

The Cone Gatherers - Key Quotations

1. CHARACTERISATION: the contrast between Calum and Duror

Quotation	Analysis	Impact / Effect / Evaluation
“chaffinches fluttered around him”	Comparison with St Francis of Assisi “fluttered” shows Calum’s gentle nature	Shows Calum to be a saint like character Calum is no threat, conflict with him is unreasonable
“a face so beautiful and guileless to be a diabolical joke	Oxymoron draws attention to the idea that nature has been cruel to Calum	His inward nature shown in his beautiful face is more important than his outward appearance
“since childhood Duror had been repelled by anything that had an imperfection, deformity or lack	Word choice “repelled” suggesting this is a powerful force	
“overspreading tree of revulsion in him”	Symbol of Duror’s corrupt inner nature – it has roots, will spread to overwhelm him “revulsion” suggests powerful disgust	
“god knew how many inhibitions, repressions and complexes were twisting and coiling there, like the snakes of damnation”	“damnation” foreshadows Duror’s tragic demise Simile suggests Satan and the evil inside Duror	

2. TURNING POINT: The Deer Drive

Quotation	Analysis	Impact / Effect / Evaluation
“Rushing upon the stricken deer and the frantic hunchback, he (Duror) threw the latter off with furious force, and then, seizing the former’s head with one hand cut the throat savagely with the other”	“furious force” and “savagely” show that Duror has changed from a civilised person to a primitive savage	This happens before witnesses to Duror’s problems are no longer simply internal – they have been made known to everyone
“What’s happened to Peggy?”	The question shows that the roots of the problem lies with Duror’s relationship with his wife	
“the great wobbling masses of pallid fat”	Shows how shocking she must have looked	There is a suggestion in the book that Duror himself is responsible for this – perhaps the idea is that the more Duror was overwhelmed by evil the fatter she got

“Since your wife’s illness you have never had relations with her?”	The reliable character – Dr Matheson – is used to reveal the truth	
“Aye to endurance”	This is the doctor’s advice but Duror has had enough of endurance	
“in a mood for murder, rape or suicide”		Foreshadows the outcomes of the novel

3. FORESHADOWING: The role of the doll and “Rape, Murder and Suicide”

Quotation	Analysis	Impact / Effect / Evaluation
“it was a small wooden doll, naked, with a comical red cheeked face; one leg was missing”	Connotations of childhood and innocence	Reminds us of Calum – a beautiful face but deformed Duror will masturbate over the doll, this violent sexual act will be the “rape” foreshadowed after the doctor’s appointment and a reminder that the roots of Duror’s problems are sexual
“Duror was stalking away to the point ... it was as if the rotting tree itself had moved”	“stalking” suggests that Duror’s killing of Calum was a deliberate act	This is the murder foreshadowed earlier
“infinite desolation”	This is the “damnation” foreshadowed earlier	Killing Calum brings Duror no satisfaction instead he is filled with an eternal emptiness – as a result he commits suicide as foreshadowed earlier
“and as she wept pity and purified joy welled up in her heart”	“purified joy” suggests that Calum’s death cleanses out Duror’s evil influence and goodness is restored	The death of an innocent, like Christ, takes away sins and restores goodness after the defeat of evil