

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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Great Expectations

By
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Based on the Book by
Charles Dickens

Great Expectations was originally produced by Seattle Children's Theatre in the 1983-84 season.

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The Cast originally consisted of six men, four women, two boys and one girl, and doubled as follows:

Young Pip*
Young Herbert/ Stable Boy
Young Estella/ Barmaid
Adult Pip**/ Soldier
Herbert Pocket/ Lieutenant/ Tailor
Wemmick/ Pumblechook/ Bentley Drummle
Jaggers/ Compeyson***/ Clergyman
Joe Gargery/ Aged Parent/ Porter/ Prison Doctor
Magwitch/ A Pocket
Miss Havisham/ Miss Skiffins
Estella
Bidley/ Clara Barley/ A Pocket
Mrs. Joe Gargery/ Molly/ A Pocket

* Young Pip's last scene takes place when he is told that he must apprentice himself to Joe.

**Adult Pip's first scene is at the Three Jolly Bargemen.

*** The actor playing Jaggers can double as Compeyson, except for a few non-speaking cross-overs in Act II. Since the character is heavily muffled, other actors may take turns at Compeyson during these scenes.

ABOUT THE NARRATION: The premise of this adaptation is that all of the actors tell the story; it is a shared effort in storytelling. Narration is assigned at the director's discretion. Narrating actors may be solitary and removed, may be part of the scene, or may be narrating while assisting in a scene change.

One interesting choice is to let narration about a particular character be spoken by the actor playing that role. For example, another member of the company can speak the line "The next morning early, after fortifying themselves with..." Pip might take the line, "Pip was puzzled."

THERE ARE OVER FIFTY SCENES IN THIS ADAPTAION. THE SET IS A NEUTRAL PLATFORM, WITH UPSTAGE SCAFFOLDING. THIS SCAFFOLDING PERFORMS SEVERAL FUNCTIONS:

1. A (MOVABLE) PART OF IT MUST BECOME MISS HAVISHAM'S IRON GARDEN GATE, ALLOWING ENTRANCES FROM BEHIND THE SCAFFOLDING ONTO THE STAGE.
2. IT MUST CONTAIN A COUPLE OF FUNCTIONING PROP SHELVES FOR THE ACTORS TO USE.
3. IF POSSIBLE, THE SCAFFOLDING SHOULD CONTAIN AN UPPER LEVEL, WITH VISIBLE STAIRS.

THERE SHOULD ALSO BE ONE OR TWO SMALLISH WAGONS, WHICH CAN BE PRESET OFFSTAGE WITH THE FEW BIG SET-PIECES (MISS HAVISHAM'S TABLE WITH THE BRIDE CAKE, FOR INSTANCE), THEN WHEELED ONSTAGE EITHER BY ACTORS OR MECHANICALLY. CHAIRS CAN BE HUNG ON PEGS AT THE SIDES OF THE STAGE OR ON THE SCAFFOLDING. IN ANY CASE, THE FURNITURE USED SHOULD BE AS SPARE AS POSSIBLE, AND SHOULD BE MANIPULATED RAPIDLY.

THE THAMES RIVER SCENES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN WITH A LARGE MAP OF THE THAMES ESTUARY IN MIND--TO BE USED ON THE FLOOR IF THE STAGE IS RAKED. MODEL BOATS MANIPULATED BY ACTORS CAN TRAVEL ON THE MAP. THE ACTORS PROVIDE, IN EFFECT, A KIND OF VOICE-OVER FOR THE ACTION.

WITH ONE OR TWO OBVIOUS EXCEPTIONS, COSTUME CHANGES SHOULD BE MINIMAL.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOST SOUND EFFECTS SHOULD ALSO BELONG TO THE ACTING COMPANY, WHO CAN RING ALL THE BELLS, MAKE THE RURAL SOUNDS, ETC., IN VIEW OF THE AUDIENCE.

THE PREMISE ON WHICH THIS ADAPTATION STANDS IS THAT SIMPLE, HONEST STORYTELLING AND OPEN USE OF THE STAGE AS A STAGE WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN ANY LITERAL-MINDED OR REALISTIC SET.

The entire company is assemble onstage, except for the actor playing MAGWITCH, who is already hiding behind the tombstone.

NARRATION His family name being Pirrip and his own name being Philip, in the beginning the boy could make of both names nothing longer than ... Pip.

So he called himself Pip,

And came to be called Pip.

The family name, Pirrip, he had on the authority of a certain tombstone, his father's.

And on the authority of his older sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery,

Who was married to the town blacksmith.

They lived in the marsh country of Kent, where the Thames ran down to the sea.

In that dark, flat wilderness was a village churchyard where, one day, Pip found his parents.

Churchyard. A few tombstones. Pip kneels in front of one of them, reads haltingly.

PIP "Philip Pirrip, late of this parish." (PAUSE) "Also Georgiana, wife of the above..."

NARRATION The boy, a small bundle of shivers, began to cry, when—

MAGWITCH pops up from behind a tombstone.

MAGWITCH Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!

PIP Oh don't, sir!

MAGWITCH Tell us your name quick, then!

PIP Pip, sir.

MAGWITCH lifts him abruptly, sets him atop the stone, searches him. He finds a crust of bread, which he gnaws.

MAGWITCH Lookee here, then--where's your mother?

PIP There, sir. (MAGWITCH STARTS.) There--"Also Georgiana" .
That's my mother.

MAGWITCH Hah. And that's your father, alonger your mother?

PIP Yes, sir. "Late of this parish."

MAGWITCH Hah. And who d'ye live with now, supposin' I kindly let you live,
which I haven't made up my mind about?

PIP My sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery. She's wife to the blacksmith.

MAGWITCH Blacksmith, eh? (HE LOOKS DOWN AT HIS LEG IRONS.) Lookee
here: the question being whether or not you're to be let live--you
know what a file is?

PIP Yes, sir.

MAGWITCH And you know what wittles is?

PIP Wittles is food, sir.

MAGWITCH You bring me a file and you bring me some wittles, or I'll have your
heart and liver out. Bring 'em tomorrow at dawn--and don't say a
word about having seen me--and I'll let you live. (PIP NODS) But
mind, I'm not alone, if you're thinking that. No indeed, there's a
young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I
am an angel. So you must do as I tell you.

PIP Yes, sir.

MAGWITCH (PULLS OUT A LITTLE BIBLE.) Swear--say "Lord strike me dead if
I don't."

PIP "Lord strike me dead if I don't."

MAGWITCH gives him a dismissing nod. The boy backs away, then bolts. MAGWITCH huddles by the tombstone.

THE FORGE KITCHEN

NARRATION Pip's sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than the boy.

She had established a great reputation as a foster parent, because she had brought the boy up by hand. (AS PIP RACES IN, SHE SLAPS HIM.)

She was neither a good-looking woman, nor a cheerful one. (JOE STEPS IN TO PROTECT PIP.)

Pip had the impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand, too. (SHE SLAPS JOE, AS WELL.)

MRS. JOE Where've you been, young monkey? I'm worn away with fret and fright over you.

PIP I've only been to the churchyard.

MRS. JOE Churchyard! If it weren't for me you'd have been in the churchyard long ago. Bad enough being a blacksmith's wife, and him a Gargery, without being your mother as well. You'll drive me to the churchyard one of these days, between the two of you.

As she talks, she butters a slice of bread, hands it to Pip with another slap. He takes a bite, then when she isn't looking, he hides the rest in his pocket. Joe notices, however. Mrs. Joe turns to Pip.

MRS. JOE Where's your bread? Did you swallow it whole? This boy has the manners of a swine!

JOE Oh no, my dear, I don't think he—

MRS. JOE Don't my dear me! I'm not your dear. (SHE HANDS PIP A SLATE, SOME CHALK.)

NARRATION Pip felt little tenderness of conscience toward his sister.

 But Joe he loved. (JOE WATCHES PIP WRITING LABORIOUSLY
 ON THE SLATE.)

JOE I say, Pip, old chap, what a scholar you are!

PIP I'd like to be. (HE WRITES.) How do you spell Gargery?

JOE I don't spell it at all.

PIP But supposing you did?

JOE It cannot be supposed--though I am uncommon fond of reading.

PIP Are you, Joe? I didn't know that.

JOE Uncommon--give me a good book and I ask nothin' better.

PIP (PAUSE) Did you ever go to school?

JOE My father, he were given to drink, Pip; and whenever he were
 overtook with drink, he'd beat my mother and me, most
 unmerciful. We ran away a time or two, and my mother would find
 a job. "Joe," she'd say, "now you shall have some schooling, please
 God." And so I'd start school. But my father was such a good-
 hearted man, he couldn't bear to live without us, so he'd hunt us
 down and drag us home. Then he'd beat us up again to show how
 he'd missed us. Which you see, Pip, were a serious drawback to my
 learning. (MRS. JOE TAKES PIP'S SLATE AWAY.)

