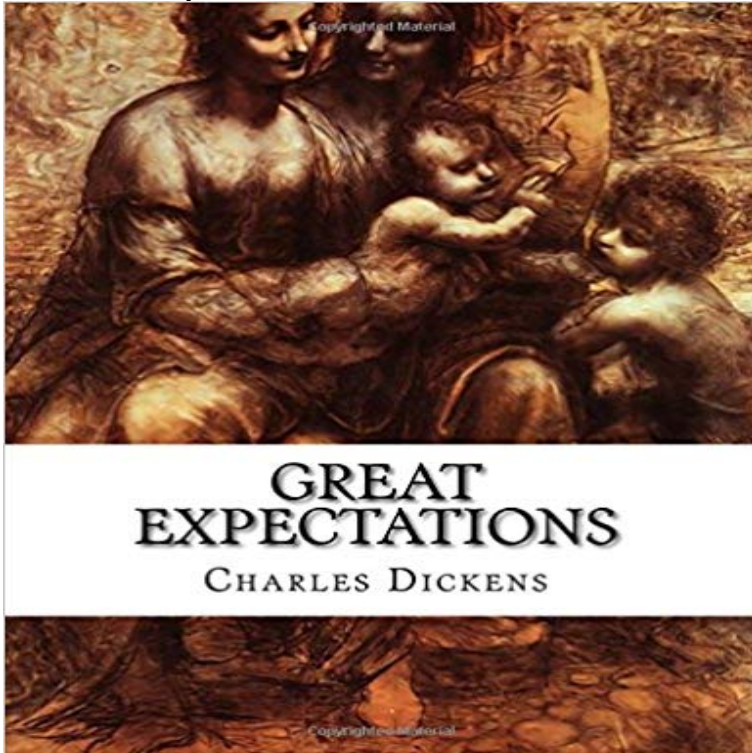


Great Expectations



Great Expectations is Charles Dickens's thirteenth novel and his penultimate completed novel; a bildungsroman which depicts the personal growth and personal development of an orphan nicknamed Pip. It is Dickens's second novel, after David Copperfield, to be fully narrated in the first person. The novel was first published as a serial in Dickens's weekly periodical All the Year Round, from 1 December 1860 to August 1861. In October 1861, Chapman and Hall published the novel in three volumes. It is set among marshes in Kent, and in London, in the early to mid-1800s, and contains some of Dickens's most memorable scenes, including the opening, in a graveyard, where the young Pip is accosted by the escaped convict, Abel Magwitch. Great Expectations is full of extreme imagery: poverty; prison ships and chains, and fights to the death; and has a colourful cast of characters who have entered popular culture. These include the eccentric Miss Havisham, the beautiful but cold Estella, and Joe, the kind and generous blacksmith. Dickens's themes include wealth and poverty, love and rejection, and the eventual triumph of good over evil. Great Expectations is popular both with readers and literary critics, and has been translated into many languages, and adapted numerous times into various media. On Christmas Eve, around 1812, Pip, an orphan who is about seven years old, encounters an escaped convict in the village churchyard while visiting the graves of his mother, father and siblings. The convict scares Pip into stealing food and a file to grind away his shackles, from the home he shares with his abusive older sister and her kind husband Joe Gargery, a blacksmith. The next day, soldiers recapture the convict while he is engaged in a fight with another escaped convict; the two are returned to the prison ships. Miss Havisham, a wealthy spinster who wears an old wedding dress and lives in the

dilapidated Satis House, asks Pips Uncle Pumblechook (who is Joes uncle) to find a boy to visit. Pip visits Miss Havisham and her adopted daughter Estella, falling in love with Estella on first sight, both quite young. Pip visits Miss Havisham regularly until it comes time for him to learn a trade; Joe accompanies Pip for the last visit when she gives the money for Pip to be bound as apprentice blacksmith. Pip settles into learning Joes trade. When both are away from the house, Mrs. Joe is brutally attacked, leaving her unable to speak or do her work. Biddy arrives to help with her care and becomes a blessing to the household.

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