes in to light up.

As during all his downtime at the Verinder estate, Cuff turns back to the rose garden that represents his aspiration to give up grimy detective work for a life of unproblematic beauty. Franklin, clearly scarred by his failed relationship with Rachel and self-indulgently intellectual, keeps the eternal bystander Betteredge entertained. His openly contradictory thoughts represent the tensions Collins sees in all his characters (like the apparently two-faced Rachel, the brilliant but unassuming Cuff, and the outwardly humble but inwardly hubristic Betteredge himself).

The carriage returns without Julia, who has decided to remain in town, but with two letters—one for Franklin and one for Betteredge, which explains that Cuff has officially been fired. Betteredge finds Cuff and reads him the letter, in which Julia claims that Rachel reacted to Rosanna's suicide by swearing "she has never spoken a word in private to Rosanna." Julia admits that Rachel is opening herself to suspicion, but reports that Rachel claims to have neither debts nor knowledge of **the Moonstone**'s whereabouts. Rachel refuses to speak further on the matter and explains that Julia will one day understand her "careless[ness]." At the end of the letter, Julia asks that Betteredge read the document to Cuff, give him his paycheck, and release him of his obligations. Julia believes "that the circumstances, in this case, have fatally misled him [Cuff]."

The letter to Franklin is another symbol of the limits of Betteredge's narration: although he seems to know everyone and everything in the house, much remains hidden from him and the reader—here, specifically the dynamic encompassing Franklin, Rachel, Julia, and Godfrey, to which Betteredge is not privy. Rachel's reaction either proves her even more heartless than anyone ever imagined, or else—astonishingly—proves Cuff wrong about his theory, which forces the reader to completely reconsider their picture of who does and does not have a reliable perspective on events, as well as perhaps go back and try to reinterpret all the clues Cuff has uncovered throughout his investigation.

Cuff declares he will no longer discuss the closed case, but promises to repay the "generous" check when the family's conflict "bursts up again." Clearly, he sees Rachel's response as proof that she is "hardened enough to resist the strongest appeal" and willing to lie to her own mother. Betteredge says he considers this an insult—but Cuff says Betteredge should take it as a warning. As they bid goodbye (and Betteredge fails to keep himself from continuing to ask about **the Diamond**), Cuff proclaims Betteredge "as transparent as a child," if not more, and he makes three predictions before departing: the Yollands will get in touch with him when Rosanna's letter arrives on Monday, the three Indians will reemerge wherever Rachel happens to be, and the moneylender, Septimus Luker, will somehow come up as well.

Cuff seems unworried about apparently botching the case; perhaps, after all, he does have some important knowledge that has yet to come out, and he remains firm in his conviction that Rachel is lying. Cuff's assessment of Betteredge again destabilizes Betteredge's self-understanding and sense of worth; he considers himself refined and mature, intelligent and authoritative, the opposite of a child who easily shows its emotions. Cuff's statement also encourages the reader to step out of Betteredge's narration momentarily and consider what Betteredge's style reveals about his blind spots, biases, and potential misinterpretations. And if Cuff's specific predictions prove as astute as his earlier ones, the reader can also expect him to reemerge later on.

Cuff mentions his "sincere personal liking" for Betteredge, whom he invites to visit him after retirement. He yells at the gardener about roses some more and then takes his leave. Betteredge explains that he still has only to narrate "Franklin's departure" from that day, and then the "strange things that happened in the course of the new week." He is very much looking forward to completing his portion of the narrative.

Just after insulting Betteredge, Cuff pays him a sincere compliment, thereby remaining an ambiguous and contradictory figure: one who simultaneously does and does not seem to understand the crime, who seems both on the family's side and against them, and whose profound seriousness contrasts with his whimsical attraction to roses.

THE LOSS OF THE DIAMOND: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE: CHAPTER 23

Betteredge recounts Franklin's decision to leave the estate after receiving his letter from Julia, which was largely the same as the one Betteredge received, but included an addendum concerning Rachel: Julia sees that Rachel's silence is outrageous, but is more interested in her daughter's well-being than her secrets. Julia insists that nobody, including Cuff, understands what happened. She is planning to bring Rachel to London to see doctors, and for a change of scenery. While she asks Franklin to meet her and Rachel there, Julia also recognizes that Rachel and Franklin cannot be together now, especially because Franklin—in his well-intentioned attempts to find **the Diamond**—actually multiplied Rachel's anxiety.

The reader does, after all, get insight into Julia's letter to Franklin, which confirms Julia's paramount concern for her daughter. In contrast to Cuff and Betteredge's endless, driving curiosity about the case, Julia simply wants what is best for her family, and has no interest in the Diamond. Indeed, throughout the rest of the novel, these two concerns come into and out of alignment, and it is worth asking whether the novel is truly about the search for the Diamond or the quest to repair the Verinder family—most of all Franklin and Rachel—torn apart by the Diamond's curse.

Franklin thinks back to when he first arrived at the Verinder estate with **the Diamond**, and how the jewel has torn the family apart (just as Herncastle would have wanted). As the house staff bids him goodbye, Betteredge asks where he is going; he claims to be "going to the devil!" Without him, Betteredge returns to **Robinson Crusoe**, and the other servants return to talking about Rosanna (whom they assume stole the Moonstone and committed suicide out of guilt). Penelope still believes Rosanna was completely innocent.

Despite their rough start, both in Franklin's childhood and upon his return to England, Betteredge and Franklin are clearly the best of friends after enduring the crucible of Cuff's investigation together. With his departure, the normal order of things takes back over the house—represented most of all by the return of Robinson Crusoe (although a 21st century reader might wonder why a country house needs scores of servants to continue running normally when its owners are not even living in it).

The day after Franklin's departure, a letter arrives for the servants, directing them to bring some clothing to Frizinghall so that Rachel and Julia can bring it with them to London. Betteredge writes to ask Franklin's whereabouts, and the rest of that night is uneventful—the first such day in some time. But the next day is shocking: as Cuff predicted, Betteredge received news from the Yollands, when their invalid daughter, Limping Lucy, arrives at the house to ask about the man she called "Murderer Franklin Blake." Lucy laments Rosanna's "miserable life" and describes her and Rosanna's plan to move to London together and make a living independently, which was ruined when Franklin Blake came and "bewitched her." She demands to confront Franklin and suggests that "the day is not far off when the poor will rise against the rich."

The end of the investigation also marks a change in scenery for the next section of the novel, as the mystery of the Diamond escapes Betteredge's domain (the Verinders' property) and moves on to London. Cuff's predictions prove accurate, after all, which in turn calls into question whether he might have been right to accuse Rachel of some involvement in the theft. While in some ways similar to Rosanna (visibly deformed and from the lower classes Betteredge disdains), Limping Lucy actually speaks her mind, perhaps since she is not morally indebted to the Verinders. Her threat of a revolution points to the deep class tensions in Victorian Britain and certainly looks vile to the traditionalist Betteredge, although it does also recall Rosanna's more richly-painted struggle to overcome the social and emotional constraints put on her by Britain's idea of what constituted a good working-class life. And by accusing Franklin Blake, one of the book's most sympathetic characters, of wrongdoing (he not only kickstarted the investigation out of concern for Rachel but also suffered immensely when that investigation tore him from her), Lucy again suggests to the reader that appearances may deceive, and that the truth of the Moonstone's disappearance may turn out to be completely unexpected.

In fact, Limping Lucy reveals she has a letter for him from Rosanna. Betteredge feels his "detective-fever" returning, and he admits that Franklin Blake has left for London, but offers to send him the letter the following day when he hears back regarding his own letter. But Lucy insists she must "give it from my hands into his hands." She agrees to let Betteredge write Blake about the letter in her possession, and then abruptly turns back to return home. Betteredge follows her but cannot get her to talk. He visits the family, but Mrs. Yolland only cries and nobody knows anything more about Rosanna's death.

Lucy's refusal to let Betteredge deliver the letter and Betteredge's inability to get through to the Yollands without Cuff's mediation again suggests that the story is beginning to fall out of his hands, and that it is time for a new narrator. It also means that the mystery of the Moonstone and Rosanna's connection to it will inevitably resurface when, or if, Franklin returns to Yorkshire.

The next day, Betteredge receives two letters: one from Penelope confirming that Rachel and Julia reached London, and another from one of Franklin's father's servants, explaining that Franklin went directly abroad, "wherever the railway chooses to take [him]." (His father was too busy to talk with him about Rachel after his return.) Nobody, not even Franklin himself, knows from where they will hear news of him next. Between Lucy's visit and Franklin's departure, Betteredge realizes that Rosanna's death truly might have had something to do with Franklin. Nobody knows what is in Limping Lucy's letter—including Lucy herself—and nobody ever finds Rosanna's body.

As Betteredge continues to mull things over, he begins to form new opinions on the unresolved case. Franklin's return to romantically wandering around Europe suggests that it may be some time before Limping Lucy's letter ever gets delivered, and adds to the lingering mystery and sense of irresolution that indicates the Moonstone's tale is far from over.

Two days later, Betteredge receives another letter from Penelope, who reports that a doctor has prescribed Rachel "a whole round of gaieties" from social events to "flower-shows," to lift her spirits. She is also hanging out with Godfrey. And surprisingly, Miss Clack has not yet shown up on Julia's doorstep—which is important only because Betteredge has learned that her narrative will be the next document the reader encounters. He implores the reader to "do me the favour of not believing a word she says" about him.

Just as Betteredge always sent for the doctor to resolve Rosanna's distress, Rachel's misery becomes translated into a medical disorder, which is to be (perhaps absurdly) treated by distracting and lighthearted social events. This reflects both the state of Victorian medicine, which was far from the scientific profession it is today, and the condescending eye with which women's problems were viewed. Betteredge's warning about Miss Clack points to the unreliability of all the book's narrators and the reader's task: to form their own interpretation of sometimes competing information.

The only event of note that Friday was that a dog fell sick. On Saturday, Betteredge received a newspaper addressed to him in Sergeant Cuff's handwriting, with a curious police report circled: the gem dealer Septimus Luker is being harassed by a persistent group of "three strolling Indians," whom he thinks might have some relation to an Indian employee who he suspected was stealing from him. He has no legal claim or evidence, but the document confirms that he can bring the Indians to court if they continue to bother him. Betteredge finds this letter perhaps the most remarkable part of the whole story of **the Moonstone**'s disappearance: all three of Sergeant Cuff's predictions came true "in less than a week."

Just like his prediction about the Yollands, Cuff's other two predictions come true and prove the case remains very much alive. Specifically, he seems to have found the Moonstone in (the ominously-named) Septimus Luker's possession, and has also confirmed that the Indians have not relented in their own investigation into the stone. While it remains inexplicable to the reader how Sergeant Cuff might have made all these accurate, seemingly disjointed predictions out of the blue, this sustains his contradictory aura as a character somehow so hyperrational as to exceed the apparent capacities of reason.

Betteredge tells the reader he cannot hold it against them if they choose to believe Sergeant Cuff's suspicion that Rachel has sold the gem to Luker, rather than his own faith in the family. And he also reveals that he cannot reveal the full details of what has happened since **the Diamond**'s disappearance, since he has been ordered to "keep strictly within the limits of my own experience" and reveal neither what others told him nor what he has learned since the events in question. In accord with legal procedure, "the plan is," he writes, "not to present reports, but to produce witnesses." The reader must now follow the Diamond to London, and Betteredge hopes they will forgive his errors and take solace in his writing just as he took solace in **Robinson Crusoe**.

As when he began, at the end of his narrative Betteredge deliberately weakens his authorial voice, inviting the reader to doubt him and form their own opinions, as well as reminding them that he has been prevented from including in his tale his own analysis and any knowledge he gained after the fact (a directive his successor Miss Clack completely and colorfully ignores). The structure of "witnesses," with the reader interpreting the truth and falsehoods told by each, points to the system of legal evidence and investigation that forms the backbone of the book's plot and theory of evidence.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 1

Miss Clack, John Verinder's loquacious and outwardly deferential niece, thanks her late parents for teaching her "habits of order and regularity," like how to care for her hair and fold her clothes before keeping her diary and repeating the "Evening Hymn" at night. Although she has grown more troubled in adulthood, folding her clothes reminds her of a time when her father was still alive, and her diary allows her to "discipline the fallen nature which we all inherit from Adam" and serve Mr. Franklin Blake.

Clack, like Betteredge, opens with a personal digression that reveals much about her character, although in her case it is truly irrelevant to the story and merely a kind of comic relief. Indeed, the tone of her account makes her religious fanaticism clear from the start and sets her up as an unreliable narrator—in contrast to the deliberately humble and sober Betteredge. Nevertheless, both are firmly pinned to particular values: Betteredge sees Robinson Crusoe and loyalty to his employer as paramount, the same way Clack sees (her interpretation of) the Bible.

Miss Clack has grown poor and distant from Julia's side of the family. Living retired in Brittany, she mostly keeps to herself—but then, all of the sudden, she receives a letter from Franklin Blake, asking her to write a record of her visit to London in exchange for both a check and a sense of importance. Because she kept a detailed record of her visit in her diary and because her "sacred regard for truth is (thank God) far above [her] respect for persons," she promises she will be an objective witness, although she also writes that Franklin Blake might modify her testimony. (Franklin Blake writes in a note explaining that he will not make any alterations to the "manuscripts which pass through my hands," and that he can withstand "the smartest exercise of Miss Clack's pen," which is revealing about its own author's character.)

Clack's allusion to her new home in France and Franklin Blake's scathing footnote suggest that, unlike Betteredge, she is far from beloved by the family; rather, Franklin simply needs her narrative for his records, and while she claims to be providing it out of a sense of service, it is clear that her real motivation is money (but also that she does not want to admit it). Clack's declaration that she prefers "truth" above "persons" contrasts directly with Betteredge's expression of delight that he puts loyalty to Julia above mere reason. It is also clear that Clack puts little actual weight in the "truth"—at least, "truth" conceived as scientifically verifiable fact, the kind relevant to the Diamond's theft and necessary for the witness statements Franklin Blake is compiling. Indeed, her frequent conflation of "truth" with religious dogma ultimately obscures rather than reveals the facts of the case.

Clack's involvement with **the Moonstone** mystery begins on July 3rd, 1848, when she passes Julia Verinder's house in London, notices it is occupied, and decides to knock. She learns that Julia and Rachel have recently come to London and sends a message "begging to know whether I could be of any use." This message goes to "the daughter of a heathen old man named Betteredge—long, too long, tolerated in my aunt's family." While Penelope goes upstairs to pass the message, Miss Clack reads a religious pamphlet "addressed to young women on the sinfulness of dress." Penelope returns and transmits Julia's invitation to lunch the next day. Miss Clack offers Penelope the pamphlet, which she rejects—but Miss Clack puts it in the mailbox on her way out (making her feel "relieved, in some small degree, of a heavy responsibility towards others").

Although Clack presents stumbling upon Julia's house as a casual coincidence and offering her help as an act of service, Penelope's note to her father Betteredge at the end of the last chapter suggests that Clack is ordinarily keen to impose herself on the family uninvited. And Clack's attitude toward Penelope and Betteredge—who also considers himself a good Christian—again forces the reader to confront the question of how much of Betteredge's narrative to take at face value (not to mention the perhaps easier associated question: how much of Clack's). Clack's pamphlet is a classic symbol of Victorian evangelical Christian morality, a largely conservative, reactionary trend that aimed to stop the changes in social and especially gender mores brought about by industrialization.

The same evening, Miss Clack meets with her charity committee, which is in the business of buying "unredeemed fathers' trousers from the pawnbroker" and tailoring them for their "innocent son[s]." She is surprised that her "precious and admirable friend" Godfrey Ablewhite does not come to the meeting. The others on the Committee explain that Godfrey and Mr. Septimus Luker were "victims of an outrage which had startled all London" the previous week. While she neither saw the story in the newspapers nor heard it firsthand from Ablewhite, she will now "state the facts as they were stated" and hopes that the reader will accept "these lines [...] written by a poor weak woman."

Clack's charity, also a caricature of the fundamentally useless religious social interventionism that often passed as reform, essentially uses the pants to denounce fathers for their poverty, which is labeled immoral without any consideration of how or why families end up poor (not to mention any attempts at genuinely changing the next generation's socioeconomic situation). Clack's mention of Godfrey should recall her brief presence at Rachel's birthday dinner (when they spoke to no one else, and the reader can now likely see this might have had something to do with Clack's propensity for endless, empty talk).

On the previous Friday, June 30th, Godfrey ran into a stranger at a bank. While this may seem minor and unrelated, Miss Clack warns the reader against "presuming to exercise your poor carnal reason" (and then apologizes for "fall[ing] insensibly into my Sunday-school style"). The stranger was Mr. Luker, by the way. At home, Miss Clack continues, Godfrey found a boy waiting for him with a letter inviting him to go immediately to answer questions for a prospective donor to the charity for which he and Clack work. "The Christian Hero" Mr. Godfrey went immediately to the house in question, where he noticed "a faint odour of musk and camphor," as well as "an ancient Oriental manuscript" on a table. Suddenly, a "tawny-brown colour[ed]" arm grabbed him from behind and he was blindfolded, gagged, thrown to the ground, and searched.

While Clack realizes that her "Sunday-school style" can be off-putting, it is so contradictory, exaggerated, and comedic, especially to Collins's working- and middle-class newspaper audience, that it made her narrative the most popular section of the novel. Her name for Godfrey, "the Christian Hero," recalls Betteredge's comparable reverence for the man, although both contrast with his surliness on Rachel's birthday, which is the reader's only glimpse of him so far. Clack narrates the Indians' robbery of Godfrey with a characteristic outrage tied to her descriptions of stereotypes about Asia and the men's racial characteristics. Although, by distracting Godfrey with the "ancient Oriental manuscript," the Indians seem to understand and use to their advantage the power of such prejudices and stereotypes.

Clack considers the next events "hardly within the proper limits of female discussion," but continues by explaining that Godfrey heard yelling in an unfamiliar language and then silence for some time, until the apartment's landlord and his wife came to free him. They explained that an English gentleman and his "three Oriental noblemen" friends had rented their flat for a week, and that nothing out of the ordinary happened until this moment when they saw their lodgers walking away and encountered Mr. Godfrey bound upstairs. Although Godfrey's possessions were strewn around the room, nothing was missing—except the book he had seen on the table before. Clack determines that "Godfrey had been the victim of some incomprehensible error."

Clack ties her regressive picture of gender roles ("proper [...] female discussion") to her xenophobic disdain for the Indians, and of course recounts Godfrey being saved by the selfless English property owner. Again, the Indians play on this same stereotype to rent the apartment in the first place (by presenting themselves as aristocracy and enlisting an English gentleman). Unable to imagine that the Indians could have had a reason to search Godfrey—presumably, for the Diamond—Clack declares they must have been "incomprehensibl[y]" irrational to do so.

Mr. Luker, similarly, received a mysterious letter that day from a man who professed to be "an enthusiastic collector of oriental antiquities." The same exact thing happened to him: he saw the beautiful book, was choked and blindfolded and gagged and searched, then saved by a landlord who gave the same story. The only difference was that one of Mr. Luker's papers was missing: it was a receipt for "a valuable of great price" that he had left in the bank. He ran to the bank in question, but they had seen no sign of the receipt nor the Indians. The police investigated, and it became clear that the men were planning to rob whatever Mr. Luker left in the bank (and searched Mr. Godfrey because they saw the two men meet there). Accordingly, Godfrey's reason for being away from Miss Clack's charity meeting was an appointment with the police.

Unlike with Godfrey, the Indians certainly had a reasonable basis for assuming Mr. Luker had something to do with the Diamond. This is the same story about which Cuff mailed a newspaper item to Betteredge, which means that Clack's narrative has reached the point at which Betteredge's ends. But given Clack's reverence for Godfrey, the reader must decide how faithfully to believe her insistence that he was only at the bank by coincidence. Luckily, his meeting with the police confirms for Clack that Godfrey remains truly invested in her charity.

At lunch with Julia and Rachel Verinder the day after her visit to their house, Miss Clack is astonished by Julia's concern for Rachel and Rachel's "absence of all ladylike restraint." Rachel goes to the library after lunch (as the doctor had ordered) and Julia tells Miss Clack "the whole horrible story of the Indian Diamond." Given her lack of faith in Rachel's character, Miss Clack was not astonished by any part of the story besides Julia's failure to call in a clergyman and the doctor's "heathen advice." Julia explains that Godfrey and Luker's "strange adventure[s]" further aroused Rachel's spirits, and Miss Clack responds by suggesting that Rachel must be "keeping a sinful secret" that the investigation into **the Diamond**'s disappearance "threatens." At that moment, Godfrey Ablewhite comes into the room.

