

# AN ADVISABLE HANDBOOK FOR BOOSTING RESEARCH SKILLS

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**G**OBESHONAY Hatekhori (Introduction to Research Methods) is one of the latest books by Ragib Hasan written in Bengali language on different strategies for carrying out research-oriented works. Ragib Hasan is a teacher in Department of Computer Science, University of Alabama, USA. This book, as written in Bengali, is expected to be highly beneficial for the students as well as teachers of Bangladesh who are currently involved in different research programs. At the beginning of the book, the author defines the word "research" in light of a few lines quoted from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, France which states that a research assignment is a "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications." So, according to the quoted words, research aims at innovating ideas and dimensions which are not so conventional and which will help the dissemination and growth of knowledge. All research works focus on certain questions and stumbling-blocks and finding answers to those questions and exploring the way those stumbling-blocks may be crossed are the goals of research initiatives.

The book may be split into three parts. In the first few chapters the author has interpreted the basic terminologies linked with research, addressed the necessity of research and research principles. In the middle chap-



ters he has highlighted how one should start a research work, select a research field and how to screen the concerned texts, publications and sources which will be consulted in course of preparing a dissertation. In the concluding chapters, the writer has laid emphasis on different technicalities needed

for reading, comprehending and executing a research work. Moreover, presentation and defence of research papers, current research-related trends and effective procedures for seeking financial aid for research endeavours have also been underscored in this book.

Lack of knowledge is responsible for mal-practices like plagiarism, emulation and textual pilferage. Research candidates can avoid all these unethical things if they have adequate learning on the point they are willing to develop through their writing enterprise. So, before a research work is started, the concerned person should gather the required books and materials and peruse the procured stuff with utmost concentration.

While applying for a research program in a higher institution, research proposals are indispensable prerequisites. In this book the author has explained this point too. According to the author, a research proposal should contain the following portions: I) Summary II) Introduction III) Motivation IV) Related Works V) Approach VI) Benefits VII) Timeline VIII) Required finance IX) Evaluation Plan. If all these points are exquisitely illustrated, there are ample chances to obtain scholarships or financial support from the concerned institution, the author asserts.

While writing a research paper, in terms of the suggestions of the book's author, a student or teacher should keep his/her abstract restricted within 5/6 sentences. Abstracts should be terse but substantial with maximum thoughts expressed through minimum

words. The focal points of the research paper should be briefly but precisely stated in the abstract. In the main part of the article, facts and figures will have to be accompanied with acknowledgments of sources wherefrom the citations have been borrowed. As far as in-text citations and bibliography are concerned, two styles are prominent in most of the countries: MLA (Modern Language Association) and APA (American Psychological Association). Mixtures of these two styles should be avoided. Footnotes and interpreted transliteration are allowed for referential purposes in required cases.

Lingual expertise is highly crucial for any research work. Language used in a piece of writing should be unambiguous, vivid, accurate and foolproof. Words and phrases should be selected very carefully so that they match the theme of the paper and don't appear to be out of context. On the other hand, the citations stated in the paper should be buttressed with the writer's own explanatory statements to show that the cited lines fit in with the chosen subject or title of the paper. Tautology should be avoided as far as possible. Tautology happens while using a foreign language where writers may use the same word over and over again and thus make their papers tedious and clumsy. So, a powerful vocabulary is a very big obligation for writing appreciable research papers.

The habit of continuous writing is deeply helpful to research candidates. It should be remembered that, a person who doesn't write

even a couple of lines in an entire year, will certainly find it too difficult to express his/her ideas convincingly when it comes to a research work. Writing pace and proficiency don't come up all on a sudden. It's a quality which can only be acquired through intensive and ceaseless practice. There is no detour to success. We have to run the full circle to achieve our aims. Patience, hard work, honesty and diligence are always needed for performing well in every task. Research is no exception. Another necessary point is to attach importance to everything that comes our way while writing a research paper because we never know what is profound or what is desultory unless the materials in hands are cautiously scrutinized. So, preconceived ideas about a text without meticulous absorption are detrimental to research efforts.

Individual thinking is required too. Jumping on the bandwagon or going with the flow is a widespread trend in our country. Research papers that reflect the writer's own thoughts and views always succeed to command respect from readers and editors. For that reason, going through and examining already published research papers are necessary so that a research aspirant doesn't refer to a discernment that has been meanwhile analysed by many other writers. In such cases, a research paper may lose its appeal of originality.

The writer is the Vice President, Chowdhury Philanthropic Trust, Sylhet.



