

Convict in great expectations

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Great Expectations starts off with Pip, the young poor boy-whose parents are dead-who lives with his aunt. He is poor and his aunt treats him badly and harshly. One day down at marshes by the churchyard Pip come into contact with a convict who is supplied food by Pip, later on the convict gets caught and this is the last we hear of him for a while. One day he gets asked to go and play with Estella's at Miss Havisham's house in return for money.

Miss Havisham was a lady who was going to get married and get let down on the day of the marriage. Miss Havisham has never seen daylight since; she does her best with help from Estella to break as many male hearts as feasible.

The novel continues with Pip being a poor person and he visiting Estella's but one day his luck changes. He receives a lot of money-becoming a gentlemen- from an anonymous benefactor, but Pip thinks is benefactor is Miss Havisham but he later comes to realise that his benefactor is the convict he met on the marshes.

The convict later traces Pip to London and illegally comes to meet him. The convict then tells Pip that he is Pip's benefactor, much to Pip's disenchantment. Pip then tries to get the convict back home to New South Wales (Australia) but they get caught and the convict gets sentenced to death but dies of a natural death before his allocated death. In a way Pip was happy that the convict (Magwitch) died of his natural death because it was less painful than being hung.

Magwitch became a convict with a collaborator called Compeyson but Compeyson got a shorter sentence because he was a gentleman; " And

when we we're sentenced, ain't it him as gets seven year, and me fourteen, and ain't it him as the Judge is sorry for". As Compeyson was a gentleman the judge blamed his wrongs on Magwitch, the peasant. Magwitch and Compeyson became enemies from that day forward. The differences between the two convicts' sentences are symbolic to what was happening to convicts in the real world at the time of Dickens and this was the only way of pointing this out to people without getting into trouble. If you were rich then you got treated well whereas if you were poor you got treated badly; you were considered to be lower than the rich are.

In this essay I will be examining how imperative the role of Magwitch is in Great Expectations. The ways in which his character develops, the way in which he makes Pip's character develop and how he affects the plot's development. Magwitch has four major manifestations in the novel. Firstly he appears in the marshes by the courtyard where he first encounters Pip. Secondly when Magwitch comes to visit Pip in London to tell him that he is Pip's benefactor. Thirdly when Magwitch goes to trial for trying to escape back home to Australia. Lastly when Magwitch dies in the infirmary.

In each of these four sections I will be discussing how Magwitch's appearances affect Pip's feelings and the plot development. Charles Dickens wrote this novel, but wrote in first person, we are told the story through Pip hence all our knowledge of Magwitch comes from Pip and we are always told Pip's feelings. This style of writing is important because it makes us as the reader for sorry for Pip.

During the opening chapter we meet the convict for the very first time. The convict comes over as a malevolent person; "The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside-down and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread." When Pip says "nothing in them but a piece of bread" we get the idea Pip didn't need the bread but the convict obviously did and hence the later friendship. Pip's fear for the convict continued throughout the first meeting; "I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter."

This meeting between Pip and the convict is in the churchyard and it is dark and rainy which creates an image of a typical horror genre. The darkness also suggests pathetic fallacy towards the convict's feelings; the weather is dark and so is his manner towards Pip. The rain suggests imagery and pathetic fallacy towards Pip's feelings; it is raining and Pip is raining, he is crying; "and beginning to cry was Pip."