Much like Betteredge does (although more forcefully), Clack considers Rachel the wrong kind of woman because of her independent-mindedness and refusal to accommodate the gendered expectations of polite society—even though Clack does not take into consideration the profound trauma Rachel has just suffered and also certainly lacks "restraint" when she openly accuses Rachel of hiding something. Clack's disdain for doctors evokes the emerging tension between science and religion in Victorian England—a conflict in which Collins seems to side firmly with science.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 2

Miss Clack declares that Godfrey entered "exactly at the right time," the correct distance behind his servant. Julia calls for Rachel, and Godfrey proclaims that the women should not worry about him because "I have merely been mistaken for someone else," and his experience could have easily been far worse—he lost neither life nor property. Godfrey never wanted to go public with the story, but Mr. Luker did, and so Godfrey had no choice. Godfrey asks the radiant and grateful Miss Clack about their charity, but at that moment Rachel Verinder walks in.

For Clack, Godfrey is the opposite of Rachel: he can do nothing wrong, while she seems unable to do anything right. (In fact, he even seems to set the standard for right and wrong behavior.) Godfrey's grace and humility are carefully calculated, even more so than Betteredge's, but easily win Clack's reverence, and her report about the Indians mugging him seems pulled directly from his testimony.

The "unlady-like" Rachel greets Godfrey excitedly and asks about his story. He insists that the story is in the newspapers, and after Rachel asks why he does not want to talk about it, Miss Clack interjects to remind her that "true greatness and true courage are ever modest." Rachel insists that Godfrey is neither great nor modest, and that he must have "some private reason for not talking of your adventure," which she wants to know. He replies that he is merely "tired of the subject," but Rachel declares that, unlike his "lady-worshippers," she plans to make him answer specific questions. Miss Clack is surprised that Julia simply sits and tolerates Rachel's behavior, especially as she brings Godfrey to a chair by the window and begins to interrogate him.

Although he gladly discusses his mugging with Clack and Julia, Godfrey is more cautious with Rachel, perhaps because she rejected his proposal on her birthday, and because he knows she will not listen idly like Miss Clack. In fact, Rachel seems to have changed profoundly since the theft: excitable and full of energy, she appears finally interested in tracking down the Moonstone. Clack's role in the family is merely to interject with unwanted moral commentary, and her comment about modesty is clearly gendered, plainly contradicting her view of Godfrey, whom she considers great and courageous, despite his obvious self-promotion, which he only covers with a faint veneer of modesty.

Clack grows more and more offended as Rachel talks down to Godfrey and orders even her mother around (but she implores her "Christian friends, don't let us judge!"). Rachel gets Godfrey to admit that some have suggested Luker's gem is, indeed, **the Moonstone**, although Luker has firmly denied knowing anything about it. Rachel asks why Godfrey defends Luker, whom he supposedly knows nothing about, and Godfrey proclaims—to Clack's delight—to "take up the cause of all oppressed people." Rachel rejects his plea and Julia reprimands her, but also encourages Godfrey to answer her questions.

Again, the open contradictions between Clack's judgments and her moral principles points to not only the hypocrisy in her beliefs, but also the more general tension between characters' outward self-presentation and real personalities. So does Godfrey's absurd claim to fight for "all oppressed people," something he may believe about himself but which is an unlikely commitment for a wealthy British heir such as himself. Indeed, by now it is obvious that Clack and Godfrey's moralism is really for themselves, a way of managing their self-perception, and unrelated to the welfare of those they claim to be helping.

Godfrey soon admits that "scandal says [...] I am the man who has pawned" **the Moonstone** to Luker. Rachel screams that "this is my fault!" and that she cannot bear to "let an innocent man be ruined." As the others try to slip her medicine, Rachel declares that she knows who stole the Moonstone, and that it was not Godfrey. Godfrey warns Rachel against sacrificing her reputation, but she declares that she, too, has been accused of the theft, and that she will do anything to prove Godfrey's innocence. He draws up a declaration that she readily signs, and she promises to try and "repair the wrong I have done you" as much as she is able. Clack is disgusted that Godfrey fails to kiss Rachel on the hand and then responds to her hysterics with "a gentleness of tone [...] little better than a compromise with sin."

Confronted with Rachel's direct, honest questioning, Godfrey admits the full weight of the recent events concerning him; Rachel's overwhelming guilt appears to explain Julia's earlier reluctance to breach the topic of the Diamond, and her shocking declaration that she knows the truth about the theft is consistent with Sergeant Cuff's conclusion about the case. But neither she nor Godfrey appears a perfectly trustworthy witness, and the reader must make their own judgments about their credibility. For the first time, Clack criticizes Godfrey's demeanor, showing both that she is completely insensitive to circumstances and that she truly does put her absurd morals before her loyalty to Godfrey.

All of the sudden, there is "a thundering knock at the street door" from the three "audaciously dressed women" who are to accompany Rachel to a flower-show. Before she leaves, Rachel asks her mom—tastelessly enough—if she has been "distressed," and Julia kindly insists that she has not. Miss Clack attempts to confront the tearful Rachel on her way out, but Rachel recoils, offended and insistent that she is happy. Clack writes of her pity "for this miserable and misguided girl."

Rachel's medical orders (to attend flower-shows and enjoy herself) suddenly intervene, and inexplicably, even Rachel's concern for her mother is "tasteless" to Clack, whose standards for feminine morality seem clearly unachievable. Despite her professed concern for Rachel, there is no evidence that any of Clack's interventions so far have helped.

After Rachel's departure, Godfrey destroys the declaration of innocence she has written, for the sake of Rachel's own reputation. Clack is charmed by "his noble conduct" and feels a "pure, unearthly ecstasy" when she kisses his hand—by the time she recovers and opens her eyes, he is gone. To fill the time, Clack—who reveals her first name is Drusilla—asks Julia about her health, but Julia responds that this is a "very distressing subject." Clack gets up to apologize and leave, but Julia tells her to sit and explains that she has a secret to tell—one that she can tell, but expects Clack to keep. She also has a favor to ask of Clack, she explains: she needs her as a witness to the signing of her will in front of her attorney Mr. Bruff. At once, Clack realizes what Julia's secret must be.

While Godfrey's decision to destroy Rachel's document is apparently noble, it is also secretly self-serving: it prevents him from incriminating the woman he loves and raising even more suspicions about both himself and Rachel. Clack's "pure, unearthly ecstasy" clearly has sexual overtones and suggests that her affinity for Godfrey may be about something more than just her admiration for his charity work. Unintentionally, Clack further hurts Julia by asking her about the "very distressing subject" of her apparently deteriorating health, and it becomes clear that Clack is only truly useful to the family because of her distance from it (to Franklin, she can be a witness because she has no interest in the Diamond, and to Julia, she can be a witness because she has no interest in Julia's property).

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 3

Julia reveals to Clack that, for a long while, she has been "seriously ill […] without knowing it myself." (Miss Clack worries that Julia might be "spiritually ill," too.) When Julia took Rachel to her second doctor in London—an old friend of the family—he revealed that Julia has an "insidious form of heart disease" that has left her with only months to live, even though she lacks symptoms. She is in the process of arranging her "worldly affairs," but she has not told Rachel, out of fear that Rachel would blame herself—and **the Diamond**—for Julia's illness (which, in fact, she has had for years).

The fact that Clack immediately thinks about the "spiritually ill" after Julia's admission shows her profound lack of empathy (despite her professed benevolence). More interested in converting Julia to her form of Christianity than genuinely giving her the support she needs, Clack is blinded by her fanatical ideology. Of course, Julia's mysterious and untreatable illness is another classic trope from both "sensation novels" and the mystery and thriller genres that emerged from them.

Clack is thrilled: Julia's news offers her a "career of usefulness," namely the opportunity to save Julia through Christianity. She offers meetings with three friends in the clergy, but Julia objects. Clack determines to bring pamphlets instead and rushes out to bring them back before the lawyer's arrival. Because she cares so deeply about Julia, she even takes a cab—and then gets scorned by the cab driver when she offers him some of her religious tracts, as well.

Clack continues to justify her self-serving, narcissistic, suffocating behavior by recourse to a greater good that only she seems capable of seeing; in fact, Clack is ironically delighted to hear of her beloved aunt's imminent death, since she cares much more about the afterlife than the present one.

When she returns to the Verinder residence, Clack finds Julia is busy with the doctor, and is asked to wait with Mr. Bruff, the lawyer, who has just arrived. He is surprised to see her large bag, but she knows that to show him the pamphlets inside would be "to invite an outburst of profanity." Mr. Bruff agrees that Clack will do as a witness, and she writes that she was delighted to hear that the will does not include her, which means nobody will see sinister motives in her agreement to serve as witness.

Clack recognizes that those around her oppose her evangelism but never questions her right to impose it on the unwilling. Although she claims to be glad that she is not named in the will, Clack's initial confession to her poverty and delight at Franklin Blake's check suggests she might be self-deceptively writing the opposite of what she actually feels.

Bruff then brings up the scandalous news of Godfrey, and Clack reprimands him for repeating the rumor that Godfrey is connected to **the Diamond**'s disappearance—but Bruff insists that the "ugly circumstances" justify this suspicion: Godfrey was present during the Diamond's theft and it was no coincidence that the Indians pursued him in London. Clack cites Sergeant Cuff's conclusion, and Bruff insists that he believes Rachel above all else. Clack points out that, just hours before, Rachel herself proclaimed Godfrey's innocence—and she savors "the unholy triumph" of confounding Mr. Bruff, who apologizes, compliments her skill in argument, and begins to pace back and forth, contemplating the crime that he now finds "beyond conjecture."

Clack clearly looks down on the hyperrational Bruff as exemplar of the new amoral turn in Victorian society. While she recognizes that there is something "unholy" about relishing another person's defeat or suffering, she also seems to make an exception for her own sins, despite chastising everyone around her for theirs. In fact, Bruff is the one who conducts himself in a far more respectful and balanced manner: he accepts that Clack has bested him. His puzzlement at the crime (the truth of which scarcely interests Clack) recalls Franklin's reaction to the investigation and proves that the mystery of the Moonstone remains a very open question.

Although she regrets it while writing her narrative, Clack admits that she butted into Mr. Bruff's monologue to insist that perhaps Mr. Franklin Blake could be responsible for the theft. Bruff agrees that his grounds for suspecting Godfrey are also sufficient reason to suspect Franklin, who is, after all, famously indebted. However, Bruff is also Franklin's lawyer, and he explains that his creditors prefer to charge interest and wait rather than collect their debts immediately, and that—more damningly—Rachel was hoping to marry Franklin, whom she secretly loved. And, besides, Franklin so enthusiastically searched for **the Diamond**, even when nobody suspected him (and so he had no need to throw people off his trail). Bruff considers Clack's suspicion of him a "monstrous proposition." All that can be reasonably known, Bruff declares, is that Rachel, Godfrey, and Franklin are all innocent, and that Luker probably has the diamond.

Again, the tension between evidence- and faith-based belief drives apart characters with opposite opinions about the Diamond. Clack reveals her own bias through her lack of self-control; it is important to remember here that Franklin is still compiling and editing the whole narrative, and that Miss Clack is far more forgiving toward him now than when she declared she was grateful to be of service at the beginning of her account. Now, Bruff's information puts Clack off guard, but it also challenges Cuff's hypothesis about why Rachel would have stolen the Diamond—her debts (which also would be combined with Franklin's were they to marry).

Before Clack can again chastise and contradict Bruff, the servant announces that Julia is ready for them. Clack explains that she has summarized their conversation because it reveals who was suspected of **the Diamond**'s theft at the time, and so that she can correct her moral balance by apologizing for the "sinful self-esteem" she revealed in her argument with Bruff.

Clack's justifications for reporting the conversation are actually self-undermining: the only new information in her conversation with Bruff was the fact that Franklin is not being asked to pay his debts, and she boosts her "sinful self-esteem" precisely by disavowing (but never taking real responsibility for) her previous behavior.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 4

Julia quickly signs the will and Clack scares Bruff out of the room with her bag of religious tracts. As Julia proclaims she plans to give Clack her own "little legacy" on the spot, Clack pulls out a book concerning the pernicious threat of the Devil in people's everyday actions (namely, the section on "Satan among the Sofa Cushions"). Julia rejects the literature, explaining that her doctor has asked her to avoid stress—Clack includes a tirade against the "notoriously infidel profession of Medicine" as an aside in her narrative. Clack hides the book between the sofa cushions, hoping that when Julia accidentally touches it, "the book might touch *her*." She also hides another book among Julia's flowers and, on her way out, hides the other dozen she has brought throughout the house, including in Julia's bedroom and bathroom.

Collins's sense of irony cannot be clearer: Clack hides "Satan among the Sofa Cushions" among the sofa cushions, accidentally announcing her nefarious intent. In fact, when Julia is about to give her some form of payment, Clack distracts her by interrupting with her own "legacy"—her ridiculous books, which would be of no use to the dying Julia even if she wanted to save her own soul through Christianity and not medical science. (Clack never ends up getting her "legacy" from Julia.) Clack violates Julia's privacy, both by harassing her in her last days and by disrupting the normal order of the house, including going to places where she was never invited.

Having deposited all her books, Clack feels an "exquisite sense of duty done" and is ecstatic through the next morning. At lunchtime, the Verinders' servant Samuel visits Clack with a letter. She sits him down and asks when she may see the family again—he insists they are busy for now, but runs to get her a ticket to the ball they will attend in the evening. Clack is horrified that Godfrey will be at these festivities instead of their charity meetings.

Clack's "exquisite sense of duty done" reveals her true motivation for evangelizing: her sense of elation at making an impact on others—even if others see this impact as negative, Clack reassures herself it is benevolent. Samuel's arrival indicates that the Verinders are not willing to deal with Miss Clack personally anymore, now that she has fulfilled her function as a witness to Julia's will. And Clack's reaction to Godfrey's plans proves how unrealistic her expectations and portrayals of him continue to be.

Miss Clack opens the parcel Samuel has brought and finds her "twelve precious publications […] all returned to me by the doctor's orders!" Knowing that "the true Christian never yields […] irrespective of every human consideration […] for we are the only people who are always right," she decides to pursue "Preparation by Little Notes," mailing quotes from her books as letters and hiding others throughout the house. She prepares a dozen letters that day, sends six by mail, and keeps six "for personal distribution in the house."

In an attempt to get through to the aunt who has squarely rejected her, Clack decides to become as annoying as possible. Her speech plainly lays out her disregard for other peoples' interests, boundaries, and beliefs, and lets Collins effectively mock his contemporary Christians who would never be as bold as Miss Clack: to admit that they think "we are the only people who are always right." In fact, Clack's attitude toward Christianizing her resistant family directly echoes the strategies of British colonialism in India, a forceful "conversion" to Western ways of being (and, of course, to economic servitude on Britain's behalf).

The next day, Clack returns to the Verinders' London house and learns that Julia, in her illness, is at home while the rest of the family is supposedly at the concert. Samuel sends her to wait in the library, and she secretly scatters the remaining six letters around the house before watching in astonishment as Samuel lets an unfamiliar man go straight up to speak with Julia. Clack realizes he must be the doctor and waits for a few minutes behind a curtain, so that she can confront him on his way out from Julia's room into the drawing-room. However, she listens through the door and realizes, to her astonishment, that the visitor is Godfrey Ablewhite. He says, "I'll do it to-day!"

When Clack returns for her next attempt to "save" Julia, she is astonished to learn that the family has deceived her and prioritizes Godfrey's visit over hers—even though she is presently deceiving the Verinders both by again leaving her literature throughout the house and by eavesdropping on a private conversation. She continues to think that her religious mandate justifies her violating the family's explicit wishes and creating unnecessary drama in Julia's last days.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 5

Still behind the drawing-room's curtains, Clack contemplates Godfrey's words and wonders what unholy thing he is planning to "do to-day." She does not even remember until much later that Godfrey is supposed to be at a concert. Then, she hears Rachel ask Godfrey why he came upstairs instead of to the library—"Miss Clack is in the library," he explains. Furious, Clack moves the curtains so she can see into Julia's room as well as hear the conversation. Godfrey tells Rachel she is being missed at the concert, which he also skipped for her sake. They agree that Julia's condition should improve soon.

Clack plays the secret eavesdropper, another important trope in mystery literature that gives the reader private information. As she realizes that Godfrey is avoiding her, she must at least subconsciously reconsider her reverence for him—or realize that her love for him is one-directional. The reader must, of course, reconsider Godfrey's credibility, as well as Clack's portrait of him. On another note, it is clear that Godfrey and Rachel do not yet know that Julia's condition is terminal. Julia seems to have told Clack simply because (unlike Clack) she is honest and forthcoming.

Then, to Miss Clack's surprise, Godfrey declares his "hopeless love" for Rachel, who protests that they "agreed [...] to be cousins, and nothing more." He proclaims that he hopes she will someday, somehow, grow to reciprocate it, and begins to cry as he admits he has "lost every interest in life, but [his] interest in [her]." He declares he even finds his charities "an unendurable nuisance" now, and Clack despairs for "the struggling Female Boards" that could not function without Mr. Godfrey. Rachel reveals that she has her own confession to make—Clack and Godfrey both think it will be about **the Moonstone**, but Rachel instead says that she is "the wretchedest girl living."

Rachel and Godfrey's apparent love also proves Miss Clack's moral compass to be misguided: she cannot make sense of a man she considers exemplary falling in love with a woman she considers deficient. Unsurprisingly, she blames Rachel singlehandedly for Godfrey's interest, portraying her as stealing him away from his rightful women (Clack and those at the charities—although, tellingly, Clack refers to the charities' directors and not their beneficiaries).

Godfrey brings up **the Moonstone**, but Rachel says this is unrelated to her sentiment; instead, she asks Godfrey to imagine he "were in love with some other woman" who were "utterly unworthy of [him]" and unbearable to think about. She is, of course, talking about her own love for someone who "doesn't know" about it; in fact, she "will never, never, never see him again." She cries as Godfrey gets on his knees, holds her, and utters two words Miss Clack finds astonishing: "Noble creature!" He praises Rachel's honesty and asks her to marry him. She replies with what Miss Clack considers her "first sensible words": "You must be mad!"

Rachel is almost certainly alluding to Franklin Blake, whom she has come to hate ever since the Moonstone's theft and is assuming she will "never, never, never see" in the future. Either Godfrey does not understand Rachel's reference to Franklin or he does not care; he proposes for a second time, although this she has already rejected him once.

Godfrey insists Rachel is wiser to choose a man who loves her than one who does not even recognize her love. He declares himself "content with [Rachel's] affection and regard," even if she does not grow to love him. Rachel warns Godfrey not to "tempt" her and Clack laments Rachel's moral weakness. Godfrey insists that marriage is women's "Refuge," and that "respect and admir[ation]" are more important than love. He knows Rachel cannot "sentence [her]self to a single life," and Rachel warns that he is beginning to change her mind before yielding to his pressure and accepting the proposal. Clack watches them kiss and is ashamed to reveal that she closed her eyes "just one moment too late." Godfrey asks Rachel which of them should speak to Julia, and she insists they wait until Julia recovers from her illness.

Although Godfrey justifies his own position by claiming he loves Rachel, he also makes an argument against the necessity of love for marriage. Marriage based in love was not yet the norm at this time (since marriage was often a means of preserving a family's social class or transferring property by establishing familial relations between men). Meanwhile, Rachel still has faith in love—much like Rosanna—but begins to see an apparently secure future with Godfrey as a reasonable replacement for genuine happiness with Franklin Blake. In this sense, while Rachel appears to grow joyous and enamored throughout the scene, she is also clearly taking a cynical stance, compromising her faith in love for the sake of security.

At once, Rachel notices that the curtains are out of place and begins to draw them apart—but then "a man in great alarm" comes to the steps and calls for Rachel, reporting that Julia fainted and will not recover. Clack escapes downstairs and Godfrey tells her to go help Julia while he finds the doctor. When she sees Julia's face, Clack immediately recognizes "the dreadful truth." The doctor arrives, sends Rachel away, and tells the rest that Julia has died. Clack is horrified to see that Julia has not opened any of her letters, and realizes some time later that Julia also never gave her the "little legacy" she was promised.

Clack's near-discovery creates a momentary flood of suspense, but Julia's death prevents her discovery—which is, of course, another instance of the family's demise benefiting Clack. Indeed, Clack is less worried by Julia's death than the fact that Julia never read her letters in her final hours. By proving such an irritant, Clack even forfeits the payment she was promised for simply being present at the signing of Julia's will.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 6

This chapter of Miss Clack's narrative summarizes a series of letters between herself and Franklin Blake. After Clack attempts to include some of her religious pamphlets as addenda to her narrative of Julia's death, Blake sends back the pamphlets because they are irrelevant to her narrative. Clack promises to offer Franklin the same religious material if he falls sick and asks if she can reveal "later discoveries" about **the Moonstone**. Blake repeats that she must only recount her firsthand experience. Miss Clack asks if she can include her and Blake's letters in her narrative, to reveal the constraints within which she was forced to write. Blake agrees curtly and asks her not to reply, but Clack replies that she, as a Christian, is not offended (even though that seemed to be Blake's intention). She "solemnly pledges" to send the pamphlets back to Blake, who does not write back.

