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Failed Expectations: Miss Havisham and the Female Gothic in *Great Expectations*

“Miss Havisham’s face could not smile. It had dropped into a watchful and brooding expression...and it looked as if nothing could ever lift it up again...she spoke low, and with a dead lull upon her; altogether, she had the appearance of having dropped, body and soul, within and without, under the weight of a crushing blow” (Dickens ch. 8). Looking at this quote from Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations* through the lens of the Female Gothic can help shed new light on the novel. Literary scholar Ellen Moers coined the term Female Gothic to apply to texts encapsulating “a coded expression of women’s fears of entrapment within the domestic and within the female body” (Smith and Wallace 1). Miss Havisham is an image of fear in the quote from Dickens, and the unnamed “crushing blow” could refer to the weight of expectations on her, and on women in general, during this time period. Her “appearance having dropped, body and soul” is a visual manifestation of the effects of these constraints. One of the most significant components of Female Gothic literature is the domestic sphere, a “symbolically loaded, psychically resonant site associated with familial inheritance where most middle- and upper-class women of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries spent the majority of their lives” (Davison 53). What the Female Gothic does, however, is take the familiar of this space and turn it unfamiliar for the purposes of inciting terror and making a critique on a patriarchal system. This “crushing blow” mentioned in *Great Expectations* could very well be a critique on the domestic sphere and its effects on women. Other works like Gilman’s “The Yellow

Wallpaper,” and Chopin’s *The Awakening* can be described as Female Gothic literature, given their focus on women’s role in the domestic sphere. However, there is an additional element to these works that is another pillar of the Female Gothic: madness.

The image of the madwoman is one of the most prominent images of Female Gothic literature. What was once a “conventional sentimental icon,” the madwoman trope was “repeatedly rewritten in Gothic narratives throughout the nineteenth century, hovering between the Good and the Evil woman, the literal and the figurative, and vigorously participating in the construction of fear – and horror” (Horner 32). This image helped men and women writers define the condition of women, using the domestic sphere to highlight the root of the madness. Charlotte Brontë, for example, used the disease of catalepsy in her novels to show the extreme of women’s hypersensitivity and impressionability. Catalepsy is “characterized by a sudden fall into a state of apparent unconsciousness” (Horner 38). Brontë’s use of catalepsy portrayed women as being locked in their own minds, and the disease became one of the signature tropes of the Female Gothic. The obsession with the madwoman in Gothic literature during the Victorian Era was paralleled with the rise of women patients in Victorian mental asylums. Interestingly enough, Charles Dickens was “particularly struck by the female lunatics” at St. Luke’s Hospital where he attended a Christmas Ball in 1851 (Showalter 51). Showalter also describes that he “looked with special interest at the madwomen who attended the ball,” noticing the large inequality between the number of women and men inmates at the asylum (51). Given Dickens’ fascination with madwomen, it would only be expected that some of his works would include the madwoman image, and, perhaps most notably, Miss Havisham of *Great Expectations* becomes symbolic of this trope.

In addition to madwomen, Charles Dickens had a particular interest in the behavior of recluses, another common trope of Female Gothic literature. In 1856, Dickens wrote about an “upper-class female recluse who had been murdered. What interested him were ‘the odd facts of human behaviour it revealed’ in terms of the reclusive woman herself, rather than the facts of the murder” (Raphael 407). Additionally, in an article published in 1853, Dickens describes a woman who travelled frequently on Oxford Street wearing her wedding dress. “She went mad because a wealthy Quaker would not marry her” (407). These examples, especially the latter, resemble a prominent character of Dickens’. The novel *Great Expectations* can be viewed under the lens of the Female Gothic in relation to Miss Havisham, both a recluse and a madwoman who embodies the effects of the domestic sphere on women during this time period. In taking the traditional and turning it on its head, Dickens uses Gothic elements to make these effects apparent, portraying Miss Havisham as a truly harrowing and terrifying woman. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens uses the Female Gothic and asylum-like imagery of Miss Havisham and Satis House to portray the domestic sphere as terrifying and entrapping, causing Miss Havisham, a woman who is effectively stuck in time, to descend into madness and rage. Through Miss Havisham’s past and her manipulation of Estella, Dickens argues that she, and women in general, are unfairly destined to stay trapped in the domestic sphere where they will slowly wilt away and only gain their freedom back by dying. In this sense, the ideal of a domestic haven set forth by society actually becomes a domestic prison for some women, as it does for Miss Havisham.

