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Great expectations door Charles Dickens

anoniem

Summary

The story is about Pip (Philip Pirrip). A young orphan who is living with his older sister and her husband in Kent. His parents are dead, and one day Pip is visiting their grave. Suddenly, an escaped convict jumps up, and grabs Pip. He orders him to bring him food and a file, so he can get rid of his iron legs. Pip is scared to death, because the convict said, "if you don't do it, I will get your heart and liver out of your body".

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One day Pip is taken to Satis House, where the rich Miss Havisham lives with a beautiful young girl named Estella. Miss Havisham is a strange person, disappointed in life. Her boyfriend left her, on the day that was supposed to be their wedding day. She is still really sad, and every day she wears her wedding dress. Estella is a cold and cruel person. Although Estella isn't nice to Pip, he falls in love with her.

When Pip, his sister and his brother-in-law, Joe Gargery (a blacksmith), are eating, Mr. Jaggers comes in. He is a lawyer, and has big news. An anonymous benefactor has given Pip a fortune, so he can be a gentleman. He has to go to London with the lawyer, where his lessons 'how to be a gentleman' will be given. Pip goes to London, but first he says goodbye to Miss Havisham and Estella. In London Pip meets a young (gentle)man. His name is Herbert Pocket. He also meets Jaggers clerk, Wemmick.

When Pip is a gentleman he feels to good for his family and old friends. He treats them coldly, especially Joe, because he is just a blacksmith. Only Estella he treats the same, cause he still has a crush on her.

Many years later Pip meets the anonymous benefactor. He is really frightened, because the benefactor is the convict he met many years before. The convict, named Magwitch, made Pip a gentleman, because he feels he owes him that for giving him food so he didn't have to go back to jail, and could make a fortune. But Magwitch is still a criminal and also a convict. He asks Pip to help him escape, because the police are searching for him. Pip agrees and together with another man, Herbert, they try to cross the river. During that journey Pip and Magwitch talk a lot together. Pip finds out that Magwitch is the father of Estella. Magwitch thought she was dead.

The police are coming really soon behind them. There's another boat coming as well. They can't go away. The police catch them and a cop and Magwitch are fighting. Together they fall in the water. Magwitch falls on the boat. He's hurt. The police catch them. Magwitch is sentenced to death, and Pip loses his fortune (which he made during his 'being a gentleman-time'). Pip is also put in jail, but when Joe pays his bail, he is free.

His sister had been attacked and died a while later. During the time between her attack and her death, Biddy nurses her. Biddy is a close friend of Pip.

When Pip is free, he goes to Biddy and tells her that he really, really likes her. He was probably going to propose to her, when Joe walks in. They tell Pip that they are going to get married! Pip says he is happy for them.

Then Pip goes to Miss Havisham. During a conversation with her, he finds out why

she raised Estella so coldly. She wanted Estella to be the one who broke hearts, who was in control. She raised her as coldly as she did, because then she wouldn't have real feelings, so she wouldn't get hurt (but it is just the other way round, Estella doesn't get respect from men, and is unhappy).

When Pip leaves, Miss Havisham bends over to the fireplace, and goes up in flame. Pip tries to rescue her, but it didn't help. She dies.

Pip goes to Cairo to make money. When he returns many years later, he visits the Satis House. He discovers that Estella lives here now. She had been married, but her husband had treated her badly. Her coldness became sad kindness. Luckily for her, her husband died. Pip and Estella talk things over, and came to the conclusion that they really like each other.

Short summary

This book is about the life of Pip. His parent died when he was just a little boy. He was brought in an orphans house. Later, he gets a fortune of a man he does not know; he can become a gentleman now. At the end of the story everything seems to be going wrong, but he ends up, living happily ever after with the girl he loved.

Reason why I have chosen this book

I read a story of Charles Dickens before (in Dutch), and I like the way he writes. So I thought, why not read a story of his in English.

About the writer

Charles Dickens was born in 1812. He was one of eight kids. Up to his ninth he lived in Kent. His father was a very gentle man, but he didn't know how to run his financial business.

He ended up in jail. His mother found a job for him, but the other seven children she brought to his father. He didn't like this job. He thought he was too good for it. After three months, when his father was released, Charles got back to school. When he finished school, he started to work in a courtroom. Later he became a writer. Except for David Copperfield, Great Expectations is the most autobiographical book he wrote. He grew up in Kent, hated his job and he had on an early age a large amount of money. Charles died in 1870.

The title.

The title of the book is Great Expectations. The explanation of this title is the Great Expectations that Pip has of life. In the beginning he has not many expectations, but when he can go to London to become a gentleman, his expectations about what life has to offer, become bigger and bigger, until they are Great Expectations

Theme.

The theme is life, and the good and bad things life has to offer. Pip is growing up

and learning about life and being a gentleman. The good things, the bad things and, of course, the sad things and the disappointments.

The genre.

It's a developing roman, because Pip, the main-character goes through a character-change. Starting as a boy who doesn't know about the worlds and growing up to be a very sophisticated grown-up.

Characters.

The only real main-character is Pip. Through his eyes we experience the story, we see him growing up and becoming a man.

Other, less important, characters are Estella: Pip has fallen in love with her, eventhough she is such a cold and cruel person.

Miss Havisman, she is the one who raised Estella.

Magwitch, he is the escaped convict. He gave the money to Pip so that Pip could become a gentleman.

He is the father of Estella.

Joe Gargary, he is Pips brother-in-law. He's a man with a heart of gold, he buys Pip out of prison in spite of the fact that Pip hadn't be nice for him.

Biddy, she is a friend of Pip since they were little. She falls is love with Joe and marries him (after his wife died). Pip also had a crush on her.

Point of view.

We see the story through the eyes of Pip, so it is an I-person story.

Setting.

The most important places are Kent, that's where Pip experiences his childhood, and London, that's where Pip becomes a grown up, and learns all about life.

My own opinion.

This is a book about life. It's about the good and the bad things, the happiness and the disappointments. That is the main reason why I liked this book. A downside is that everything is written so long-winded and detailed. It makes the book a bit hard to understand and is boring at times. The linguistic usage was sometimes a bit difficult. I thought it was a good book, but I think it would have been better when I would have read it with more understanding of the English language.

Portfolio Assignment

I have chosen for assignment 12: Could this story really have happened? What is real and what isn't?

I think there is a pretty good chance that something like this (could have) happened for real, not exactly as it happened in the book, but it is a realistic story, as many of

Charles Dickens' stories. The most things are for real, although it has been of course fictionalised; Dickens probably made up the characters and stuff, but the rough story line could also have happened in real live.