This humorous chapter again reminds the reader of Franklin Blake's editorial hand in the novel as a whole, as well as his continued disdain for Miss Clack, who remains stubbornly unable to follow instructions or focus on the factual elements of her story (which are ultimately the only material relevant for the novel's plot). Characteristically, she at once picks a fight, exhausts her opponent, and takes the moral high ground, even though she appears to be the only person who cares about any of it at all.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 7

Clack explains that "the foregoing correspondence" forces her to simply move on with her story rather than dwelling on Julia's death. Clack met Rachel a month after Julia's death and witnessed an important development in Rachel and Godfrey's relationship, which is the last event she must recount before her narrative can be done with.

Clack's original plan was clearly to intersperse her sermons and pamphlets into the narrative, and thereby turn Julia's death into a teachable moment. The reader should be grateful to Franklin Blake for stopping her.

Clack decides not to attend Julia's funeral, both because she is too distraught and because she dislikes the "clerical castaway" in charge of the service. Godfrey Ablewhite's father becomes Rachel's new guardian, and Godfrey and Rachel's engagement soon becomes public knowledge. After some indecision about where they will live, the family settles on moving Rachel and Godfrey with Godfrey's mother and her ill sister to a house in Brighton.

Clack remains disrespectful to Julia even in death; rather than considering the importance of honoring the dead, she turns Julia's funeral into a referendum on her own *suffering and the particularities of her doctrine. (In fact, perhaps the family is fortunate that Miss Clack decides to stay home.)*

Mrs. Ablewhite, Miss Clack's aunt, "has never been known to do anything for herself." She also mirrors the opinions of those around her and therefore becomes spiritually "hopeless." She enlists Miss Clack to find servants for her new house and explains that Rachel has the list.

Although Mrs. Ablewhite's idleness and hopelessness might ordinarily make her emblematic of the precise kind of womanhood Miss Clack considers most noble and Christian, her defeating characteristic is simply her lack of faith.

Rachel, who "looked pitiably small and thin in her deep mourning," apologizes to Miss Clack for her tone in the past and declares that she hopes they can become friends. Clack sees this as evidence of Rachel lacking a source of "true comfort," but also as an opportunity to proselytize. To gauge "the extent of the change" in Rachel's personality, Miss Clack asks her about her engagement—a subject Rachel repeatedly avoids, which makes Miss Clack think she has a chance of convincing Rachel to accept religion by counseling her about marriage.

Tone-deaf as ever, Clack sees Rachel's apology and attempt to sincerely connect as yet another invitation to heal the "spiritually ill." Of course, Clack remains uninterested in all else, and ironically thinks she has adequate marriage advice despite being a spinster. She never seems to value Rachel for becoming her beloved Godfrey's fiancée (and in fact may be jealous).

Miss Clack turns to the list of servants. She has Rachel write a letter for Mrs. Ablewhite to sign, which Miss Clack can use to recruit the necessary people. Delighted, Rachel even invites Miss Clack to join them in Brighton, opening "the glorious prospect of interference." Miss Clack finds the most pious servants possible and stocks the house with religious literature. That Saturday, the family arrives alongside Mr. Bruff, whom Clack calls "the Serpent." Clack is convinced he has some self-interested reason for accompanying the family (given that Godfrey is busy). He spends the first day chatting casually, but when he leaves he looks at Rachel in a way that convinces Miss Clack he wanted something from her. The next day, Rachel is the only person willing to accompany Miss Clack to church, but Rachel complains that the sermon "has only made my head ache."

At last, Miss Clack has an actual task to fulfill—but she ignores Rachel and the Ablewhites' needs in order to fulfill her own plot instead. She compares the nonconfrontational and diplomatic Mr. Bruff to the snake from the Garden of Eden because he is allegedly threatening Godfrey and Rachel's relationship. And while Rachel again tries to appease Miss Clack by going to church, the message clearly does not catch on, and Miss Clack does not know what to do with someone who thinks so differently from herself.

After lunch, Mr. Bruff takes Rachel for a walk, which they agree is the best cure for her headache (although Clack is disappointed that this walk makes Rachel miss the afternoon services at church). After their walk, Rachel is lost in thought and Bruff asks if she is "sure of [her] own resolution," to which she responds in the affirmative. Rachel locks herself in her room instead of coming to dinner, and does not open her door despite Miss Clack's efforts to get through to her.

For once, Miss Clack was right: Bruff did have some important business with Rachel, whose insistent privacy recalls her reaction to the Diamond's theft. Of course, Bruff and Rachel have to lie to Miss Clack to get her to leave them alone.

The next day, Miss Clack visits Rachel first thing in the morning and asks why she has piled the religious books on a corner table. Rachel says she has no interest in the books and rejects Miss Clack's offer to "read a few passages of the deepest interest." Miss Clack declares that Mr. Bruff must have been delivering bad news the day before, and Rachel insists it was "quite the contrary." Miss Clack asks if this news regarded Godfrey, and Rachel replies, astonishingly, "*I shall never marry Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite.*" Clack seeks an explanation, but Rachel calls for her bath and manages to get Clack out of the room.

After ignoring the terms of her invitation and returning to her attempts to convert Rachel, Miss Clack officially becomes a pariah within the family again: Rachel has to fight her off like a bothersome fly or pet, and it is unclear how Miss Clack thinks her words will suddenly make Rachel receptive to Christianity. Rachel's sudden revelation suggests that Bruff's intervention had something to do with her engagement to Godfrey.

While Clack's intended path to Rachel's soul—her engagement and marriage—now appears closed, Clack is delighted to think that the inevitable fallout of her breakup with Godfrey will leave her with "a salutary moral depression" that she, and Christ, might be able to heal.

Like Julia's illness, Clack sees Rachel's coming misery as a fantastic positive development, seemingly overlooking the teachings of her religion for the sake of shoving it down Rachel's throat.

Rachel refuses breakfast and plays "scandalously profane" piano music, which Miss Clack avoids by leaving the house. When she returns, she is surprised to see Godfrey there earlier than expected, and ready to talk with her. He reveals that Rachel "has taken a sudden resolution to break the engagement," and that he has accepted this. He does not seem at all distraught, and he brings Miss Clack to a seat so he can explain himself.

Even Rachel's piano playing offends Miss Clack's fragile moral sensibilities, and she returns to Godfrey's even more surprising acceptance of the end of the engagement, which suggests that Miss Clack is seriously missing his true motives—either she is being kept in the dark because of her fringe status in the family, or (as she suspects) someone is being deceptive.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIRST NARRATIVE: MISS CLACK: CHAPTER 8

Godfrey declares that he has "no motive" for agreeing to lose "a beautiful girl, an excellent social position, and a handsome income" along with his engagement. He can explain neither why he proposed to Rachel in the first place nor why he has stopped attending charity meetings; he feels like a child unable to explain its faults. Clack sees this as evidence of a "mental problem" and Godfrey asks for insight. He explains that Rachel was only planning to marry him in order to forget about the other man she really loves, and that he felt "a most overpowering sense of relief" when she broke off the engagement.

Godfrey speaks about his engagement in the practical terms of a series of prizes won: Rachel (only because of her beauty), the Verinder name, and of course money. As Clack accurately realizes, his explanation is clearly a cover for some other motive, but she is unable to imagine what this might be and simply assumes there is something wrong *with Godfrey—as she does with all people who disagree with her. Even she can now recognize Godfrey's apparently heartfelt and emotionally sensitive speech as being false.*

"As a spiritual physician," Clack declares Godfrey's tryst with Rachel a test from God, who has forced him to momentarily err from perfection as a way of "remind[ing] greatness that it is mortal." Godfrey is elated and kisses Miss Clack's hands, which makes her nearly "swoon away in his arms." But all of the sudden, he has to return to London to meet his father and explain what has come of his engagement. In an aside, Miss Clack promises that rumors about Godfrey did not influence her opinion of him, which never declined again after this episode (especially because, about a month after her arrival in Brighton, "events in the money-market" forced Miss Clack to leave England).

Clack provides a convoluted explanation in the religious idiom that seems to be her only means of understanding the world around her. The notion that imperfection is a part of God's perfect plan exemplifies the way she accommodates contradictions and illogic in her system of explanation, which prevents her from understanding how everyone else sees the world, and lets her continue to worship Godfrey despite everyone else's suspicion about him.

Rachel, unlike Godfrey, seems tortured and confused after breaking the engagement—likely because she is thinking about "that other man whom she loved." Clack promises to get the truth out of her after "convert[ing] her"—but, alas, that evening, Rachel avoids Miss Clack's attempt to read to her by again escaping to the piano.

Rachel's reaction is more ambivalent, even though she proposed the breakup before Godfrey. While Miss Clack guesses about her real motivations, her desire to find out is about selfish curiosity, not helping Rachel. Indeed, Miss Clack yet again fails to see Rachel's suffering, because she is only interested in her own evangelizing mission.

Miss Clack predicts that the senior Mr. Ablewhite will visit the next day (to create the storm that will allow her to convert Rachel). He does appear, after all, and Mr. Bruff comes unexpectedly shortly thereafter, as he believes he might "be of some use" in the coming conversation. Mr. Ablewhite asks Rachel to bring him to the sitting-room to discuss her engagement to his son, but she insists on talking where they are, with everyone present. Mr. Ablewhite confirms that she intentionally accepted Godfrey's proposal and then suggests that maybe "a lovers' quarrel" and a misunderstanding have led to their engagement's apparent end. She confirms that there was no quarrel and that they agreed quite soberly to reverse their engagement. Growing furious, Mr. Ablewhite gently coaxes Rachel to be nicer to Godfrey, and she explains that "it is a settled thing" that she and Godfrey will not marry.

Mr. Ablewhite's involvement shows that marriage is, as Godfrey earlier suggested, more about property, money, and status for his family than about love; this may or may not have something to do with the engagement's failure. (It helps to recall Betteredge's description of the upwardly-mobile, nouveau riche Mr. Ablewhite from the first section.) But Mr. Ablewhite and Godfrey's perspectives also do not appear to quite match up. And, as always, the nosy Miss Clack plays witness to important family conversations that have nothing to do with her (at least Betteredge, in contrast, had a reason to be present everywhere).

Mr. Ablewhite asks a third time and Rachel confirms for a third time that the engagement is off, and that Godfrey was eager to end it. Mr. Ablewhite begins screaming, asking Rachel "what complaint" she has against Godfrey—Mr. Bruff tells Rachel she need not answer, and Ablewhite starts yelling at him instead. Clack is disgusted at Rachel's composure in the face of Ablewhite's anger. She declines to explain any further than to say it is in both "his [Godfrey's] welfare and mine," and Ablewhite knocks over his chair and yells that he is insulted by Rachel's "cursed family pride," the same pride that turned the Verinders against *him* when he married into the family, because he was self-made and not of noble birth. He declares that Rachel has "the Herncastle blood." She and Bruff dismiss him as he grows more and more furious.

Mr. Ablewhite does not seem to process the possibility that his son would be fine with calling off the engagement. With his open disregard for Godfrey's wishes and desire to push his own agenda, Mr. Ablewhite becomes parallel to Miss Clack, who is also single-minded in her own pursuits to the extent that she disregards others. Rachel's refusal to explain her reasons for leaving the engagement forces the reader to keep guessing, and by alluding to the "Herncastle blood," Mr. Ablewhite turns the tables on conventional social hierarchies, painting nobility (which he was always handicapped by lacking) as deceitful and sinful.

Miss Clack decides to intervene—one of her books has a useful passage pertaining to this situation. She begins to read "the blessed, blessed, blessed words of Miss Jane Ann Stamper," but then Mr. Ablewhite, "this monster in human form," yells: "Miss Jane Ann Stamper be—!" (a word Miss Clack will not replicate). Miss Clack hands Ablewhite a book about the sin of "profane swearing," which he tears in half. Clack returns to her corner. Ablewhite asks his wife if she "asked this impudent fanatic into the house," but Rachel eagerly takes credit instead. Ablewhite declares that she has no right to bring "this Rampant Spinster" into his house, but Bruff explains that Ablewhite actually gave Rachel the house in his capacity as her legal guardian. Ablewhite declares that he declines to act as Rachel's guardian, and asks Rachel to evict Miss Clack at once. With that, he leaves.

Miss Clack's last stand against the equally righteous Mr. Ablewhite finally forces her to face the absurdity of her position and endless evangelism. Finally, however, the "Rampant Spinster" does serve one useful function: Rachel uses her as an excuse to alienate the Ablewhites who try to strongarm her out of her decision, even though Godfrey was perfectly alright with it. Through Clack's hilarious defeat, Collins satirizes once and for all the vacuity of her kind of Christian moralism, which he implies has no weight and no role in meaningful decisions of any sort.

After Mr. Ablewhite leaves, Mrs. Ablewhite insults Miss Clack and apologizes to Rachel, who breaks into tears. Mr. Bruff says that he and Rachel will leave at once, and Mrs. Ablewhite leaves, but Clack refuses to go because of her moral "interest in Rachel." Mr. Bruff takes Rachel aside and comforts her, explaining that the will allows him to appoint a new guardian, and he wants to take on that role.

Although Mrs. Ablewhite tries to compensate for her husband's anger, she also recognizes that Miss Clack has neither an invitation nor any compelling reason to stay in the room. Nevertheless, the perennially pigheaded Clack somehow fails to see that her access to Rachel's soul is up.

Miss Clack rises in an attempt to stop this dreadful behavior and protect Rachel, her "lost sheep"—but Rachel accepts Bruff's offer at once. "Stop!" shouts Miss Clack, insisting that *she* is Rachel's rightful guardian, for she and Rachel are actually related. Rachel rejects this offer diplomatically. Clack shouts that she "can't part with" Rachel and tries to embrace her. Rachel and Bruff are deeply confused, and Miss Clack finally explains her intention "to make a Christian of" her, and save her—as she failed to do with her mother. Rachel asks for an explanation and Miss Clack explains her view about "the awful calamity of dying unprepared." Rachel screams and takes Bruff "away, for God's sake, before that woman can say any more!" She is horrified that Miss Clack would "make [her] doubt that [her] mother, who was an angel on earth, is an angel in heaven now!"

Clack's attempt to become Rachel's guardian again shows that she is incapable of distinguishing what is best for Rachel from what is best for herself. And Rachel and Bruff's confusion at Clack's melodrama again shows that Clack's life-and-death struggle for salvation is playing out only in her own head, recognized by nobody else at all. Clack's final inexcusable insult alienates Rachel forever by revealing that she never had Julia's best interests at heart, either.

Rachel calls Penelope to pack her things and leaves at once. Mr. Bruff tells Miss Clack it was a mistake to explain her motives, and even Penelope—whom Clack refuses to call by her name, but only refers to as "the person with the cap-ribbons"—also says she is "ashamed of" Clack's behavior. "Reviled by them all, deserted by them all," Miss Clack's narrative concludes, "I was left alone in the room." Clack sees herself as "a Christian persecuted by the world" and explains that she "never saw Rachel Verinder again." Nevertheless, she forgives Rachel, prays for her, and is even leaving her a book—*Life, Letters, and Labours of Miss Jane Ann Stamper*—in her will.

Clack's conclusion—"reviled by them all"—might be the single most accurate statement in her narrative. It is telling that she is left alone in the Ablewhites' house because, beyond the house not being hers (and her having no reason to be there), she in fact ends up with nobody to advise, accompany, or convert precisely because of her persistence and refusal to let people live in peace. She closes with another proclamation of her dogged persistence, and surely the book's other characters must be delighted that Clack has been forced out of the British Isles.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SECOND NARRATIVE: MATHEW BRUFF: CHAPTER 1

The solicitor Mathew Bruff explains his dual purposes in writing. First, he wants to explain "certain points of interest which have thus far been left in the dark," namely Rachel and Godfrey's real motives for ending the engagement—which Bruff alone knows. Secondly, his conversations with one of the three Indians and Mr. Murthwaite are quite relevant to the story of **the Moonstone**.

Bruff's dry, factual, and purpose-driven narration is as far as one might get from Clack's maniacal moral ravings. He aims to both tie up a loose end in her account and return the Moonstone to the center of the novel's plot.

"The true story of the broken marriage engagement" starts many years before, at the deathbed of Sir John Verinder, who always avoided making a will—when he finally obliged, he dictated: "Everything to my wife. That's my will." And then he returned to his nap. Although Bruff would ordinarily object to this, he knew Julia was trustworthy and competent in business (unlike almost all other women, he remarks). And, indeed, shortly after Sir John's death, Julia drew up her own, much more elaborate will, which Bruff did not bother to revisit until she received her final diagnosis—her "sentence of death"—in 1848. She wanted to make some minor changes, so she asked Bruff to prepare a second will—the one for which Miss Clack served as a witness. The only difference involving Rachel was the process for determining a guardian.

John Verinder's apparent laziness and ineptitude at managing his estate contrasts with Julia's precision and diligence; in their relationship, the stereotypical gender roles are reversed (although Bruff makes a point of reinforcing them). Validating Betteredge's utmost respect for Lady Julia, this revelation proves that her primary concern was protecting Rachel and the others around her. In this sense, her uncompromising benevolence and selflessness are quite the opposite of her sinister, egotistical, lawbreaking brother, "the wicked Colonel" John Herncastle (not to be confused with her husband, who was also named John).

A few weeks after Julia signs her second will, Bruff receives news that someone from the firm Skipp and Smalley has paid to examine the will (which is perfectly legal, but unusual). Luckily, Bruff has close ties to this firm, which often takes up cases he turns down. Mr. Smalley explains that he cannot reveal his reasoning for viewing the will without breaking his attorney-client privilege, and Bruff recklessly threatens to cut off his relationship with Smalley if he does not learn who asked to see the will. Smalley obliges: it is Godfrey Ablewhite.

Bruff's discovery proves that Godfrey was not entirely forthcoming about his motives for proposing to Rachel and then withdrawing from this proposal. It also, incidentally, proves that Bruff is excellent at his job. He is as concerned with protecting the Verinders as Julia is. The importance of the will suggests that Godfrey was seeking some material benefit, and, regardless, the reader can now safely dismiss Miss Clack's fantastical portrait of him.

Bruff explains that the will leaves Rachel with houses and a steady income, but no means of liquidating the family's property. Bruff sees that Godfrey wanted to marry Rachel for her money—and knows that he cannot get that money because of the will's structure. So Bruff jumps on the opportunity to take Rachel to Brighton and gets Rachel to admit that she is "marrying in despair," but that she believes Godfrey genuinely loves her. She realizes that Bruff has "something to tell [her] about Godfrey" and he explains his reservations. They walk together as she grows pale and withdrawn. Knowing that she is independent and thoughtful (unlike "the mass of her sex"), Bruff gives her time to think. After a long silence, she asks him to shoot down "any rumours of my marriage" in London and explains that she has decided to cut off the engagement.

Through her will, Julia manages to protect Rachel even after her death. Bruff carries out these plans and saves Rachel, not only from *the scheming Godfrey, but* for *a better marriage when she can find one based on love instead of mere security. Bruff also excepts Rachel from his blanket assessments of "her sex," which shows how Collins both exposes and breaks stereotypes through Rachel and his other female characters (with the exception of Clack, of course). Rachel takes her decision immediately, and the reader can now resolve Miss Clack's confusion at how the engagement fell apart so abruptly.*

Bruff asks if Rachel has some woman in her life to turn to for advice. She admits that she does not, so Bruff does his best to substitute, and suggests that she tell Godfrey honestly that she knows of his motives, and that it is in his best interest to at least outwardly agree with her reasons for ending the engagement. But Rachel says she cannot bear "the shame" of degrading Godfrey to his face, and that she will simply declare that it is over and better for both of them to be apart, regardless of Godfrey's response. Bruff warns her not to "brave public opinion [...] at the command of private feeling," but she said she has already taken this risk with **the Moonstone**. Bruff grows confused and Rachel never clarifies this, leaving him conflicted and uneasy when he returns to London at the end of the day.

Again, Bruff seems to believe in some essential personality difference between men and women, apparently one so strong that gender should be the most important criterion in determining whom Rachel should ask for advice. However, circumstances defeat his assumptions. Rachel's vague words about the Moonstone again suggest that she is hiding something, and her willingness to put "private feeling" above "public opinion" attests to her lack of interest in conventional markers of status (which is why the conflicted, status-seeking Mr. Ablewhite grows so furious with her).

That night, back in London, Mr. Ablewhite the elder comes to visit Bruff and declare that Godfrey has accepted Rachel's decision to end the engagement. This confirms that Godfrey was simply looking for "a large sum of money" by a definite date through his prospective marriage to Rachel, and that he eagerly gave up on the engagement once he realized he would not get this windfall. But Mr. Ablewhite's behavior showed Bruff that he would be "merciless" when confronting Rachel, and Miss Clack's narrative shows how Bruff decided to cope with this danger. He ends his first chapter by affirming "that Miss Verinder found the quiet and repose which she sadly needed" by staying with Bruff and his family.

