

# Havisham

Linguistics, English



English, Assignment Havisham Miss Havisham is to be pitied rather than condemned. They say God condemns for life, by giving those a broken heart. Havisham was a sensitive individual and in the grim personal love-tragedy she encountered, anyone would turn cynical. Her case was the rarest of the rare. She had every reason to believe that men folks were ignoble. On the wedding day, her man, Compeyson forsook her, and she was unable to transcend that heartbreak. From that moment she behaved like a psychiatric patient. This is her bitter cry that marks the beginning of the poem and the journey of life seeking vendetta against men.

“ Beloved sweetheart bastard. Not a day since then  
I havent wished him dead.”(Lines 1, 2)

Her beautiful mansion of love collapsed and that betrayal led her to make some desperate decisions. When the news struck her like a lightning that her man was gone forever from her life she was wearing only one shoe, and she continued to remain in that condition. She wished to conquer time in her own style by stopping all the clocks in Satis House at twenty minutes to nine, and that was the moment when she received the news of treachery of Compeyson. She literally turned mad and yearned for vendetta. Her adoption of Estella was not an act of love, not to recoup her original mental poise, but to seek revenge on men. She imparted her training to break men’s hearts. She was raised as a weapon, a destructive tool. She failed to grasp the essence of life that in societal terms one lived not only for self but for the sake of near and dear ones in the family and well-wishers. All noble thoughts and ethical standards were swept under the carpet by her in the pursuit of destructivity. She failed to appreciate the intensity of hurt that she was

causing to Pip and Estella.

Havisham discounts the possibility that there is always scope for advancement in life, notwithstanding the cruel stroke of destiny. One incident, good or bad, does not constitute life. Trials and tribulations are part of life and the world cannot run on happiness alone. With a rigid approach, she shuns societal contacts and prefers self-imposed prison of solitude and speaks in the words of condemnation about the man who betrays her and men in general. Her condition evokes deep sympathy. Words generate from her tongue like the blows of hammer.

“...I’ve dark green pebbles for eyes,  
ropes on the back of my hands I could strangle with.”(Lines 3, 4)

Havisham has suppressed the tender feelings of love and her heart is filled with poisonous thoughts of negativities. But, after all, she is a woman and her sexual feelings torment her, sadism overtakes her and she lashes out at the male fraternity,

“ Give me a male corpse for a long slow honeymoon.

Don’t think it’s only the heart that b-b-b-breaks.”(Lines, 15, 16)

Miss Havisham is certainly not responsible for her own misery. The tragic development that takes place on the wedding day is the genesis of her misery. Her immediate reaction is understandable. I do understand and sympathize with her feelings. They say, howsoever powerful may the waves of the ocean, their real nature is mere water! Similarly the gravest incident of sorrow could have been transcended, if only Havisham had someone who could understand her plight and counseled her on the right lines. Her feelings of self-pity and her desire for revenge were the outcome of the

desperate situation encountered by her; they say desperate situations sometimes need desperate measures to challenge them. Havisham chose the hard option. Tender feelings and humanity lay hidden in a corner of her heart and in the end she is redeemed, she understands how she is the cause for the plight of Pip, she recalls the process of her suffering, and she begs Pip for forgiveness. The basic human virtues, sympathy and nobility triumph.

#### Works Cited

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