

Student Essay on Pip's Rise and Fall in "Great Expectations"

Pip's Rise and Fall in "Great Expectations" by Charles Dickens

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Essay

"Great Expectations" by Charles Dickens can be seen as the rise and fall of Pip as a gentleman. The plot begins showing him as a poor boy whose parents have passed away and is raised by his mean sister and brother in law who is a blacksmith. Ever since a child Pip is doomed to the destiny of becoming a blacksmith also.

Pip's goal of becoming a gentleman begins as he is invited to Miss Havisham's house, a rich old woman who calls on him to play with her experiment, Estella. Miss Havisham is set out to get revenge on men by making them fall in love and breaking their hearts. She is doing so as she was left by the man she loved on her wedding day and uses Estella to try and get Pip to fall in love with her and have her break his heart. As Pip falls for Estella, he realizes that he would never have a chance with her unless he became a gentleman.

One day, he is given great expectations by an unknown benefactor to go to London, study and become a gentleman. Pip learns quickly and rises through the ranks and becomes a gentleman. He finds out that Estella has grown into a beautiful woman and finds her with his hopes up, but he finds out that being a gentleman wasn't enough to win Estella's heart. She had no heart to win.

After many struggles as a gentleman, he finally finds out who his benefactor is. It is not who he thought it was, Miss Havisham, but instead, it was an escaped convict who he helped escape as a young boy. The only problem was that he was still an escaped convict and if caught, Pip would be a shame among the gentleman society and would no longer have any support of funds. Finally, after being caught, and Pip left with a debt to pay, he goes to jail where his brother in law Joe, comes to bail him out. After coming out, Pip is left without Estella and ends up working as a blacksmith anyway.

I think in one point, Charles Dickens was showing that for a common man to become a gentleman in those days was a hard thing to achieve.