



Estella and Miss Havisham

- 3 When I was old enough, I was sometimes allowed to help Joe in the forge. I also did small jobs for people in the village. My sister, Mrs Joe, sometimes asked me to. The people paid me a little every time. My sister put the money in a large pot in the kitchen. I wasn't allowed to touch it. Every week, Mrs Joe took two pennies out of the pot and gave them to me. The pennies were to pay for my lessons. I started to go to school every evening to learn to read and write and to learn my numbers. I wasn't a very good student, but my teacher wasn't a very good teacher either. She slept every evening from six to seven. Her granddaughter, Biddy, helped me a lot and I began to learn some basic spelling.

- Biddy was an orphan, like me, and her grandmother (our teacher) was very unkind to her. When I looked at Biddy, there always seemed to be something wrong. Except on Sundays. Then, she always looked very clean and tidy. Biddy and I were good friends. She helped in her grandmother's shop and was very good with numbers and letters. I learned a lot from her, but numbers and letters were still confusing*.
- 4 One evening, after my lessons, Mr Pumblechook came to the forge. 'It's Miss Havisham,' he said. 'She wants the boy to go up to the big house. She wants Pip to go up there.'

confusing difficult to understand

My sister washed me and scrubbed* me and put me into my Sunday clothes. Then Mr Pumblechook took me up to the big house. The house was old and dark. The garden was untidy and the windows were dark and dirty. Mr Pumblechook rang the bell and we waited at the gate*. A girl opened a window and said, 'What name?' 'Pumblechook.'

'Quite right,' came the answer.

A pretty young girl came out of the house and opened the gate. She seemed very proud*.

'This,' said Mr Pumblechook, 'is Pip.'

'This is Pip, is it?' replied the girl. 'Come in, boy. I'm Estella.' Mr Pumblechook and I went inside.

'Oh, did you want to see Miss Havisham too?' said Estella to Mr Pumblechook.

'Well, only if Miss Havisham wants to see me, of course,' he replied.

'She doesn't,' said Estella. And she closed the gate. 'This is Satis House, boy. Do you know what that means?'

I didn't and I told her so.

'Well, *satis* is Greek or Latin or Hebrew or something. Maybe it's all three. It means *enough*. So, here you are. Welcome to Enough House. Now let me take you to see Miss Havisham.'

She took me up the dark stairs and along the dark corridors. At last we came to the door of the room, and she said, 'Go in.'

'After you, Miss.'

'Don't be ridiculous, boy; I'm not going in.' And she walked away, looking at me scornfully*, taking the

to scrub to wash very hard
gate a door in a garden

proud (here) too happy with yourself
scornfully as if someone isn't good enough for you



candle* with her. I was in the dark. I nervously knocked at the door.

'Come in,' said a voice from the other side.

I opened the door. I was in a large room. There were a lot of candles, but there was no light from the windows. A strange lady was sitting at a table in the room. She was wearing an old white dress made from very rich cloth*. It was so old it now looked yellow. She wore old white shoes and they looked yellow too. She had wedding flowers in her hair, but her hair was white.

'Who is it?'

'Pip, Madam.'

'Come nearer. Let me look at you.'

I went nearer but I didn't want to look at her face. I saw that the time on her watch was wrong. It said twenty to nine. The clock on the wall also said twenty to nine.

'Look at me. Are you afraid of me?'

'No,' I lied*.

I watched as she put her hand on her heart. 'Do you know what I'm touching here?'

'Yes. It's your heart.'

'Broken!' she said, almost proudly. 'Now, I'm tired. I want to see you play. Play! Play!'

I didn't know what to do. I couldn't play. I tried to dance around the room, but I wasn't playing. 'Please, Madam. I can't play on my own. Please don't tell my sister, she'll be angry.'

'Then call Estella. You can play cards with Estella.'

I called for Estella and she came proudly into the room.

'I want to see you play cards with this boy.'

candle



cloth we use cloth to make clothes
to lie to say something that isn't true (the person is a liar)



'With this boy? But he's only a common* village boy.'

Then I *thought* Miss Havisham said, 'Then you can break his heart.' Or did she?

We played cards and then I understood. Everything in the room was from a time in the past. The time was at twenty to nine in another year, another age. Twenty to nine in a year before I was born. But why? I didn't know why.

While we were playing cards, Estella was horrible to me. It was clear that she thought I was nothing. 'What rough* hands you've got. And look at your dirty boots! You're not a gentleman, you're just a horrible, common country boy.'

Miss Havisham seemed happy that I was uncomfortable. 'And what do you think of her?' she said.

'I don't want to say.'

'Then tell me in my ear.'

'I think she's very proud and very rude*. But I think she's very pretty too. I also think I want to go home now. Can I please go home now?'

