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The Ideal Friend

            The Victorian novel *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens tells Pip’s story of growing up to be a gentleman and his encounters with good-natured as well as snobbish and selfish people. The symbol of a true friend was represented through Herbert Pocket, a faithful companion to Pip \*in his triumphs and defeats\* or \*during his times of success as well as struggle\*.

            Pip is a young man who has effortlessly fallen into the lap of luxury by inheriting the wealth of a mysterious benefactor, but is a stranger to London and unfamiliar with the customs of a man of his class. Herbert, the son of Pip's tutor, receives Pip with open arms, is “extremely amiable and cheerful” (Dickens 176), and displays “a natural incapacity to do anything secret and mean” (Dickens 176). In Pip's strive to attain knowledge in the proper manners of a gentleman, Herbert supports his efforts by kindly offering friendly suggestions to avoid making him feel embarrassed by sneering at his ignorance. In contrast, the reaction of some of Herbert's relatives is to hate Pip "with the hatred of cupidity and disappointment" and try to “[fawn] upon [Pip] in [his] prosperity with the basest meaness” (Dickens 203) out of great envy from Pip's progress. Pumblechook, Pip's condescending humbug uncle, spontaneously starts treating Pip with deep respect with the masked intentions of benefiting from Pip's fortune by gaining recognition as his benefactor or receiving money. {Herbert proves himself to be a trustworthy ally with his warm welcoming to Pip in his first visit to a new town and in aiding Pip in his pursuit towards self-improvement instead resenting Pip's luck or trying to form a false friendship for his fortune.}

            Pip's world collapses as he drags himself and Herbert into debt and then discovers that his benefactor is a convict. The realization threatens his life, reputation, and leaves him with no expectations. In Pip's greatest hour of need, Herbert devotes himself to pulling his friend through these frustrations at the risks of his own reputation in plotting and carrying out plans of escape for a convict benefactor. He tends to Pip's wounds, saves his life, and “[receives] [Pip] with open arms, and [he] had never felt before so blessedly what it is to have a friend” (Dickens 340).

As soon as Pumblechook heard of Pip's failure in become a gentleman, Pip soon notices the “wonderful difference between the servile manner in which he had offered his hand in [Pip's] new prosperity… and the ostentatious clemency with which he now exhibited” (Dickens 479). To imposters like Pumblechook, Pip doesn't even deserve respect if he is no longer a possible source of income. {Herbert is clearly the dependable person to go to during struggles since he never turns his back on Pip, blame him for causing trouble, or reject Pip for no longer prospering.}

Imposters can’t maintain consistency in treating you well because they will treat you the way they feel they will benefit the most. Whether you are advancing or stumbling through life,  the unfailing friend won’t leave your side. They will support you through anything because they value you and your friendship more than money and it's worth the trouble and risks in order to save it. Herbert showed all the qualities and is great representative of what the ideal friend should be. The ideal friend is a loyal companion like Herbert, who will stand by your side no matter what happens.