MRS. JOE Time for bed, boy. (SHE GIVES HIM A SLAP FOR GOOD
 MEASURE.)

JOE Time for bed, Pip, old chap. (WHISPERS) Your sister is much given
 to government, which I meantsay the government of you and
 myself. (HE HUGS PIP)

There is a distant boom of a cannon.

MRS. JOE Hark, the guns.

JOE Ay. It must be another convict off, eh?

PIP Off?

MRS. JOE Escaped, escaped.

PIP Please, Joe, where's the shooting come from?

MRS. JOE Ask no questions, you'll be told no lies.

JOE It comes from the Hulks, Pip, old chap.

PIP Please, Joe, what's the Hulks?

MRS. JOE This boy! Answer one question and he'll ask a dozen more!

JOE Hulks is prison ships.

PIP And please, Joe—

MRS. JOE No more! Time for bed! Bed! Bed! Bed!

NARRATION Conscience is a dreadful thing when it accuses a boy.

 Pip labored with the thought that he was to become a thief the next morning ...

 Which was Christmas Day. (THE CANNON BOOMS.)

 Pip scarcely slept that night.

 When pale dawn came he crept into the forge where he stole a file, and thence into the pantry where he stole a loaf of bread,

 Some brandy,

 And a beautiful, round firm pork pie.

As he ran toward the marshes, the mist, the wind, the very cattle in the field seemed to accuse him.

Stop thief! Stop that boy!

The churchyard. Pip runs toward the convict, whose back is to Pip. The man turns at Pip's whistle – but it is not the same man! Both gasp, then the man runs off. Pip empties his pockets, then Magwitch appears. He grabs the brandy.

MAGWITCH What's in the bottle, boy?

PIP Brandy.

Magwitch stuffs the food into his mouth. He shivers as he eats.

PIP I think you've caught a chill, sir.

MAGWITCH I 'm much of your opinion, boy. (HE PAUSES, LISTENS) You brought no one with you? (PIP SHAKES HIS HEAD.) I believe you. You'd be a mean young hound if you could help hunt down a wretched warmint like me, eh?

PIP (PIP WATCHES HIM EAT.) I'm glad you enjoy your food, sir.

MAGWITCH Thankee, boy, I do.

PIP But I'm afraid you haven't left much for him.

MAGWITCH Who's him?

PIP That young man you spoke of, who's with you.

MAGWITCH Oh, him. (HE GRINS) He don't want no wittles.

PIP He looked as if he did—

MAGWITCH --Looked? When? (HE RISES.)

PIP Just now.

MAGWITCH --Where? !

PIP Right here, a few minutes ago. I thought it was you-- he wore gray, like you, and he wore...he had the same reason for wanting a file. He ran away.

MAGWITCH Did he have a scar on his face?

PIP (NODS) Here.

MAGWITCH Give us that file, boy. (MAGWITCH STARTS TO FILE HIS LEG IRONS) And then ye'd best go--they'll be missing you! (PIP NODS, THEN RUNS OFF.)

NARRATION As Pip ran home, he could still hear the file sawing away at the convict's fetters.

He fully expected to find a constable waiting to arrest him when he got home.

But there was only Mrs. Joe, readying the house for Christmas dinner.

THE FORGE KITCHEN

MRS. JOE --And where the deuce ha' you been now? Company's expected!

PIP I was...down to hear the carolers. (SHE GIVES HIM A CRACK ON THE HEAD.)

JOE Merry Christmas, Pip, old chap.

NARRATION Dinner was set for half-past one. There was one guest ... Mr. Pumblechook, wealthy seed-and-corn merchant in the nearby town.

He was Joe's uncle, but he was Mrs. Joe's ally.

PUMBLECHOOK Mrs. Joe, I have brought you a bottle of sherry wine, and I have brought you a bottle of port wine, in honor of the Day.

MRS. JOE You was ever the soul of generosity, Uncle. (THEY SIT AT TABLE. SHE CUFFS PIP.) Stop fidgeting, boy--he wriggles as if he had a guilty conscience.

PUMBLECHOOK Then he must indeed have one. Boys, Joseph--a bad lot!

MRS. JOE Will you say the blessing, Uncle Pumblechook?

PUMBLECHOOK For that which we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful.

ALL Amen.

PUMBLECHOOK D'you hear that, boy? Be ever thankful to them what has brought you up by hand.

PIP Yes, sir.

PUMBLECHOOK Joseph, why is it the young are never thankful? I declare, boys are naturally vicious!

MRS. JOE Too true, Uncle Pumblechook.

JOE Have some gravy; Pip? (HE LADLES IT ONTO PIP'S PLATE.)

PUMBLECHOOK Not too much--the Lord invented the pig as an example of gluttony to the young. (TO MRS. JOE) He's no end of trouble to you, is he, ma'am?

MRS. JOE Trouble? You cannot know what trouble he's been.

JOE More gravy, Pip old fellow, old chap, old friend?

PUMBLECHOOK I suppose this boy will be apprenticed to you, soon, Joseph?

MRS. JOE Not for another year. Till then he'll eat me out of house and home – but I'm forgetting! I've a delicious pork pie, yet! (PIP DROPS HIS FORK.)

PUMBLECHOOK Ah, pork pie! A morcel of pie would lay atop any dinner you might mention, and do no harm, eh?

MRS. JOE I'll just go fetch it.

She goes. Pip rises in terror, rushes to the front door to escape. Simultaneously a sharp knock at the door, and a scream from Mrs. Joe. At the door, Pip is confronted by a pair of handcuffs, held by a soldier.

LIEUTENANT Hello, young fellow-- Does the blacksmith live here?

MRS. JOE (OFF) Stop! Stop, thief, my pie – it's been stolen!

LIEUTENANT Well?

PUMBLECHOOK This is the blacksmith's, yes.

LIEUTENANT Sorry to disturb your Christmas dinner –

PUMBLECHOOK Think nothing of it, my good man.

LIEUTENANT --But we've caught two convicts, and need these irons repaired. Can you do it?

PUMBLECHOOK Not me, him. He's the smith. Certainly he can do it. (MRS. JOE ENTERS, DISTRAUGHT.)

MRS. JOE My pork pie--it's gone—

LIEUTENANT (TO JOE) By the way, is this your file?

JOE (EXAMINES IT) Which it are!

LIEUTENANT It was found in the churchyard—

MRS. JOE Thieves, thieves...

Pumblechook is already pouring port wine down her throat.

NARRATION Christmas dinner was over.

When Pip arrived at the boat landing with Joe, he recognized his convict--and the other, with the scarred face.

The convicts glare at each other. The lieutenant takes the handcuffs from Joe, snaps them on Magwitch. The other man, Compeyson, lunges at Magwitch, but is pulled off by soldiers.

MAGWITCH I took 'im! I caught the villain! I turned 'im in, don't forget.

COMPEYSON This man--this man has tried to murder me!

MAGWITCH See what a villain he is--look at his eyes! Don't forget, I caught 'im for ye! (MAGWITCH TURNS, NOTICES PIP. PIP GIVES HIM A TINY SHAKE OF THE HEAD.) I wish ter say something respectin' this escape. It may prevent some persons from lying under suspicion alonger me.

LIEUTENANT You'll have plenty of chance later—

MAGWITCH --But this is a separate matter. I stole some wittles up in the willage yonder. Likewise a file—

JOE Halloa, Pip?

MAGWITCH And some liquor. And a pie. (TO JOE) Sorry to say, I've eat your pie.

JOE God knows you're welcome to it, as far as it was ever mine. We don't know what you have done, but we wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow. Would us, Pip?

Pip shakes his head. The lieutenant calls out "Ready! Move!" The prisioners are marched off. Magwitch stops, turns back. he and Pip stare at each other for a moment. Darkness.

THE FORGE KITCHEN

NARRATION It was not long after the incident on the marsh that Mrs. Joe returned home in the company of Mr. Pumblechook, in a state of rare excitement.

Joe smoking his pipe in a chair, Pip on the floor beside him. Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook burst in.

MRS. JOE If this boy ain't grateful this night, he never will be! (PIP TRIES TO LOOK GRATEFUL.) It's only to be hoped she won't fill his head with silly ideas.

PUMBLECHOOK I doubt it. She knows better.

JOE Which someone mentioned a she?

MRS. JOE Unless you call Miss Havisham a he –

JOE Miss Havisham? That odd, solitary lady in the town?

MRS. JOE She wants this boy to go play there. Of course he's going--and he'd better play, or I'll work him! (SHE CRACKS PIP ON THE HEAD.)

JOE Well, to be sure. I wonder how she come to know Pip?