'All right. But I want you to come again in six days. I don't know about days of the week or months of the year, but I want you to come again in six days. Six days, do you hear? Now, Estella, take him down and give him something to eat. Let him look around the garden while he eats.'

We went downstairs and Estella opened the door to the garden. I was surprised that it was still daytime. She went away and I looked at my rough hands and my horrible boots. Yesterday, I didn't think about them at all. Today I hated them. Estella came back with some bread and some meat and looked at me in the way that someone looks at a dog. I felt small and uncomfortable. Then she went away and I cried and cried.

common of a low social class, not educated
rough (here) not fine, not beautiful

rude not polite, behaving badly towards other people



After a while, Estella came back with the keys to the gate. 'Why don't you cry?' she said.

'I don't want to.'

'Yes you do. Your eyes are red. I know you want to cry some more.' She opened the gate and I went out. While I was walking home, I cried again.



When I got home, my sister asked me about my visit to Miss Havisham's. I didn't really want to explain about Miss Havisham and Estella. Mrs Joe hit me a few times, but I still didn't say very much. Mr Pumblechook was there. He wanted to know all about my visit, too.

'So, how did it go, boy?'

'Quite well,' I answered.

'Quite well? Quite well? What kind of answer is that? Look, boy, tell me now, how did it go? What's Miss Havisham like?'

'Very tall and dark.'

'Is she, Uncle?' asked my sister.

Mr Pumblechook said yes. This showed me that he had no idea, because I knew that Miss Havisham wasn't tall and dark at all.

'And what was she doing when you went in today?'

'She was sitting in a black coach* and a girl, Estella, gave her cake on a gold plate. And we all had cake on gold plates.'

'Gold?' They said, surprised.

'Yes, gold. And there were four enormous* dogs. They had meat from a silver plate. Then Estella and I played with flags and gold toys. Estella had a blue flag and I had a red one. Miss Havisham had a flag with gold stars on it. It was wonderful*.'

'Well, you *are* a lucky boy. I think Miss Havisham will help you in

coach a type of transport pulled by horses

enormous very big

wonderful very good





the future, boy,' said Mr Pumblechook. 'Yes, I think she will. What do you think, Mrs Joe?'

'Yes, I think she'll probably do something for him. Probably property*. Yes, property, I think,' said my sister.



I felt sorry about lying, especially to Joe. To him, my visit to Miss Havisham's was such a wonderful thing. So, later, in the forge, I told him the truth about the day. I told him about Estella and how horrible she was to me. I told him about crying and that I felt common and rough. As usual, Joe was very good to me and he made me feel better. I went to bed. In bed I decided to make myself as "uncommon" as possible. I decided to learn everything I could from Biddy.



There was a pub in our village, like in most villages. Our pub was called the Three Jolly Bargemen. Sometimes Joe went there to smoke his pipe. I usually went there after my lessons and I walked home with Joe.

That evening, Joe was there, smoking his pipe as usual, but there was a stranger with him. The stranger bought a drink for Joe and started asking questions. He asked about me and about Joe. Then, when Joe wasn't looking, the stranger took a file from his pocket. He looked at me and stirred* his drink with the file. I knew the file. It was my file. The file I gave to my convict. I didn't know what to say or do. Then, I don't know why, the stranger gave me a coin* wrapped in paper. 'That's for you, young man.'

Then he left.

When we got home, I gave the coin to Mrs Joe. She took it out of its paper. 'What's this?' she cried. 'This isn't paper, it's two pound notes! Quick Joe, go back to the pub. This must be a mistake.'

property (here) money or a house
to stir to move liquid (often with a spoon)

coin metal money



But when Joe got to the pub, the stranger wasn't there.



Wednesday came and I went to visit Miss Havisham again. Estella opened the gate and we went upstairs. On the way she stopped for a minute and said, 'Do you think I'm pretty?'

'Yes, I do.'

'Well, I think you're a horrible, common little monster. What do you think of me now? Are you going to cry again you silly little boy?'

'No, I'm not and I'll never cry for you again.'

We continued upstairs. On the way, we met a gentleman. He was coming down. 'Who's this?' he said to Estella.

'Just a boy.'

Then the gentleman turned to me. 'Well, be good, boy. I know a lot about boys and they're not a good thing. So, be good, boy. Be good.' Then he went on down the stairs.

We went into Miss Havisham's room. 'Is it that day already?' she asked.

'Yes Madam, today is.....'

'No, no. I don't want to know. Now come with me.'

She took me into another strange room. The room was dark and dusty and cold. There was a large table in the middle of the room with a large old wedding cake on it. There were spiders* and other insects on the table. Mice were running all over it.

'Today is my birthday, Pip. The cake you can see there was my wedding cake. My wedding day was also my birthday. When I die, Pip, they'll put me here, in my wedding dress, on my wedding table. I hope that day will be on this date, Pip. On my birthday. Now, call Estella. You must play cards again.'

spider 