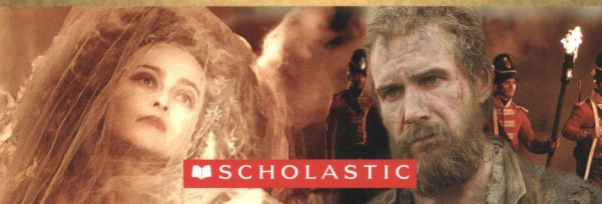




GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Charles Dickens



SCHOLASTIC

CHAPTER 1

A meat pie

I never saw my mother, father or five little brothers. I only knew their names from their gravestones behind our little church.

We lived in a small village on the edge of the marshes, where the river joins the sea. One evening, I sat on the grass next to my dead family and looked across the wet, grey land. It was the night before Christmas. A cold wind came from the sea. It seemed to call my name: 'Pip, Pip!'

'Don't say a word!' a terrible voice shouted suddenly. 'Or I'll cook your heart and eat it!'

A large man appeared from behind the gravestones. His clothes were dirty and he had a heavy piece of iron around his leg.



'Please don't eat my heart, sir*', I said.

'What's your name?' said the man. 'Tell me – quick!'

'Pip, sir.'

'Where are your mother and father?' he asked.

'There, sir,' I said.

He jumped and quickly turned around.

* In Dickens' time, people called strangers 'sir' or 'madam'.

'There, sir,' I said again, pointing at the gravestones.

'Oh,' he said. 'Who do you live with?'

'My sister, sir. She's married to Joe Gargery, the blacksmith.'

'Blacksmith, eh?' he said. He looked down at the iron around his leg. Then he put his face close to mine.

'I want food and a file,' he said. 'Do you know what a file is?'

'Yes, sir,' I said. 'Joe uses files.'

'You bring food and a file to me, tomorrow morning, early. You see that tree on the marshes? I'll wait there.'

'Yes, sir,' I said.

'Don't say a word about me to anyone.'

'No, sir,' I said.

'When a boy breaks his word,' he said, 'I find him in his warm bed at midnight. Then I eat his heart.'

His nose was touching mine.

'Yes, sir. Can I go now?'

I ran home without stopping.

My sister was twenty years older than me. She did not like children and was not kind to me. Her husband, Joe Gargery, was the kindest man in the world.

'Where have you been?' she said when I came in to the kitchen. She hit my head. Joe was sitting by the fire.

'To the gravestones,' I said.

'Gravestones!' she said. 'You can thank me that *you're* not under a gravestone.'

I wasn't frightened of my sister, but I was frightened of the man on the marshes. Did he really eat boys' hearts? My hair stood up on my head.

Later, we heard guns across the marshes.

'What's that?' I asked Joe.

'It's the prison ship,' said Joe. 'On the sea over the marshes.'

'Why are they firing guns?' I asked.

'The guns mean a prisoner has escaped from the ship,' said Joe. 'Sometimes they jump off and swim to the marshes. One prisoner escaped last night, and now there's a second one. Don't worry, Pip – you're safe here.'

I didn't feel safe.

'Stop asking questions and get to bed,' said my sister, and she hit the back of my head.

I did not sleep that night. Early the next morning, I went quietly downstairs. I fetched a file from outside the house and took a meat pie from the kitchen cupboard.



It was cold and grey on the marshes. Before I reached the tree, I saw the man. I called to him, but when he turned around, it was a different man! This man was also dirty and he had iron around his leg, but he looked like a gentleman. He tried to catch me so I ran quickly past him.

I found my prisoner at the tree. He said nothing when I gave him the pie and the file. He ate like a hungry dog and he looked half-dead.

'I think you're ill,' I said.

'I think you're right, boy,' he said. He looked around him. 'Have you brought anyone with you?'

'No, sir!' I said.

'I believe you,' he said and ate some more. 'You're a good boy.'

'You're not saving any food for the other prisoner,' I said.

He stopped eating. 'What other prisoner?'

'I saw him – over there,' I said, pointing. 'I thought it was you.'

He took hold of my arm.

'Didn't you hear the guns last night?' I asked. 'Another prisoner escaped from the ship – after you.'

He looked towards the sea. 'There are so many strange sounds on these marshes,' he said.

'He looked like a gentleman,' I said.

'A gentleman!' The look on the prisoner's face was terrible. 'I know him.'

He pushed the rest of the pie into his pocket. Then he looked at the iron on his leg.

'Give me the file, boy.'

He started to file the iron on his leg. He worked hard and fast, talking angrily to himself.

'I have to go now,' I said, but he didn't hear me.

When I got back to the house, Joe and my sister were in the kitchen.

'Happy Christmas, Pip!' said Joe.

'And where have you been this time?' said my sister.

Luckily she was cooking the dinner so she couldn't hit me. But every time she went near the kitchen cupboard, my heart stopped. The pie!

Joe and I put on our best Sunday clothes. Joe's uncle, Mr Pumblechook, was coming for Christmas dinner. My sister was always very nice to him because he was an important man in the town with his own shop.

'Mrs Gargery!' said Mr Pumblechook when he arrived. 'I have brought you two bottles of wine.'



'Oh, you are so kind, Uncle,' said my sister. 'And I have made your favourite pie!'

I felt ill.

'And how is this child?' said Mr Pumblechook, pulling me towards him by my ear.

'Trouble,' answered my sister. 'Always trouble.'

At dinner, they would not leave me alone.

'You are lucky to be at this table,' Mr Pumblechook told me.

'He is,' agreed my sister.

Joe put a piece of meat on my plate.

'You are lucky to have meat for your dinner,' said my sister.

'He is,' agreed Mr Pumblechook.