Dickens’ Gothic description of Miss Havisham paints her as a woman who is both of this world and of another, which, in part, is a result of the environment she is in. Pip’s first encounter with Miss Havisham is evidence of this idea:

I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose, had shrunk to skin and bone. Once, I had been taken to see some ghastly waxwork at the Fair, representing I know not what impossible personage lying in state. Once, I had been taken to one of our old marsh churches to see a skeleton in the ashes of a rich dress, that had been dug out of a vault under the church pavement. Now, waxwork and skeleton seemed to have dark eyes that moved and looked at me. I should have cried out, if I could. (Dickens ch. 8)

Because of the terrifying descriptions, “this is one of the most powerfully Gothic moments in the novel...that both ‘others’ and makes monstrous Miss Havisham” (Smith 20). Pip is rightfully terrified of Miss Havisham, “waxwork and skeleton” giving the impression that she is not wholly human. This description is told through the eyes of Pip, a child at the time of the encounter; however, it reveals insights about Miss Havisham beyond her otherworldly appearance. From Pip’s perspective, she is frightening, but the idea that there is “no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes” speaks to her emotional and mental health. Just as Satis House has no brightness, Miss Havisham also lacks brightness or happiness. There is a darkness that is pervasive in Miss Havisham, and “skeleton” implies that she is someone who is dead inside. From a feminist lens, the oppressive imagery of her environment works to reinforce Miss Havisham’s ghastly appearance and mental health. While it is fair to read Miss Havisham as someone whose isolation is self-inflicted, “probing into the causes of her tortured manner of living reveals the workings of a complex system which has made her reclusiveness inevitable” (Raphael 403). This reclusiveness is inevitable because, as a woman, she has certain roles to

fulfill within the home, and she becomes further shunned from society for being unmarried. Miss Havisham is hideously described in such a way because she has been trapped in Satis House for years, forced into the domestic sphere and kept there by constant reminders of her failed wedding.

One of these reminders of Miss Havisham's wedding comes in the form of her wedding feast that has been untouched and left to rot. During Pip's second visit to Satis House, he is taken into the chambers where this feast is laid out on a long table:

An epergne or centrepiece of some kind was in the middle of this cloth; it was so heavily overhung with cobwebs that its form was quite undistinguishable; and, as I looked along the yellow expanse out of which I remember its seeming to grow, like a black fungus, I saw speckled-legged spiders with blotchy bodies running home to it, and running out from it, as if some circumstances of the greatest public importance had just transpired in the spider community. (Dickens ch. 11)

The use of color of yellow that is so pervasive in the description of Miss Havisham, this wedding feast, and Satis House is similar to that of its use in Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper." What is usually viewed as a joyful color that is full of life is now used to describe the dead and decaying. As in "The Yellow Wallpaper," the color yellow becomes an eerie and almost oppressive color, once again signifying the Gothic trope of turning convention on its head. The same can be said for the symbolic nature of a wedding. This image of mold and fungus on a wedding feast "creates a vivid and lasting image for the reader, one which is made more grotesque because of its convolution of the symbolic import of a wedding scene," especially because Miss Havisham mentions that this table is also where her body will be placed after she dies (Raphael 402). Dickens' use of the Female Gothic here shows that Miss Havisham does not have an identity

outside of this private sphere; she is, and will forever be, lonely. The connection this description makes between the wedding and death is striking when taking women's role in society into consideration. While weddings are often viewed as celebrations of love, they can also be viewed as funerals for women, especially during this time period. Putting this scene in historical context with an early work of Female Gothic can help readers understand why Dickens would include these Gothic elements in *Great Expectations*.

