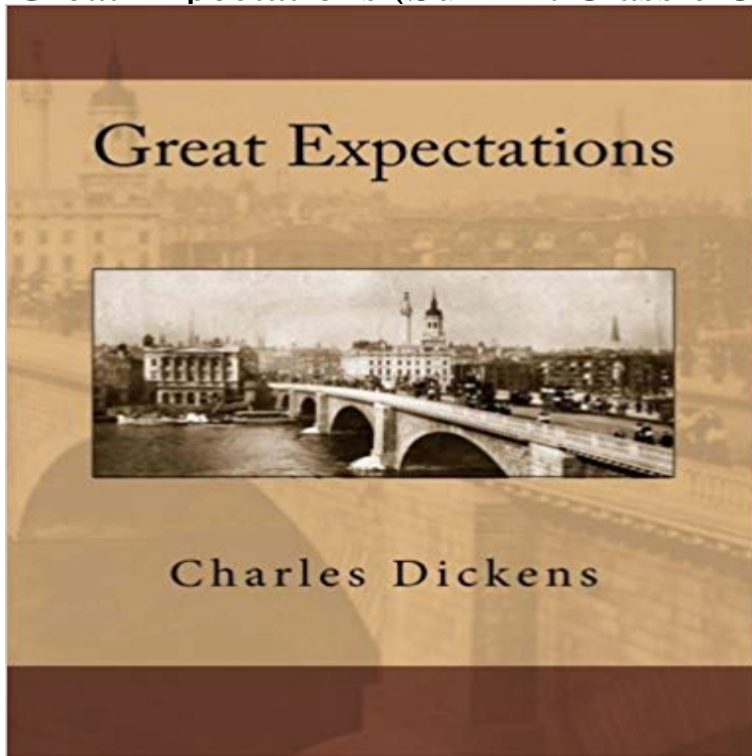


Great Expectations (Summit Classic Collector Editions)



With a large 7.44x9.69 page size, this Summit Classic Press edition is printed on hefty 60# bright white paper with a fully laminated cover featuring an original full color design. Page headers and modern design and page layout exemplify the attention to detail given this collector-quality volume. Also included is a new, original biography of Charles Dickens, discussing the life and work of this literary giant. Widely regarded as his finest work, Charles Dickens quintessential Victorian coming-of-age tale, *Great Expectations* was originally published in serial form between December 1860 and August 1861. In response to contemporary literary criticism asserting that the story was too sad, Dickens later rewrote the ending. In keeping with long-standing literary tradition, this Summit Classics volume follows the 1874 edition, published as a full-length novel with the modified ending. The tale follows the life of an orphan named Pip from childhood in and around the Kentish marshes to London and back again. Pip crosses paths with Abel Magwitch, an escaped convict, the well-off but unbalanced Miss Havisham, still wearing the wedding dress in which she was abandoned on her wedding day, and her beautiful adopted daughter Estella. Pip has a loyal friend in Joe, the brother-in-law who takes him on as an apprentice, where he is working when a lawyer, Mr. Jaggers, informs him that he is to receive a large sum from an anonymous benefactor and must immediately travel to London. As the real relationships and identities of the characters are revealed over the course of the story, Dickens delves into themes of love, loyalty, honesty and revenge. Born in Portsmouth England on February 7, 1812, Charles Dickens enjoyed a comfortable childhood until his father lost his post at the Navy Pay Office and ultimately landed in debtors prison. Young Charles embarked upon an horrific stint pasting labels on jars

of bootblack in a rat-infested slum. He would later find work as a newspaper writer, covering politics and then the courts. These experiences, with his almost photographic memory, would provide him with material for the colorful characters and vivid depictions of life in England which would characterize his work for decades. The publication of *The Pickwick Papers* in serial form in 1836 brought Dickens success. Within a few years he had become an international literary celebrity. Ultimately he would become the foremost novelist of the Victorian era and one of the most widely read writers in history. His books have never gone out of print, have been turned into films and plays, and are still widely read today. Along with his compelling storylines and unforgettable characters, Dickens stories served as vehicles for social commentary, often harshly critical of class stratification and public institutions. In particular, and contrary to prevailing views, Dickens championed the poor, whom he saw as wretched not because of their own weaknesses and moral failures but because of their helplessness before society's attitudes and institutions. And yet Dickens managed throughout to maintain a humorous element, and satire and caricature fill the pages of his works. Dickens died on June 9, 1870, following a stroke. Given the body of work he left behind, it is striking to note that Charles Dickens was just 58 years old at his death.

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