When we finished eating, Mr Pumblechook's face was red. 'That was a wonderful dinner,' he said, 'but I think I can eat just a little bit more.'

'Of course, Uncle,' said my sister. 'I will get the pie!'

Trouble was coming. I waited. My sister shouted something from the other room. I got up from the table and ran to the front door. At the same moment, there was a loud bang on the door. I opened it. A group of soldiers stood there. They were holding a pair of handcuffs.

'We want to speak to you,' they said.

CHAPTER 2

Satis House

Everyone came to the door. My sister was holding the empty pie plate. Mr Pumblechook was holding his knife and fork.

'Is the blacksmith here?' asked one of the soldiers.

'That's me,' said Joe.

'Some prisoners have escaped,' said the soldier. 'We're going to catch them but the lock on these handcuffs doesn't work.' He gave the handcuffs to Joe.

'I can help,' said Joe, taking off his Sunday jacket.

'As quick as you can,' said the soldier.

When Joe brought back the handcuffs, we followed the soldiers onto the marshes.

'I hope we don't find them,' I said quietly to Joe.

The sun was disappearing and the sky was the colour of blood. Then we heard some voices.

'Help!' a man shouted. 'He's killing me!'

'Come quickly! He's here,' shouted another man. I knew his voice.

We ran towards them. The men were prisoners and they were fighting. The soldiers pulled one away from the other. Then I saw their faces, and I knew them both.

'I've caught him for you,' said my prisoner.

The soldiers put handcuffs on both men.

'He tried to kill me,' said the other prisoner.

'No,' said my prisoner. 'I was free. Look – there's no iron on my leg. But this man must never go free. I was in prison because of him. Now he'll go back to prison because of me.'

My prisoner looked around at the rest of us. He saw me but he did not show that he knew me.

'Before we go, I want to say something,' he said. 'I took a pie and a file from the blacksmith's.'



'Oh!' said Joe, looking at me. 'Your sister's pie!'

'So you're the blacksmith, are you?' said the prisoner. 'I'm sorry about your pie.'

'You're welcome to it,' said Joe. 'I don't know why you were in prison. But a man must eat.'

The soldiers pulled the two prisoners away and led them back to the prison ship.

On the way home, I did not tell Joe about my part in the story. I knew it was wrong to lie. But Joe was my only friend and I did not want to appear bad in his eyes.

My future was certain.

'Pip, one day you'll be a blacksmith,' Joe often said. 'In a few years, you can come and work with me. I'll teach you everything I know.'

Until then, I did small jobs for people in the village. I

went to school for an hour every evening, in the shop near the church. Biddy was our teacher. She wasn't much older than me and like me, she had no parents. She worked all day in the shop and then taught the village children for an hour. She never had time to clean her shoes or brush her hair, except when she went to church on Sundays.

One evening in the kitchen, I practised my writing and showed it to Joe.

'Pip!' he said. 'What fine words!'

When I asked him to read them, I discovered that Joe could not read.

'I never went to school, Pip,' he told me. 'My father preferred drinking to working. He came home from the pub each day and hit my mother and me. We ran away many times. But my father had a big heart. He hated being without us. He always came to find us and bring us home. And then he hit us again. But he was a good man with a big heart. You can see that, can't you, Pip?'

I could *not* see that but I did not say so. It was not Joe's father who had a big heart; it was Joe.

'You never think badly of anyone, Joe,' I said.

One day, when Joe and I came back from a walk on the marshes, Mr Pumblechook was in the kitchen.

'Uncle Pumblechook has found you a job,' my sister said to me. 'It is with Miss Havisham. She wants a boy to go and play there.'

Everybody knew Miss Havisham's name but nobody ever saw her. Her house was called Satis House. It had high walls around it and she never went outside. My sister and Mr Pumblechook were very excited. They both loved money, and the name 'Havisham' meant money.

Half an hour later, I was on my way to town with Mr Pumblechook.



The next morning, we waited outside the iron gates of Satis House. A girl appeared. She was about my age and very pretty but she didn't smile once.

'Name?' she asked.

'Pumblechook,' said Mr Pumblechook. 'And this is Pip.'

'This is Pip, is it?' she said, opening the gates.

Mr Pumblechook started to follow me but the girl stopped him. 'Do you want to see Miss Havisham?'

'Does Miss Havisham want to see me?' he asked, looking uncomfortable.

'She does not,' said the girl, closing the gates behind her. Mr Pumblechook looked at me angrily.

'Hurry up, boy,' the girl said.

I hurried up. Inside, the house was dark. I followed the girl until she stopped outside a room.

'Go in,' she said.

'After you, miss,' I said.



'Don't be stupid, boy. *I* am not going in.' And then she walked away.

I stood alone in the dark in front of the closed door.

CHAPTER 3

Miss Havisham

I didn't know what to do. Then I heard a woman's voice.

'Come in,' she said.

I pushed open the door and went in.

The woman sat in an armchair in the centre of a large, dark room. She wore a white wedding dress and there were flowers in her hair. But the white was not really white – it was yellow. The flowers were dead. And the woman herself was old. Her hair was white and she looked like a ghost. It was Miss Havisham.

I was frightened.

'Who is it?' said Miss Havisham.

'Pip, my lady.'

'Pip?'

'Mr Pumblechook's boy. I've come to play,' I said.

'Come closer,' she said.





I came nearer but I did not look at her. Her pocket watch said twenty minutes to nine. A clock in the room said twenty minutes to nine. It was not twenty minutes to nine.

'Look at me,' said Miss Havisham. 'You are not frightened of me, are you?'

'No,' I lied.

'My heart is broken,' she said.

She turned to the door and called out. The girl came in.

'This is Estella,' said Miss Havisham. 'She calls me mother but she's not my real daughter. She came to me when she was three years old. She has no mother and father of her own.'