The previously quoted scene in Miss Havisham's chambers closely parallels a scene from an early Female Gothic novel, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Ann Radcliffe, published in 1794, giving Dickens inspiration to use similar elements in his novel. Dickens would have been aware of Radcliffe's work as she was one of the most influential authors of the late eighteenth century, and "*The Mysteries of Udolpho* was one of the novels catalogued in Dickens' personal library when it was auctioned off in 1870" (Simmons Jr. 11). In the novel, the main character, Emily St. Aubert, enters a room that was formerly inhabited by the Marchioness, who died twenty years earlier. Radcliffe describes it as "a place that fills Emily with horror, and as she describes the disarray in the spacious chamber, Emily notes how the objects in it 'remain just as they did' when the Marchioness died" (Simmons Jr. 11). This tomb-like room mirrors Pip's observation that Miss Havisham's chambers are stuck in time and have not changed since her wedding day. The most popular and influential branch of Female Gothic literature developed from *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, and works of this genre are characterized by their "dark and prisonlike images of feminine experience within domesticity" (Davison 55). As in Radcliffe's novel, these works focus on what were long considered the two most important rites of passage in a woman's life: marriage and death. Dickens' description of Miss Havisham and her chambers combine both of these elements into the idea that marriage equals death. Whereas Radcliffe's novel focuses on

death images in the Marchioness' room, Dickens' use of a decaying woman in a wedding gown and decaying food on an abandoned feast table becomes a look at expectations lost. He enlarges Radcliffe's image to argue that marriage is the death of a woman's freedom and any life they had previously as they get thrust into the domestic sphere and are forced to stay there. It is important to note here that even though Miss Havisham escapes the fate of marriage, she is suffering an even worse fate as an unmarried spinster because she loses her freedom, yes, but she also goes mad due to loneliness and isolation. When it came to marriage for women during this time period, getting married or staying unmarried was a lose-lose situation. For Miss Havisham, Satis House is used as a prison for her misery, one that society intends on keeping her locked inside of.

The Gothic imagery of Satis House works to introduce the idea of a terrifying domestic sphere, one that Miss Havisham is trapped in. Given that the Female Gothic focuses on "women who just can't seem to get out of the house," it is necessary to look in-depth at the house Miss Havisham finds herself trapped in (Davison 54). Firstly, looking at the name "Satis House" is interesting in itself, "Satis" meaning "Enough." Estella comments on this saying, "But it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house, could want nothing else" (Dickens ch. 8). This anecdote about Satis House changes the house's meaning, given that its inhabitant is a woman. Miss Havisham "has" the house and "could want nothing more," meaning that being inside of a home is the only thing a woman could, or should, ever want. Estella's comment reveals the entrapping nature of Satis House as Miss Havisham's domestic sphere through the idea that the extent of women's desires lies within the sphere and that it is "enough." To further emphasize Satis House's asylum-like qualities, Dickens uses "the common tropes of entrapment and decay that typify Gothic architecture" (Smith 19). For example, "the passages were all dark" within the house, and "no glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it"

(Dickens ch. 8). In darkness, spaces seem smaller and tighter than they are when illuminated by sunlight, speaking to the suffocating nature of Satis House. Of course, there is no sunlight in the house; its interior is only lit up artificially with candles. The yellowish hue would give the house, and Miss Havisham, a witchy or even vampiric glow. All of these elements in the description of Satis House establish it as a terrifying place, but one element in particular portrays the house as inescapable.

The manipulation of time within Satis House solidifies the space as terrifying, but the stopped clocks are also representative of its inescapable nature, keeping Miss Havisham locked inside. Pip notices that all the clocks are stopped at twenty minutes to nine, which is later revealed to be the time of Miss Havisham's failed wedding many years ago. Pip views Miss Havisham's room in relation to the clocks, saying, "I began to understand that everything in the room had stopped, like the watch and the clock, a long time ago" (Dickens ch. 8). Miss Havisham, and every detail in the room around her, is stuck in an awful memory that she has to relive every single day. The stopped clocks are representative of Miss Havisham's inability to move on from the tragic event. In a sense, her life ended the day of her wedding, and through the use of the Female Gothic, Dickens subtly explains that this was the case for all women during the Victorian Era. Clocks usually move continuously ahead, representing the passage of time, growth, and development. Time allows one to look back into the past, stay grounded in the present, and plan for the future. Miss Havisham is denied this right, as she is only stuck in the past. As a character, Miss Havisham "fails to understand the system that works against her," but that does not mean the system stops working against her, instilling the idea that women are nothing without marriage and domesticity (Raphael 410). Dickens' use of the Female Gothic to exaggerate Miss Havisham's situation shows the flaws in a system that keeps women unfairly