MRS. JOE Noodle--who says she knows him? (SHE CRACKS JOE ON THE HEAD.) Couldn't she ask Uncle Pumblechook if he knew of a boy to go play there? Isn't it barely possible that Uncle Pumblechook may be a tenant of hers; and might he go there to pay his rent? And couldn't Uncle, out of the goodness of his heart, mention this boy here--to whom I have ever been a willing slave?

PUMBLECHOOK Now, Joseph, you know the case.

MRS. JOE No, Uncle, Joseph does not know the case. (TO JOE) For you do not know that Uncle, aware that this boy's fortune might be made by Miss Havisham, has offered to deliver Pip to her tomorrow, with his own hands! What do you say to that?

JOE (MYSTIFIED) Thankee kindly, Uncle Pumblechook.

PUMBLECHOOK My duty, Joseph. (TO PIP) Boy, be ever grateful to those what brought you up by hand. (HE GIVES PIPA BOX ON THE EAR.)

NARRATION Miss Havisham's house was of dismal bricks.

Most of its windows were boarded up.

There was a tall iron gate before which Mr. Pumblechook and Pip appeared at ten the next morning.

Miss Havisham's. The garden; then a room. Mr. Pumblechook rings the bell.

PUMBLECHOOK Right on the dot of ten, boy.

PIP No sir, I believe we're early. See, her big tower clock says twenty to nine.

PUMBLECHOOK It must have stopped. My time piece is always correct.

Estella appears.

ESTELLA What name?

PUMBLECHOOK Pumblechook.

ESTELLA Quite right. (SHE UNLOCKS THE GATE. PUMBLECHOOK PUSHES PIP THROUGH.)

PUMBLECHOOK This is Pip.

ESTELLA This is Pip, is it? Come in, Pip. (PUMBLECHOOK TRIES TO FOLLOW.) Do you wish to see Miss Havisham?

PUMBLECHOOK I'm sure Miss Havisham wishes to see me.

ESTELLA Ah, but you see, she don't. (SHE SHUTS THE GATE IN HIS FACE, LEADS PIP ON.) Don't loiter, boy.

NARRATION Although she was about Pip's age, to him she seemed years older

Being beautiful and self-possessed—

And being a girl.

She leads Pip upward, with a candle in her hand. She knocks. A voice says "Come in." Estella gestures Pip into the room, then leaves. It is dark. There is a banquet table with a huge cake. Miss Havisham is seated before it.

HAVISHAM Who is it?

PIP Pip, ma'am.

HAVISHAM Pip?

PIP Mr. Pumblechook's boy, ma'am. Come to play.

HAVISHAM Come nearer, let me look at you. Come closer.

NARRATION Once Pip had been taken to see a waxwork at a fair.

Once he had been taken to an old church to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich robe, which had been dug out of a vault.

Now waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved, and looked at him.

HAVISHAM Come closer. Ah, you are not afraid of a woman who has never seen the sun since you were born?

PIP ...No.

HAVISHAM You know what I touch here?

PIP Your heart.

HAVISHAM Broken. (PAUSE.) I am tired. I want diversion. Play. (PIP DOES NOT MOVE.) I sometimes have sick fancies; and I have a sick fancy that I'd like to see someone play. Play. Play, play! (PIP DOES NOT MOVE.) Are you so sullen and obstinate?

PIP I'm very sorry, but I can't play just now. I would if I could, but it's all so new here...so strange and fine and ... melancholy.

HAVISHAM So new to him, so old to me; so strange to him, so familiar to me; so melancholy to us both. (ESTELLA ENTERS.) Let me see you play cards with this boy.

ESTELLA With this boy!? Why, he's nothing but a common laboring boy!

HAVISHAM (ASIDE TO ESTELLA) Well? You can break his heart.

ESTELLA What do you play, boy?

PIP Only "Beggar My Neighbor", miss.

Estella brings out a deck of cards, deals. They play. Pip drops some cards.

ESTELLA He's stupid and clumsy--look at his hands, so coarse! (THEY PLAY.)

HAVISHAM (TO PIP) You say nothing of her. What do you think of her, tell me in my ear.

PIP (WHISPERS) I think she is very proud.

HAVISHAM Anything else?

PIP I think she is very pretty.

HAVISHAM Anything else?

PIP I think she is very insulting and I'd like to go home.

HAVISHAM You may go soon. Finish the game. (THEY PLAY)

NARRATION The girl won. Her name was Estella.

Pip was asked to return the next week.

Estella took the candle and led him out.

ESTELLA (GOING) You're crude. You're clumsy. Your boots are ugly!

NARRATION The girl saw tears spring to Pip's eyes.

Pip saw her quick delight at having been the cause of them.

And for the first time, he was bitterly aware that life had been unjust to him.

He quickly dried his eyes so she would not catch him weeping.

ESTELLA Why don't you cry again, boy?

PIP Because I don't want to.

ESTELLA Yes you do. You cried before, and you'll cry again...

NARRATION Pip headed for home with the shameful knowledge that his hands were coarse and his boots were ugly,

And that he was much more ignorant than he had thought himself the night before.

THE FORGE KITCHEN

Pumblechook, Mrs. Joe and Joe wait eagerly. Pip enters.

PUMBLECHOOK Well, boy? How did you get on?

PIP Pretty well, sir.

PUMBLECHOOK "Pretty well?" Tell us what you mean by pretty well, boy.

PIP I mean pretty well.

PUMBLECHOOK And what is she like?

PIP Very tall and fat.

MRS. JOE Is she, Uncle? (PAUSE. PUMBLECHOOK NODS VAGUELY.)

PUMBLECHOOK Now, tell us what she was doing when you went in?

PIP She was sitting in a big black velvet coach. (HIS LISTENERS ARE AMAZED. PIP SMILES.) Miss Estella handed her wine and cake, into the coach. We all had wine and cake--on golden plates! (ASTONISHED PAUSE.)

PUMBLECHOOK Was anyone else there?

PIP Four black dogs.

PUMBLECHOOK Large or small?

PIP Immense !

PUMBLECHOOK That's the truth of it, ma'am, I've seen it myself the times I've called on her. (HE BOWS, EXITS WITH MRS. JOE. PIP WHISTLES A TUNE TO HIMSELF.)

NARRATION After Mr. Pumblechook departed, Pip--or his conscience-- sought out Joe.

PIP It was all lies, Joe.

JOE Really? The black velvet coach was a lie?

PIP Yes.

JOE Even the golden plates?

PIP I wish my boots weren't so thick, Joe, I wish —(HE THROWS HIS ARMS AROUND JOE, BURIES HIS FACE IN JOE'S SHOULDER.)

NARRATION He told Joe how miserable he'd been made to feel, by Uncle Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe, and by the very beautiful young lady who had called him common.

JOE One thing, Pip, lies is lies and you mustn't tell any more of 'em. That ain't the way to stop bein' common. As for that, in some ways you're most uncommon. You're uncommon small. You're an uncommon scholar.

PIP I'm not, I'm ignorant and clumsy.

JOE Pip? Even the four black dogs was lies?

NARRATION Although Pip could not improve the quality of his boots, he set about to remedy the quality of his education by taking lessons from Mr. Pumblechook's great-aunt's grand-niece - Biddy - who lived in the neighborhood.

BIDDY (HOLDS UP A SLATE TO PIP.) Six times four.

PIP Twenty-four.

BIDDY Seven times four?

PIP Twenty-eight.

BIDDY Eight times four? (A PAUSE. PIP ISN'T SURE OF THE ANSWER AND, TO TELL THE TRUTH, NEITHER IS BIDDY.)

PIP Thirty-four? (SHE NODS APPROVAL.)

NARRATION And a week later he returned to Miss Havisham's at the appointed hour.

MISS HAVISHAM'S. THE GARDEN, THEN A ROOM.

ESTELLA Follow me, boy. Well?

PIP Well, miss?

ESTELLA Am I pretty?

PIP Very.

ESTELLA Am I insulting?

PIP Not so much as you were last time.

ESTELLA No? (SHE SLAPS HIS FACE.) Coarse little monster, why don't you cry?

PIP I'll never cry for you again.

As they cross, they pass Mr. Jiggers coming from the other direction.

NARRATION As Estella led him through the gloomy house, they encountered a singular-looking gentleman mming toward them.

JAGGERS Well, well, what have we here?

ESTELLA A boy.

JAGGERS Boy of the neighborhood?

PIP Yes, sir.

JAGGERS How d'you come to be here?

ESTELLA Miss Havisham sent for him, sir.

JAGGERS Well, behave yourself. I've a pretty large experience of boys, and you're a bad set of fellows. Behave! (HE CONTINUES OUT. ESTELLA AND PIP ENTER MISS HAVISHAM'S ROOM.)

HAVI SHAM So, the days have worn away, have they? A week. Are you ready to play?

PIP I don't think so, ma'am.