'Then she is like me,' I said.

'I am not like you,' said Estella proudly.

'Estella,' said Miss Havisham. 'Come and play cards with Pip.'

'But, Mother, he is the blacksmith's boy,' she said.

'Well?' said Miss Havisham quietly. 'Blacksmith's boys have hearts too. You can break his.'

We sat at the table and played cards.

'This boy does not have a gentleman's hands,' said

Estella. 'And look at his boots!'

She won the first game. I gave her the wrong number of cards for the second game because I was so ashamed of my hands.

'He is stupid too,' said Estella. 'He does not speak correctly and he cannot count seven cards.'

'You say nothing about her,' said Miss Havisham to me. 'What do you think of her?'

'I don't want to say,' I said.

'Tell me in my ear,' said Miss Havisham.

I moved closer. 'I think she is very proud,' I said quietly.

'And ...?'

'I think she is very pretty,' I said.

'And ...?'

'I think I would like to go home,' I said.

'Finish the game,' said Miss Havisham.

Estella won all the cards.

'Come again in a week's time,' Miss Havisham said to me. 'Now go.'



When I arrived at the garden gate, I started to cry. Estella just smiled.

I was a different Pip after that day. I did not want to

be a blacksmith. I wanted to be a gentleman. That day I learned to be ashamed of my hands, my boots, myself and Joe.

On my next visit to Miss Havisham's, Estella met me at the gate again. As we went inside, she stopped and turned to me.

'Well?' she asked. 'Am I pretty?'

'Yes,' I answered. 'You are very pretty.'

'Am I proud?'

She did not wait for my answer, but hit my face as hard as she could.

'Why don't you cry again, boy?' she said.

'Because I will never cry for you again,' I answered. It wasn't true because I was crying inside.



Miss Havisham was in a different room this time. There was a fire with more smoke than heat. There was a long table with places for many guests. In the centre of the table, there was a tall wedding cake. It was a wedding party for ghosts. Everything was old and broken.



'When I die,' said Miss Havisham, 'they will put my body here, on this table.'

We walked around the room.

'Today is my birthday, Pip,' she said. 'Many years ago, this day was also my wedding day.'

Estella came into the room. We played cards again.

'Come back next week,' said Miss Havisham. 'And look around the garden before you go.'

In the garden, I saw a young gentleman. He was about my age.

'Why are *you* here?' he asked.

'I came to see Miss Havisham,' I said.

'Come and fight,' he said.

I followed him through a gate in a wall into another part of the garden. Estella stood at the gate and watched us.

The boy took off his jacket. He came to hit me, but I hit him first. He fell and lay on his back, with blood around his nose. He was up again in a moment. He was not

strong, and when he hit me, I felt nothing. I am sorry to say that I hit him harder.



'You have won,' he said. 'Well done!'

I offered to help him but he didn't want my help. We said goodbye.

Estella waited by the gate. She was smiling.

'You're a good fighter, blacksmith's boy,' she said. 'You can kiss me if you like.'

She turned her face and I kissed her. For me, it was my happiest moment. For her, it meant nothing. She gave the blacksmith's boy a kiss as if it were a piece of money.

CHAPTER 4

Great expectations

On my next visit, there was a chair with wheels in Miss Havisham's room. She was tired and didn't want to walk so I pushed her round the room. I visited Miss Havisham every week for the next nine months. She asked all about me and my future as a blacksmith. I said I wanted to study, but she did not offer to help me.



Sometimes there were other people in the house. Miss Havisham had cousins who wanted her money and visited often. They came on her birthday with presents. But Estella told me about one cousin who never came. His name was Matthew Pocket.

'Matthew upset Miss Havisham once,' Estella told me. 'He has not been welcome at Satis House since then.'

And once, Estella and I met a gentleman with clever eyes, coming down the stairs. He looked closely at me, but did not speak. Then he was gone.

'That was Mr Jaggers,' Estella said.

Estella was always there. Sometimes she talked to me and sometimes she was even friendly.

'Is she prettier today?' Miss Havisham often asked me.

I always said yes, because it was true. Miss Havisham seemed pleased when I said it.

Mr Pumblechook often came to our house. He and my sister loved to discuss Miss Havisham's plans for me. They pulled my hair and my ears, and shouted at Joe.

'She will give him her house when she dies,' my sister said.

'She will give him her money,' Mr Pumblechook said.

Then one day, it was over.

'You are growing tall, Pip,' said Miss Havisham. 'Bring the blacksmith with you next time.'

Two days later, Joe came with me. He looked uncomfortable in his Sunday clothes. When he spoke to Miss Havisham in his country way, Estella said nothing but her eyes laughed.



Miss Havisham gave Joe a bag of money.

'Pip has been a good boy. Here is his money,' she said. 'Now he must learn to be a blacksmith.'

'Shall I come again, Miss Havisham?' I asked.

'No,' she said. 'Goodbye, Pip.'

On the way home, there was only one thought in my head: once I wanted to be a blacksmith; now I do not.

I tried hard to be a good blacksmith for Joe but I was not happy. My life was flat and grey, like the marshes.

About a year later, I decided to visit Miss Havisham. Estella wasn't there.

'Why are you here?' Miss Havisham asked me.

'I want to tell you that I am working hard,' I said. 'And to say thank you.'

'Are you really here to see Estella?' she asked.

'No,' I said. 'But I hope Estella is well.'

'She is in France,' said Miss Havisham. 'She is far away from you. She is very beautiful now. Do you feel that you have lost her?'

She laughed coldly and I said goodbye. I felt worse than when I arrived.

When I got back home, the doctor was there. My sister was lying on the floor.

'She has fallen and hit her head,' said Joe. 'Your poor sister.'

