

Life Goals in Charles Dickens' Great Expectations

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"He came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me, so that his eyes looked powerfully into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his" (3). These lines describe the entrance of the character, Provis, into the life of a young man who goes by the name of Pip. Pip is the protagonist in [Great Expectations](#), the classic novel by Charles [Dickens](#).

Written in 1861, *Great Expectations* tells the life story of Pip, a young man who is born into the working class of England and makes his rise in society as the years progress. During his childhood years, Pip is endowed to his sister, who "brings him up by hand" (5), meaning she uses brute force when it comes to punishment, and punishment is frequent even when not required. This is also the time in his life when Pip meets the convict, Provis, out on the marshes near the church. Provis plays a key role in Pip's rise in society, even though Pip doesn't know it. Throughout the novel, the convict is subconsciously if not consciously on Pip's mind. The reader may not notice this fact at first, but it becomes evident as the novel progresses. Around the end of the novel, Pip finally learns who is the cause for his sudden wealth, and he realizes that his reasons for being ashamed of his

family are shallow, so he sets things right. Great Expectations is the goals that Pip has about his life.

During his childhood, Pip becomes the playmate to [Estella](#), the adopted daughter of the wealthy Miss Havisham. Immediately, he falls in love with her, but she feels that she is socially above him and therefore he is not worthy of her. Upon first meeting Pip, Estella, upon hearing that she is to play cards with him, immediately remarks, "With this boy! Why, he is a common labouring-boy!" (55). Estella scorns Pip from the first day she meets him. Pip wants to be better for Estella and becomes ashamed of his family, because they are common townspeople. Estella is the reason for Pip's first expectation of becoming part of the upperclass.

This aim is fulfilled when Pip learns that he has "come into a handsome property" (129) and he is to "be brought up as gentleman- in a word, as a young fellow of great expectations" (129).

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