HAVI SHAM Are you willing to work, then? (PIP NODS. SHE TAKES HIS ARM, LEANS AGAINST HIS SHOULDER.) Help me to walk, boy. (THEY

CIRCLE THE TABLE.) This is where I shall be laid when I am dead.
(SHE POINTS WITH HER STICK.) What do you think that is?

PIP I cannot guess.

HAVISHAM It's a great cake. A bride-cake. Mine.

PIP There are mice in it, ma'am.

HAVISHAM Yes. This cake and I have worn away together, and sharper teeth have gnawed at me.

NARRATION Breathing the heavy air that brooded in the room, Pip suddenly had an alarming fancy that all was decaying - that even he and Estella might presently begin to decay.

HAVISHAM Now you must play at cards. (ESTELLA GETS THE DECK.) Is she not pretty, Pip? (PIP SIGHS, NODS. ESTELLA DEALS.)

NARRATION And so the visits ran, with little to distinguish one from another.

Estella always won at cards.

Once, some relation called upon Miss Havisham.

A POCKET How well you look, ma'am.

A POCKET Happy birthday, cousin—

A POCKET --And many happy returns of the day.

HAVISHAM You see, Pip? The vultures have descended again, my Pocket relations. But the Pockets shall not have a penny of mine, never! You may go, Pip.

NARRATION Pip was all too glad to take his leave. He was about to let himself out by the garden gate, when he was stopped by a pale young gentleman.

Young Herbert appears, munching an apple.

HERBERT Halloa, young fellow. Who let you in?

PIP Miss Estella.

HERBERT (PLEASANTLY) Do you want to fight? Come on. (HE TOSSES THE APPLE OVER HIS SHOULDER STRIPS OFF HIS CAP, JACKET AND SHIRT.) I ought to give you a reason for fighting. There – (HE CLAPS HIS HANDS TOGETHER UNDER PIP'S NOSE, GENTLY PULLS HIS HAIR. HE DANCES AROUND PIP, FISTS DOUBLED.) Standard rules, is that agreeable? (PIP NODS. HERBERT DANCES AROUND, THROWING PUNCHES WHICH MISS PIP . PIP FINALLY GETS ONE OFF, AND IT LEVELS HERBERT. ESTELLA PEEPS OUT TO WATCH.)

PIP Oh dear, I'm sorry –

HERBERT Think nothing of it, young fellow!

He jumps to his feet, squeezes a sponge of water over his head, dances around again. Pip lands another punch, Herbert falls.

PIP Oh, look, I ' m really so sorry, I –

HERBERT Perfectly all right. (HE GETS UP, PICKS UP THE SPONGE, THROWS IT.) See, I'm throwing in the sponge. That means you've won. (HE OFFERS HIS HAND. THEY SHAKE.)

P I P Can I help you?

HERBERT No thankee, I'm fine.

He picks up his jacket and cap. As he goes off, Estella passes him and sticks out her tongue. He shrugs, leaves. Pip stares after him. Estella comes to him.

ESTELLA You may kiss me, if you like.

He kisses her on the cheek, then, overwhelmen, he flees.

NARRATION If Pip could have told Joe about his strange visits –

NARRATION If he could have unburdened himself about his love for Estella, or even about his fight with the pale young gentleman...

But of course he could not, for Joe's hands were coarser and his boots thicker than Pip's own!

So Pip confided in Biddy - it seemed natural to do so. He told her everything,

And Biddy had a deep concern in everything he told her.

Pip and Biddy are strolling, sharing a piece of toffee.

PIP Biddy, I want to be a gentleman.

BIDDY Oh, I wouldn't if I was you, Pip.

PIP I've my reasons for wanting it.

BIDDY You know best, but wouldn't you be happier as you are?

PIP I am not happy as I am! I am disgusted with my life.

BIDDY That's a pity for you, isn't it?

PIP I know. If I was half as fond of the forge as I was a year ago, life would be simpler. I could become Joe's partner someday. Who knows, perhaps I'd even keep company with you. I'd be good-enough for you, wouldn't I, Biddy?

BIDDY Oh yes, I am not over-particular. (PAUSE) Is it Estella?

PIP It's because of her I wish to be a gentleman.

BIDDY Do you wish to be a gentleman to spite her or to win her?

PIP I don't know. Biddy, I wish you could put me right.

BIDDY I wish I could....

NARRATION But Bidly could not put Pip right.

Things went on in the same way. His dreams and discontent remained.

Time passed.

Finally, one day Miss Havisham looked at him crossly-

HAVISHAM You are growing too tall! What is the name of that blacksmith of yours?

PIP Joe Gargery, ma'am.

HAVISHAM I shan't need you to come play here anymore. So you'd better be apprenticed to Mr. Gargery at once.

PIP But—

HAVISHAM But what?

PIP - I don't want to be a blacksmith! I'd rather come here!

HAVISHAM It's all over, Pip. You're growing up. Estella is going abroad to school next week. Gargery is your master now. (SHE GLANCES AT ESTELLA, WHISPERS TO PIP.) Does she grow prettier, Pip? Do you love her? Shall you miss her? (PIP TURNS AWAY, SHE CROSSES TO ESTELLA.) Break their hearts, my pride and hope, break their hearts and have no mercy.

NARRATION Pip was indentured as apprentice blacksmith to Joe Gargery the following week.

Miss Havisham's parting gift of twenty-five pounds was cause for celebration in some quarters. (MR. PUMBLEHOOK AND MRS. JOE TOAST.) Pip did not celebrate. He had liked Joe's trade once, But once was not now.

NARRATION He was wretched. (SOUND OF AN ANVIL. GLOW OF A FORGE FIRE.) Nonetheless, Pip labored.

And Pip grew.

Always he would gaze into the fire at the forge and see Estella's face.

He heard her cruel laughter in the wind.

He was haunted by the fear that she would come home, witness his debasement, and despise him.

On the surface, however, Pip's life fell into a routine.

Days he worked with Joe at the forge. Evenings he became his own teacher—

For he had long outstripped Bidley in learning.

Once a year, on his birthday, he visited Miss Havisham.

HAVISHAM Pip, is it? Has your birthday come round again? Ah, you're lookins around for her, I see. Still abroad, educating for a lady...far out of reach and prettier than ever. Do you feel you have lost her?

NARRATION Time wrought other changes.

Mrs. Joe Gargery fell gravely ill, and lingered in a kind of twilight, tended by Bidley,

Who was more sweet-tempered and wholesome than ever.

Pip was now a young man, old enough to accompany Joe to the local public house of an evening.

And so, in the fourth year of his apprenticeship, on a Saturday night at the Three Jolly Bargemen

THE PUB

Pumblechook, Joe and Pip at a table. Jagers sits at a distance, in the shadows. Others are also drinking. A barmaid serves. Pumblechook is reading from a newspaper.

PUMBLECHOOK "The victim is said to have spoken the name of the accused before he died, according to a witness for the prosecution. And medical testimony brought out during the third day of the trial by the prosecution points to--"

JAGGERS I suppose you've settled the case to your satisfaction?

PUMBLECHOOK (PUMBLECHOOK PEERS INTO THE SHADOWS.) Sir, without having the honor of your acquaintance, I have. The verdict should be "guilty."

JAGGERS I thought as much. (HE RISES) But the trial is not over, is it? You do admit that English law supposes each man to be innocent until he is proved--proved--guilty?

PUMBLECHOOK Certainly I admit it, sir.

JAGGERS And are you aware, or are you not aware, that none of the witnesses mentioned in that questionable journal you read has yet been cross-examined by the defense?

PUMBLECHOOK Yes, but—

JAGGERS I rest my case. (HE PEERS AROUND THE ROOM.) From information I have received, I've reason to believe there's a blacksmith among you by the name of Joseph Gargery. Which is the man?

PUMBLECHOOK There is the man. What have you done, Joseph?

JAGGERS And you have an apprentice who is commonly known as Pip--is he here?

PUMBLECHOOK Aha! I knew that boy would come to no good!

JAGGERS I wish a conference with you two - a private conference. (THE OTHERS DRIFT AWAY, GRUMBLING.) My name is Jaggers, and I am a lawyer in London. I'm pretty well known there. I've some unusual business to transact with you. (PIP AND JOE GLANCE AT EACH OTHER.) Know first that I act as the confidential agent of a client. It is his orders I follow, not my own. Having said that: Joseph Gargery, I've come with an offer to relieve you of this apprentice of yours.

JOE Pip?

JAGGERS Would you be willing to cancel his indentures, for his own good? (JOE THINKS, NODS) You'd ask no money for doing so?

JOE Lord forbid I should want anything for not standing in Pip's way.