My sister lived half a life after that. She sat in a chair in the kitchen and could not speak. She never shouted at me or hit me again. Bidly, the school teacher, came to live with us. She cooked and cleaned, and sat with my sister.

I visited Miss Havisham once a year, on my birthday. She never changed. She always gave me some money, which I spent on books. In the evenings, I read and studied.

I had a secret in my heart. I wanted to be a gentleman

for Estella. The secret stayed with me for three years. Then one night, a man came to our door.

'My name is Jaggers,' he said, as he sat down at our table. 'You have seen me at Miss Havisham's house, Pip. I am a lawyer in London. I have come to tell you that you have great expectations.'

I looked at Joe. Joe looked at me.

'A person – I cannot tell you their name – wants you to become a gentleman,' said Mr Jaggers. 'I have some instructions. First, the name of this person is a secret. They will tell you their name when they are ready. Second, you must always keep the name "Pip". Do you agree?'

I agreed.

'This person is paying for you to study and live in London as a gentleman,' Mr Jaggers said. 'So, Mr Pip, when can you come to London?'

'At once,' I said. My dream was coming true! I felt Joe's hand on my arm. His eyes were wet. But I did not think of Joe. I thought only of myself and my great expectations.

Before I left my old life, I bought some new clothes and went to visit Satis House. Sarah Pocket, one of Miss Havisham's cousins, came to the gate. She looked at my new clothes and shoes with wide eyes. She did not smile. She took me up to see Miss Havisham and stayed in the room with us while we talked.

'Pip!' said Miss Havisham. 'You look so different! I have heard about your fortune from Mr Jaggers. A rich person is paying for you to be a gentleman, he tells me.'

'Yes, Miss Havisham,' I said. 'That person is very kind.'

'Yes, yes,' she said. She gave Sarah Pocket an unfriendly smile. 'And Mr Jaggers will look after you in London.'

'Yes, Miss Havisham,' I said.

'You must follow his instructions carefully, Pip,' she said.

'Yes, Miss Havisham.'

'And you will always be "Pip",' she said.

'Yes, Miss Havisham.'

'Goodbye, Pip,' she said.

'Thank you, Miss Havisham,' I said. 'You are very good to me.'

'Go now,' she said. She smiled again at Sarah Pocket, who did not smile back. Instead Miss Pocket looked angrily at me. Her jealous eyes spoke to me.

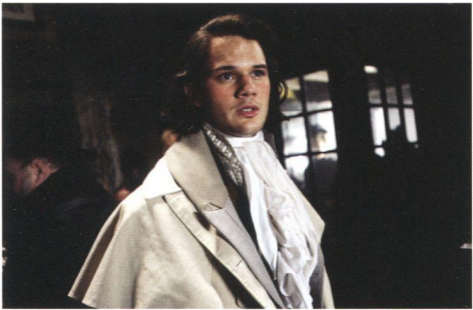
'Why is Miss Havisham giving money to a blacksmith's boy, when she has her own family at her side?'

CHAPTER 5

London

The next day I arrived in London and I went straight to Mr Jaggers' office. There I met Wemmick who worked for him. I soon learned that Mr Jaggers was a very clever lawyer.

'You will live with Herbert Pocket and you will study with Matthew Pocket, Herbert's father,' said Mr Jaggers. 'Matthew Pocket, you may know, is Miss Havisham's cousin. You will get twenty pounds a month. Do not spend more than you have.'



Wemmick took me to my new home in Barnard's Inn. It was not a large and comfortable hotel, as I hoped. It was a dark and dirty building. Herbert Pocket lived at the top of the building.

'Come in,' said Herbert with a smile. 'I am sorry the rooms are not more comfortable. My father is not rich and my job does not pay me well. In fact, it does not pay me at all. I work for a shipping business, but they do not feel the

need to give me any money! At least I am learning about business and I'm sure I will find a good job soon. We will eat well – thanks to you – and I'm sure we won't fight!

And then we looked at each other more closely.

'I know you,' he said. 'You are the boy from Miss Havisham's garden!'

'And you are the young gentleman!' I said.

We laughed.

'And now you have a fortune,' he said. 'Well, I am sorry I hit you so hard.'

I remembered that I hit *him* hard, but I did not say so.

'Why were you at Miss Havisham's?' I asked.

'Miss Havisham wanted to look at me,' Herbert said. 'For Estella, I think. But they didn't like me.'

'And ... did you like Estella?'

'No,' said Herbert. 'She is cold and proud. Miss Havisham wants her to break men's hearts.'

'What do you mean?' I asked.

'Let's have dinner,' laughed Herbert. 'Then I'll tell you.' Herbert was kind and always smiling.

'I am a country boy,' I told him. 'Please tell me when I do something stupid.'

We started to eat. I used my knife to put a piece of meat in my mouth.

'Oh,' said Herbert, 'in London we think it is dangerous to put a knife in our mouths – we use our forks for that.'

We laughed. And then he told me Miss Havisham's story.

'Miss Havisham's mother died when she was a baby. Her father was a rich gentleman. He married again – the cook, I believe – and they had a son called Arthur. The cook died and Arthur turned bad. When the father died, most of his money went to Miss Havisham. She became

very rich. Arthur got some money, but he spent it all in a short time.'

'Did Arthur dislike Miss Havisham?' I asked.

'Yes, he hated her. He was the son and he wanted all the money. Twenty-five years ago, Miss Havisham fell in love with a man called Compeyson. They chose a day for their wedding. He asked her for money many times, and she always gave it to him. The wedding day came. But Compeyson did not appear. In fact, he was already married. He sent a letter ...'

'... which arrived at twenty minutes to nine,' I said. 'Did anyone tell her to be careful of this man?'