trapped within their homes. Later in the novel, Pip sees this connection, mentioning “the distinct shadow of the darkened and unhealthy house in which [Miss Havisham’s] life was hidden from the sun” (Dickens ch. 38). The contrast between dark and light in this quote highlights the difference between what Miss Havisham’s life is and what it could be. Instead of having the freedom to live in the light, “she lives as disconnected from the outside world as if she were institutionalized” (Raphael 403). Because of her entrapment and isolation within Satis House and her inability to escape, Miss Havisham turns into an image of female rage as she looks to Estella to do her bidding on men.

Miss Havisham’s past, namely her failed marriage to Compeyson, explains her rage towards men as Dickens portrays her entrapment in the domestic sphere as unfair. As Herbert Pocket relays to Pip, Miss Havisham was scorned by Compeyson and devastated at his decision to leave her. She “passionately loved him. There is no doubt that she perfectly idolized him” (Dickens ch. 22). Compeyson himself professed to be devoted to Miss Havisham but then betrayed her, leaving her with a boiling rage toward all men. Her rage is somewhat understandable; the passion of love she felt for Compeyson is now passion of a different kind. Miss Havisham’s rage, though exaggerated through Gothic elements, is not unlike the rage or frustration other women would have felt toward men during this time period. Looking again at Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper,” the narrator reveals her frustration at her husband for not believing anything is wrong with her mental state. While Miss Havisham’s rage is on a much stronger level, these examples show Female Gothic works containing female characters who are fed up with the idea that women need to be submissive and even-tempered. The unfairness of this system is shown in an interaction between Pip and Miss Havisham. Pip asks Miss Havisham if her actions toward him and Estella have been kind. “‘Who am I,’ cried Miss Havisham,

striking her stick upon the floor and flashing into wrath so suddenly that Estella glanced up at her in surprise, ‘who am I, for God's sake, that I should be kind?’” (Dickens ch. 44). In this quote, Miss Havisham challenges the notion that women should be “kind” all the time. What happened to her on her wedding day was unfair, yes, but what is even more unfair is that she should be confined to the domestic sphere for the rest of her life. The extent of her rage is shown in an almost magical or fantastical way with the strike of her stick on the floor and “flashing into wrath.” However, this rage she feels is does not only affect her; it also affects Estella who has grown up being groomed to carry out Miss Havisham’s revenge.

Miss Havisham, being stuck in the domestic sphere, forces Estella to wreak havoc on men, leading to the argument that the domestic sphere has negative effects on all women, not just those who are married. These effects are shown when Estella says to Miss Havisham, “‘I am what you have made me. Take all the praise, take all the blame; take all the success, take all the failure; in short, take me’” (Dickens ch. 38). From this quote, it is clear that Estella has been robbed of developing an identity, as she is what Miss Havisham has “made” her. Estella is not her own person; rather, she is Miss Havisham’s. Estella is described as a creation of sorts, akin to a Frankenstein who scorns men. Again, Miss Havisham fails to understand this system that tries to destroy her and lets it destroy Estella, too. Estella’s relationship with Miss Havisham is another trope of the Female Gothic genre that stems from Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Davison says, “Assuming the genre’s starring female role as persecuted maiden, she is transported to, and virtually imprisoned in, an ancestral Castle or manor home by the text’s other star – the enterprising, unyielding, [and] ruthless...Gothic hero-villain who threatens the young woman” (51). This description speaks to the argument Dickens makes about the unfairness of the domestic sphere. He uses this kind of relationship between Miss Havisham and Estella to show

the dangers of isolation when one is inside a space for a long period of time. Miss Havisham has turned Estella into a younger version of herself to live vicariously through because she herself is trapped inside Satis House. Not only is her entrapment unfair to her, but it is also unfair to Estella, and even to Pip, who both end up suffering at the hand of Miss Havisham. Dickens takes the terrifying nature of the domestic sphere even further, however, by portraying Miss Havisham as a madwoman.

