

## Great Expectations: Pip and Magwitch meet

1 'Hold your noise!' cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the  
2 side of the church porch. 'Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!'

3 A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with  
4 broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in  
5 water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles,  
6 and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth  
7 chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

8 'O! Don't cut my throat, sir,' I pleaded in terror. 'Pray don't do it, sir.'

9 'Tell us your name!' said the man. 'Quick!'

10 'Pip, sir.'

11 'Once more,' said the man, staring at me. 'Give it mouth!'

12 'Pip.Pip, sir.'

13 'Show us where you live,' said the man. 'Pint out the place!'

14 I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards,  
15 a mile or more from the church.

16 The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down, and emptied my  
17 pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. [\*] He ate the bread ravenously.

18 'You young dog,' said the man, licking his lips, 'what fat cheeks you ha' got.'

19 I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized, for my years, and not strong.

20 'Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em,' said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, 'and if I  
21 han't half a mind to't!'

22 I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on  
23 which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

24 'Now lookee here!' said the man. 'Where's your mother?'

25 'There, sir!' said I.

26 He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

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27 'There, sir!' I timidly explained. 'Also Georgina. That's my mother.'

28 'Oh!' said he, coming back. 'And is that your father alonger your mother?'

29 'Yes, sir,' said I; 'him too; late of this parish.'

30 'Ha!' he muttered then, considering. 'Who d'ye live with – supposin' you're kindly let to  
31 live, which I ha't made up my mind about?'

32 'My sister, sir – Mrs Joe Gargery – wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir.'

33 'Blacksmith, eh?' said he. And looked down at his leg.

34 After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone,  
35 took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked  
36 most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

37 'Now lookee here,' he said, 'the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know  
38 what a file is?'

39 'Yes, sir.'

40 'And you know what wittles<sup>1</sup> is?'

41 'Yes, sir.'

42 After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of  
43 helplessness and danger.

44 'You get me a file.' He tilted me again. 'And you get me wittles.' He tilted me again. 'You  
45 bring 'em both to me.' He tilted me again. 'Or I'll have your heart and liver out.' He tilted me  
46 again.

47 I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, 'If  
48 you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps  
49 I could attend more.'

50 He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll [\*]. Then, he held me by the arms in an  
51 upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

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<sup>1</sup> 'wittles' = victuals (food)

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52 'You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to  
53 me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to  
54 make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and  
55 you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how  
56 small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted, and ate. Now, I ain't  
57 alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which  
58 young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a  
59 secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in  
60 wain<sup>2</sup> for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door,  
61 may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think  
62 himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him  
63 and tear him open. I am a keeping that young man from harming of you at the present  
64 moment, with great difficulty. I find it very hard to hold that young man off your inside. Now,  
65 what do you say?'

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<sup>2</sup> 'in wain' = in vain (useless)