Great Expectations: Characters Analysis

Throughout the book Great Expectations, Charles Dickens incorporates many different individuals who offer a sense of enlightenment and guidance to Pip. Guardians like Joe, Biddy, and Jaggers influence and shape Pip during his hardships and difficulties.

Joe appears to be a very influential individual in Pip's life. From the beginning of the book, we have seen how Joe has always been a fatherly figure to Pip. In part one, we see how Joe tries his best to comfort Pip. Specifically, early on in the book on page 48, Joe and Pip were having a conversation which had turned emotional, "I broke out crying and begging pardon, and hugged Joe round the neck: who dropped the poker to hug me, and to say, 'Ever the best of friends; an't us, Pip? Don't cry, old chap!". Pip and Joe's relationship was not only a bond of a father and son but also a friendship in which both Pip and Joe could rely on one another. AT this moment, Pip any insecurities or fears he had of sharing his feelings with Joe, and he become open to show his emotions. He was open to cry and Joe's arms were open to take him in and comfort Pip when he needed him. This represents reliance and dependability, it shows that Joe offers a sense of comfort and makes it known that he is someone Pip can go to for advice, not only in this moment where he cried but any time Pip had a problem or situation, Joe always had open ears and advice to guide Pip passed his difficulty. We also see how leaving Joe was difficult for Pip since Joe was such an important role in Pip's adolescent life. This is exemplified when Pip states: "O dear good Joe, whom I was so ready to leave but so unthankful to" "O dear good faithful tender Joe, I feel the loving tremble of your hand upon my arm, as solemnly this day as if it had been the rustle of an angel's wing!" Evidently, from the quote above, it is clear that Pip does not want to leave Joe, which makes his representation of Joe before he leaves, uplifting and praiseful.

Jaggers, a mysterious yet one of the most obliging characters. Jaggers firstly appears in chapter 11 where Pip describes Jaggers and says "His eyes were set very deep in his head and were disagreeably sharp and suspicious." His mysterious and puzzling appearance could have a misleading impact on the reader. This deceptive visual that Pip explains about Mr. Jaggers may give off the impression that this man wouldn't play a big part in Pip's life, Pip himself says "I could have had no foresight then, that he would be anything to me.." However, Jaggers becomes to be one of the most helpful characters. Jaggers begins to help Pip on his journey on becoming a gentleman and on his transition from the marshes to London near the end of Part I and continues on from there. He took Pip to London as a form of training as he exposes him to the new lifestyle. This was essentially a form of gaining empirical knowledge of the gentleman class and way of life. This was a very important impact on Pip because he was new to the "gentleman" routine. He came from a blacksmith family and the transition to this new social class was not easy for Pip. But with the help of Mr. Jaggers, the process of adapting to this new lifestyle became easier. We also see Pip refer to Mr. Jaggers as his guardian. "I am going up to my guardian in London" so we can assume that Pip already considers Jaggers as someone who cares for him and someone who will aid him in London. "Now, I return to this young fellow. And the communication I have got to make is, that he has great expectations." "I am instructed to communicate with him." Here we can see that Jaggers is taking some kind of responsibility for Pip. That he knows he's in charge of helping Pip grow and eventually become a gentleman. Overall, Jaggers plays a significant role in helping Pip appropriately adapt to this new

socioeconomic status and properly socializing him to fit in within this new social environment.

Herbert is Pip's best friend who has had some complications with Pip during their friendship. Despite the fact that they fight a lot, they share a bond in which Pip classifies Herbert to be a kind and a decent guy who understands him more than anyone. "I had never seen anyone then, and I have never seen anyone since, who more strongly expressed to me, in every look and tone, a natural incapacity to do anything secret and mean. There was something wonderfully hopeful about his general air, and something that at the same time whispered to me he would never be very successful or rich." This gives Pip a sense of relief and reassurance since he had someone he could relate to. Pip also describes him as being extremely "amiable and cheerful." As well as describing him as his "intimate companion and friend," By this, we see how elevated Pip may feel to have someone in his life who understands him as he claims in page 177 when he describes how connected he felt with Herbert. We also see that when Pip asked Herbert to give him a hint if he were at a loss or going wrong, Herbert gladly agreed to help Pip. In fact, Pip has hope that Herbert will help him learn moral and social knowledge while also acquiring the traits necessary for becoming a polite gentleman. He had more hope in Herbert to help him because as we saw earlier, he viewed Herbert as some who "strongly expressed" him. While Herbert and Pip did indeed have their discussions and differences through the book, their friendship was strong and valuable to Pip.

To conclude, there are many characters that Dickens includes in this book to guide Pip and care for him like Joe, Herbert, and Jaggers. These individuals do not assist Pip when needed but they help Pip grow and mature throughout his adolescent life. They are all significant figures that encourage a sense of maturity and a better understanding of reality and life situations for his future. In all, they mentor and guide Pip through his rite of passage and ultimately allow him to flourish into who Pip desires to be.