Indeed, given what Bruff explained about Franklin in the last chapter, the important fact about Godfrey's debts is that they are imminent: he needs to find money as soon as possible, even by desperate means (whereas Franklin's creditors prefer to keep building up his interest). Bruff ultimately played a crucial role in ensuring Rachel's safety by going to Brighton, mediating her argument with Ablewhite, and, most of all, taking guardianship of her after the fact. Indeed, he seems to be the exemplary gentleman Clack mistakenly saw in Godfrey.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SECOND NARRATIVE: MATHEW BRUFF: CHAPTER 2

Bruff turns to **the Moonstone**. His information is important because of its relevance to "events which are still to come." Roughly a week after Rachel left his house, a foreign man comes to Bruff's office with a card bearing the recommendation of Septimus Luker. Bruff's clerk explains that the man looks Indian, and Bruff realizes that he may have something to say about the Moonstone, so he gives him an interview. This "highly unprofessional sacrifice to mere curiosity" is justifiable because of Bruff's connection to the Moonstone mystery: he was also Herncastle's lawyer and played a key role in convincing Franklin Blake to bring the Moonstone to the Verinder estate.

Now that the tale of Julia's death and Rachel's ill-fated engagement to Godfrey has been settled, the narrative turns back to the Moonstone, which quickly resurfaces in London. The Indian's visit is bold and potentially threatening (given how the men mugged Godfrey and Luker), but luckily Bruff's sense of duty to the Verinders, even if "highly unprofessional" in a technical sense, puts him closer than anyone has been to guessing at the Indians' side of the story, and using their leads to restart the family and their allies' own investigation.

Bruff immediately determines that the "mysterious client" is one of the Indian jugglers, likely "the chief." In "excellent" English, the man apologizes for the inconvenience and brings out a small jeweled box, which he offers as collateral on a loan he hopes to take out. (Mr. Luker, the Indian explained, does not have the money to lend.) Bruff knows that "this Oriental gentleman would have murdered me" over **the Moonstone**, but still finds him a remarkably respectful client. Nevertheless, Bruff explains that he does not lend to strangers, and the Indian does not argue, but merely asks what the normal repayment term for such a loan is—a year, Bruff explains, and the man leaves in "a noiseless, supple, cat-like way."

Bruff takes a fascinating, surprisingly sympathetic stance towards the Indian whom he admits might be willing to kill him. The man's manners and English completely contradict what Collins's readers would have expected from an Indian; it suggests the man's superior intelligence and social intuition, even despite his apparent unfamiliarity with the norms and ways of London. At the same time, this hyperintelligence bordering on the mystical (like the man's "noiseless, supple, cat-like" exit) does play on the Western stereotypes about India that run throughout this novel.

After the man leaves, Bruff realizes that this last question was the purpose of the man's visit, as an interview with Septimus Luker confirms the next day. Luker is "so vulgar, so ugly, so cringing, and so prosy" compared to the Indian that Bruff prefers to summarize rather than recount their conversation. A few days before, the Indians' leader visited Mr. Luker, who was "quite paralyzed with terror," as these same Indians had attacked him some time before. The man asked Luker the same question about a loan and, out of fright, Luker referred him to Bruff, "the first name which occurred to him." Luker has come to Bruff to apologize; Bruff learns that the Indian also asked Luker the same question on his way out, and then he dismisses Luker and begins preparing for a dinner-party.

Indeed, the contrast Bruff paints between the well-behaved Indian and the "vulgar" Luker further suggests that Indian civilization and manners are not inferior to the British, as many imperialists wanted the public to believe, but in fact incomparably superior. While Luker's fear is comprehensible, his apparent cowardice and boorishness seem to reflect his line of work—he is a profit-seeking middleman apparently uninterested in whether his merchandise was stolen (or how many times).

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SECOND NARRATIVE: MATHEW BRUFF: CHAPTER 3

Bruff is at the dinner-party, and Mr. Murthwaite is also there. His "dangerous adventures" have won the interest of many of the English people he has encountered. He announces his plans "of penetrating into regions left still unexplored," and everyone is enraptured by his courage and recklessness. The ladies leave after dinner and the men turn to politics, an "all-absorbing national topic" that Bruff finds "dreary" and "profitless," about which Murthwaite appears to agree.

When he appears at another party, Murthwaite is again a mysterious and respected figure—much like the Indians themselves—but, this time, he is far more talkative. His penchant for further exploration points to the expansive, all-consuming aims of British colonialism, and the guests' reactions to his plans show how such adventure—with its impacts on native inhabitants carefully ignored—had the same kind of exotic, sensational appeal that Collins tried to cultivate in his novel.

Bruff decides to bring up **the Moonstone** and explains his connection to the case. The whole group of men shifts focus to Murthwaite and Bruff, who brings up the Indian's visit the day before and asks if Murthwaite might understand why the man asked about the repayment term of a loan. To Murthwaite, the man's motive is obvious. He first points out that the three Indians are too young to be the same ones who followed Colonel Herncastle to England after he stole **the Diamond** from India, and that they must instead be the original men's successors, now in charge of the organization that is seeking to take the Diamond back to India.

For a second time, Murthwaite proves an incomparable interpreter of the Indians' behavior; this time, unlike when Betteredge and Franklin discounted his warnings on the night of Rachel's birthday, he is bound to be taken more seriously. His first insight is very simple, it points to the depth of the Indians' commitment to finding the Diamond and shows Bruff that the Diamond's "curse" is simply this longstanding attempt to repatriate it.

Murthwaite and Bruff agree that Herncastle's death was the Indians' first opportunity to take **the Diamond**, and that the Indians could easily find out where it was headed by getting a copy of Colonel Herncastle's will and learning everything possible about Julia Verinder and Franklin Blake. Since it would likely be easier for them to seize the jewel from the Verinders' estate, the three jugglers went to Frizinghall while other members of the organization stayed in London, following Franklin Blake and ingratiating his servants. But, Bruff asks Murthwaite, how would the Indians have known that Franklin put **the Moonstone** in the Frizinghall bank, and accordingly waited until Rachel's birthday to try and steal it? (They agree that the jugglers' ink-drop clairvoyance is an inadequate explanation.)

Murthwaite's thought process is as methodical and detail-oriented as detective Cuff's. By retracing the Indians' actions, he and Bruff try to determine what resources they have at their disposal and to what extent they are following them (versus using the mystical, inexplicable power that Betteredge feared). But, more importantly, they also remind the reader of events that were likely published many weeks ago in an earlier weekly installment of the novel.

Murthwaite corrects Bruff: the Indians *did not* know that Franklin put **the Diamond** in the bank, which is why they showed up at the Verinder estate on the same night Franklin arrived. Realizing that Franklin was shrewd and capable of hiding the Diamond, the men waited until it passed into Rachel's possession on her birthday (as promised by the will). This is why, at the time, Murthwaite advised the family to cut the Diamond up. Bruff agrees that this explanation is rational.

The fact that the Indians erred proves that they are no more than human—in fact, they are master detectives themselves, and the novel can really be seen as a conflict between two teams of detectives trying to trace down the Diamond. They first underestimated Franklin; now Murthwaite's job is to make sure that the gentlemen detectives (Bruff, Betteredge, and Franklin) do not underestimate the Indians.

Murthwaite continues: the Indians' "second chance" at stealing **the Diamond** occurred "while they were still in confinement." The prison's governor had brought Mr. Murthwaite a letter in Hindustani, addressed to the woman who was lodging the Indians in Frizinghall. The police had Murthwaite translate it, and he kept a copy.

Murthwaite not only provides the cultural background necessary for the Verinders' allies to understand the Indians, but he also literally translates their language, which would have otherwise remained secret. Of course, writing in Hindustani seems designed for secrecy, as Mr. Bruff found out during his visit from one of the Indians that they appear to speak perfect English.

The letter reads: "In the name of the Regent of the Night, whose seat is on the Antelope, whose arms embrace the four corners of the earth. Brothers, turn your faces to the south, and come to me in the street of many noises, which leads down to the muddy river. The reason is this. My own eyes have seen it." Murthwaite explains that "the Regent of the Night" is the four-armed Hindu moon-god, who sits on an antelope. The remaining sentences seem to implore the recipients to go to London—as the three Indians did after their release from jail. To Murthwaite, it is obvious that the writer of this letter is the worker Septimus Luker fired for trying to steal an "Oriental treasure." Bruff finally understands how the Indians knew Luker got **the Moonstone**.

Murthwaite expertly decrypts the language, which evokes exotic, mystical conspiracies and reminds the reader that the Indians' duty to retrieve the Moonstone is sacred. The men's aim seems to be to return the stone to its original position, the temple in Somnauth where it was kept until the 11th century. The Indians managed to get someone inside Septimus Luker's business before any of the Verinders, their relatives, or their employees realized the gem had resurfaced. As Murthwaite reminds them time and time again, the Indians are a serious force to be reckoned with.

Murthwaite now asks Bruff for "a piece of information": does Bruff know who paid for Luker to buy **the Moonstone**? Bruff does not know, but Murthwaite suggests it may have been Godfrey Ablewhite. Bruff, however, explains that Godfrey "had been cleared of all suspicion."

Bruff now updates Murthwaite on what he learned from—of all people—Miss Clack in London. Clearly, knowing who pledged the stone would lead directly to the thief; but Collins will not give away the Moonstone's secret quite yet.

Returning to the timeline of the Indians' actions, Murthwaite suggests that Mr. Luker is responsible for "the loss of their second chance of seizing **the Diamond**," for he fired their accomplice and put the gem in the bank at once. Murthwaite thinks it is not worth determining how the Indians discovered the gem's location in the bank, but instead asks Bruff: "what is their third chance of seizing the Diamond? and when will it come?"

Murthwaite redirects the conversation—and the plot of the novel—toward the Moonstone's inevitable return when the Indians seek to steal it from the bank (or from whoever withdraws it from the bank). The reader must now wait in suspense until the Diamond resurfaces.

Bruff immediately understands that the Indian man visited his office to figure out how soon **the Diamond**'s purchase can be paid off (when the bank can release it). In a year, Murthwaite declares, "the unknown person who has pledged the Moonstone can redeem it" and the men can try for a third time to steal it back. While Murthwaite will be "thousands of miles away from England," he thinks Bruff should "arrange to be in London at the time." Murthwaite feels he "shall be safer […] among the fiercest fanatics of Central Asia than […] with the Moonstone in my pocket." With that, the party guests "dispersed" and Bruff writes himself a reminder to seek news of the Moonstone in late June, 1849.

Bruff pieces together Murthwaite's warning: the Diamond will be back in a year, and both the Indian and the English detectives will be after it. The adventurous Murthwaite maintains his characteristic distance by assuring Bruff that the decision is his, and also by literally leaving England for the foreseeable future. He offers a (fittingly xenophobic) warning that, this time, the Englishmen are likely to take more seriously.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 1

Franklin Blake is "wandering in the East," changing his travel plans and sending a servant to retrieve mail and money in a city he is no longer planning to visit. The servant is delayed a week, and when he finally meets Franklin again, he presents a letter from Mr. Bruff, revealing the death of Franklin's father and imploring Franklin to return to England as soon as possible.

After leaving off with Murthwaite's plans to travel in Asia at the end of Bruff's narrative, the reader finally hears from Franklin Blake, who happens to be doing just that (on his inherited or borrowed bankroll). Crucially, Blake is also the mastermind who compiles everyone else's narratives into the novel. Technically its editor, Blake appears not to make any changes to the novel's testimony, although it would be impossible for the reader to know if he were to omit something.

Franklin argues that Betteredge's narrative—and especially the "satirical references to [Franklin's] foreign education"—unfairly depict him. However, Betteredge correctly shows Franklin's devastation at Rachel's rejection and his decision to leave England in order "to forget her." Over time, the "novelty" of his travels dulled his pain. However, the news that he must return to England after his father's passing is bringing this pain, and his desire for Rachel, back to the surface. When he arrives in England, he immediately seeks her out. He also learns everything included in the other narratives (except Mr. Bruff's explanation of Rachel and Godfrey's motives for breaking their engagement).

Indeed, Franklin takes the opportunity to defend his foreign education from Betteredge's English pride. Unlike the other male narrators so far (Betteredge, whose emotional outbursts contradict his belief in his own unflappable professionalism, and the completely unemotional Bruff), Franklin is perfectly aware of the emotional games he plays with himself, and the way emotion drives his decision making. While Franklin insists that there is only a slight difference between what he knew at the time of the novel's events and his knowledge while writing his account (after reading Betteredge, Clack, and Bruff's narratives), the reader should still ask whether his editorial position colors his recollection of events—he, after all, is not being forced by someone else to stick to "just the facts," unlike all the novel's other narrators (who are urged to do so by him*).*

Rachel is living with one of her father's sisters, a widow named Mrs. Merridew, and Franklin goes to her house immediately upon his arrival in England. But Rachel refuses to see him, so he meets with Mrs. Merridew, who repeats that she is "not in a position to offer [Franklin] any explanation." Finally, Franklin writes Rachel a letter; her response: "Miss Verinder begs to decline entering into any correspondence with Mr. Franklin Blake."

Even though he returned because of his father's death, Franklin remains totally consumed by his enduring love for Rachel, who seems to have never gotten over her animosity toward him after the Diamond's theft. To the reader, of course, their sudden shift from lovers to enemies remains a mystery.

Offended, Franklin asks Mr. Bruff about the matter—and he does not have any response, either. Bruff simply notes that, while she was living at his own house, Rachel never once mentioned Franklin's name. Franklin takes out the letter that Julia wrote him after he left Frizinghall, in which she explained that Franklin's assistance in **the Moonstone** investigation inadvertently "added to [Rachel's] burden of anxiety." Bruff admits that this would be his best guess at Rachel's motives.

Bruff, tactful and evenhanded as ever, adds nothing to Franklin's search for an explanation. Through this search, Franklin begins transforming himself into a detective figure (much like Cuff and Betteredge in the first narrative). While Betteredge thought Franklin (and Cuff and Godfrey) knew what was happening in his relationship with Rachel, evidently he does not. Rachel's absolute silence may be more significant than an occasional mention of Franklin—clearly, there is some unresolved business between them.

Franklin decides at once to go to Yorkshire and "find out the secret of [Rachel's] silence towards her mother, and her enmity towards *me*." Perhaps he can even discover who stole **the Moonstone** by talking to Betteredge, who knows the most about the case. Franklin encounters Betteredge, as always, in his chair in the yard, smoking his pipe and reading **Robinson Crusoe**, flanked by his two dogs. Betteredge is startled to see Franklin, and Franklin begins to tear up.

Despite Julia's death and Rachel's move away, nothing seems to have changed about the predictable Betteredge. Unlike at their previous meeting and despite their occasional, continued jabs at one another, Betteredge and Franklin are clearly thrilled to be reunited and to catch the "detective-fever" again.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 2

Betteredge remarks that **Robinson Crusoe** astonishingly foresaw Franklin's visit. He has opened to the following passage: "I stood like one Thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an Apparition." He invites Franklin in and explains that, although "the house is shut up, and the servants are gone," he will do his best to make Franklin comfortable. However, knowing that "the house was Rachel's house, now," Franklin feels unable to accept and reveals his reservations—and recent missed encounter with Rachel—to the elderly Betteredge. Betteredge tells a long story about his own wife and concludes that Rachel's kind of dismissive behavior—"riding the high horse"—is typical of women. "You have put up with Miss Rachel in London," he warns Franklin, so "don't put up with her in Yorkshire."

Yet again, Betteredge considers his fortune-telling successful—indeed, while any unforeseen event would have fulfilled Robinson Crusoe's prediction, there seems to be very little surprise and astonishment in Betteredge's life since the initial investigation into the Moonstone, which appears to have sucked all life out of the house, not to mention disintegrated the Verinder family and their network. Franklin's narration also allows the reader to see Betteredge's chauvinism from the outside, and his own enduring respect for Rachel from the inside.

Franklin still refuses to stay at the Verinder estate, and Betteredge recommends the nearby Hotherstone's Farm. Franklin agrees and begins to set off, but Betteredge asks that they talk immediately about whatever business has brought Franklin to Yorkshire, rather than waiting until the next day. Betteredge hardly believes Franklin when he says he wants "to find out who took **the Diamond**," and advises him to leave it alone—since not even the illustrious Sergeant Cuff could find it. Franklin asks about this Sergeant Cuff, whom Betteredge reveals has retired (and managed to grow roses in a way the Verinder estate gardener always insisted was impossible).

As anticipated, Franklin's return officially restarts the search for the Diamond, which Betteredge seems to have given up. Despite Betteredge's statement about Cuff, it remains an open question whether he really was right about the case. Cuff's retirement and success with his roses indicates that he has managed to move past his sometimes taxing job, and of course that he remains as uncannily intelligent as ever—more so than the Verinders in one sense, at least.

When Betteredge says Franklin can trust him in his investigation, Franklin realizes Betteredge has some undivulged information about **the Diamond**. Betteredge claims he is "mere[ly] boasting" but Franklin notes that Betteredge's assistance could "make Rachel come to an understanding with me." They agree that they will continue to hold Rachel in high esteem no matter what. His trust won, Betteredge brings up Rosanna Spearman's letter, which remains at the Yollands' house in Cobb's Hole. Franklin determines to go immediately, but Betteredge convinces him to wait until the next morning.

Cuff seems to have been right when he called Betteredge "as transparent as a child"—Franklin knows exactly what he has to say to win his confidence. Again, by seeing Betteredge as a character and not a storyteller—now out of control, persuaded by someone who knows better, rather than narrating a situation he does not fully understand—the reader can now get a new perspective on his narrative and begin to reinterpret the initial search for the Diamond.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 3

After a restless night at Hotherstone's Farm, Franklin meets Betteredge at the Verinder estate. Betteredge complains that he has caught "the detective-fever" again. They meet Mrs. Yolland in Cobb's Hole, and "a wan, wild, haggard girl"—Limping Lucy—brings Franklin his letter and asks him to follow her down to the beach. There, she stares at him "with the strongest emotions of abhorrence and disgust" and comments to herself that she cannot understand "what [Rosanna] saw in" him. She gives him the letter and yells, "God Almighty forbid I should ever set eyes on you again." Franklin thinks Lucy is clearly insane, and he turns to the letter.

The return of Rosanna's letter proves that the novel's seemingly minor details do serve important purposes in the plot, a technique that would have been particularly powerful with the British reading public that could track and predict the consequences of these clues between Collins's weekly installments. Again, Lucy appears as a direct and fearless foil to the more reserved Rosanna—but here, she also serves the same function for Rachel, who covers her apparent disdain for Franklin by refusing to "set eyes on" him. Ultimately, Franklin thinks Lucy is mad, but not the same of Rachel (or of Rosanna, whose behavior was arguably the closest to madness). In fact, he simply cannot yet see her perspective—not until he understands Rosanna's feelings about him.

Rosanna's letter implores Franklin to follow the instructions enclosed within, which direct him to go to the South Spit at the **Shivering Sand** and find a chain leading down to the quicksand. Betteredge follows Franklin out and reads the letter, then exclaims that this is exactly what Sergeant Cuff predicted. They rush to the Shivering Sand and Betteredge recounts how Cuff inferred that Rosanna had hidden her treasure. When the tide is low, they go to the spot Rosanna laid out; but then Betteredge leaves, as Rosanna's instructions implore Franklin to pull up the mystery item alone.

With Franklin heading to the Shivering Sand, the investigation picks back up right where it left off: with Rosanna's hidden treasure, which Cuff had no clues or time to find. After all, to nobody's surprise, Cuff was right about this treasure; although Rosanna is dead, Betteredge seems to fear the potential mystical power of her instructions, and accordingly insists on letting Franklin retrieve the treasure alone.

After a few minutes, Franklin finds the chain and begins to follow it toward the quicksand—but finds "a thick growth of seaweed" in his way. He uses a stick to find where the chain continues past the seaweed and is horrified to see the quicksand face-to-face. Soon, he finds the chain, pulls it up, and discovers "the japanned tin case fastened to the end of it." Inside are a letter and a linen nightgown, with the paint smear from Rachel's door. Franklin remembers Sergeant Cuff's promise that the paint smear was connected to **the Diamond** and realizes that the owner of the nightgown was likely the thief. Realizing that the garment would likely be "marked with its owner's name," he looks for the mark and finds: "MY OWN NAME." He has solved his mystery: he, himself, is the thief he is looking for.

As Franklin comes face-to-face with the quicksand where Rosanna died, he not only confronts the place's danger and his own eventual mortality, but also forces himself to empathize with her in some way for the first time, to understand the turmoil by which she lived and died. His astonishing discovery of his own *guilt is inexplicable, a classic mystery twist designed to shock the reader and force them to reconsider everything they have read so far—Rosanna and Rachel's suspicious behavior, the circumstances under which Franklin brought the Moonstone to the Verinder estate in the first place, and most of all, the reliability of Franklin's narration and editing.*

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 4

Franklin Blake is stunned and confused on his way back to the estate with Betteredge. When they arrive, Franklin begins to face the undeniable evidence of his own guilt. Betteredge insists that the nightgown is "a liar," and that someone else must have used it—Franklin remembers that "Rosanna Spearman had once been a thief" and determines that she must have "smeared [his] nightgown purposely with the paint."