'Only my father, Matthew,' said Herbert, 'but she did not listen to him. She told him to leave her house, and he has not seen her since that day.'

The next morning Herbert took me to his father's house in Hammersmith. Two other students already lived there. One of them was called Bentley Drummle. He was a strong young man and he came from a rich family. He was also stupid and lazy, and he didn't like me. Luckily he didn't stay for very long.

I kept my room in Barnard's Inn. I studied books with Matthew Pocket in Hammersmith and I studied life with Herbert Pocket in London. I learned fast. Herbert and I became best friends. In Hammersmith, we had a boat on the River Thames and we often went out on the water at weekends.

One morning I received a letter. It was in Bidley's handwriting and it was from Joe. He was coming to London the next day, and he wanted to see me.

How did I feel about his visit? I loved Joe of course, but I didn't want to see him. After my first visit to Miss Havisham's, I felt ashamed of who he was. I was even

more ashamed of him now that I had a new London life.

I waited for him on Tuesday morning at Barnard's Inn. When I heard his big boots on the stairs, I wanted to run away.



'Joe, how are you?' I said.

'Pip, how are you?' he said. He wore his Sunday clothes and looked uncomfortable. He looked at me in my London clothes. He took my hand and held it for five minutes.

'I am so proud of you, Pip,' he said happily.

I am sorry to say that I did not smile back. I felt uncomfortable, and I am sure that it showed in my face.

Joe gave me news of Biddy and my sister, and then he gave me a message.

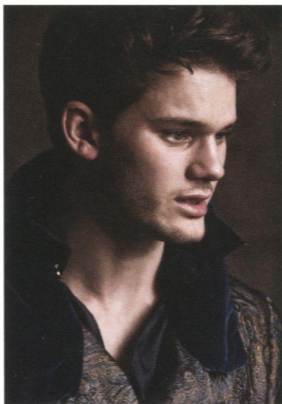
'Last week, Miss Havisham sent a letter,' said Joe. 'Estella is home and she would like to see you. I asked Biddy to write and tell you, but she knew I wanted to see you. So here I am.' He smiled again. 'And now, Pip, I've seen you and I will say goodbye.'

'Joe!' I said. 'You're not going already?'

But I hoped that he was going. The situation was impossible. He was my family, but we lived in different worlds now. I did not want my new friends to know about my old life.

'Yes, Pip,' he said, 'I'm going. I was wrong to come here. You're a gentleman now and I'm a village blacksmith. You don't want to see me in London. Perhaps one day you will visit me at your old home, Pip.'

And Joe left. My feelings about him were wrong, I knew. He loved me without question, but I couldn't do the same. Things were different now. But I didn't worry about it for long and my thoughts soon turned to Estella. What plans did Miss Havisham have for us?



I took the next coach and went straight to Miss Havisham's. Was this the start of my life with Estella,

I asked myself? We will bring the house and Miss Havisham back to life, I thought. We will bring the sun into the rooms and start the clocks again.

Miss Havisham was sitting in her usual chair. A beautiful young woman sat next to her.



'Come in, Pip,' said Miss Havisham. 'What do you think of Estella?'

Suddenly I was the little blacksmith's boy again. I said nothing.

'I have just come back from France,' Estella said. 'And now I am going to live in Richmond, in London.'

'You will meet Estella in London, Pip,' said Miss Havisham, 'and take her to parties.'

Miss Havisham sent us into the garden.

'Do you have new friends now?' Estella asked.

'Yes,' I told her. 'I am friends with Herbert Pocket.'

'And your old friends in the village?' she said. 'I'm sure you do not enjoy being with them anymore.'

I knew she meant Joe. I did not answer, but I knew now that I could not visit him the next day.



'Do you remember when I cried here? The first time I came?' I asked, as we reached the gates.

'No,' she said.

How could she forget? I remembered that moment every day of my life.

'You must know that I have no heart,' said Estella. 'I cannot feel things. I know nothing about love.'

CHAPTER 6

My twenty-first birthday



One evening a letter arrived at Barnard's Inn. 'Mrs Joe Gargery died last Monday,' it said. The following Monday, Joe and I walked together to the little church in our village. I watched my sister join our mother and father and five little brothers under her own gravestone.

That evening I talked to Biddy in the garden. 'What will you do now, Biddy?' I asked.

'I have a new job,' she said. 'We have a new school and I'm the teacher. And I will cook for Joe.'

'I will come often, Biddy,' I said. 'I won't leave him alone.'

Biddy was quiet.

'Say something, Biddy,' I said.

She looked at me. 'Will you come often?'

'Of course,' I said. 'How can you ask that?'

I was angry and I went to bed early. When I left the next morning, Joe was already working.

'Goodbye, Joe,' I said. 'I shall visit you again soon.'

He smiled and took my hand. 'You are always welcome,' he said.

Biddy was right. I did not visit soon or often.

On my twenty-first birthday, I went to see Mr Jaggers.

'Happy birthday, Mr Pip,' said Mr Jaggers. 'You are spending more money than you have.'

'I know,' I said.

He gave me a banknote. 'This is for you,' he said.

'Wemmick will give you one of these every year from now on, and no more. These are my instructions.'

The banknote was five hundred pounds!

'Who can I thank for my fortune?' I asked. 'Will I learn their name soon?'

'When the person appears, Pip, my job will be over,' said Mr Jaggers. 'That is all I can say.'

On my way out, I spoke to Wemmick. 'I want to use some of my money to help Herbert,' I said.

'I know of a business called Clarriker's,' said Wemmick. 'You can buy him a place there. It is a good business with a strong future.'

I paid half of my five hundred pounds to Clarriker's but said nothing to Herbert.

The next day Herbert came home with a big smile on his face. 'I have found a job at last!' he said. 'At Clarriker's.'

