

GRADED READERS

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

CHARLES DICKENS



Student's Book

LEVEL 4



**Great Expectations**

by Charles Dickens adapted by H.Q. Mitchell

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## CHAPTER 1

The young boy called himself Pip simply because he had difficulty getting his tongue around his full name of Philip Pirrip. His parents had died while he was still a baby and he was brought up by his sister, Mrs Joe Gargery.

Pip lived in marsh country. One of his earliest memories was of the day he went exploring and found himself in a churchyard. His parents, as well as his five unknown brothers, were all buried there. Although he had never known them, Pip began to cry when he touched the cold tombstones.

"Hold your noise, you little devil!" called out a terrible voice. The young boy was so scared when he heard that, he froze.

"Keep still, or I'll cut your throat!" ordered the voice.

A frightening man, dressed in grey-coloured clothes from head to foot, appeared in front of the boy.

"Please don't hurt me sir," begged the boy.

"Tell me your name!" said the man. "Fast!"

"P-Pip, s-sir," whimpered the boy.

"Again! Speak up!" ordered the man.

"Pip. Pip, sir," whispered Pip.

"Tell me where you live," said the man. "Point it out - go on!"

Pip did as he was told.

The man then lifted Pip and turned him upside down. A piece of bread fell out of Pip's pocket.

"I'm so hungry I could eat your fat little cheeks," said the man as he hungrily swallowed the last crumbs of bread.

Then he sat Pip on the tombstone.

"Where's your mother?" he asked.

"Over there sir!" replied Pip.

"Oh! And is that your father next to her?" he questioned further.

"Yes sir!" replied Pip.

"So tell me little 'un, who do you live with ... if I'm kind enough to let you live!" said the man.

"M-my sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, blacksmith's wife, sir," answered Pip.

The man looked down at a great iron rod on his leg. "Blacksmith, eh!" he thought.



Suddenly he grabbed Pip by the collar so tightly that Pip was afraid he would choke.

"Now listen boy," he said, with his face so close that Pip could feel his breath. "Do you know what a file is?"

"Y-yes sir," stammered Pip.

"You get me a file and some food or I'll cut out your heart!" threatened the man. "I'm not alone either, boy. There's a man hidden near here looking at us, and I am kind and loving compared to him boy! Understand?"

Pip nodded, too frightened to answer.

"Tomorrow morning, I'll be waiting here and God help you if you don't bring those things," he warned.

"Goo-good night sir," stammered Pip again.

"Be off with you," said the man.

Without looking back, Pip ran as fast as his young legs could carry him in the direction of home.

Pip's sister, Mrs Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than her brother. She was tall, thin and not very attractive. She was strict and Pip often felt the weight of her hand when she was displeased with him. She also behaved in a similar way towards her husband Joe.

Joe was a curly-haired blonde man, with beautiful blue eyes. He was very good natured and likeable, even though he seemed to be foolish at times.

When Pip arrived home from the churchyard quite exhausted, he found Joe sitting alone in the kitchen.

"Mrs Joe's really angry with you Pipi," said Joe. "She expected you to help her with the Christmas preparations."

Pip tried to hide, but it was too late.

"Were you trying to hide, were you?" asked Mrs Joe. "You little monkey. Just where have you been?"

"To the churchyard," replied Pip sobbing.

"Churchyard! If it weren't for me, you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there!" she reminded Pip painfully.

Mrs Joe turned away and started to cut a loaf of bread. She gave one piece to Pip and one to Joe. Pip was so hungry he could have eaten his piece all in one go, but he dared not forget the frightening man in the churchyard or his

unseen companion. When no-one was looking, he quickly stuffed the bread and butter down the leg of his trousers.

"Blimey Pip, you had better be careful how you eat, or you'll do yourself damage," cried Joe, noticing that Pip seemed to have already finished.

"What's he done now?" said Mrs Joe and she immediately went to get the bottle of Tar-Water. She then poured the Tar-Water down Pip's throat.

Some time later, as Pip was taking his turn stirring the Christmas pudding, they heard a very loud noise. It sounded like a big gun being fired.

"What's that Joe?" asked Pip.

"Another convict off," replied Joe. "That makes two," he thought to himself.



"What's that mean Joe?" asked Pip. "Who fires the big guns?"

"Oh that boy!" said Mrs Joe, "If you answer one of his questions, he'll ask a dozen more. The guns are on the prison ships across the marshes. Now that's enough. No more questions," she said firmly.

Pip was still confused and said to himself quietly, "I wonder who's put in prison ships?"

Mrs Joe, whose hearing was nothing less than perfect, heard him and said with an exasperated sigh, "The prison ships have murderers, robbers and all sorts of bad people." Then, with a wave of her hand she signalled it was time to go to bed.

Pip was thankful the day was coming to an end. He crept upstairs to his bedroom and pulled out the bread and butter from his trousers. He then found a hiding place for it.

Pip had a poor night's sleep, full of frightening dreams. The next day was Christmas, so there was plenty of food stored in the pantry. Pip stole some bread, cheese, a jar of mincemeat, a pork pie and some brandy. In an attempt to make it look as though no brandy had been taken, Pip topped the bottle up with some water he had found in a jug in the kitchen.

Pip then went to the forge, took a file and set off for the marshes.



## CHAPTER 2

Pip made his way across the marshes until he saw a man sitting with his back to him. He approached him softly and tapped him on the shoulder. The man jumped up and turned round, but it wasn't the same man at all. However, he was also dressed in grey-coloured clothes and had a great iron on his leg! The man got such a fright - he ran away as fast as he could.

"It's the other man!" thought Pip, as he felt a spasm of fear pass through him. Soon afterwards he found the right man, who promptly grabbed the food out of Pip's hands. He was about to eat it when he stopped and asked, "You didn't bring anyone with you, boy, did you?"

"No sir, no," replied Pip.

"And no one followed you?" he questioned further.

"No," replied Pip again.

"Well that's alright then isn't it?" said the man.

Pip watched the man eating and said, "Eh...I'm glad you like it."

"Mm, thank you boy. I do," he said.

"I don't think your friend will be too happy, if you don't leave any of it for him," said Pip timidly.

"What? What friend?" said the man suspiciously.

"The other man you told me about," hesitated Pip and then continued, "the one who was hiding and watching us." His voice trailed off.

"Ah! Yes. No, he needs no feeding," grinned the man.

"He looked like he did," Pip responded.

The man stopped eating. "Looked? When?" he asked angrily.

"Just now over there," said Pip, pointing somewhere behind him. "I thought he was you!"

The man grabbed Pip by the collar and stared at him so hard that Pip began to feel frightened again.

"Tell me boy...did he wear the same clothes as me?" asked the man. "And did he have a scar on his face?"

"Why y-yes and had an iron on his leg," stammered Pip.

"By God, I'll hunt him down!" replied the man determinedly.

Picking up the file the man began furiously filing away at the iron on his leg. Pip, fearing he had stayed away too long, turned and ran back across the marshes.