Franklin's personality splits as he discovers his guilt; his realization that he must have committed the crime clashes with his knowledge that he did not, and this split speaks to Collins's notion of the inevitable contradictions within an individual's character. Franklin's absolute faith in the evidence leaves him little recourse (whereas Betteredge easily rewrites the story to satisfy his intuition that Franklin cannot be guilty, and certainly someone like Miss Clack would eagerly ignore the facts altogether).

Franklin Blake looks at the letter Rosanna has left in the tin: it begins with a declaration of her love. Franklin is astonished but Betteredge implores him to continue reading. Rosanna writes that she will "be dead and gone" when Franklin receives the letter, so can boldly "own the truth." She says her love was the motive for all her actions. She finds her early life not worth mentioning in detail and explains that, when Franklin arrived at the Verinder estate, he was "like a prince in a fairy-story." She did everything possible to win his attention and cried endlessly when he never did look at her. Rosanna hated Rachel because of Franklin's love for her, and always replaced the roses Rachel gave Franklin with her own. She writes that she found Rachel ugly, but that she knows she cannot continue writing in such a spiteful tone.

Despite Rosanna's endless attempts to get Franklin's attention, he seems to have never noticed her, whether because of his fixation on Rachel, his unwillingness to even recognize the possibility of loving someone who did not share his upper-class background, or some combination of the two. On the other hand, Rosanna's audacity—her willingness to seek out a relationship she knew, on some level, to be impossible—also points to her ability to see past these class boundaries, to claim a right to the normal life that her employers took for granted but would have likely denied her.

Rosanna next writes that she plans to turn to the story of **the Moonstone**, but first she insists on explaining something else. She writes about how ashamed and lonely she felt after going through the reformatory, taking responsibility for her crimes, and moving to work at the Verinder estate. And she writes that, to cope with these feelings, she used to visit the **Shivering Sand**, where she felt that her life would come to an end. During the process of writing this letter, she explains, she realized she could actually use the quicksand to "end all [her] troubles [...] and hide [herself] for ever afterwards."

Rosanna recalls her initial conversation with Betteredge at the Sands, and then explicitly ties her suicide back to this prophetic moment, pointing to how the novel's twists and turns are often embedded in the details of earlier chapters and reminding the reader of the interpretive task—attending to and interpreting clues—central to both reading and police investigations. While Rosanna presents her eventual suicide as a product of guilt over her criminal past, she also makes it clear that her apparently "reformed" life working for the Verinders was by no means a dignified or fulfilling existence.

Rosanna then reaches the day of **the Diamond**'s theft. She tried to avoid "the foolish talk among the women servants" as well as Franklin, whom she hated for calling the police. When Seegrave came, she followed his orders; after he asked about the paint smear, Rosanna checked her own nightgowns, but Penelope assured her that the smear could not be her fault, since it must have happened late the night before. It could not have been any of the ladies' faults, Penelope assured—but Penelope also had no interest in telling this to Seegrave.

In her final communication to the living, Rosanna confirms that—contrary to Cuff's suspicions and Betteredge's fears—she had no connection to the theft. Her momentary antagonism toward Franklin again exemplifies the contradictory feelings that give Collins's characters their depth, as does her insistence on checking her own nightgowns—perhaps like Franklin should have, she was not certain whether she could trust her conscious knowledge that she did not steal the Diamond.

Rosanna went on with her work, arranging Franklin's room—and noticed the stain on his nightgown, which he had left on the bed. In astonishment, she hid the nightgown in her own room and told Penelope about it. She decided not to mention what she suspected Franklin was doing in Rachel's room so late at night; but she also wonders if Rachel might not have been prudent enough to warn Franklin about the paint. She decided to keep the nightgown, but never suspected Franklin Blake might have stolen **the Diamond**.

It is unclear whether Rosanna takes Franklin's gown out of panic, a desire to protect him from the investigation, or an attempt to steal a piece of him for herself. Additionally, Rosanna's decision to tell Penelope about the nightgown is an important twist, since it both reveals why Penelope was under so much scrutiny and suggests that Betteredge's narrative might have been far more complete had he simply asked his beloved daughter's opinion about the investigation (rather than ridiculing whatever opinions she offered).

At this point, Franklin Blake again interrupts the letter and recognizes that his initial shock about and sympathy for Rosanna have now turned into bitterness. He asks Betteredge to finish reading the letter, which continues below.

Ironically, while Franklin is bitter at Rosanna for her obsession and interference with him, she in fact saved him from being quickly identified as the criminal.

Rosanna next determined to make an identical nightgown to replace Franklin's stained one, although first she carefully combed his room for paint stains and erased the small one she found inside the dressing-gown he likely put on over his nightgown. Seegrave then questioned the rest of the servants, and accused Penelope because—in Penelope's own words, she was "the last person in the sitting-room at night." Upon hearing this, Rosanna remembered that Franklin Blake was in the sitting-room even later—and immediately decided he must have been the thief, because this allowed her to construe stealing his night-gown as a "means of shielding [him] from being discovered."

Rosanna has no qualms about the possibility of her beloved Franklin actually being the thief; perhaps this is because of her own past, or because this fact will threaten his chances with Rachel. There is something uneasy about the way she carefully searches Franklin's room looking for information about him (even though it is her job to clean up after him). This destabilizes the usual boundaries of public and private space, which is particularly uncomfortable for the British aristocracy.

To get closer to Franklin, Rosanna writes, she then approached him in the library under the pretense of his leaving a ring upstairs—but she is so put off by his "cruel distance" that she decides to provoke him by insisting "they will never find **the Diamond**" (her way of accusing Franklin of the theft to his face). She feigned illness that night to buy the linen for Franklin's new nightgown, which she added to his clothing the next day. But then Sergeant Cuff arrived, and she was devastated to be seen as guilty precisely when she thought she was covering for Franklin.

In fact, Franklin and those around him took Rosanna's bold statement as evidence of her *alleged madness and potential guilt—both of which the reader (not to mention Betteredge and Franklin) is forced to reinterpret as rational behavior after reading her account. As she transforms from a sinister to a sympathetic character, Rosanna forces the reader to challenge their assumptions about guilt and innocence—not only because she is revealed to have had purely good intentions, but also because those good intentions contributed to the failure of the investigation and thus Franklin's ability to get away with the crime.*

Betteredge and Franklin take a break from Rosanna's letter to talk—Franklin does not want to discuss his reaction until the end of the letter, and he tells Betteredge that Mr. Bruff and Sergeant Cuff are the only other people he can consult about the case. At that moment, "the most remarkable-looking man that [Franklin] had ever seen" walks in. He is old and wrinkled, with unevenly grayed hair and "soft brown eyes." He offers Betteredge a piece of paper, "the list for next week," and walks out. Betteredge explains that the man is the assistant to Mr. Candy, who "lost his memory" during his previous illness and can no longer practice medicine. "Nobody likes" this assistant, whose "list" includes the names of poor patients who need wine from the Verinders' surplus. And he has "as ugly a name as need be," in Betteredge's words: "Ezra Jennings."

Like Limping Lucy's address to Betteredge at the end of his narrative, this odd scene appears completely out of place in the context of the narrative, but in fact is Collins's means of dropping a huge, important clue about the direction of the novel in the near future—and the men who can truly help Franklin out. (In fact, so was Mr. Candy's illness on the night of Rachel's birthday, which seemed inconsequential until now.) And just like Rosanna and Lucy, Ezra Jennings is outwardly ugly and off-putting—which, in the context of Collins's other characters, suggests that his personality may be just the opposite.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 5

Franklin Blake and Betteredge turn from Ezra Jennings back to the end of Rosanna's letter, which Franklin hopes to use to generate a fruitful conversation with Mr. Bruff and score a meeting with Rachel.

Franklin begins wondering what the letter can do for him—and, in doing so, appears to give up on empathizing with Rosanna.

Rosanna's letter continues with her attempts to hide Franklin's nightgown just as Sergeant Cuff—whom she knew from her days as a petty criminal—begins to look for it in the servants' quarters. Rosanna's few attempts to speak with Franklin proved unsuccessful, and she began to consider suicide a better alternative to "bear[ing] Mr. Franklin Blake's indifference to me." And she also cannot explain why she never simply brought up her belief that Franklin Blake had the jewel—she could have promised to defend him or help him sell it. Indeed, in her criminal days she took far steeper risks and far greater measures. She can only attribute her weakness in this moment to her love for Franklin.

While her story is a stereotypical tragedy about a woman unable to control or withstand her emotions, Rosanna is far from a standard hopeless woman—rather, her downfall comes from the tension between her deep romantic love (which she cannot achieve) and her practical, logical sensibilities (which would deprive her of a full life, leaving her as an obedient servant forever, if she were to follow them completely). These are not only competing forces in her psyche, but also competing images of what a female character can be in Victorian literature; Rosanna's struggle to bridge the sexless, plain, practical, lower-class woman and the idealized girl in love (usually a wealthy protagonist) is what drives her to destruction.

Penelope eventually came to talk with Rosanna and promise her that Rachel would be leaving soon, and that Franklin Blake would follow soon after her. Rosanna is distraught to know that she and Franklin will be driven apart, and even more so to hear that Rachel was angry with Franklin but not vice-versa.

Rosanna sees that her plan has backfired: she realizes once and for all that Franklin's only interest is in Rachel, and that he will never recognize what she does for him (not to mention fall in love with her).

Sergeant Cuff then began questioning the servants, and insinuated strongly to Rosanna that he thought her responsible for the theft (although not its mastermind). He "was miles away from knowing the whole truth," but Rosanna was still in danger, and so she decided to hide Franklin's nightgown in the **Shivering Sand** (for destroying it would mean doing away with "the only thing [she] had which proved [she] had saved [him]").

Rosanna's decision to hide rather than destroy Franklin's nightgown not only left the story with an essential plot twist, but also allowed her to make a definitive record and proof of her actions and motivations, which were invisible to everyone else during her life because of her status in the family and the others' suspicion toward her.

This is how Rosanna ended up in the Yollands' house in Cobb's Hole, writing such a lengthy letter to Franklin. She planned to speak her love and reveal her knowledge of his apparent crime in case he decided to leave the estate. If Franklin rejected her again, the letter explained, Rosanna planned to kill herself. She closes the letter by noting that she has begun to cry and writing that she is hopeful about Franklin's response in the future.

As Rosanna grows increasingly obsessed with Franklin, everything else in her life—like her plans to leave Yorkshire and move to London with Limping Lucy—fly out the window. Rosanna becomes desperate and willing to take a final stand because she sees that Franklin does not even understand what he is to her.

When Betteredge finishes this letter the first day Franklin encounters it, he reveals that "there is nothing to guide you" within it and encourages Franklin not to read it yet. In retrospect, Franklin understands that Betteredge also knew about Rosanna's two final attempts to talk with him, both of which he rejected without realizing Rosanna's true motives. While the thought of Rosanna's fate still pains him, Franklin writes, he has no more to say about it and so he continues narrating his resumed search for **the Moonstone**.

Franklin is caught between his genuine pity for Rosanna and sense of personal responsibility for her death, on the one side, and his continued desire for Rachel and refusal to accept responsibility for the Diamond's theft he knows he did not commit (but seems quite undeniably to have committed), on the other. Ultimately, even after Rosanna's death and confession, Franklin never takes her seriously or even considers thinking of her as an equal.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 6

Franklin Blake heads to the train station in Frizinghall for his return to London. He is accompanied by Betteredge, who asks, first, if Franklin was "drunk on the night of Rachel's birthday" (he was not) and, secondly, whether he used to sleepwalk as a child (he did not, and he has never heard of his having done so since). Betteredge asks if Franklin really thinks that he might have "took **the Diamond** without knowing it," and whether it makes any sense for him to have also gone to London and pawned it without realizing. As his train approaches, Franklin bids Betteredge goodbye and then notices Ezra Jennings on the platform.

After eliminating the obvious explanations for why Franklin might have stolen the Diamond without realizing it, Betteredge points out the deeper inconsistency in his newfound evidence: that he could not have unknowingly kept the Diamond for weeks, until Cuff resolved his investigation, and brought it to London to sell it. Ezra Jennings's appearance again suggests to the clue-seeking reader that he will resurface in a more significant capacity soon.

When he gets to London, Franklin goes immediately to meet Mr. Bruff at his home and presents the lawyer with Rosanna's letter. Mr. Bruff thinks this document is also telling because it proves that Rachel, too, "believes [he has] stolen **the Diamond**." Franklin must confront Rachel about this belief, Bruff insists, and point out the central gap in the evidence: it is completely possible that someone else was wearing Franklin's nightgown when Rachel's door paint smudged and the crime presumably took place. In fact, by proving her capacity for deception, Bruff thinks, Rosanna's letter undercuts her own credibility; Rachel most likely suspects Franklin because Rosanna showed her the nightgown in an attempt to start conflict, push Rachel and Franklin apart, and create an opening to go after Franklin herself.

Rosanna's letter becomes the subject of a controversy about evidence and testimony, gesturing to the reader's responsibility to vet and read between the lines of the novel's various narratives. Whereas Franklin and Betteredge take Rosanna's letter at face value, the experienced lawyer Bruff clearly sees how she could have deliberately admitted the proof of her guilt and accordingly used the testimony to cover her tracks. The only problem is that this would not explain Rosanna's decision to commit suicide. Still, more generally, Bruff's explanation that Franklin was framed is much more reasonable and more exonerating than anything Betteredge and Franklin managed to come up with; it also raises the sort of doubt about identity and imitation that proves central to the mystery genre, as well as the novel's climax.

Franklin asks what it would mean if he were wearing the nightgown, something Bruff considers impossible to prove. And he wonders if Rachel might have suspected him for any other reason—and remembers an event first recounted "in the eighth chapter of Betteredge's Narrative," when "a foreigner and a stranger" visited him. They had come to collect a debt, which Julia readily paid off when she heard the collectors arguing heatedly with Franklin in the next room. Rachel was furious at him for a day afterward, and Bruff tells Franklin that this may have been "a predisposing influence" to his losing Rachel's trust after the theft of **the Diamond**.

Franklin, like Cuff, sees a clear connection between the Diamond's theft and the family's debts—something that, ironically enough, they are able to incur only because of their social reputation and class status, even when they do not actually have the money that class is supposed to be based on. However, the fact that the debt disappeared meant Franklin had no need for the Diamond and seems an adequate explanation of both his innocence and Rachel's fury at him.

Bruff and Franklin then begin brainstorming how to convince Rachel to meet with Franklin. Bruff suggests Franklin take advantage of the "perverse weakness for" him that Rachel might still possess, and they agree to invite Rachel's over to Bruff's house, which will become "a trap to catch" her. Two days later, she comes under the pretense of meeting Bruff's wife and daughters, who do not know about the men's ulterior motive. Bruff promises that Rachel will be alone in the music-room at three in the afternoon, and merely asks Franklin not to "blame [*him*] for what happens afterwards."

Although Bruff has tenaciously defended Rachel in the past—including by briefly taking guardianship over her (although it is unclear why she needs a guardian)—he is Franklin's lawyer as well as hers, and therefore has to negotiate between his two competing obligations in this situation. Clearly, he conspires with Franklin to surprise Rachel because he thinks their relationship can be repaired, and that their best interests coincide.

While he waits for three o'clock, Franklin peruses his mail and discovers "a letter from Betteredge," explaining to him that he was approached by Ezra Jennings after seeing Franklin at the station and Jennings told him that Mr. Candy wanted to see Franklin for some specific, significant, and secret reason. When his time comes, Franklin enters the Bruff house's garden, moves to the drawing-room, and hears Rachel playing the piano from the adjacent music-room. In a "supreme moment," he enters to meet her.

Two unwelcomed invitations, in quick succession, promise to transform the Moonstone case. Surely enough, Ezra Jennings and Mr. Candy do reemerge in relation to the Moonstone. Rachel's piano playing is a refined performance that highlights her femininity and intelligence and adds a deeper air of expectation to Franklin's approach.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 7

Rachel meets Franklin Blake, who is taciturn and seemingly entranced. She approaches him and Franklin forgets the conflict between them, remembering only "the woman I loved" and then kissing her all over the face. In response, Rachel lets out "a cry of horror" and pushes him away with "merciless anger in her eyes" before calling him a "mean, miserable, heartless coward!" Franklin reprimands her, and she facetiously apologizes for assuming that he would recognize the cowardice in his actions. He asks what actions she is talking about, and she asks if she really needs to explain, after protecting his secret. Distraught, she buries her head in her hands.

Rachel's free creative expression (playing the piano) completely shuts down when she sees Franklin, who fails to consider her perspective and simply treats her as though it doesn't matter that she has distanced herself from him for a year. Clearly, she blames him for some particular act that he is unable to identify; again, like with Rosanna, Franklin cannot relate or reply to Rachel because he has no idea what she is thinking, and they simply speak past one another because of their asymmetric information.

After a long pause, Franklin asks if Rachel will hear his appeal and he tells her everything he has discussed in his narrative thus far. At the end, he asks if Rosanna showed Rachel his nightgown, and she asks if he is "mad" and has only come to try and relieve his guilt through a "pretence of innocence." She declares that she "*saw you take* **the Diamond** *with my own eyes!*"

Rachel reveals the worst and most baffling news possible: Franklin did, indeed, steal the Diamond. How, why, and why he does not remember (or whether he is lying here) are all questions yet to be answered. Franklin seems to have become foreign to himself.

Franklin is shocked and "overwhelmed by the discovery of his own guilt." Rachel explains that she tried to "spare" him and asks "why did you come here to humiliate yourself?" Franklin at once understands her reaction to him and tells her, "Rachel, you once loved me." He holds her hand, but she tells him to "let go of it," and he wonders whether there might still be some piece of evidence that could "be made the means of vindicating [his] innocence in the end."

Like Rosanna's, Rachel's behavior has seemed erratic and secretive throughout the entire novel so far (which is why Sergeant Cuff thought she might have stolen her own Diamond). However, after learning what she experienced, the reader must now re-interpret all her breakdowns and periods of isolation—as well as her decision never to reveal what she saw Franklin do.

Franklin asks if Rachel can recall everything she saw the night of the theft for him, and she reluctantly agrees. She could not sleep that night, and so she dressed to go out and get a book—and then Franklin came to her door, wearing his nightgown and holding a candle, with bright eyes that looked around the room as though he "were afraid of being found out." Rachel "was petrified" and felt she could not move; she is certain that Franklin "never saw [her]." She saw him put down his candle, open her cabinet, take **the Diamond** and hold "still, for what seemed like a long time," before leaving her room (leaving the door open, just as he left the drawer with the Diamond open) and disappearing. Nothing else strange happened that night, Rachel finishes, and she asks if Franklin is satisfied with her report.

The way Franklin enters Rachel's room, silently and with an otherworldly glare, alongside Rachel's reaction to his actions, carry strong overtones of sexual assault, which is metaphorically linked to the Diamond's theft. It becomes clear why Rachel would lose all trust in Franklin and watch her own identity begin to fall apart: the man she most trusted and loved betrayed her through an unprecedented, deceitful, and egotistical crime, silently in the middle of night, by stealing the gift that symbolized her beauty, innocence, and coming of age on her 18th birthday.

In a move he later considers rash and ignorant, Franklin criticizes Rachel for not telling him earlier, and she explodes "with a cry of fury," declaring that Franklin is a "villain" for now telling her she was wrong to hide his secret and not immediately accuse him of being a thief. "In mercy to *her*," Franklin turns and walks out without a word—but Rachel follows him and declares that she "owe[s him] a justification of [her] conduct."

Again, Franklin worsens the situation by reacting before thinking through Rachel's perspective and experience, which is perhaps ironic given his great propensity for planning and philosophical speculation. In as much of a hurry, he abandons the situation he sought to resolve at its worst moment.

Rachel explains that she kept quiet to protect Franklin and even wrote him a letter—which she knows he never got—explaining that she knew he needed money to pay his debts and offering him that money, if only he would secretly return **the Diamond**. But then she took the letter and "tore it up" upon realizing that Franklin himself was enlisting the police's help and starting to lead the investigation, including interviewing Rachel herself about the theft. She then approached him and gave him an opportunity to admit the crime on the terrace—something he misinterpreted and responded to with a "false face of innocence."

In fact, the precise silence that Franklin interpreted as an affront was Rachel's attempt to protect him; like Rosanna, Rachel strained to save Franklin from himself—indeed, from something he did not even realize he had done. Needless to say, by leading the push to call the police on something Rachel already knew he had done, Franklin sent horrendously mixed signals that confounded Rachel. The most logical explanation was that he was continuing to deceive her.

Rachel declares that she saved Franklin's reputation by never admitting what she saw, and insists that she believes he is capable of any lie (including lying to her now) given that she saw him steal **the Diamond**. She believes *he* has pledged the Diamond in London and that his entire story about finding Rosanna's letter and the nightgown is a lie. But she does not understand why he has returned to her—and laments that she "can't tear [him] out of [her] heart, [...] even now!" Franklin insists that "You shall know that you have wronged me, yet [...] Or you shall never see me again," and leaves. On his way out, Rachel shouts that she forgives him and asks him to forgive her, too. But Franklin does not respond.