JAGGERS Good. Don't try to change your mind later. (WITH GREAT FORMALITY.) The communication I have come to make is...that this young man has great expectations. (PIP RISES. HE AND JOE GAPE.) I'm instructed to inform him that he will come into a handsome fortune; that he is to be immediately removed from his present sphere of life and from this place, that he is to be brought up as a gentleman-- in a word, as befits a young man of great expectations.

Joe and Pip stare wordlessly for a moment.

PIP Joe—

JAGGERS --Later. First, understand that the person from whom I take my instruction requests that you always bear the name of Pip. You've no objection, I daresay? Good. Secondly, Mr. Pip, the name of your benefactor—

PIP --Miss Havisham—

JAGGERS --the name of your benefactor must remain a secret until that person chooses to reveal it. Do you accept this condition? Good. Good. I've already been given a sum of money for your education

and maintenance. From now on, you will please consider me your guardian.

PIP Thank you —

JAGGERS --Don't bother to thank me, I am well-paid for my services, or I shouldn't render them. Now then, education: you wish a proper tutor, no doubt? Good. Have you a preference?

PIP Well...I only know Bidley, that's Mr. Pumblechook's great-aunt's grand-niece —

JAGGERS --Never mind, there's a man in London who might suit well enough, a Mr. Matthew Pocket.

PIP Pocket--is he a cousin of Miss Havisham?

JAGGERS Ah, you know the name. He is. When do you wish to come to London?

PIP Soon--directly!

JAGGERS Good. You'll need proper clothes--here is twenty guineas. You'll take the hackney coach up to London --it's a five-hour trip. Shall I look for you a week from tomorrow? Good. Well, Joseph Gargery, you look dumbfounded.

JOE Which I am.

JAGGERS It was understood you wanted nothing for yourself.

JOE It were understood and it are understood and ever will be.

JAGGERS But what if I was instructed to make you a present, as compensation for the loss of his services--?

JOE --Pip is that hearty welcome to go free with his services jto honor and fortune, as no words can tell him. But if you think as money can compensate me for the loss of the little child what--what come to the forge and...and...ever the best of friends. (HE WEEPS)

PIP Oh, Joe, don't...I'm going to be a gentleman!

Darkness.

NARRATION That night Pip sat alone in his little room at the forge, feeling sorrowful and strange that this first night of his bright fortune should be the loneliest he had ever known.

The next morning, things looked brighter —

Only seven days until his departure.

Seven long days.

But there was much to do. First he visited a tailor.

PIP (RINGS BELL) I beg your pardon ...

TAILOR (UNIMPRESSED) I beg yours.

PIP I am going to London.

TAILOR What of it?

PIP I shall need a suit of fashionable clothes.

Pip drops coins one-by-one into the hand of the tailor, who becomes obsequious. During the following, Pip goes behind a screen and changes his clothes.

TAILOR (WHILE PIP CHANGES.) I beg your pardon, my dear sir. Fashionable clothes, is it? For London! You've come to the right place, you shall be quite correct, I assure you, quite the thing! Indeed, one might call you the "glass of fashion" We'll turn you out from top to toe as fine as any London gentleman could wish!

NARRATION And thence, to Mr. Pumblechook's, to receive that great man's blessing.

PUMBLECHOOK (RAISING A GLASS) Beloved friend, I give you joy in your good fortune. Well-deserved, well-deserved! And to think that I have been the humble instrument leading up to all this...is reward enough for me. So here's to you--I always knew you had it in you! And let us also drink thanks to Fortune--may she ever pick her favorites with equal judgement!

NARRATION And thence to Miss Havisham's, with barely suppressed excitement... and gratitude.

Pip emerges behind the screen. His London suit is almost comical in its exaggeration of high fashion. It is De Trop.

HAVISHAM This is a grand figure, Pip.

PIP Oh, ma'am, I have come into such good fortune!

HAVISHAM I've learned of it from Mr. Jaggers. So, you've been adopted by a rich person, have you?

PIP Yes, Miss Havisham.

HAVISHAM Not named?

PIP Not named.

HAVISHAM You've a promising career before you. Deserve it! You're always to keep the name of Pip, you know? (HE NODS) Goodbye tha, Pip. (SHE PUTS OUT HER HAND, HE KISSES IT CLUMSILY.)

NARRATION Finally, the morning of his departure dawned.

THE FORGE KITCHEN

PIP You may be sure, dear Joe, I shall never forget you.

JOE Ay, old chap, I'm sure of that.

PIP I always dreamed of being a gentleman.

JOE Did you? Astonishing! Now me, I'm an awful dull fellow. I'm only master in my own trade, but...ever the best of friends-- (HE FLEES IN TEARS)

PIP (TO BIDDY) You will help Joe on, won't you?

BIDDY How help him on?

PIP Joe's a dear fellow, the dearest that ever lived, but he's backward in some things, Biddy ... like learning and manners.

BIDDY Won't his manners do, then?

PIP They do well enough here, but if I were to bring him to London when I come into my property —

BIDDY --And don't you think he knows that? Pip, Pip ...

PIP Well?

BIDDY Have you never considered his pride?

PIP His pride? Whatever do you mean? You sound almost envious—

BIDDY If you have the heart to think so! Can't you see, Joe is too proud and too wise to let anyone remove him from a place he fills with dignity—(JOE ENTERS, BLOWING HIS NOSE.)

JOE It's time for the coach, Pip.

PIP Well then. (HE PICKS UP HIS VALISE)

JOE I'll come visit you in London, old chap, and then — wot larks, eh? Wot larks we'll have!

PIP Goodbye, Biddy. (HE KISSES HER CHEEK) Dear Joe—(JOE GRABS PIP'S HAT, THROWS IT UP IN THE AIR, TO HIDE HIS TEARS.)

JOE Hoorar! Hoorar!

With waves and cheers, the "coach" departs for London.

NARRATION When his coach finally left the village behind, Pip wept.

Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are the rain on the blinding dust of earth, overlaying our hard hearts.

Pip felt better after he had cried—

More aware of his own ingratitude –

Sorrier,

Gentler.

But by now it was too late to turn back to Joe, so he traveled forward.

The mists slowly rose and the world lay spread before him.

And suddenly there was—

COACHMAN London !

PIP London !

Pip climbs off the 'coach', clutching his valise. He stares around him at the crowd.

NARRATION Not far from the great dome of St. Paul's, in the very shadow of Newgate Prison, Pip alighted and stood before an ugly stone building.

JAGGERS'S OFFICE

Wemmick appears at Pip's knock. Jagger is inside the room, washing his hands, he pours water from a pitcher into a basin.

- PIP Is Mr. Jagger in? (WEMMICK PULLS HIM INSIDE.)
- WEMMICK Am I addressing Mr. Pip? He's been expecting you. I'm Wemmick, Mr. Jagger's clerk. (HE LEADS PIP TO JAGGERS.)
- JAGGERS Well, Mr. Pip, London, eh?
- PIP Yes, sir.
- JAGGERS I've made arrangements for you to stay at Barnard's Inn. You'll share young Mr. Pocket's apartments.
- PIP My tutor?
- JAGGERS His son. I've sent over some furniture for you. And here's a list of tradesmen where you may run up bills. And you will, you will-- you'll drown in debt before the year is out, I'm sure, but that's no fault of mine, is it? Good. Wemmick, take him over to Barnard's Inn, will you? I must get back to court. (HE EXITS. WEMMICK PICKS UP PIP'S VALISE, THEY STROLL.)
- WEMMICK So, you've never been to London? I was new here, once, myself. But now I know the moves of it.
- PIP Is it a very wicked place?
- WEMMICK You may get cheated, robbed and murdered in London. But there are plenty of people anywhere who'll do that for you. Here we are, "Mr. Pocket, Jr. I" (HE KNOCKS.) As I keep the cash, we shall likely be meeting often. (THEY SHAKE HANDS, WEMMICK GOES.)

BARNARD 'S INN

- HERBERT (HERBERT COMES TO THE DOOR.) Mr. Pip?
- PIP Mr. Pocket? (THEY SHAKE HANDS.)
- HERBERT Pray, come in. We're rather bare here, but I hope you'll make out tolerably well.
- PIP It seems very grand to me.
- HERBERT Look around. It's not splendid, because I don't earn very much at present, still I think... bless me, you're you're the prowling boy in Miss Havisham's garden!
- PIP And you are the pale young gentleman!
- HERBERT The idea of its being you!
- PIP The idea of its being you! (THEY LAUGH, BOTH STRIKE A BOXING POSE.)
- HERBERT I do hope you've forgiven me for having knocked you about? (THEY LAUGH, SHAKE HANDS AGAIN.)
- NARRATION Dinner was sent up from the coffee-house in the next road and the young men sat down to get acquainted.
- PIP Mr. Pocket, I was brought up to be a blacksmith. I know little of polite manners. I'd take it as a kindness if you give me a hint whenever I go wrong.
- HERBERT With pleasure. And will you do me the kindness of calling me by my Christian name: Herbert?
- PIP With pleasure. My name is Philip.
- HERBERT Philip. Philip ... no, I don't take to it. Sounds like a highly moral boy in a schoolbook. I know! We're so harmonious--and you have been a blacksmith ... would you mind if I called you "Handel"?