He was in love with a girl called Clara, and now they could plan to marry. He became happier every day. I was happy too.

'Something good has come from my great expectations at last,' I thought.

Estella was in London now and I saw her a lot. I took her to parties, I danced with her, we walked in Richmond Park. We were often together and I loved her more and more.

Many gentlemen wanted to marry Estella and I was jealous of them. They were jealous of me too and that seemed to please Estella. I felt very unhappy. I hated being with her but I hated being away from her too.

I often took Estella to visit Miss Havisham. Estella spoke about the men in London who were in love with her. Miss Havisham watched me while she listened. I saw that I was part of her plans for Estella. I had to become a gentleman and I had to wait. Estella must break all these men's hearts. Then we could get married.

We often saw Bentley Drummle when we were out. He remembered me from Matthew Pocket's school and he still did not like me. He did not believe that I was a real gentleman. I didn't like him either. I discovered that he was interested in Estella.



'Why do you dance with *him*?' I asked her one night after a party. 'Everyone hates him. Everyone thinks he is stupid.'

'Well?' she asked.

'He has a lot of money but that is all,' I said.

'I don't care if you are angry about it,' she said.

'But do you love him?' I asked.

'Pip, I have no heart,' said Estella. 'I have no feelings. You know that.'

'You could not be so beautiful,' I said, 'and have no heart.'

Estella was my life. And then one day, my life fell apart.

CHAPTER 7

Abel Magwitch

I was twenty-three years old and I could not decide what to do with my life. I spent many hours reading and thinking.

One night, Herbert was away on business in France and I was alone. I heard someone on the stairs.

'Who's there?' I called into the dark.

'I'm looking for Mr Pip,' said a voice.

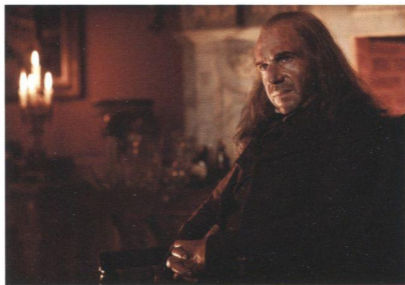
'That's me,' I said. 'Is anything wrong?'

'No,' said the voice. A man appeared. He looked like a traveller. He wore a hat over his long, grey hair and his face was dark from the sun. He was about sixty years old.

'Do you want to come in?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said.

He sat by the fire. He took off his hat and looked at me. The fire lit his face.



'I have come a long way to see you, Pip,' he said.

Suddenly I knew him. I remembered that night on the marshes, sixteen years ago.

'You were good to me, dear* boy,' he said. 'I have never forgotten it.'

I felt uncomfortable. I was only a child when I helped him. It was not necessary to thank me now. I wanted him to leave.

'How do you live now?' I asked.

'I have a business in Australia,' he said. 'I worked as a prisoner for seven years, and then I was free. I couldn't come back here, so I bought some land and I've done very well.'

'I'm happy to hear it,' I said.

'And you have done well, dear boy,' he said, looking around the room. 'How have you done well?'

'Someone has given me a fortune,' I said.

'Who?' he asked.

'I don't know,' I said. 'How did you find me?'

'Mr Wemmick told me your address.'

And then I knew.

'Yes, Pip,' he said. 'I have made you into a gentleman. I have worked hard so that you do not have to work.'

He took both my hands. This could not be true. Did my great expectations really come from a prisoner? Where did *he* get the money? Did he kill for it?

'I need to sleep, Pip,' he said. 'I've been on the sea for months and I'm tired.'

I took him to my room.

'Nobody must know I am in England, Pip,' he said. 'They sent me to Australia for the rest of my life. I'm breaking the law.'

He slept and I sat alone with my thoughts. Miss Havisham never wanted me to marry Estella. And Estella was just practising on me. And my dear Joe – I left him for a prisoner on the marshes.

* You say 'dear' to someone you like or love.

The fire went out. Outside it was dark. Inside it was dark. In my heart, it was dark.



In the morning, I gave my visitor breakfast. He ate like an animal. His name was Abel Magwitch and he had no plans to go back to Australia.

'How much danger are you in?' I asked.

'Only three people know I'm here – Jagers, Wemmick and you,' he said.

I went to see Mr Jagers. The lawyer jumped to his feet when he saw me.

'Is it true?' I asked.

'Yes, it is true,' he said.

'I thought the money came from Miss Havisham,' I said.

'I have never said anything about Miss Havisham and your fortune,' said Mr Jagers.

I said nothing. He was right.

For the next five days Magwitch and I did not go out, except at night for some air. When Herbert came back

from France, we told him everything.

'You are a great friend to me, Herbert,' I said, when Magwitch was asleep. 'What can I do? I cannot take money from a prisoner. It is dirty money. Now I have no money and no fortune. I have no job and no future!'

'That's not true,' said Herbert.

'I could run away and be a soldier,' I said.

'Magwitch has dreamed all these years of making you a gentleman,' said Herbert. 'You cannot turn your back on him. Think about it: he comes here at great danger to himself, and then he discovers that you do not want him or his money. Everything that he's done has been for nothing. What does he do then?'

'You are right, Herbert,' I said. 'He will go to the police and they will put him back in prison. I cannot let that happen.'

'You must take him out of England,' said Herbert, 'then you can get away from him.'

'But first we must find out why he was in prison,' I said.



The next day, we spoke to Magwitch. 'Who was that other prisoner on the marshes?' I asked.

And so Abel Magwitch told us his story. 'As a child, I had no family and no money. I never went to school and I was always hungry. I was in and out of prison. About twenty years ago, I met a gentleman. He was full of clever talk and he was good-looking. His name was Compeyson.'

Compeyson – the man who left Miss Havisham on her wedding day! I looked at Herbert, but we said nothing.