Understandably, Rachel finds it impossible to believe anything at all that Franklin says—and this inevitably raises the question of whether the reader should, either. Like all of Collins's characters, she remains tortured by opposite feelings: this suspicion and her residual love for Franklin. Both of their personalities begin to destabilize, and the implausible truth throws more and more of the novel's testimony so far into doubt. And Rachel's last words to Franklin show that she—like Rosanna—still believes in love above all else.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 8

In an unexpected "visit from Mr. Bruff," Bruff asks Blake to promise not to visit Rachel again. Bruff both believes Rachel's story and thinks "there must be some dreadful mistake somewhere" that accounts for her having seen Franklin take **the Diamond**. Bruff hopes they can move forward and focus on "what we *can* discover in the future." Namely, he knows that Mr. Luker will withdraw the Moonstone from the bank in a few weeks, at the end of June, and he plans to follow Luker when he does so and discover who actually pawned the Diamond. The Indians are likely to do the same, which makes this a dangerous game.

Realistic and pragmatic as ever, Bruff refocuses on finding the Diamond and clearly recognizes that the facts appear contradictory: Rachel's testimony is both undeniable and impossible (Franklin does not remember taking the Diamond or bringing it to London). He enlists Franklin, now the novel's primary detective figure, in his upcoming second investigation. By raising the prospect of encountering the Diamond in the near future, Bruff also reminds Collins's weekly audience of his own narrative and the general direction of the novel as a whole.

Franklin finds Bruff's plan reasonable, but he cannot stand to wait two weeks, and decides to try to contact Sergeant Cuff in the meantime. He visits Cuff's country retirement cottage—but Cuff has just left for Ireland to learn something new about rose gardening, and so Franklin simply leaves a note and returns home, where he stays up most of the night pondering how the theft was possible, and eventually wondering whether anything exists at all. The next morning, he rediscovers the letter Betteredge had left him, which asks him to talk with "Mr. Candy's remarkable-looking assistant" Ezra Jennings, and he writes a "perfectly commonplace" reply. He thinks through Rachel's birthday dinner and all the guests present, and decides to return to Yorkshire to get a full guest list from Betteredge.

In retirement, Cuff finally has the luxury to put his roses before detective work. Franklin's night of fruitless philosophical speculation both exemplifies the contradictions Betteredge sees in his personality and points to the fruitlessness of theoretical inquiry in an investigation based on the scientific appraisal of evidence. Ezra Jennings is again defined as a sort of mad scientist by his appearance, which seems to in turn define his trustworthiness.

Franklin misses the first train to Yorkshire and must wait three hours for the next; during this time, he decides to visit all the guests he can remember who live in London: Mr. Murthwaite, Godfrey Ablewhite, and Miss Clack. He goes to get their addresses from Mr. Bruff, who denounces him as "fanciful." Bruff says that Godfrey's whereabouts are unknown, and the other two guests are out of England for the time being. Franklin visits Godfrey's club, where some of Godfrey's friends inform him that Godfrey had pursued and broken off an engagement with a rich young heiress, and that one of Clack's friends had left him 5,000 pounds as inheritance, with which he decided to vacation in Europe. In fact, he has already left—the morning before, just like Cuff. "Depressed in spirits," Franklin goes to Frizinghall.

While Godfrey's absence means Franklin's plans to investigate continue getting thwarted, no information in this novel is ever irrelevant; given Mr. Bruff's revelation in his own narrative that Godfrey needed money immediately to pay off debts, Godfrey's new broken engagement suggests that he managed to get the money he needed, and that he either ended up with surplus cash after paying what he owed or simply squandered the money. Otherwise, however, Franklin's investigation severely lacks momentum.

When he reaches Frizinghall, Franklin sends notice to Betteredge and then visits Mr. Candy, who "had expressed a special wish to see [him]." Franklin is astonished to see Candy shriveled and incapacitated by his illness, utterly unrecognizable except for his "tendency to vulgar smartness in his dress." Franklin brings up **the Diamond**, explaining that he has learned the Moonstone might still be found and that he is trying to investigate the night of its disappearance. He immediately realizes that Candy is incapable of following his speech and instead turns to the letter Candy sent to Betteredge. Although he insists his memory is strong, Candy cannot remember its topic—except that it involved Rachel's birthday. Franklin gives up and switches "to topics of local interest" for some half-hour, until he feels it appropriate to leave. On his way out, disappointed at Candy's lapsed memory, Franklin meets Ezra Jennings.

Candy's transformation is another legacy of Rachel's birthday party, after which the doctor fell irreversibly ill from riding home in the rain. Franklin struggles to make sense of whether Candy remains the same person in his mental and physical deterioration, raising an important question about the nature of identity and mirroring Franklin Blake's own struggle to understand if he, or some other version of him, truly stole the Diamond. Candy's inability to remember his intended topic of conversation means that, again, Franklin just narrowly misses what could have been a crucial clue—and then, for the umpteenth time in this chapter, Ezra Jennings intervenes unexpectedly and ominously.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 9

Franklin Blake looks at the notably ugly Ezra Jennings, whose strong but inconsistent features make him "look old and young both together" and make him rather unpopular around town. Jennings admits that Mr. Candy's memory "is hopelessly enfeebled" but thinks "it may be possible to trace Mr Candy's lost recollection." Jennings also explains that he is from a British colony and his mother is not English, which helps Franklin understand his apparent suffering. Jennings recalls the days after Candy fell ill after riding home and visiting a patient in the heavy rain on Rachel's birthday. Jennings saved him by administering stimulants (while other doctors insisted on the opposite treatment), and Jennings owes so much to Candy that he has cared for him nonstop since.

The apparent connection between Jennings's foreignness, his ugliness, and his misfortune shows the dangers of both British xenophobia and first impressions based on attractiveness. From the beginning, Jennings is a tragic figure, his ostracism and mistreatment contrasting profoundly with his apparent brilliance as a doctor and endless care for Mr. Candy. In many ways, his identity is also ambiguous, impossible to be placed: his age, ethnic origins, and history are completely unclear.

During Candy's acute illness, Jennings noted down his "wanderings" to test for research purposes whether "the loss of the faculty of speaking connectedly, implies of necessity the loss of the faculty of thinking connectedly as well." By filling in the gaps between Candy's disconnected utterances, Jennings began to arrive at coherent narratives—and one of these stories is very relevant to Franklin Blake's inquiry, although Jennings is uncertain about the ethics of sharing this information. Franklin explains that he is hoping to learn about **the Moonstone**'s disappearance, something that Jennings laments he cannot help elucidate. At this moment, they realize they must take different paths to their destinations, and Jennings apologizes for being "of no use" in Franklin's investigation. As Jennings begins to head his own way, Franklin realizes he "must tell him the truth" about his own apparent role in the Diamond's theft and calls Jennings back.

Jennings's strategy for reconstructing the meaning behind Candy's words is directly analogous to the investigative process that both Collins's detective characters and his readers undertake: Candy must use certain clues as the key to an invisible but coherent story, filling in the blanks among the evidence Candy gives him to solve a puzzle. Here, this investigative process is presented explicitly within the context of a scientific method, and Jennings's graciousness and ethical concerns show, again, that he is far from the monster many consider him.

Franklin begins to explain that he is accused of stealing **the Diamond**, but first Jennings interrupts him to explain that "a horrible accusation" has ruined his own life and reputation, but he cannot bring himself to admit what it is, and "the wrong is beyond all remedy." He has lost his family and "the woman [he] loved" because of "the vile slander," and even lost another job in rural England before going to work for Mr. Candy. Despite his appearance, he admits, he is only 40. But Jennings believes he "shall be dead" before the news reaches Frizinghall, for he is terminally ill and has grown addicted to opium in his attempt to extend his final years and make "the little sum" he needs to provide for an unnamed love one. Because he is "a dying man," Jennings suggests, he has no time for insincerity and hopes to make some peace with the world.

Jennings's mysterious "accusation" is a clear foil for Franklin's role in the Moonstone's theft; their parallel admissions of vulnerability solidify their bond and their chance to help one another (Jennings can help exonerate Franklin and fulfill his desire to be a force for good in the world by doing so). Like Julia Verinder, Jennings is terminally ill and making his final preparations for death. His opium addiction is directly based on the author's, which was so severe while Collins was writing The Moonstone *that he reportedly forgot his own novel's ending.*

After Jennings's speech, Franklin admits that Rachel saw him steal **the Diamond**. Jennings jumps up excitedly and asks Franklin if he has "ever been accustomed to the use of opium." Franklin denies it but admits that he was "unusually restless and irritable" last year, and unable to sleep most nights—except the night of Rachel's birthday. Jennings declares that he is "absolutely certain [...] that [he] can prove [Franklin] to have been unconscious of" stealing the Diamond. Suddenly, a man calls Jennings for an appointment, and Jennings tells Franklin to meet him two hours later at Mr. Candy's house.

Jennings's astonishing revelation leaves the reader unsatisfied, prolonging Collins's signature suspense but heavily insinuating that the theft might have had something to do with opium. Jennings's apparently prophetic knowledge of what Franklin must have undergone recalls Sergeant Cuff's remarkable predictions and raises the perennial question of whether Jennings is merely a brilliant scientist or has some mystical ability like the Indians purport (as always in The Moonstone, *the answer is the former).*

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: THIRD NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE: CHAPTER 10

Franklin first spends two hours anxiously pacing around and postponing his planned meetings with Mrs. Ablewhite and Betteredge. When the time is up, Franklin meets Jennings in a surgery room at Mr. Candy's house. Jennings has papers out and repeats his question to Franklin about opium, before adding that Franklin is merely "not aware of ever having taken opium" and asking about Franklin's argument with Mr. Candy on the night of Rachel's birthday (Franklin summarizes that he "had attacked the art of medicine," frustrating Mr. Candy). Finally, Jennings asks whether Franklin had "any special anxiety about **the Diamond**," and Franklin declares that he "had the strongest reasons for feeling [such] anxiety."

Jennings continues to build suspense, gathering important preliminary information before he dares to reveal his theory (and, in doing so, violate Mr. Candy's privacy). All the circumstances he cites show the complexity of the causality behind whatever happened that night. Jennings sees that the confluence of diverse circumstances and actors, rather than one person's individual malice, led to the theft. At last, Franklin's animosity towards science and medicine returns to hurt him—which is perhaps Collins's way of encouraging his readers to trust the emerging medical establishment in Victorian England.

Jennings declares that he has the solution: Franklin "took **the Diamond**, in a state of trance, produced by opium [...] given to [him] by Mr. Candy" in order to prove his point about the capacity of medicine. Jennings admits that Candy's "dreadful mischief" was "innocent," and that Candy was planning to return to the Verinder estate the next morning to admit his trick—a plan that, of course, Candy's illness thwarted. Jennings produces his transcription of the words and phrases Candy repeated, and then his new filled-in version, in which Candy appears to admit having slipped Franklin laudanum. Although Franklin does not know much about Laudanum, he admits that he "feel[s] convinced" that it accounts for his behavior.

Jennings's remarkable solution to the theft perfectly explains both how Franklin could have stolen the jewel in front of Rachel and how he could have had no recollection of it the next morning. The course of events appears to be nobody's fault in particular, but rather the result of various small responsibilities added together: Candy's pride, Franklin's anxiety about the Diamond, and the unexpected rain, plus Rachel's insistence on leaving the stone unlocked and whatever circumstances left Franklin without the Diamond in the morning.

"The next question," Jennings continues, is how "to carry our conviction to the minds of other people." His notes are insufficient, since they "represent a medical and metaphysical theory" and could have been falsified. Rather, they "must put [their] conviction to the proof." Jennings proposes "a bold experiment" involving "personal inconvenience" on Franklin's part: they will replicate the circumstances of the last year and Franklin "shall steal **the Diamond**, unconsciously, for the second time, in the presence of witnesses whose testimony is beyond dispute!" The first step is for Franklin to quit smoking (again), and subsequently they must return him to the same house and same obsession with the Diamond that entranced him the year before. Jennings points Franklin to some scientific literature showing that people could repeat or remember their past actions when given the same substances as in the past. Franklin agrees that this proposal carries scientific weight.

In a brilliant twist, the investigation now will require the crime to be committed, again—just as Franklin has broken the thief's cardinal rule (acting intentionally), he and Jennings will now disrupt the very distinction between crime and investigation, as well as guilt and innocence: Franklin must prove his innocence *by showing that he did, indeed, commit the theft. Jennings's distinction between theoretical and demonstrable knowledge again illustrates the novel's argument about knowledge and evidence—mere persuasion is meaningless in* The Moonstone, *and only verifiable proof does any good, whether for investigative purposes or for the sake of legitimating a theory. Jennings's "bold experiment" is actually the novel's second: the first was Cuff's decision to tell Rachel about Rosanna's death (which did nothing but reveal that Rachel and Rosanna were not, in fact, working together).*

Jennings admits that it will be impossible to "exactly reproduce [...] the conditions as they existed last year," but he thinks the experiment should be enough to prove Franklin's innocence if it goes correctly. Franklin's only question is why laudanum would have made him walk around, not go straight to sleep, and Jennings declares Franklin mistaken—not only is Jennings on laudanum right now, but he also points Franklin to the famous book *Confessions of an English opium Eater*, whose author Thomas De Quincey wrote about exploring London on the drug, which has "a stimulating influence first, and a sedative influence afterwards." This "stimulating influence," Jennings suggests, might have turned Franklin's anxiety about **the Diamond** into a quest to preserve it. Under the "sedative influence," Franklin would have "fall[en] into a deep sleep" and in the morning he would have forgotten everything.

Beyond all the inversions and ironies already present in the experiment, Jennings's description of the opium's effect reveals one more irony: Franklin might have stolen the Diamond precisely out of an effort to protect it from being stolen. *While Collins's experiment itself is more theatrical than precise, his understanding of opium and reference to its literature are in line with both his own experiences and the fervor surrounding the drug (and its accompanying literature) in his day, as opium treatments and addictions spread rapidly in England.*

Franklin asks if Jennings can figure out what happened after he took **the Diamond**, and Jennings suggests he might have hidden it for apparent safekeeping after taking it—in a place he might be able to recall during the experiment. Franklin points out that the Diamond is pledged in London with Mr. Luker, but Jennings suggests that this theory "rests on a mere assumption" and could be completely wrong—perhaps the Indians wrongly searched Luker and Godfrey Ablewhite, and Luker was telling the truth when he said he knew nothing of the Moonstone.

Jennings's experiment actually has two goals: to prove that Jennings took the Diamond, of course, but also to figure out what happened to the Diamond afterward. Currently, both of these questions remain up in the air; although Bruff already has plans to trace the Diamond from the bank, the reader truly cannot know if it will turn up there, and must—like the novel's characters—rely on their best hunches.

Franklin proposes contacting Bruff, and Jennings tells him to do so and quit smoking at once. Jennings emphasizes that it is crucial to rearrange the house exactly as it was before, and he offers to write Rachel on behalf of Franklin (since she likely has "a strong interest in the attempt to prove [his] innocence"). They part, but not before Jennings reiterates that "this little service" would be "like a last gleam of sunshine" for him. Franklin writes that the record of this experiment continues in Ezra Jennings's journal.

Ultimately, Franklin finds an excellent way to pass the two weeks before the Moonstone's removal from the bank, as well as to jumpstart and finally repair his relationship with Rachel, depending what she thinks of the experiment.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FOURTH NARRATIVE: EZRA JENNINGS

Ezra Jennings's narration consists of passages from his journal, copied directly. On June 15, 1849, he writes that he has mailed Rachel a letter asking if she will agree to the experiment he has planned with Franklin Blake.

Jennings's journal is the only part of the novel written in real time and organized by date, not by chapter. As the reader later finds out, this is because it was a pre-existing document, and Ezra Jennings could not write a narrative for inclusion in the novel.

On June 16, Ezra Jennings (who is suffering from opium withdrawal) writes that he has found Franklin Blake "miserable [and] restless" as a result of quitting smoking, and that Franklin must go outside to work up an appetite for dinner. He tells Franklin that he has written Rachel and Franklin describes Betteredge's objections to the opium experiment. Ezra Jennings wonders why he feels such an "attraction" to Franklin, whether it is because (unlike everyone else) Franklin is kind to him or because he allows Jennings to feel sympathy, just as his addiction empties him of feeling.

Jennings and Franklin are again mirrors of one another, here because of their parallel experiences of drug withdrawal. Jennings's confusion about his feelings for Franklin suggests that, after a life spent emotionally isolated from others, he has finally gotten a chance to connect with someone on an equal and fundamental level. Although he has also dedicated his life to helping people through medicine, he has remained anonymous and received little acknowledgment for doing so.

On June 17, Jennings writes that Mr. Candy is leaving for a trip, which allows him to avoid discussing his experiment. Rachel has written Jennings back, insisting that Jennings's explanation "satisfied her of Mr. Blake's innocence" and revealing her obvious love for Franklin. Jennings, whose own "love has been torn from" him, feels that he can live vicariously through "these two young people [whom he is bringing] together again." Rachel has asked, first, that Franklin not see her letter, and secondly, that she may go to Yorkshire, arrange the house, and be "present as one of the witnesses" for the experiment. Jennings suspects that she wants to tell Franklin firsthand that she considers him innocent, but he worries that this would interfere with the experiment by throwing off Franklin's emotions. Jennings wonders how he can satisfy Rachel's request without introducing this interference.

Jennings's involvement in both attempting to prove Franklin's innocence and mediating between Franklin and Rachel allows him to symbolically compensate for his own failed romance. Rachel's interest in helping conduct the experiment shows that, despite some of the characters' suspicions about Jennings, the attempt to exonerate Franklin will be a team effort. But Jennings is still concerned with making the experiment as scientific as possible—letting Franklin see Rachel before reenacting the crime would almost certainly redirect his anxieties away from the Moonstone (which Jennings plans to discuss with him) and onto the results of the experiment and its consequences for his relationship with Rachel.

Later that day, Jennings visits Franklin, who is feeling somewhat better. Jennings wants to keep him "not too well" and "not too ill." He tells Franklin that Rachel has consented to the experiment, but not that she is eager to see him proven innocent. Jennings then suffers an acute attack of his opium withdrawal and later writes back to Rachel, suggesting she arrive on the night of the experiment rather than coming to Yorkshire earlier and talking with Franklin.

Jennings continues trying to manage Franklin's condition, keeping him focused on the experiment at hand. This requires shielding him from normal life and isolating him like a lab rat. This also helps explain why the reader learns about this experiment from Ezra Jennings's perspective and not from Franklin Blake's.

On June 18, Jennings writes that he fears he will return to opium, as his withdrawal symptoms are worsening. Betteredge is with Franklin when Jennings arrives for his visit in Yorkshire, and Franklin explains that Bruff wrote him and "expressed the strongest disapproval" of the planned experiment, having asked for the opinion of "an eminent physician" down in London. Bruff refused to talk about **the Moonstone**, which he and Mr. Muthwaite were confident remained in Mr. Luker's possession. Jennings believes "that distrust of *me* was at the bottom of all this," but Franklin's faith in him remains unshaken.

Whether Betteredge and Bruff are prejudiced toward the pariah figure of Jennings or simply confused about the prospect of reenacting the crime is unclear. It seems that, while Franklin and Jennings are worried primarily about repairing Franklin's relationship with Rachel, Betteredge and Bruff are focused on getting the Diamond back. This difference in priorities may stem from a difference in personality or sense of value: Betteredge and Bruff are worldly and practical, focused on status and money, whereas Franklin and Jennings are emotion- and relationship-driven.

Betteredge turns to Jennings, expresses his stern disapproval of the experiment, and yet promises that he will faithfully carry out his orders, as always. He asks for Jennings's specific directions—to decorate the house exactly like the year before (besides the few things that cannot exactly be replicated). Betteredge asks about a long list of minutiae (for instance, does he need to replace the pins under the carpet? and does he need to repair the "statue of a fat naked child"—Cupid—whose wing fell off?). "Speaking as a servant," Betteredge thanks Jennings for his information, and "speaking as a man," he tells Jennings that his "head is full of maggots."

Betteredge presents his conscience as split: he personally objects to the experiment but remains professionally committed to executing Rachel's orders perfectly. (This raises the question of in which capacity, personal or professional, he wrote his narrative.) But, clearly, he has trouble holding these apart, and his condescending tone while going over the details of his job provide a comic foil to the similarly over-serious (but much more self-aware) Mr. Jennings.

The next day, on June 19, Jennings writes that he received a letter from Mrs. Merridew, who complains that she cannot send the 19-year-old Rachel away "without a 'chaperone.'" Jennings interprets this as proof "that Mrs. Merridew stands in mortal fear of the opinion of the world." Unfortunately, Jennings could not care less about the world, and only wants to reunite Rachel and Franklin, "two young people who love each other."

Mrs. Merridew's request clashes with Rachel's independence and intelligence. She is certainly an adult capable of acting alone, although social norms mean both that people continue to treat her as a child and that she cannot be seen visiting a house full of men alone.