The purpose of portraying Miss Havisham as a typical Victorian madwoman works to show how the domestic sphere affects women's minds. Throughout *Great Expectations*, Miss Havisham has a number of interactions with Pip that show her deteriorating mind while further emphasizing Gothic elements. In one of these encounters, Miss Havisham tells Pip to love Estella and repeats the phrase "love her" numerous times, as if trying to hypnotize Pip. Pip remarks, "She said the word often enough, and there could be no doubt that she meant to say it; but if the often repeated word had been hate instead of love— despair— revenge— dire death— it could not have sounded from her lips more like a curse" (Dickens ch. 29). Bringing back the witchy image of Miss Havisham, Dickens uses the repetition of "love her" as a way to express her deteriorating mental state. In this same encounter with Pip, Miss Havisham appears to have some kind of a fit; "she rose up in the chair, in her shroud of a dress, and struck at the air as if she would soon have struck herself against the wall and fallen dead. This all passed in a few seconds" (Dickens ch. 29). Her seclusion within Satis House has only made her rage and need for revenge against men stronger, as she has not been out in the real world to curate a new opinion on what love is. For Miss Havisham, love is "giving up your whole heart and soul to the smiter — as [she] did" (Dickens ch. 29). This definition of love rests on the presence of a "smiter," as there was in her relationship. However, because of her entrapment in the domestic

sphere, her judgement toward love has been clouded and she only knows of her own experience. Her mind has failed to progress beyond the wrongs that have been committed against her. In this instance, Dickens portrays the domestic sphere as a place that restricts women from a life in the public sphere, and within that private sphere, women go crazy without true human connection and experience. Pip speaks to this idea by saying, “In shutting out the light of day, she had shut out infinitely more; that, in seclusion, she had secluded herself from a thousand natural and healing influences; that, her mind, brooding solitary, had grown diseased” (Dickens ch. 49). Being trapped in the domestic sphere, even for a woman who is not married, restricts Miss Havisham’s ability to live a life that allows her mind to flourish. The “thousand natural and healing influences” are social experiences that men get to have outside of the home that women do not. These human interactions ground people in reality and without them, people go mad. In order to understand Miss Havisham’s madness even further, it is important to contextualize it among other Victorian works and history.

Looking at madwomen within other Female Gothic texts can help readers understand what madness for women was truly like during the Victorian Era and what it represents in literature. As previously established, Dickens was interested in female recluses and madwomen, attending events at asylums. During the early 1800s, the population of women institutionalized in asylums rose, and “by the 1850s, there were more women than men in public institutions” (Showalter 52). It was the belief of psychiatrists that women were more susceptible to insanity or madness than men because of the instability of their reproductive systems. In fact, many psychiatrists thought it a wonder that more women were not insane, given this “instability.” Parts of Miss Havisham’s character can be seen in descriptions of Victorian madwomen. For example, these women were “indifferent to the usual conventions of politeness and decorum in speech,

dress, and behavior” (Showalter 58). This speaks to Miss Havisham’s blunt and often insulting way of speaking to the characters she interacts with. Additionally, her attire certainly would not be considered a “usual convention.” However, while doctors blamed madness on women’s biology, writers of the time “suggested that it was the lack of meaningful work, hope, or companionship that led to depression or breakdown” (Showalter 61). This description mirrors Pip’s suggestion that Miss Havisham is being denied of a purposeful life through her isolation in Satis House. One Victorian woman writer, Florence Nightingale, was concerned that Victorian women were rendered crazy and powerless by society that they could rant and rave but never rebel against the system that kept them mad. Her autobiographical essay, *Cassandra*, is a scathing analysis of the social code that destroyed women’s intellect, morals, and passion. Another influential writer of the Female Gothic was Charlotte Brontë, and her depiction of the madwoman, Bertha, in *Jane Eyre* follows a similar pattern to Nightingale’s and Dickens’. What is interesting here is Jane’s relationship to Bertha. Saying that “Brontë has no sympathy for her mad creature,” Showalter argues that “before *Jane Eyre* can reach her happy ending, the madwoman must be purged from the plot” (69). Similarly, Estella cannot reach her own happy ending, and even Pip cannot reach his, until Miss Havisham dies. Her death, then, is another commentary on the unfair patriarchal system that says she is destined to die within the domestic sphere.