PIP Handel? Why?

HERBERT There's a piece of music I like, The Harmonious Blacksmith, by Handel-- (HE HUMS THE TUNE)

PIP I'd like it very much. So...we two go way back to Miss Havisham's garden! (THEY EAT.)

HERBERT Yes. She's a tartar, isn't she?

PIP Miss Havisham?

HERBERT I don't say no to that, but I meant Estella. You know the old lady raised her to wreak revenge on all the male sex?

PIP No! Revenge for what?

HERBERT Dear me, it's quite a story--which I'll begin, Handel, by mentioning that in London it's not the custom to put the knife in the mouth--scarcely worth mentioning, but.... Also, the spoon is not generally used overhand, but under. This has two advantages: you get to your mouth more easily, but to your cravat less well.

 Now, as to Miss H. Her father was a country gentleman. There were two children, she and a half-brother named Arthur. Arthur grew up extravagant, undutiful—in a word, bad! So the father disinherited him—

 --Have another glass of wine, and excuse my mentioning that society as a body does not expect one to be so strictly conscientious in emptying one's glass as to turn it upside-down.

PIP So sorry.

HERBERT It's nothing. Upon her father's death, Miss H. became an heiress. She was considered a great match. There now appears on the scene--at the races, say, or at a ball--a man who courted the heiress. This is twenty-five years ago, remember.

HERBERT Also remember that your dinner napkin need not be stuffed into your glass. At any rate, her suitor professed love and devotion, and she fell passionately in love. She gave the man huge sums of money, against all advice--particularly against my father's; which is why she's never liked us since, and why I wasn't the boy chosen to come play with Estella –

Where was I? Oh yes, the marriage-day was fixed, the wedding-dress bought, the guests invited, the bridecake baked. The great day arrived--but the bridegroom failed to. Instead, he sent his regrets. That morning a letter arrived –

PIP Which she received while she was dressing for her wedding? At exactly twenty minutes to nine?

HERBERT Which is why she had all the clocks in the place stopped at that moment! It was later discovered that the man she loved had conspired with her brother to defraud her. They shared the profits of her sorrow.

PIP Whatever became of them?

HERBERT Fell into ruin and disappeared, both of 'em. Not many months after, Miss H. adopted Estella--she was a tiny child. And now, my dear Handel, you know everything I do about poor Miss H.

PIP But I know nothing of you. If it's not rude to ask, what do you do for a living?

HERBERT (DREAMILY) I'd like to go inot business. I'd like to be an insurer of great ships that sail to distant ports.

PIP I see.

HERBERT I'm also considering the mining business ... Africa.

PIP I see.

HERBERT Trading in the East Indies interests me.

PIP I see. You'll need a lot of capital for all that.

HERBERT True. Meanwhile, I'm looking about me. Temporarily employed in a counting house, but looking about me for the right opportunity...

PIP And then...what larks.

HERBERT Pardon? (PIP LAUGHS, HERBERT JOINS HIM.)

NARRATION Pip took up his studies with Herbert's father, Mr. Matthew Pocket.

He was joined in his classes by another student, a haughty young man named—

DRUMMLE --Bentley Drummle, seventh in line for a small baronetcy. And who, may I ask, are you?

NARRATION Latin, French, history, mathematics in the mornings. In the afternoons, sports, of which the favorite was rowing on the river.

DRUMMLE No, no, no, Mr. Pip. Starboard's there. This is port!

PIP Thank you very much.

DRUMMLE Now you dip the blade of the oar into the water--that's the wide part, Mr. Pip.

PIP You're too kind. But I did grow up near the river.

DRUMMLE Yes, I've heard about you. Your rowing lacks form, there's no style to it, is there? Still, you're strong. One might say you've got the arm of a blacksmith! (PIP GLARES AT HIM.)

NARRATION To his surprise, Pip enjoyed his studies with Mr. Pocket.

He also enjoyed his tailor, his linendraper, his glovemaker, his jeweler—

JAGGERS'S OFFICE

Jaggers washes his hands. Wemmick watches.

JAGGERS Well, how much do you need this time?

PIP I'm not sure, Mr. Jaggers.

JAGGERS Fifty pounds?

PIP Oh, not that much, sir.

JAGGERS Five pounds?

PIP Well, more than that, perhaps.

JAGGERS Twice five? Three times five? Wemmick, twenty pounds for Mr. Pip.

WEMMICK Twenty pounds in portable property, yes, sir.

JAGGERS And now excuse me, young man, I'm late to court. (HE GOES. PIP STARES AFTER HIM.)

PIP I don't know what to make of that man!

WEMMICK He don't mean you to know, either. He always acts like he's just baited a trap. He sits watching, and suddenly--snap! You're caught. By the way, if you've nothing better to do at the moment, perhaps you'd like to come home with me for supper. I live down in Walworth.

PIP Why, that's very kind of you. Yes.

WEMMICK You've no objection to an Aged Parent?

PIP Certainly not. (THEY STROLL)

WEMMICK Because I have one.

PIP I look forward to meeting her—

WEMMICK Him. Have you been to dine at Mr. Jaggers's yet?

PIP Not yet.

WEMMICK He'll give you an excellent meal. While you're there, do notice his housekeeper.

PIP Shall I see something uncommon?

WEMMICK You will see a wild beast tamed.

WALWORTH. THE GARDEN, WITH DRAWBRIDGE.

NARRATION And so they arrived at Mr. Wemmick's cottage in Walworth. The place was odd, to say the least.

WEMMICK Step over the drawbridge, if you will, Mr. Pip. (PIP CROSSES OVER WITH WEMMICK, WHO HAS GROWN VERY AFFABLE.) I must warn you, our little cannon fires at nine o'clock every evening, Greenwich time, so you won't be alarmed.

PIP It's wonderfully ... original here.

The Aged Parent enters, pulling a small cannon on wheels.

WEMMICK Ah, here's the Aged. (VERY LOUD) Well, Aged Parent, how are you this evening?

AGED PARENT All right, John, all right.

WEMMICK Here's Mr. Pip, come to tea. (TO PIP) Nod at him, Mr. Pip, that's what he likes. He's deaf as a post, he is. (PIP NODS AT THE AGED, WHO NODS BACK.)

AGED PARENT This is a fine place my son's got, sir. (PIP NODS. AGED NODS.)

WEMMICK Proud as punch, ain't you, Aged? (ALL THREE NOD.) There's a nod for you, and there's another for you. (TO PIP) Mr. Jaggers knows nothing of all this. Never even heard of the Aged. I'll be grateful if you don't mention it--the office is one thing, private life's another. I speak now in my Walworth capacity.

PIP Not a word, upon my honor.

WEMMICK When I go to the office I leave the castle behind me, and vice versa. One minute to nine--gun-fire time. It's the Aged Parent's treat. Ready? Here we go! (THERE IS A BIG BOOM.)

AGED It's fired! I heard it! (ALL THREE NOD HAPPILY.)

NARRATOR A few weeks later, Pip was invited, along with Herbert and Bentley Drummle, to dine at Mr. Jaggers's.

JAGGERS' HOME. A DINING TABLE.

JAGGERS (ASIDE, TO PIP) I like your friend Drummle, he reminds me of a spider.

PIP He's not my friend, we merely study together. He's a poor scholar, and he is incredibly rude.

JAGGERS Good. You keep clear of him, he's trouble. But I like such fellows. Yes, he's a real spider. (MOLLY APPEARS. JAGGERS TURNS TO HER.) Molly, Molly, Molly, Molly, may we sit down? (SHE NODS. HE TURNS TO THE OTHERS.) Ah, dinner is served, gentlemen. (THEY SIT, SHE SERVES.)

NARRATION Pip studied her carefully. The night before, he had been to the theatre to see "Macbeth". The woman's face resembled those he had seen rise out of the witches' cauldron. She was humble and silent... but there was something about her....

JAGGERS So, Mr. Drummle, in addition to conjugating the past conditional tense of French verbs, you gentlemen also go rowing for exercise?

DRUMMLE We do. And your Mr. Pip's rowing is better than his French—

HERBERT --I say, Drummle!

DRUMMLE But I'm stronger with an oar than either of these fellows.

JAGGERS Really? You talk of strength? I'll show you strength. Molly, show them your wrists.

MOLLY (CRINGES) Master, don't—

JAGGERS Show them, Molly! (HE GRABS HER ARM, RUNS HIS FINGER UP AND DOWN HER WRIST DELICATELY.) There's power, here. Few men have the sinews Molly has, see? Remarkable force, beautiful power. Beautiful. That'll do, Molly, you've been admired, now you may go. (SHE GOES) To your health, gentlemen.

