

A Late Redemption

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When Pip pleads Estella to not marry Drummle, Estella justifies her decision and atones for her wrongdoings. In this brief moment, Estella reminds him that she believes that she does not comprehend the sentiments that Pip has for her. Estella warns Pip that she has been raised to have no heart. She would not fling herself away upon Pip, a man who would “the soonest feel that I took nothing to him” (364), because she does not want to further hurt him. Estella shows that she has a greater understanding of morality than her mother because she understands her societal obligation to protect her suitors’ hearts from herself. By telling Pip, “I shall do well enough, and so will my husband” (364), Estella tells him that she and her husband are similar in their lack of heart. Estella remarks, “if people do feel such things” (364), which implies that she does not believe that certain people such as Drummle would feel that she took nothing to him. Pip demonstrates a great selflessness in his moral character when he asks Estella to not “fling yourself away upon a brute” (364) and to marry a better man. Although Pip knows that he cannot marry Estella, he sadly implores her to marry another man who is not as heartless. Estella explains to him that he would only be more damaged if she continued to follow Havisham’s plan, which involved not marrying Drummle at the moment but waiting for a better opportunity. Since Drummle is a “brute” (364) and he does not understand love, he is the best suitor for Estella. Drummle arises as the best suitor for Estella because a marriage with him would stop Estella’s other suitors, including Pip, from following Estella and continuing Miss Havisham’s plan. In this moment, Estella tries to atone for her past actions, despite Pip’s request to “put me aside forever ... but bestow yourself on some worthier person than Drummle” (363). Although Pip’s heart has already been broken, Estella has now realized that there are few charms in breaking suitors’ hearts and she tries to change it.