

Great expectations essay

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



Imprisonment in Great Expectations Prison is a very grim and doleful place for humans in which everyone might experience once in their life physically or mentally. The theme of imprisonment is demonstrated frequently in many works of literature, as many characters must struggle with the reality of their prison whether it is a physical or mental prison. In Charles Dickens's bildungsroman novel, Great Expectations, the characters Miss Havisham, Estella, and Pip must struggle and endure physical and/or mental prisons. Throughout this bildungsroman novel, Miss Havisham is seen in a mental and physical prison that makes her burdened and desolate. Miss Havisham at one time used to be a bliss and doting woman but when she was left at the altar by her fiancé on her wedding day, it tears Miss Havisham's heart.

This tragic event makes Miss Havisham seek revenge on all males and to this day she still has not forgotten what occurred that despondent night. In fact Miss Havisham stayed in the same room of the altar where "No glimpse of daylight was to be seen" (Dickens 55). Her bridal dress from years before "was faded and yellow...." (Dickens 56). Miss Havisham's dolefulness and grief put her in a mental prison in which she loses touch of the outside world and is trapped in time and space. She also physically imprisons herself in one room of her house where nothing can make her forgive men as people.

This makes Miss Havisham very bitter and also the prison in which she cannot let go of the past causes her great strife and pain for others, such as Pip and her adopted daughter Estella. The character Estella is seen in more of a mental prison in which she cannot love and express her feelings to anyone. Miss Havisham has raised Estella not to love any man for her own revengeful reasons and so she cannot sympathize with Pip or any man that

loves her. This makes Estella so miserable that she treats Miss Havisham coldly and with hate. This causes Miss Havisham to ask why she is not showing any love or affection towards herself. Estella complains to Miss Havisham “ If you had brought up your adopted daughter wholly in the dark confinement of these rooms, and had never let her know that there was such a thing as the daylight by which she has never once seen on your face...” (Dickens 307). Estella shows her disgust to Miss Havisham metaphorically as she is never taught or shown love as child so it is impossible for her to show affection to Miss Havisham.

Miss Havisham shaped her heart into stone in which she treats everybody trenchantly. Since Estella is never shown love as a child, she cannot express her feelings to anyone making her trapped in a mental prison of pain and suffering. Finally Pip is physically affected by imprisonment because he is trapped in his social class. Pip loathes to be upper class so he can be worthy of Estella. Pip thinks his dreams come true when he finds out he has a secret benefactor that will help make him a gentlemen but to do that he has to leave his best friends Joe and Biddy.

This is hard on both Pip and his friends but he chooses to leave them because he believes Miss Havisham is the secret benefactor and that she intends Pip to marry Estella. When Pip finds out his benefactor is actually Magwitch, not Miss Havisham, Pip contemplated “ I only suffered in Satis House as a convenience, a sting for the greedy relations... I sat thinking, and hanged at the Old Bailey door, that I had deserted Joe. (Dickens 324). Pips whole idea on social class changes due to the fact Magwitch is also a low

class convict that was able to become wealthy. Pip realizes that he owes his loyalty to Magwitch even though he is disgusted on the fact that he is a low class prisoner.

Unfortunately for Pip, he also began to be imprisoned with guilt on how he left Joe and it caused him some suffering. Fortunately for Pip, he is able to redeem himself in the end of the novel by apologizing and coming to his senses on how close friends and family are far more important than social class. Charles Dickens conveys many characters encountering some sort of mental or physical prison. These prisons can drive people insane and ludicrous or it can teach someone a life lesson and moral to redeem themselves of their wrongdoings.

Miss Havisham, Estella, and Pip had to endure some type of imprisonment in Great Expectations but what they got out of it influenced their lives negatively or positively.