Darkness.

BIDDY My dear Mr. Pip: I write at the request of Mr. Gargery, for to let you know he is coming up to London and would be glad to see you. He will call at Barnard's Hotel next Tuesday morning at nine. Your sister continues to linger. Your ever obedient servant, Biddy. P.S. He wishes me most particular to write "what larks!" He says you will understand. I hope you will see him, even though you -are a gentleman now, for you had ever a good heart and he is so worthy. He asks me again to write "what larks!" Biddy.

NARRATION With what feelings did Pip look forward to Joe's visit?

 With pleasure? No, with considerable disturbance and mortification.

 What would Bently Drummle think of someone like Joe?

 And what would Joe think of Pip's expensive and rather aimless new life?

BARNARD'S INN

A knock at the door. Joe enters, awkwardly dressed in a suit.

PIP Joe!

Joe holds his arms out to embrace Pip – Pip sticks out his right hand. They shake.

JOE Pip, old chap.

PIP I'm glad to see you, Joe. Come in , give me your hat! (JOE REMEMBERS HE HAS ONE, REMOVES IT FROM HIS HEAD, BUT HOLDS FAST TO IT.)

JOE Which you have that grow'd and that swelled with the gentle folk!

PIP And you look wonderfully well, Joe. Shall I take your hat? (JOE CONTINUES TO CLUTCH I T.)

JOE Your poor sister's no worse nor no better than she was. And Biddy is ever right and ready, that girl. (HERBERT ENTERS FROM BEDROOM.)

PIP Here's my friend, Herbert Pocket. Joe. (HERBERT EXTENDS HIS HAND, JOE DROPS HIS HAT.)

HERBERT Your servant, sir.

JOE Yours, yours. (HE PICKS UP THE HAT.)

HERBERT Well. Have you seen anything of London, yet?

JOE Why, yes, sir. Soon as I left the coach, I went straight off to look at the Blacking Factory warehouse.

HERBERT Really? What did you think?

JOE It don't come near to its likeness on the labels.

HERBERT Is that so?

JOE See, on the labels it is drawn too architectooralooral. (HERBERT NODS. PIP COVERS HIS FACE IN MORTIFICATION. JOE DROPS HIS HAT.)

HERBERT You're quite right about that, Mr. Gargery--he is, Pip. Well, I must be off to work. It's good t o have met you. (HE OFFERS HIS HAND. JOE REACHES, DROPS HIS HAT. HERBERT GOES OUT.)

JOE We two being alone, sir—

PIP --Joe, how can you call me "sir?!"

JOE Us two'being alone, Pip, and me having the intention to stay not many minutes more--

PIP --Joe!—

JOE I will now conclude--leastways begin--what led up to my having the present honor, sir. Miss Havisham has a message for you, Pip, sir. She says to tell you Miss Estella has come home from abroad and will be happy to see you.

PIP Estella!

JOE I tried to get Biddy to write the message to you, sir, but she says, "I know Pip will be glad to have that message by word of mouth." Which I have now concluded. (HE STARTS TO GO.) And so, Pip, I wish you ever well and ever prospering to greater height, sir—

PIP --You're not leaving?!

JOE Which I am.

PIP But surely you're coming back for dinner?

JOE Pip, old chap, life is made of ever-so-many partings welded together, and one man's a blacksmith, and one's a whitesmith, and one's a goldsmith. Divisions among such must be met as they come. You and me is not two figures to be seen together in London. I'm

wrong in these clothes. I'm wrong out of the forge. You won't find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge clothes, with my hammer in my hand. And so, ever the best of friends, Pip. God bless you, dear old chap, God bless you, sir.

NARRATION And he was gone.

After the first guilty flow of repentance, Pip thought better of such feelings.

He dried his eyes, and did not follow Joe into the street to bring him back.

The next day Pip took the coach down from London.

He did not bother to call in at the forge.

MISS HAVISHAM'S

Estella waits in the shadows. Pip enters.

HAVISHAM So, you kiss my hand as if I were a queen?

PIP I heard you wished to see me, so I came directly.

HAVISHAM Well? (ESTELLA TURNS, SMILES AT HIM.) Do you find her much changed?

PIP I...

HAVISHAM And is he changed, Estella?

ESTELLA Very much.

HAVISHAM Less coarse and common? (ESTELLA LAUGHS.) Go into the garden, you two, and give me some peace until tea time. (ESTELLA TAKES HIS ARM, THEY WANDER OUT.)

PIP Look, it's all still here.

ESTELLA I must have been a singular little creature. I hid over there and watched you fight that strange boy. I enjoyed that battle very much.

PIP You rewarded me very much.

ESTELLA Did I?

She picks up a clay pot of primroses, smells them, picks one and puts it in Pip's button hole.

PIP He and I are great friends, now. It was there you made me cry, that first day.

ESTELLA Did I? I don't remember. (SHE NOTICES HIS HURT.) You must understand, I have no heart. That may have something to do with my poor memory.

PIP I know better, Estella.

ESTELLA Oh, I've a heart to be stabbed in or shot at, no doubt. But I've no softness there, no...sympathy . If we're to be thrown together often-- and it seems we shall be-- you'd better believe that of me. What's wrong, is Pip scared? Will he cry? Come, come, tea's ready. You shall not shed tears for my cruelty today. Give me your arm, I must deliver you safely back to Miss Havisham.

They return to Miss Havisham, who takes Estella's hand and kisses it with ravenous intensity. Estella goes out.

HAVISHAM Is she not beautiful, Pip? Graceful? Do you admire her?

PIP Everyone who sees her must.

HAVISHAM Love her, love her, love her! If she favors you, love her! If she wounds you, love her! If she tears your heart to pieces, love her, love her, love her!

PIP You make that word sound like a curse.

HAVISHAM You know what love is? I do. It is blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission. It is giving up your whole heart and soul to the one who smites you, as I did. That is love.

Darkness.

NARRATION Love her!

Love her!

Love her!

The words rang triumphantly in his ears all the way back to London.

That Estella was destined for him, once a blacksmith's boy!

And if she were not yet rapturously grateful for that destiny,

He would somehow awaken her sleeping heart!

BARNARD'S INN

PIP I've got something particular to tell you.

HERBERT That's odd, I've something to tell you.

PIP It concerns myself--and one other person.

HERBERT That's odd, too.

PIP Herbert, I love--I adore Estella!

HERBERT Oh, I know that. My dear Handel, you brought your adoration along with your valise the day you came to London.

PIP She's come home--I saw her yesterday. I do love her so!

HERBERT What are the young lady's sentiments?

PIP Alas, she is miles and miles away from me.

HERBERT If that's so, can you not detach yourself from her? (PIP TURNS AWAY) Think of her upbringing-- think of Miss Havisham! Given all that, your love could lead to misery.

PIP I know, but I cannot help myself. I cannot "detach."

HERBERT Well. But perhaps it doesn't matter--perhaps your feelings are justified. After all, it would seem you've been chosen for her. Yes, I'm sure it will work out!

PIP What a hopeful disposition you have.

HERBERT I must have--I've not got much else. But since the subject's come up, I want you to know first - I ' m engaged.

PIP My dear Herbert! May I ask the bride's name?

HERBERT Name of Clara. Clara Barley.

PIP And does Clara Barley live in London?

HERBERT She does. Oh Pip, if you could see her--so lovely!

PIP Is she rich?

HERBERT Poorer than me--and as sweet as she is poor. I'm going to marry her—

PIP That's wonderful, Herbert. When? (HERBERT ' S FACE FALLS.)

HERBERT That's the trouble. A fellow can't marry while he's still looking about him, can he?

PIP I don't suppose he can. But cheer up, it will all work out. Yes, I feel it... it shall work out!

ESTELLA Dear Pip: I am coming to London the day after tomorrow, by midday coach. Miss Havisham insists that you are to meet me, and I write in obedience to her wishes. Yours, Estella.

NARRATION And suddenly she was there, in London!

Estella hands a valise and hatbox to Pip.

PIP I'm glad, so glad you've come.

ESTELLA Yes. I'm to live here with a chaperone, at great ridiculous expense, really. She is to take me about. She's to show people to me, and show me to people.

PIP I wonder Miss Havisham could part with you.

ESTELLA It's all part of her great plan. She wants me to write her constantly and report how I get on—

PIP Get on? Get on? With what? With whom? (ESTELLA SMILES.)

ESTELLA Poor Pip. Dear Pip.

BIDDY Dear Pip: I am writing to inform you that your sister died at peace the night before last. Her funeral was held this morning. We discussed whether to wait until you could attend it, but decided that as you are busy in your life as a gentleman we should go forward with the affair as we are. Yours, Biddy. P.S. Joe sends his fond wishes and sympathy.