'He gave me a job,' Magwitch continued. 'There was another man in his business. His name was Arthur but he was ill. A few years before, these two got a lot of money from a rich lady, and then they broke her heart. But they soon spent the money. When Arthur was dying, he shouted about a woman in a white dress.'

'So Compeyson had all these ideas about how to get money from rich people. I did all the dangerous work for him and he took the money. Then the police caught us. Compeyson told lies about me. Because he was a gentleman, he had friends who could help him. I got fourteen years in prison and he got seven.'

'We were on the same prison ship. Then I escaped. I hid among the gravestones, and then I met you, Pip. They sent me to Australia for life for that escape. Compeyson just finished his seven years in prison – then he was free.'

'Where is he now?' I asked.

'I don't know,' Magwitch said.

Now we knew the danger to Magwitch.

'When Compeyson learns that he is back in England, he will tell the police,' I said to Herbert. 'I will take him

to Europe. But before I go, I must see Estella and Miss Havisham. I will say nothing about Magwitch to them.'

I went to Richmond but Estella was not there. She was at Miss Havisham's. I travelled by coach to the town. The first person I saw there was Bentley Drummle, standing outside the town hotel.

'Pip, my dear friend,' he said, with a horrible smile. 'Do you know any good blacksmiths around here?' He laughed loudly and disappeared into the hotel.

Estella was sitting with Miss Havisham in her room.

'I know now that my fortune did not come from you, Miss Havisham,' I said. 'I want to talk to you about your cousin, Matthew Pocket, and his son, Herbert. Matthew Pocket tried to help you – he tried to tell you that Compeyson was a bad man. Matthew and Herbert are good people. They thought I was getting your money, but they have always been my friends. Your other cousins, like Sarah Pocket, hate me for it.'

'What do you want for them?' asked Miss Havisham.

'Nearly two years ago, I secretly paid some money to get Herbert into a good business. It's called Clarriker's and he's doing very well there. I agreed to pay more money after two years, but now I have lost my fortune and I cannot pay it. I hope you will pay the rest of the money for Herbert and keep it a secret.'

Then I turned to Estella. 'You know that I love you,' I said. 'Miss Havisham does not want us to marry, I understand that now. So I am free to speak. She wanted you to practise on me. I don't think she was unkind to me. She was so unhappy herself – she did not think of my feelings.'

'I have tried to tell you, Pip,' said Estella. 'When you say you love me, I know what you mean. But I feel nothing.'

'I know you do not love me,' I said. 'But, please, Estella, do not marry Bentley Drummle.'

'Why not?' said Estella. 'I have no love to give any man. So it is better to marry someone with no feelings himself. And when I am married, you will forget me in a week.'

'I will never forget you,' I said. 'You are part of me. When I look out over the marshes, I see you. When I look out over the roofs of London, I see you. And I will always love you.'

I looked at them both. Estella was surprised. Miss Havisham seemed to see me for the first time. Suddenly she understood that *my* heart was broken too.

I walked back to London. It was past midnight when I arrived. There was a message for me at the gate of Barnard's Inn. It was from Wemmick.

'Don't go home!' it said.

CHAPTER 8

Fire!

I spent the night in a hotel in Covent Garden, and went to see Wemmick the next morning.

‘Someone is watching your rooms,’ he said.

‘Compeyson?’ I guessed.

‘Yes,’ he said. ‘Mr Herbert has taken your guest to a safer place. I believe Mr Herbert has a lady friend – Clara – who lives with her father by the river. You will find your guest there.’

Wemmick often went to visit prisoners in Newgate prison in his work for Mr Jaggers. He always listened to the talk there. He knew what happened in the city’s darkest corners.

‘When it is the right time to leave, I will tell you,’

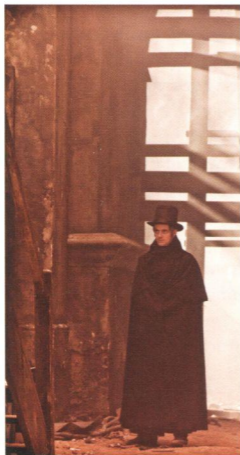
Wemmick said. ‘It will be

dangerous – I cannot know the best time for certain.’

I visited Magwitch at his new home. Herbert was there too and I met Clara. We decided to bring my boat from Hammersmith to this part of the river.

‘We can go up and down the river in it,’ said Herbert. ‘Then, when we take Magwitch to a ship, it won’t seem unusual if people see us.’

We followed our plan and went up and down the River Thames many times in the next few weeks. We waited



for a sign from Wemmick. I had no money now so I sold my watch and some other things. The time passed slowly and Magwitch and I spent a lot of time together. Slowly I learned to love him as a father.

One afternoon I was walking in the city when I saw Mr Jaggers. He invited me to dinner.

During dinner Mr Jaggers talked about Bentley Drummle and Estella. 'Only one person will win when they are married,' he said. 'Mr Drummle is strong and Estella is clever. I hope that Estella wins.'

As he was talking, Molly stood behind him. Molly worked for Mr Jaggers. She brought the food and wine to the table, and always disappeared quickly. But as I looked at her face and the way she moved, I suddenly saw Estella in her. Molly was Estella's mother, I was certain.



Miss Havisham sent a note to Mr Jaggers. She wanted to see me but I did not want to leave London. Wemmick told me to go at once and come back quickly.



I found Miss Havisham alone in her ghostly wedding room.

'I have helped Herbert Pocket as you wanted,' she said. I thanked her.

'Do you hate me, Pip?' she asked sadly.

'No, Miss Havisham,' I said.

'Are you very unhappy?' she asked.

'Yes, but not just because of Estella. There are other things that I cannot tell you about.'