One of the purposes of Miss Havisham’s death is to set her free from her past, and through this action, Dickens criticizes the domestic sphere and the societal claim that women cannot be free from its grasp until they die. Miss Havisham dies after realizing the damage she has done to Estella and, through Estella, Pip. Through the epiphanic moment and subsequent death of Miss Havisham, Dickens once again utilizes the Female Gothic to emphasize Miss

Havisham's madness. Finally, she realizes that she is enabling a patriarchal system by forcing Estella to seek out her revenge on men. Miss Havisham "is being jilted all over again because, in creating a heartless female to punish men, she was bound to prevent Estella from loving anyone" (Meckier 43-44). However, she does not get a chance to right her wrongs with Estella because once she understands the danger of this system that oppresses women, she dies. Pip witnesses Miss Havisham's death, saying, "I saw a great flaming light spring up. In the same moment, I saw her running at me, shrieking, with a whirl of fire blazing all about her, and soaring at least as many feet above her head as she was high" (Dickens ch. 49). This "whirl" of fire around Miss Havisham produces a Medusa-like image, monstrous and terrifying. The burning of Miss Havisham is symbolic of her "burning love" for Estella, as mentioned in Chapter 38, and her burning passion for revenge. However, this fire is symbolic of much more. Interestingly, Miss Havisham runs into the arms of Pip, a man, signifying that women will always run to men for help and to be saved because they cannot do it on their own. This action shows, in an extreme way, women's reliance on men to survive. Of course, this is in alignment with Victorian gender roles and emphasizes the importance placed on the domestic sphere during that time.

As soon as Miss Havisham begins to see under the surface of her actions and starts to become more of a complex character, she dies, insinuating that women are meant to be one-dimensional and stay within the traditional roles set out for them. All of the previous interpretations of Miss Havisham's death tie back to the idea that the domestic sphere is suffocating and turns women into mere shells of themselves. In this sense, Miss Havisham's death is a type of freedom for her; she is finally free from her past. Pip notes, "Patches of tinder yet alight were floating in the smoky air, which, a moment ago, had been her faded bridal dress (Dickens ch. 49). Her wedding dress, another piece that tied her to the domestic sphere and all it

represents, is gone. Unfortunately, it took dying for her to be free. Here in lies the problem that Dickens brings to light; when women have to die to be free, is there not something inherently wrong with the notion of separating public and private spheres? When looking at Miss Havisham's death as freedom, the fire that kills her "seems then to be a purifying fire, one which clears ground and creates new space" (Thornton 87). As stated before, Miss Havisham has to die so that Estella and Pip can have their happy endings. Her death gives Satis House a new purpose, or at least, the land Satis House is on, which is interesting because Satis House is Miss Havisham's domestic sphere, and it dies with her. Ultimately, Dickens makes the claim that being trapped inside of the domestic sphere for a long time kills and destroys and restricts freedoms, and Miss Havisham is a character that is used to show the unfairness of that entrapment.

Charles Dickens uses the Female Gothic like many writers before and after him to comment on the terrifying aspects of the domestic sphere. The reclusive and ultimately mad Miss Havisham serves as a symbol of Victorian women who were destined to stay trapped in the domestic sphere after marriage. This domestic sphere is what drives Miss Havisham's madness, along with her desire for revenge on men. Even though Miss Havisham is unwed, her obsession with her failed wedding to Compeyson is significant in that it reinforces the idea that women's life after marriage during this time period was not necessarily impactful or meaningful. The restrictions placed on women after marriage were such that their only escape from the domestic sphere was through death, as evidenced by the burning of Miss Havisham. Dickens' use of the Female Gothic in *Great Expectations* is similar to works by other female authors who use madwomen to highlight injustices within gender roles and even the medical field. While Dickens works to portray the domestic sphere as terrifyingly as possible, which he accomplishes, he

offers no other alternative for women. Yes, Miss Havisham's death sets her free, and this shows a broken system, but what is the alternative? Miss Havisham meets the same end as many other women in Victorian works, so if they cannot survive within the domestic sphere, then where is their place? Of course, *Great Expectations* is about much more than women's place in society, but Miss Havisham's end is a little discouraging. Her story is ultimately one of failed expectations, and that begs the question: Is there no redemption and freedom for women outside of death?

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