On June 20, Jennings writes that Franklin's condition is starting to approximate "his continued restlessness" at the time of **the Diamond**'s theft, and also that Sergeant Cuff wrote to Franklin from Ireland. Cuff has written that, if he "made any serious mistake" in his initial investigation, he will return to correct it, but that otherwise he hopes "to remain in his retirement" with his roses. Jennings asks Franklin to offer Cuff all the relevant details of the last year and to ask the Sergeant to serve as another witness during "the experiment."

So far, the experiment seems to be working: Franklin is nearly ready to reenact the theft. Cuff's retirement suggests that he has finally won the life of peace, solitude, and aesthetic pleasure he long desired—but he remains committed to carrying out justice, no matter the cost, and holds these opposite halves of his personality together.

Jennings and Franklin then visit the Verinder house, where Betteredge is directing the renovations, which may not be going quickly enough. Betteredge stops Jennings on his way out to offer some insight from **Robinson Crusoe**. Torn between his private reservations about the doctor's "hocus-pocus" and his official orders to arrange for it, Betteredge explains, he opened the book the previous night and came upon a passage that declared he should always follow "the secret Dictate" in his heart. When Jennings says his conviction in his experiment is not "at all shaken," Betteredge laments Jennings's lack of familiarity with *Robinson Crusoe* and sees him out. Franklin tells Jennings that, by revealing that he fails to "believe in *Robinson Crusoe*," he has "fallen to the lowest possible place in Betteredge's estimation."

The hyperrational Betteredge's irrational faith in Robinson Crusoe again makes him look like a walking contradiction. Whereas Jennings is acquainted with a broad field of scientific knowledge, Betteredge believes his favorite book to be the end-all-be-all of all knowledge whatsoever. Of course, Betteredge uses this book to resolve his other contradiction—that between his job and "the secret Dictate" (his personal beliefs)—as well to make estimations about the worth of all the people around him.

On June 21, Jennings writes that Franklin's condition has worsened and he has been forced to prescribe medicine. And Jennings has returned to his opium—"five hundred drops," his usual dose.

Jennings's typical dose attests to the severity of his addiction. However, this does not at all compromise his reliability as a scientist.

On June 22, Jennings writes that both he and Franklin are feeling much better, and that the house is nearly ready. As witnesses, he has secured Mr. Bruff and Sergeant Cuff, in addition to Rachel and Betteredge (and maybe Mrs. Merridew).

Jennings's witnesses are the key to his experiment's reliability, because only they can confirm to the outside world what Franklin has done.

On June 23, Jennings and Franklin feel worse again, and Franklin nearly returns to smoking—but throws the key to his cigar-drawer out the window instead. On June 24, Jennings writes that Franklin was "over-wrought [and] over-excited" in the morning, but improved after a carriage ride.

Jennings again points to the necessity of managing Franklin's condition: if he gets too "over-excited" about the prospect of proving his innocence, he might forget about the experiment itself.

On June 25, Jennings writes excitedly after arriving at the Verinder house, it is finally time for his "experiment." Blake is "in a state of nervous sensitiveness" worsened by his sleep deprivation, and Jennings is eager to see whether the conditions have been replicated closely enough for the experiment to work. He plans to write in his journal to keep a record throughout the day. In the morning, he notes, a letter arrived confirming Rachel and Mrs. Merridew were setting out for Yorkshire. Betteredge is "in his best black suit, and his stiffest white cravat," but still disappointed in Jennings's lack of acquaintance with **Robinson Crusoe**. Bruff has reluctantly agreed to come, as well, and "nothing has been heard of Sergeant Cuff."

As the crucial moment approaches, Jennings and Franklin are torn between their desire to replicate the previous year's conditions and the impossibility of doing so. Beyond the testimony of the witnesses, Jennings's journal is another means by which he can make a record of his experiment. Despite his private reservations, Betteredge still treats the experiment with the requisite seriousness. And Sergeant Cuff apparently does not think the experiment necessary to solve the Diamond's theft.

At 7:00 in the evening, Jennings writes that he has tried to bring Franklin Blake back to his previous routine, with "a pleasant stroll in the shrubbery" and plans to eat dinner at the exact same time as the night of **the Moonstone**'s disappearance, so that Franklin can have digested to the same extent when he takes the laudanum at night. Jennings hopes to bring up the Moonstone after dinner and before slipping Franklin the medicine.

Jennings's careful planning and attention to detail become especially crucial on the night of the experiment, when Franklin's mental state will prove crucial to the outcome. This underlines the general uncertainty and difficulty of fixing conditions in an experiment that is at once psychological, physiological, and chemical.

At 8:30 PM, Jennings writes that he has visited the medicine cabinet to prepare the dose of Laudanum, and decided to increase this dose: the amount Mr. Candy stated he gave Franklin Blake was unlikely to create symptoms, and so Jennings is convinced Mr. Candy measured wrongly. Upping the dose also allows him to counteract the fact that Franklin knows he will be drugged.

Jennings introduces some uncertainty into his experiment, but he believes that he is correcting for errors in his other variables.

At 10:00 PM, Jennings writes that "the witnesses" arrived an hour before, and he brought Franklin to his bedroom to ensure it was appropriately replicated. Bruff arrives and is clearly skeptical of Jennings. They agree that Franklin will not know about Rachel and Mrs. Merridew's presence until after the experiment.

Despite his meticulousness, Jennings understandably remains the target of others' suspicion for his "bold experiment." The only way he can convince them is by scientifically proving his hypothesis.

Then, Jennings meets Rachel, who declares she is delighted to see him, despite his "ugly wrinkled face." She asks him a series of rapid-fire questions and proclaims her love for Franklin. Jennings promises her that she needs only repeat the same words to Franklin to win him back.

Rachel's enthusiasm, quite the opposite of her attitude toward Franklin the last time she saw him, indicates that she has already forgiven him: she just needed a way to separate his actions from his intentions.

Next, Jennings meets with the harrowed and anxious Mrs. Merridew, who asks if (like all the science experiments she remembers from school) Jennings's experiment will "end in an explosion." In fact, she is already convinced of this, "resigned to the explosion," and simply asks that it not happen once she is already asleep.

Mrs. Merridew's inane question is, like Betteredge's overly serious manner, comic relief amidst Ezra Jennings's morbid seriousness. Her complete misconception about what is going on appears to be a stand-in for the average Englishperson's ignorance about science.

At once, Betteredge arrives, declaring that Franklin wishes to speak with Jennings, and he tells Rachel to tell Mrs. Merridew that the explosion is planned for the following morning. Jennings goes inside and finds Franklin agitated in his room, asking for Bruff, who is busy working in the next room. Franklin asks when it is time for his laudanum, and Jennings implores him to wait, since he knows that Mr. Candy must have originally given Franklin the drugs sometime around 11:00. Jennings and Franklin briefly chat, and then Jennings leaves to prepare the laudanum.

Rather than explaining the truth about the experiment to Mrs. Merridew, the others simply offer her a false explanation that she can believe—she is, in every way, completely extraneous and irrelevant to the day's events. Franklin's preoccupation about the course of the experiment threatens to take his mind off the Moonstone and potentially make him remember that he is undergoing a reenactment at the crucial moment when he is about to re-steal the Diamond.

Jennings notes that the weather is calm, as on the night of **the Diamond**'s theft, and Betteredge brings Jennings a letter from Rachel, who wishes to watch Jennings prepare the laudanum. Betteredge is surprised and suspicious when Jennings asks him to bring the medicine-chest to Rachel's sitting-room. Jennings also asks Bruff "to be present" for the preparation of the laudanum and then to wait in Franklin Blake's room. (He agrees, as long as he gets to continue working with his papers.) Franklin calls over from the next room to insult Bruff's indifference.

Rachel's desire to involve herself as much as possible in the experiment without compromising it reflects her hope that she might, at last, be able to forgive Franklin. On the other hand, Bruff's utter lack of interest shows that his only interest in the experiment is serving as a witness, as needed. Unsurprisingly, Franklin is offended that his own lawyer takes such little interest in his innocence (a matter which would not affect the rest of the search for the Diamond).

Betteredge, Bruff, and Jennings meet Rachel in her sitting-room. Rachel agrees to replicate everything exactly like the year before, and requests to help Jennings make Franklin's water with laudanum. She kisses the glass and tells Jennings to "give it to him on that side!" She puts "the piece of crystal which was to represent **the Diamond**" in her cabinet and turns out her lights; Jennings gives Franklin his laudanum and puts him to bed. Jennings, Betteredge, and Bruff sit behind curtains in the same room—the suspicious witnesses grow intrigued and anxious to see what will happen.

The atmosphere surrounding the final preparations underlines how different of an experience the experiment is for Franklin and everyone around him, all of whom are dedicated to cultivating his own individual experience. Although their goal is to prevent Franklin from obsessing about the experiment he is knowingly participating in, they worry for him. His success is a collective effort.

Franklin Blake is restless and worries that the opium is not yet taking effect. Jennings decides to distract him by talking about **the Diamond**, referring to the last year's events in detail to "fill his mind" with the subject. In the minutes before midnight, Jennings notices the laudanum begin to take effect, and he signals to Bruff and Betteredge that they should remove their boots, in case they need to follow Franklin.

By bringing up the Diamond, Jennings draws Franklin to the topic he was focused on during the night of Rachel's birthday. Already familiar with the drug's effects, Jennings realizes immediately when it begins to hit Franklin—he is watching a familiar experience of his own from the outside.

After a few minutes, Franklin starts muttering to himself, "I wish I had never taken it out of the bank." He gets out of bed and continues talking about **the Diamond**—"anybody might take it […] the Indians may be hidden in the house." And then, suddenly, Franklin gets back into bed—and back out again. He brings a candle and walks out of his room, down the corridors, to Rachel's sitting-room. The witnesses watch from a crack in the door hinge as Franklin goes into Rachel's darkened room and takes out the imitation Diamond. Jennings hopes that Franklin's next actions might reveal what happened to the Diamond. Franklin stumbles over to Rachel's sofa and lays down on it, drops the Diamond on the floor, and falls asleep. Jennings declares the experiment over.

After many pages of fanfare to build suspense, the experiment passes in a rush: Franklin's focus on the Diamond translates into a search for it so that he can prevent it from being stolen—and, ironically, for that very purpose, he ends up stealing it. (This is a key example of the contradictions Collins sees in each of his characters' consciousnesses.) Ultimately, however, it is impossible to ever know for certain whether this is also what happened on the night of the theft: as Ezra Jennings is well aware, the experiment can only ever be an approximation, and the same dose of opium under the same condition could still produce different effects.

With Franklin Blake fast asleep, the witnesses begin to talk about what they should do with him. Rachel suggests they merely let him sleep there, and they agree. They also agree with Jennings that the experiment proves Franklin did take **the Diamond**, unwittingly, the year before. But the experiment's second purpose—to find out what *did* happen to the Diamond—was not achieved. And Jennings is not surprised, since perfectly reproducing the conditions from the year before would have been impossible, and he may have given Franklin too much laudanum. Bruff and Betteredge both admit that they were wrong to doubt Jennings, and admit that the experiment has proven that Franklin took the Diamond.

If Franklin truly did drop the Diamond on the floor after originally taking it, then someone else must have in turn taken it from him. Otherwise, it may remain inexplicably hidden in the house, but this is unlikely. This experiment, unlike most in science, is not replicable—so the protagonists can only guess and move on. Bruff and Betteredge's surprise at the experiment's result reveals that it was ignorant of them to initially discount Jennings's skill as a scientist based on his reputation and appearance. In short, it is a victory for evidence over snap intuitive judgments.

Bruff asks how they might figure out where **the Diamond** is now, and notes that he is still planning to follow Mr. Luker when he retrieves it from the bank sometime the same month. He insists Franklin Blake follow him to London, and Jennings agrees to help convince him.

While Franklin has exonerated himself, the case of the Moonstone remains open. The protagonists must continue investigating where the stone is now, and Franklin has finally won a right to be one of the investigators.

Rachel comes out of her room to watch Franklin, which she does attentively all night. Jennings remembers his own love and loss in his youth, and writes the present long entry in his journal. After briefly taking leave to suffer a withdrawal attack in the morning, Jennings returns to find Rachel kissing Franklin on the forehead. Around 8:00 AM, she is positioned so that "when [Franklin's] eyes first open, they must open on her face." And by 11:00 AM, everyone has returned to London but Jennings, who declares that his "brief dream of happiness is over" and prepares to return to his "friendless and lonely life." But he is grateful to have played a part in reuniting Rachel and Franklin, and looks forward to their wedding.

The reenactment undoes the theft's effect on Rachel and Franklin. Now, Rachel transforms her original gaze at Franklin—when she froze up in her bed, watching him steal her Diamond—into a gaze of affection and care, aimed at confirming for him that his success in the experiment has won back her loyalty and faith. Jennings completes his goal—to live vicariously through Rachel and Franklin's love, when he could never have his own—but still seems to believe that his benevolent actions will never make up for his failures in life.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: FIFTH NARRATIVE: FRANKLIN BLAKE

Franklin Blake picks up the morning after Ezra Jennings's experiment, "perfectly ignorant of all that I had said and done under the influence of the opium." He and Rachel immediately return to their earlier affection (and Mrs. Merridew almost discovers them while searching for the explosion—which the others promise her was quite timid). Rachel decides to follow Franklin and Bruff to trace **the Moonstone** in London, and Betteredge begins resetting the house to normal. Everyone was "very sad" that Ezra Jennings could not accompany them.

Although Jennings considered his experiment a failure, for the sake of the novel it is a resounding success: while it does not reveal what happened to the Moonstone, it repairs the schism between Rachel and Franklin, which appears more important to everyone involved. Now, heading to London to investigate the bank, the characters can carry out the investigation as a unified team. Despite Jennings's lament at the end of his journal, Franklin's narrative makes it clear that Jennings won the affection and regard he was seeking—and that, at least at the very end of his life, his isolation became a choice and habit, rather than a punishment from the rest of society.

When the group arrives in London, a boy with incredibly large eyes meets them at the train platform and Bruff and Franklin go with him. Bruff explains that Mr. Luker has recently been seen with two police officers, and that this likely means he is going to the bank to withdraw **the Moonstone**, for some fear of the Indians. The boy, Bruff explains, "is one of the sharpest boys in London" and does errands for his office. The other workers have nicknamed him "Gooseberry." Gooseberry accompanies Bruff and Franklin inside the crowded bank, where they learn from two of Bruff's associates that Mr. Luker has recently gone "into the inner office." Franklin does not see any of the Indians, but he and Bruff keep an eye out for "their spy."

The group arrives just in time to meet Mr. Luker at the bank. Of course, Luker is hidden inside, leaving his intentions and the suspenseful question of whether he truly has the Moonstone a secret. The Indians are also not present, which suggests they have a more complex plan (and perhaps more precise knowledge about the gem's whereabouts). The unexpectedly, inexplicably competent Gooseberry serves as a stand-in for Sergeant Cuff, exhibiting an apparently inborn knack for investigative thinking. The bank becomes a field of possible suspects and clues—but unlike at the Verinder estate, here the investigation is happening in real time.

All of the sudden, Mr. Luker and the two plainclothes police officers come out of the bank offices, and Franklin and Bruff watch Luker intently as he darts through the crowd, waiting for him to hand over **the Diamond**. He seems to touch "a short, stout man" and then disappears out the door. And when Bruff turns to confer with the others, one of his associates and Gooseberry have disappeared. Bruff and Franklin follow the man in the grey suit, who ends up going to the chemist's office where he works—and seems to have nothing to do with the Moonstone.

Suddenly, the stakes are enormous: a split second makes or breaks the characters' now yearlong (and book-long) search for the Moonstone. Luker is clearly prepared to throw them off the trail, as he intentionally sends decoys to cover for his client. Again, the investigators' challenge is to distinguish between true and false identities.

Franklin and Bruff meet Bruff's second associate, who has followed another man who also turned out to have no relation to **the Moonstone**. And after dinner, the policeman sent to protect Mr. Luker report that he had an ordinary night: he returned home and went to bed, and nobody suspicious loitered around the house. He dismissed the policemen, which means he almost certainly does not have the Diamond with him. Gooseberry never turns up. Blake leaves a note instructing the boy to meet him at Rachel's place, and when Blake arrives there hours later than he anticipated, he discovers a note from the boy, who visited but fell asleep waiting. Gooseberry promises to visit the next morning.

Gooseberry appears to offer Bruff and Franklin's only chance at tracing the Diamond. Unfortunately, Franklin's self-indulgence costs him a night's worth of investigation and possibly gives the Indians an opportunity at a head start.

The next morning, Franklin calls Gooseberry inside, but discovers that his visitor is not Gooseberry at all: it is Sergeant Cuff. Dressed in white, "as if he had lived in the country all his life," Cuff offers complaints about London and declares that he has just returned from Ireland. After receiving Franklin's letter, he admits that "I completely mistook the case" the year before, but offers that "it's only in books that the officers of the detective force are superior to the weakness of making a mistake." He has come to reconsider the case, "in grateful remembrance of" Julia's generous check (although he will refuse further payment).

In a startling twist, Cuff resurfaces after disappearing for roughly half the book and offers a witty metatextual comment about his function as a plot device: like the men Luker approached at the bank, Cuff's theory was a distraction to throw the reader off course, indeed breaking the presumption that "the officers of the detective force are superior to the weakness of making a mistake." Retirement clearly changes his persona, not only through his clothes and newfound affinity for the countryside, but also by cheering him up—although his principled dedication to finishing the case right and repaying Julia remains the same.

Franklin tells Cuff about Ezra Jennings's experiment, and together they begin speculating about what Franklin must have done with **the Moonstone** after returning to his room. Cuff offers a sealed letter that he promises contains his best theory of the case and argues that his primary suspect as named in the letter—in addition to Mr. Luker—should be watched for the foreseeable future.

Cuff again makes a bold prediction, forcing the reader to consider whether he remains a reliable source (like when he leaves Betteredge with three predictions at the end of the first narrative). Ultimately, then, Cuff's return is about winning back his own reputation, as well as solving the crime.

Gooseberry arrives soon after and is star-struck to realize that Franklin's other guest is Cuff. They exchange introductions—in the course of which Gooseberry reveals his name to be "Octaivus Guy"—and Cuff asks what Gooseberry was doing the day before, when he was "missed at the bank." He was following a dark-skinned man "dressed like a sailor," whom the others had suspected of working for the Indians, and whom Gooseberry had seen receiving something from Luker. Gooseberry followed the man as he darted outside and got into a cab.

Cuff's reputation clearly precedes him, and his meeting with Gooseberry likely startles the boy because it transforms his investigative work from informal to official. The "sailor" seems like he might be Indian and might be heading out of the country soon—so Bruff and Franklin assumed he was their competition, not their target. (Of course, as always in this novel, appearances deceived.)

Briefly, one of Mr. Bruff's clerks stops in to report that his boss is sick and that he, the clerk, will fill in for the time being. Franklin explains that Sergeant Cuff's arrival makes this needless and sends the man back to Bruff, whom he promises to keep updated.

Bruff's surrogate reinforces the novel's fixation on substitutions and changes in identity—and foreshadows the end of the chapter.

Franklin returns to Cuff, who declares that Gooseberry certainly "followed the right man." They get in a cab for central London as Cuff proclaims that Gooseberry has a future in detective work. Cuff explains what Gooseberry told him while Franklin was meeting with Bruff's clerk: the sailor went to the Tower Wharf, where he tried to board a boat for Rotterdam overnight—but was rejected, as the boat was being cleaned. As he followed the sailor to an eating-house, Gooseberry noticed a man who looked like "a respectable mechanic" also following the sailor, and he saw an Indian-looking man stop in a taxi to talk with the mechanic. Franklin realizes that the sailor is not the Indians' employee, but more likely "the man who had got **the Diamond**."

Between Gooseberry, Franklin, and Cuff, the cab is full of three generations of three very different types of detective figures—which attests to their abundance and cooperation in The Moonstone. *Franklin realizes that the sailor was a brilliant man for the Diamond's thief to send, precisely because of the snap judgments the British men would make about someone who looked Indian. This means the "mechanic" was working for the Indians, who were on the sailor's trail from the moment he left the bank. The protagonists and Indians are now racing to recover—or, depending on one's perspective, steal—the Moonstone from this man.*

Eventually, the mechanic and then Gooseberry followed the sailor into the eating-house. The mechanic and the sailor ate quietly, reading newspapers, at separate tables until late in the night. The mechanic and Gooseberry then followed the sailor to a pub, "The Wheel of Fortune," and the sailor asked for a room. After he went up to his room, the mechanic soon disappeared, and an argument ensued upstairs. Suddenly appearing drunk, the mechanic got thrown out of the pub for entering the sailor's room (which he claimed was his own) and Gooseberry followed him outside. As soon as he distanced himself from the pub, the mechanic "recovered his balance instantly, and became [...] sober." Gooseberry returned to the pub, but nothing happened, and on his way to talk with Bruff he saw the mechanic approach the pub, see a light turned on upstairs, and leave in apparent satisfaction.