NARRATION As Pip got on, he became accustomed to the idea of his great expectations.

He grew careless with his money, contracting a great quantity of debts.

NARRATION And Herbert's good nature combined with Pip's lavish spending, to lead them both into habits they could ill-afford.

They moved their lodgings from the spartan Barnard's Inn to more luxurious quarters in the Temple, on the banks of the Thames.

Herbert and Pip enter, each holding sheaves of bills.

PIP My dear Herbert, we are getting on very badly.

HERBERT My dear Handel, those very words were on my lips! We must reform.

PIP We must indeed.

They look at each other, toss the bills up in the air, and watch them float down.

NARRATION Their affairs went from bad to worse, so they began to look forward eagerly to Pip's twenty-first birthday--

--In the hope that MR. Jagers, by way of celebration, might give Pip some concrete evidence of his expectations.

JAGGERS ' S OFFICE

Jagers is washing his hands.

WEMMICK Happy birthday, Mr. Pip. (TO JAGGERS) He's here.

JAGGERS Well, well, twenty-one today, is that not the case?

PIP Guilty, sir. I confess to being twenty-one.

JAGGERS Tell me, Pip, what are you living at the rate of?

PIP I . . . don't know, sir.

JAGGERS I thought as much. Now it's your turn to ask me a question.

PIP Have-- have I anything to receive today?

JAGGERS I thought we'd come to that! Take this piece of paper in your hand. Now unfold it. What is it?

PIP It's a banknote... for five hundred pounds!

JAGGERS And a handsome sum of money, too, you agree?

PIP How could I do otherwise?

JAGGERS It is yours. And at the rate of five hundred per year and no more, you are to live until your benefactor chooses to appear.

PIP Is my benefactor to be made known to me today?

JAGGERS As to when that person decides to be identified, why, that's nothing do with me, I'm only the agent—

PIP But she—

JAGGERS --She?—

PIP --My patron---

JAGGERS --Hah! You cannot trick me into giving evidence, young man. Now, excuse me, I'm off to court.

He goes, followed by Wemmick. Pip stares at the banknote, holds it up, and suddenly starts to smile.

NARRATION The following Sunday Pip made a pilgrimage down to Walworth to see Mr. Wemmick.

For he had an idea about how he would like to spend at least part of his money.

WALWORTH

Pip crosses over the little drawbridge. The Aged Parent greets him.

AGED PARENT Ah, my son will be home at any moment, young man. (PIP NODS) Make yourself at home. You made acquaintance with my son at his office? (PIP NODS) I hear he's a wonderful hand at his business. (PIP NODS) Now to be precise, I don't actually hear it, mind, for I'm hard of hearing.

PIP Not really!

AGED PARENT Oh, but I am! Look, here comes John, and Miss Skiffins with him. All right, John?

WEMMICK All right, Aged P. So sorry I wasn't here to greet you, Mr. Pip. May I present Miss Skiffins, who is a friend of mine, and a neighbor. The Aged and Miss Skiffins will prepare tea, while we chat—

PIP I wish to ask you--you are in your Walworth frame of mind, I presume? (WEMMICK NODS, THE AGED NODS, THEY ALL NOD.)

WEMMICK I am. I shall speak in private and personal capacity. (MISS SKIFFINS LEADS THE AGED AWAY.)

PIP I wish to do something for my friend, Herbert Pocket. He has been the soul of kindness and I've ill-repaid him by encouraging him to spend more than he has. He'd have been better off if I'd never come along, poor fellow, but as I have, I want to help him. Tell me, how can I set him up in a small partnership somewhere?

WEMMICK That's devilish good of you, Mr. Pip.

PIP Only he must never know I had any part in it. You know the extent of my resources, Wemmick. Can you help me? (WEMMICK THINKS FOR A MOMENT.)

WEMMICK Perhaps ...perhaps--yes! Yes, I like that. But it must be done by degrees. We'll go to work on it! (MISS SKIFFINS APPEARS.)

SKIFFINS Mr. Wemmick, dear, the Aged is toasting.

PIP I beg your pardon, but what did she say?

WEMMICK Tea is served. (THEY GO OFF.)

NARRATION Before a week had passed, Wemmick found a worthy young shipping broker named Clarriker—

Who wanted intelligent help—

And who also wanted some capital—

And who might eventually want a partner.

Between this young merchant and Pip secret papers were signed, and half of Pip's five hundred pounds disappeared.

The whole business was so cleverly managed that Herbert hadn't the least suspicion that Pip's hand was in it.

Herbert races in to find Pip reading.

HERBERT Handel, Handel, I've the most mighty piece of news! I've just come from an interview in the City--man name of Clarriker--I'm to have a position there and--oh, Handel, I start next week, and I might, in time –

PIP I'm happy for you, Herbert, so happy—

NARRATION Pip went quickly into his room and wept with joy at the thought that his expectations had at last done some good to somebody.

But what of Estella?

She rapidly became the belle of London, seen and admired by all.

NARRATION

Pip never had an hour's happiness in her society—

Yet his mind, twenty-four hours a day, harped on the happiness of possessing her someday.

On the occasion of Miss Havisham's birthday they were asked to come down from London together to visit.

MISS HAVISHAM'S

Pip bows. Estella kisses her cheek. Miss Havisham clutches Estella's hand.

HAVISHAM

How does she use you, Pip, how does she use you?

PIP

According to your designs, I fear.

NARRATION

And he suddenly saw his fate...

In the cobwebs...

In the decayed wedding cake...

In the face of the clocks that had stopped ...

And his profound sadness communicated itself to Estella.

Estella withdraws her hand from Miss Havisham.

HAVISHAM

What, are you tired of me?

ESTELLA

Only a little tired of myself.

HAVISHAM

No, speak the truth, you're tired of me! You cold, cold heart.

ESTELLA

What? You reproach me for being cold? I am what you made me-- take all the credit or blame.

HAVISHAM Look at her, so thankless. I took you to my heart when it was still bleeding from its wounds.

ESTELLA Yes, yes, what would you have of me?

HAVISHAM Love.

ESTELLA Mother-by-adoption, how can I return to you what you never gave me?

HAVISHAM Did I never give her love? You are so proud, so proud!

ESTELLA Who taught me to be proud? Who praised me when I learned my lesson?

HAVISHAM So hard, so hard!

ESTELLA Who taught me to be hard?—

HAVISHAM But to be proud and hard to me--to me, Estella!

ESTELLA I cannot think what makes you so unreasonable, when Pip and I have ridden all the way down here for your birthday. I have never forgotten the wrongs done to you. I've learned the lessons you taught me--God knows I wish I could unlearn them! (PAUSE. ESTELLA COMES TO HER, KISSES HER.)

NARRATION And as soon as the quarrel began, it was over, and never referred to again.

Estella leads Miss Havisham off.

NARRATION The following week, Herbert and Pip were dining at their club.

DRUMMLE Gentlemen, raise your glasses. I give you Estella.

PIP Estella who?

DRUMMLE Estella of Havisham, a peerless beauty.

HERBERT (TO PIP) Much he knows of beauty, the idiot.

PIP I am acquainted with that lady you speak of. Why do you propose a toast to one of whom you know nothing?

DRUMMLE Ah, but I do know her. I escorted her to the opera last night.

NARRATION Now she was seen around the town with Drummle,
At the theatre, at the ball, at the races...
But wasn't she destined for Pip?
He took comfort in that thought, and in Herbert's happiness—
For he had Clara Barley.
And so, two years passed.

THE TEMPLE APARTMENT

Night. Pip sits reading.

NARRATION It was the night of Pip's twenty-third birthday.
The weather was wretched, wet and stormy.
St. Paul's had just chimed eleven when—
Pip thought he heard a footstep on the stair.

PIP Who's there? (HE PUTS DOWN HIS BOOK, TAKES UP A CANDLE.) Answer! There's someone down there, is there not?

MAGWITCH (IN SHADOWS) Yes.

PIP What floor do you want?

MAGWITCH The top. Mr. Pip.

PIP That is my name. Pray, state your business.

Magwitch slowly emerges from the shadows, warmly dressed in seafaring clothes. he holds out his hands to Pip.

MAGWITCH My business?

PIP Who are you? Explain, please. (MAGWITCH ADVANCES.) I don't understand--keep away--!

MAGWITCH It's disappointing to a man, arter having looked for'ard so distant and come so far, but you're not to blame for that. (HE GAZES AT PIP ADMIRINGLY.) You're a game 'un. I'm glad you grw'd up a game 'un. (HE TAKES OFF HIS CAP. PIP FREEZES.) You acted nobly out on that marsh, my dear boy, and I never forgot it! And now I've come back to you! I've come back to you, Pip, dear boy!

And to Pip's horror, Magwitch throws his arms around him and embraces him.

Darkness.

END ACT ONE