'You are kind to say that, Pip,' she said. 'Is there anything I can do for you?'

'You have helped Herbert – that is enough,' I said. 'But thank you for the offer.'

'Pip, I am sorry.' She started to cry. 'What have I done?'

'Is Estella married?' I asked.

'Yes,' she said. 'What have I done? I took her soft, warm heart. In its place I put cold iron.'

'I know that Estella was three years old when she came to you,' I said. 'Where did you find her?'

'I wanted a daughter. Mr Jaggers brought her to me.'

Her parents were in trouble and could not keep her.'

Miss Havisham sat close to the fire and said no more. I walked to the door and looked back. She looked so sad.

As I turned to go, a great light filled the room. Miss Havisham screamed. Then she was running towards me and there was fire all around her. Her wedding dress was on fire.

I pulled off my coat and put it around her. The fire was quickly gone but her eyes did not open. When I called for help, I thought it was too late.

But Miss Havisham was not dead. I sent for a doctor from the town. Before I returned to London, I said goodbye to her but she did not hear me.

'What have I done?' she said, over and over again.

While I was at Satis House, Herbert was with Magwitch. He learned more about Magwitch's past.

'He had a wife who was always jealous,' Herbert told me. 'She thought that Magwitch liked another woman. There was a fight and the other woman died. Magwitch's wife had a good lawyer – Mr Jiggers, of course – and he saved her. There was a child – a little girl – but she disappeared. Magwitch never saw his wife or child again.'

At that moment, I saw that Magwitch's life and my own met at many places. His wife, then, was Molly, who worked for Mr Jiggers. And Estella was the daughter of Molly and Abel Magwitch.

CHAPTER 9

The Hamburg ship

A week later, a message came from Wemmick: 'Wednesday is a good day for it. Now put this note on the fire.'

Herbert and I discussed our plan for the hundredth time.

'We will take him down the river in our boat,' I said.

'We will wait for a ship on its way out to sea. There is a ship to Hamburg on Wednesday. We will put him on that.'

'You will go with him?' asked Herbert.

'I will,' I said.

Wednesday was sunny and cold. I put some money and papers for me and Magwitch in a bag. The River Thames was busy with boats of all sizes. Herbert and I took our boat under Tower Bridge and came into the side of the river. Magwitch came down the steps and climbed into the boat.

'Dear boy,' he said. 'Thank you.'

I looked around at all the other boats. Nobody seemed to be following us. We pushed out into the river.

'You will soon be free again,' I said to Magwitch.

'I hope so,' he said. 'But you are a gentleman now, Pip, and I am happy. And I have never been happy before.'

We travelled along the river all day until we were nearly at the sea. We waited at the edge of the river for the Hamburg ship. While Magwitch sat in the boat, Herbert and I worried. Each time a small boat passed by, we thought it was the police.

Finally the Hamburg ship appeared and we took our boat to meet it. It saw us and slowed down. Magwitch and I had our bags and were ready to go onto the ship.

Just then a small boat like ours appeared. It was a police boat and it carried six men. They came up beside us.

'You have Abel Magwitch there,' an officer shouted. 'We

are taking him back to London.'

One man in their boat had a coat over his head. Magwitch reached over and pulled the coat away. It was Compeyson. I tried to hold Magwitch back, but at that moment, the Hamburg ship reached us. It hit our boat and we all fell into the river. As I went under the water, I saw a thousand lights in my head. Then someone pulled me into the police boat. Herbert was there but Magwitch was not. Neither was Compeyson.

We all looked around us. The water was quiet and nobody spoke. Suddenly we saw a man's head appear.

'Magwitch!' I shouted.

We took the boat over and pulled him in. Blood ran down his face, but he wasn't dead.

The police took Magwitch back to prison. I sat next to his bed and washed the dry blood from his head.

'I went under the boat, Pip, and hit my head,' Magwitch said. He spoke with difficulty. 'We were fighting under the water. Me and Compeyson. Is he dead?'

'Yes,' I said. 'Compeyson is dead.'

'Dear boy,' he said. 'You have been like a son to me.'

His eyes closed again. I knew that he was dying.

'You have nothing to thank me for,' I said, taking his hand. I knew that he was a better man than me. I loved him and I did not want him to die.

'Magwitch, I have something to tell you ... about your daughter.' His hand moved in mine. 'She didn't die when she was a child. She is a lady and has important friends. She is very beautiful and I love her!'

Magwitch lifted my hand to his mouth. I saw a ghostly smile. And then he died.

EPILOGUE

Miss Havisham died soon after the fire. She gave her house to Estella and some money to Matthew Pocket.

Joe and Biddy were married and Joe and I became good friends again.

I went abroad to work and stayed there eleven years. I worked hard and did well. I heard that Estella's life was unhappy. Her life with Bentley Drummle was terrible and he often hit her. He hit his horse too, and that was his mistake. The horse killed him. Where was Estella now? I did not know.

Soon after I came back to England, I visited Joe and Biddy in our village. I found Joe sitting with a little boy by the fire. His name was Pip.

That evening, I walked into town to Miss Havisham's old house. I pushed open the gate to the garden and went in. I saw someone through the trees. It was Estella.

She was not as beautiful or as proud as I remembered. To me, she was more lovely. Her eyes were sad, but she held out a friendly hand to me. We walked around the garden together.



'Do you often come here?' I asked.

'I have not been here since Miss Havisham died.' She looked at me. 'I often think of you,' she said.

'Do you?'

'Yes,' she said. 'I did not allow myself to think of you when I was married. But now you are always in my heart.'

'You have never lost your place in my heart,' I said.

'I was very unkind to you,' she said. 'Are we still friends?'

I smiled. 'We are.'

As we walked out of the garden, hand in hand, I felt that my future was with Estella.