The pub's name, "The Wheel of Fortune," directly references the game of chance all three parties (the protagonists, the Indians, and the thief) seem to be playing over the Diamond. Clearly, the mechanic feigned drunkenness as a cover to surveil the sailor's room, in preparation for a later attempt to recover the Diamond. This false intoxication is a direct reference to Franklin's actual state when he took the Diamond—just like Franklin is considered innocent because of his state, the mechanic gets away with his own sinister act by pretending to be drunk.

Sergeant Cuff tells Franklin what he suspects: the sailor likely had **the Diamond**, the Indians likely sent the mechanic, and the mechanic likely went upstairs in the pub in order to get "a description of the [sailor's] room" for the Indians. The next step will be to visit the Wheel of Fortune—where they are headed now—and investigate, although Cuff regrets that they could not have done this the previous night (due to Franklin's tardiness).

Cuff's summary of events confirms that Franklin's recklessness the night before might have (again) cost them the Diamond. In fact, Franklin's conversation with Bruff's employee also set him back in the present, enough that the group has nearly arrived at "The Wheel of Fortune" by the time Cuff catches him up.

There is clearly "something wrong" at the Wheel of Fortune: "a bewildered servant girl" is tending bar, the actual barmaid is inside, and the landlord is busy upstairs. When they meet him upstairs and Sergeant Cuff introduces himself, the landlord immediately turns apologetic and explains that the sailor "is upsetting the whole house." The sailor disappeared overnight and left his door locked, even though he had asked to be called at 7:00 AM. He has still not been found, and the landlord is currently sending for a carpenter to open the door. The sailor was "perfectly sober" but did not pay the room in advance, and could have escaped through a trapdoor onto the roof.

Like with Cuff's investigation at the Verinder estate, the Moonstone's arrival again throws a house into discord, jumbling its ordinary social hierarchy. The commotion suggests that Franklin, Cuff, and Gooseberry have indeed come to the right scene, but arrived too late.

The carpenter arrives and opens the door, which is barricaded from the inside. The sailor is not gone, but laying on the bed, dead. While Cuff investigates the body, the fascinated Gooseberry leads Franklin to an empty jewel box in the corner of the room, and a torn piece of paper noting that this box, with "a valuable of great price," was retrieved from the bank by Mr. Luker. Cuff shows Franklin that the sailor's face is actually a disguise. After pulling off the wig and beard, then washing the makeup off the man's face, Cuff comes to Franklin "with horror in his face." He asks Franklin to read his sealed letter—inside, it says "Godfrey Ablewhite," the same person lying dead on the bed.

By again invoking the trope of false identity, the shocking end to Franklin's narrative reveals the thief's identity once and for all: it is clear that the Indians have gotten the Moonstone, but also that the Diamond's loss was not necessarily the most important conflict that needed resolution in the novel—not, at least, in comparison to the family conflict the Diamond's loss provoked. Gooseberry's astonished gawking at the scene of robbery and murder is a blueprint for or mirror of the reader's likely reaction to the Moonstone's final theft. This points to the emotional thrill of crime stories, the precise force that kept Collins's audiences enraptured throughout his story.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SIXTH NARRATIVE: SERGEANT CUFF: CHAPTER 1

Sergeant Cuff's narrative takes the form of a report to Franklin Blake, dated July 30th, 1849. He claims that the report will resolve all his uncertainties about Godfrey Ablewhite: how he died, and what Cuff determined about his actions during the time of **the Diamond**'s theft.

Now that Godfrey has been revealed as the culprit, Cuff offers the reader the explanation they have been waiting for throughout the entire novel, a straightforward presentation of what appear to be the bare facts of the case.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SIXTH NARRATIVE: SERGEANT CUFF: CHAPTER 2

Cuff is certain that Godfrey Ablewhite was murdered by the Indians, who smothered him with a pillow in order to get **The Moonstone**. The coroner's report confirmed the cause of death, and Mr. Luker confirmed that the box found in Godfrey's room was the same one in which the Moonstone was given to him. The Indians had tampered with the trapdoor in the roof so that they could enter the room silently and close the door from outside. A nearby house under construction had a ladder leading to the roof, which was found untied the day after Godfrey's murder. The street was quiet and seldom visited by the police, so it was unlikely that anyone could have detected the thief.

The Indians easily executed their brilliant, complex plan, suggesting that they were well ahead of the English detectives—they knew whom to follow and how to retrieve the Diamond from the start. They did this not through mysticism or magic, but merely by beating the protagonists at their own investigative game. But the events still raise one interesting question: what would have happened, and who would have the Diamond, had Franklin gotten home on time the night of the murder and gone immediately with Gooseberry to the scene?

Beyond what is already known, investigators have also discovered a gold thread "of Indian manufacture" in the room and heard reports of three Indian men nearby, heading out of London to Rotterdam by steamer. And it is quite unlikely that the mechanic could have murdered Godfrey alone without the employees staying in the neighboring rooms hearing him. The Ablewhites are offering ample reward for finding the killers, and while the mechanic has proven untraceable, there are some leads in regards to the Indians.

Cuff assures the reader that he has ample evidence for the obvious conclusion that the Indians are responsible for Godfrey's death. For once, the Ablewhites and Verinders agree on something—finding the Indians—although this is likely to be exceedingly difficult. Although the reader never learns about the Verinders' reaction to Godfrey's death, it is unlikely that they were particularly distraught—like Colonel John Herncastle, he broke the bond of family for the sake of self-interest, and, as with the Colonel, the Diamond got its revenge on him.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SIXTH NARRATIVE: SERGEANT CUFF: CHAPTER 3

Sergeant Cuff turns to Godfrey Ablewhite's actions at the Verinder house. Godfrey lived a double life: publicly, he was a noble man of charity, while privately, he had a villa and mistress near London that nobody knew about. The villa was full of fine, rare flowers, and the lady had an immense collection of valuable jewels, in addition to impressive horses and carriages. More astonishing than the existence of this villa was that everything in it was paid, without any outstanding debt.

Godfrey's public and private lives were polar opposites: in fact, his charitable behavior and performances of politeness and grace were precisely what allowed him to get away with being a scoundrel. He breaks conventional codes of marriage by keeping a mistress, but this is something the author Wilkie Collins also did openly, and it is unclear why Godfrey would not just marry this woman (most likely, his family would have approved). Nevertheless, his reckless spending on things that are completely useless except as signifiers of class ironically threatened his place in the upper class altogether.

This much is known: Godfrey had control of a 20,000 pound trust for an underage man who was set to receive his inheritance in February, 1850. And yet Ablewhite had long since spent this 20,000 pounds by forging the other Trustee's signature on every document.

In fact, the only reason Godfrey had no formal debt was because he stole the money outright—ultimately, of course, this worked out worse for him than simply borrowing money (like Franklin Blake) would have been.

The day before Rachel's birthday and **the Diamond**'s theft, Godfrey Ablewhite had asked for a 300 pound loan from his father—the same amount he needed to pay the underage man twice a year. Godfrey's father refused to lend him the money, and it is no longer surprising that Godfrey proposed marriage to Rachel Verinder shortly thereafter. He thus needed 300 pounds within the week and 20,000 pounds within two years, as of the date of the Diamond's theft. Godfrey helped Mr. Candy slip Franklin the laudanum on the night of the theft.

Although Mr. Bruff already showed in his narrative that Godfrey only ever wanted to marry Rachel for her money, Cuff now reveals that he never had pure motives to begin with—indeed, he was notably surly on the day of Rachel's birthday despite proposing to her, and his desperate need for money at the time clearly accounts for this.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SIXTH NARRATIVE: SERGEANT CUFF: CHAPTER 4

Sergeant Cuff summarizes Mr. Luker's statement about Godfrey Ablewhite. Soon after the theft, Godfrey Ablewhite approached Mr. Luker with **the Moonstone**, asking the gem dealer to purchase it and offer him a small sum upfront. Mr. Luker valued it at 30,000 pounds, but was dissatisfied with Godfrey's explanation of how he got the Diamond—until Godfrey modified his story.

Godfrey immediately tries to turn his new acquisition into a profit—unfortunately, he is too rash to consider how to avoid suspicion. Despite all the speculation about whether the Indians attacked Godfrey intentionally or by accident, it appears they were onto the right suspect from the beginning—although it is unclear how.

Godfrey's modified story goes as follows: after drugging Franklin, he began to worry about his debts and found himself unable to sleep. Through a door connecting his room to Franklin's, he heard Franklin get up and followed him to Rachel's room, where he saw not only Franklin take **the Diamond**, but also Rachel watching him do so. After bringing the Diamond back to his room, supposedly, Franklin called Godfrey over and told him to deposit the Diamond in his father's bank, because "it's not safe here." Franklin fell asleep and Godfrey took the Diamond to his room. Because Franklin did not remember his actions the next morning, Godfrey realized he "might [keep the Diamond] with perfect impunity."

Although Godfrey admits to helping give Franklin the laudanum, in this version of his story he claims that the (drugged, unconscious) Franklin gave him the gem. Of course, the reader, already familiar with the book's multiple unreliable narrators, should recognize that Godfrey has every incentive to try and legitimize his theft—but nobody knows how he really got the Moonstone from Franklin. If Godfrey's story is true, it would mean the Diamond was stolen without a single culprit. (But arguably, Godfrey is the only morally responsible party because he kept the Diamond knowingly.)

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SIXTH NARRATIVE: SERGEANT CUFF: CHAPTER 5

Cuff explains that Mr. Luker accepted the story because he thought "Godfrey Ablewhite was too great a fool to have invented it," and that Cuff and Bruff agree. Luker offered Godfrey "monstrous terms": Luker would give Godfrey 2,000 pounds and then release **the Diamond** to him after a year if Godfrey paid him 3,000 pounds at that time. Godfrey rejected this deal but then returned, realizing that he had confessed to Mr. Luker and could not ensure the gem dealer's silence unless he "made him an accomplice."

Godfrey's plan to make some quick cash backfires because of his stupidity and shortsighted opportunism. Quite the opposite of the brilliant culprit everyone was looking for, he never planned any theft and went on to hide in plain sight throughout the novel: he was London's prime suspect for the theft during the entirety of Miss Clack's narrative, but nevertheless refused when she offered to proclaim his innocence.

Stuck in a "state of helpless despair," Godfrey realized that, the next day, he had to send 300 pounds to the young man for whom he was trustee. He saw no option but to deal with Mr. Luker (although, had he not owed the man the money, Cuff argues, Godfrey very well might have cut up **the Diamond** in Amsterdam).

Godfrey's poor planning continues to undermine his self-interest. He stumbles not only into his crime, but also into endangering himself by leaving the Diamond intact.

After pledging **the Diamond** to Mr. Luker, as the reader already knows, Godfrey proposes to Rachel again (but withdraws his offer when he realizes he cannot raise the money he needs from her estate). And, when "the lady at the Villa" finds out about his proposal, she furiously demands money of her own in order to maintain her silence. He tries again to marry (but also fails because of money), but leaves this engagement with 5,000 pounds. He then goes to Amsterdam and makes "all the necessary arrangements for having the Diamond cut into separate stones," which would have allowed him to pay his debts.

Because love is subservient to marriage and marriage is subservient to property for the upper classes in Victorian England, Godfrey's money troubles quickly translate into romantic ones, even when he already has the Diamond in the bank. He spends a year frantically trying to compensate for lavishly spending on a woman who is leaving him anyway. His irresponsibility and dishonesty ultimately undermine what he hoped to gain through deceit in the first place.

In closing, Cuff repeats for the reader that it is still possible to find the Indians, who are on their way to Bombay, where the police plan "to board the vessel, the moment she enters the harbor." Cuff signs his report.

While the case has been solved and sent out of England—meaning that Cuff's work is, at last, done—the Indians still have one more obstacle to surmount if they want to bring the Moonstone back.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: SEVENTH NARRATIVE: MR. CANDY

Mr. Candy's letter to Franklin Blake includes a returned, unopened letter from Franklin to Ezra Jennings. Candy informs Franklin that Ezra Jennings "died in my arms, at sunrise, on Wednesday last." Jennings asked Mr. Candy not to tell Franklin that his health was worsening and thanks Franklin for "some happy days." During the painless final hours of his life, Jennings refused to write to his relatives or reveal any secrets to Candy—he wanted to "die as he had lived, forgotten and unknown."

Astonishingly, despite his inability to speak or remember things, Mr. Candy can write fluently, which suggests that Ezra Jennings was perfectly right to see a difference between the ability to think clearly and the ability to speak fluidly. Franklin's final letter to Jennings, a sign of their enduring bond, fittingly remains private to the reader. After a tragic, painful decline, Jennings's peaceful and painless end suggests that he ultimately did find peace and redemption through his service to Franklin.

Before his death, Jennings sends Candy to examine his papers, including his diary and a partial manuscript of a book. He removes the section of his diary dealing with Franklin Blake's laudanum experiment, and asks Candy to send those pages to Franklin. He then says a prayer for Franklin "and those dear to" him, and asks Candy not to write Franklin yet, so as not to "distress him." Jennings asks Candy to put the rest of his papers and documents into the coffin with his body, and Candy affirms that "the promise has been performed." And he asks that no tombstone or monument "mark the place of [his] burial." He wants to "sleep, nameless," to "rest, unknown."

Jennings wants to take his secrets to the grave, including the book he was working on for a long while—but he also recognizes his work for and responsibilities to others, and so he sends Franklin the journal that becomes his narrative in The Moonstone. *His prayer curiously suggests that religion and science are not necessarily at odds—at least, when the religion is not of Miss Clack's sort. And although his insistence on dying "unknown" might seem like residual pessimism, it also gestures to the humble and anonymous character of true moral good—something that contrasts sharply with the outward performance of charity Godfrey Ablewhite used to hide his private vices.*

Before his death, Ezra Jennings says the name "Ella" and asks Mr. Candy to kiss his forehead. Moments before his passing, "he lifted his head [and] the sunlight touched his face." He says, "Peace! peace! peace!" and falls dead on Mr. Candy's shoulder.

In the moment of his death, Ezra Jennings looks something like a saint, with the sunlight apparently affirming his true inner worth. "Ella" was most likely the love he lost due to his "terrible accusation."

Mr. Candy writes that Jennings was "a great man," although unknown, who confronted "a hard life" with a "sweet temper." Candy feels lonely and wonders if he should give up medicine. In closing, he congratulates Franklin on his upcoming marriage to Rachel and explains that the pages from Jennings's journal are preserved at his (Candy's) house.

In Candy's closing lines, he affirms the benevolence and strength of character that Jennings never seemed to realize in himself and points directly to the best evidence of that quality: Rachel and Franklin's successful relationship.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH: EIGHTH NARRATIVE: GABRIEL BETTEREDGE

As the story's first narrator, Betteredge explains, he is also assigned to be its last. He has nothing to say about **the Moonstone**, but only about Rachel and Franklin's marriage, which took place in Yorkshire only a few months after their reconciliation. Apologetically, Betteredge admits that he had "a drop too much" during the ceremony, and then turned to **Robinson Crusoe**, which prophetically opened to a passage about the narrator's wife and child. A year later, in November, 1850 (at which time Betteredge writes), the family finally receives news of Rachel's pregnancy. Of course, when Franklin comes to inform him, Betteredge already knows what he will say, thanks to *Robinson Crusoe*. He asks if Franklin finally "believe[s] in *Robinson Crusoe*," and Franklin declares that he is "convinced at last." Betteredge asks the reader to take *Robinson Crusoe* seriously and declares he "make[s his] bow, and shut[s] up the story."

As with everything else in his life, Betteredge writes the novel's final narrative out of a sense of duty and focuses his attention on the integrity and status of his family (i.e. the Verinders). While the lives of nearly everyone else in the novel have drastically transformed because of the events surrounding the Moonstone, Betteredge remains quite the same, living the same life in the same place. And so the novel ends as it began: with an accurate prophecy from Robinson Crusoe, *one which Betteredge latches onto and would have considered fulfilled no matter how long it took for Rachel to get pregnant.*

EPILOGUE: THE FINDING OF THE DIAMOND: CHAPTER 1

In the first section of the Epilogue, "The Statement of Sergeant Cuff's Man (1849)," the narrator explains that he was called to follow the three Indians from London to Rotterdam, where he learns that they had actually departed their boat before leaving England. The narrator returns to England and learns that the Indians have already left for Bombay, at which point Cuff ordered the Bombay authorities to board the vessel on which the Indians are traveling.

The Moonstone *ends "happily ever after" before the search for the Diamond is up. After the Diamond's loss, the task of the novel's protagonists was to repair the damage caused by the Moonstone's interference in their lives—its "curse," as it were—and not necessarily to recover the Diamond. Indeed, once the novel returns to Indian territory, it becomes not at all clear who is the Moonstone's thief and who is its rightful owner.*

EPILOGUE: THE FINDING OF THE DIAMOND: CHAPTER 2

In "The Statement of the Captain (1849)," the narrator—the captain of the *Bewley Castle*, on which the three Indians sailed—explains that these men kept a low profile during their journey. At the end, they were forced to wait three days off the Indian coast before docking in Bombay. During this time, the passengers explored their surroundings in smaller boats, which were "left moored to the ship's side" instead of raised back on board. The next morning, the crew learns that one of these small boats is missing, along with the three Indians. Although the authorities ultimately blame the captain, he neither knew at the time nor can do anything to change the facts of the matter.

Yet again, the Indians skillfully throw investigators off the trail of evidence and slip away without a trace. Once they get on land and can blend into their own country, it seems nearly impossible for the British authorities to track them down. In fact, their ease in outsmarting the British allows Collins to ridicule the very ideology at the heart of British colonialism: the notion that nonwhite peoples are culturally and intellectually inferior and need to be shaped and "saved" by the English (much like Miss Clack wanted to "save" her relatives' heathen souls).

EPILOGUE: THE FINDING OF THE DIAMOND: CHAPTER 3

In "Statement of Mr. Murthwaite (1850), In a Letter to Mr. Bruff," Murthwaite reminds Bruff about their acquaintance and conversation about **the Moonstone** in 1848. He explains that he has "been wandering in Central Asia [… and] the north and north-west of India" ever since. He has since come to a "little known" area named Kattiawar, which is devoutly Hindu and home to the holy city of Somnauth—which was destroyed in the 11th century by Muslim invaders. On his way to Somnauth, Murthwaite encounters a few others going the same way, and manages to convince them he is a pilgrim. But the group of other travelers grows and grows, until thousands descend upon Somnauth for what Murthwaite soon learns will be a nighttime ceremony honoring the Moon god.

Although his return to the story may be unanticipated, it makes perfect sense that the traveler Murthwaite, the only man capable of appreciating, navigating, and communicating in both England and India besides the three Brahmins who steal the Diamond, narrates the Epilogue's closing section. Indeed, his ability to blend in with the pilgrims attests to his cultural duality or ambiguity. To the astute reader who remembers Somnauth from the Prologue, it is clear that Murthwaite will stumble upon the Moonstone's temple.

When he arrives in Somnauth, Murthwaite's friends bring him to the Moon god's shrine, which is hidden behind trees and a curtain at the top of a hill. Looking down, Murthwaite sees "the grandest spectacle of Nature and Man, in combination, that I have ever seen." "Tens of thousands of human creatures" wearing white filled the area, in which three rivers met and flowed into the ocean. At the shrine, music begins and three men stand before the Moon god's statue—Murthwaite immediately recognizes them as the three Indians from the Verinder estate. A companion explains to Murthwaite that these men were Brahmins but gave up their caste in order to recover **the Moonstone**, and would spend the rest of their lives as pilgrims, never to meet one another again. The three men embrace before the shrine, and then descend into the crowd, into which they blend seamlessly.

Murthwaite's descriptions build a profound sense of suspense as the Brahmins prepare to reveal the Moon god. The sheer volume and coordination of pilgrims makes the ceremony feel earth-shattering and reveals how powerfully the Moonstone truly does unify Hindus—this certainly looks like a far more suitable place for the Diamond than on Rachel's dress as an adornment. The Brahmins' ultimate sacrifice of their existing bond, their honorable positions, and ultimately the rest of their lives similarly allows Collins to suggest that the British were fundamentally unable to appreciate the Moonstone's true value.

The crowd falls silent and the curtain is drawn away from the trees, revealing the statue of the Moon god on his antelope, with **the Moonstone** in its forehead. His friends in England likely know how the Moonstone returned to India, Murthwaite writes, but he does not. But "the years pass, and repeat each other," and so nobody knows "what will be the next adventures of the Moonstone."

At last, in the book's closing lines, the Moonstone's theft is undone, and it is returned to its original, rightful resting place. While the whole book focused on the Diamond's disappearance from Rachel's bedroom, this ending forces the reader to remember that the Verinders were stealing the stone all along. Murthwaite's final line evokes not only the cyclicality that is central to Hindu religious belief (e.g. reincarnation), but also the cycles of the Diamond's theft, as well as the serialized format of Collins's novel (and the inevitable next one that would soon come out in Dickens's magazine).

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