## Expectations to climb social ladder

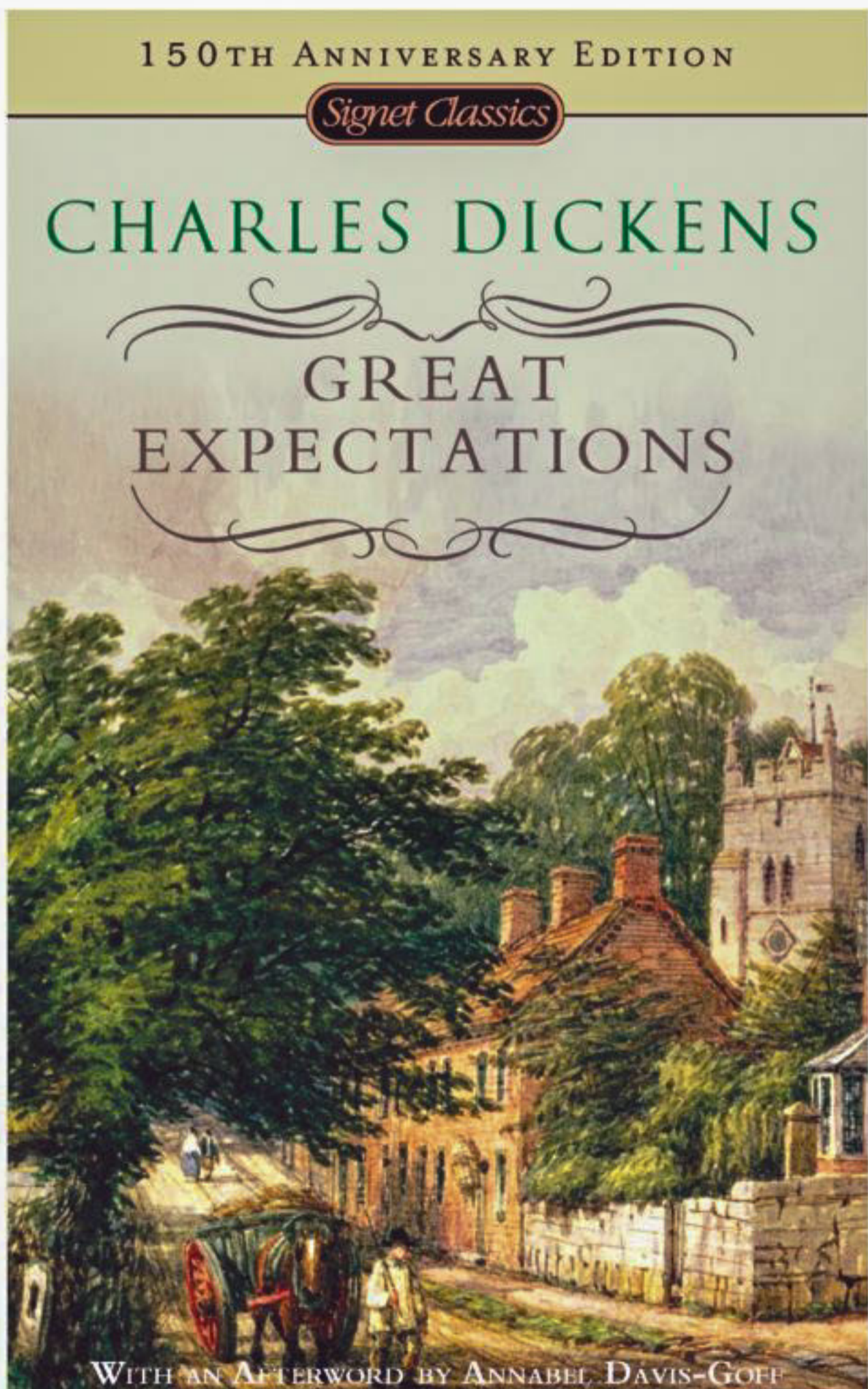
AUTHOR: CHARLES DICKENS  
 REVIEWED BY NAZIA JAHAN

PUBLISHER: CHAPMAN & HALL IN ENGLAND, HARPER & BROTHERS IN USA  
 DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION: 1861  
 GENRE: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL FICTION, BILDUNGSROMAN.

**S**ET in the mid-nineteenth century England, Great Expectations is one of Dickens' most famous works and is even considered his best book by most critics. As most of his novels are, Great Expectations can also not be categorized under one genre. It is simultaneously a mysterious tale with several climactic twists and a love story full of passion and drama, while being a narrative that serves the purpose of a serious social commentary with a tone of satirical humor. Even then, it is taken as of the bildungsroman genre since it portrays the growth of the protagonist's personality from his childhood to middle age.

Much like a fable, Great Expectations implies quite a simple moral: the things that matter and should be prioritized in life are not wealth, class and social advancement of one's status, but rather affection, loyalty, conscience and kindness. In three segments or volumes of the novel, Dickens shows the development of Pip's character from a kind and generous young boy to an arrogant and quite ungrateful "gentleman". Through Pip's character, Dickens brings out the socio-economic issues regarding class and status in the Victorian England.

As far as the synopsis goes, with little spoiler to give away, the story starts off as Pip as a young orphan living with his abusive sister and much kinder brother in law, Joe, who is the village blacksmith, in Kent. He stumbles upon Magwitch, an escaped convict, and helps to break him free of the leg irons, making Magwitch forever be indebted to him even though he gets imprisoned again. Pip is later introduced to the lavish upper class lifestyle when he is sent to entertain Miss Havisham by his pompous uncle, Uncle Pumblechook. Miss Havisham is a bitter old, wheel chair bound lady who was abandoned by her fiancé on the wedding day. Perhaps it was her attempt to stop time that she is shown to be wearing her wedding gown even after all these years, along with the fact that all the clocks in her mansion are paused and that her now rotten wedding cake



beginning, but rather Magwitch, the convict he had once helped. Estella breaks his heart and gets married to his archenemy, Drummle. Pip then goes back home with the intention of making amends with Joe and marry Biddy, however he finds out that they have married one another already after his sister's death. He leaves for Cairo afterwards and lives there for eleven years. The novel ends when he comes back and meets Estella after many years. She is now a widow and they part ways as friends, though it is implied strongly that they may be together this time; as the last line says: "...I saw the shadow of no parting from her." Dickens never fails to put such beautifully dramatic imagery in words.

Personal feedback on this novel is going to be extremely partial, coming from a blind fan of Charles Dickens' works. Great Expectations is, hands down, one of the most complicated yet heart-warming and moving love stories that I have come across. There are a good number of moments that stand out, moments of comic reliefs, and moments of suspense or passion. I have read this book for more than once and each time I found it hard to resist myself from turning the pages to read on further; each time, it felt like a completely new experience

The reviewer studies English Literature at Independent University, Bangladesh

## A Stalwart in Politics and Literature

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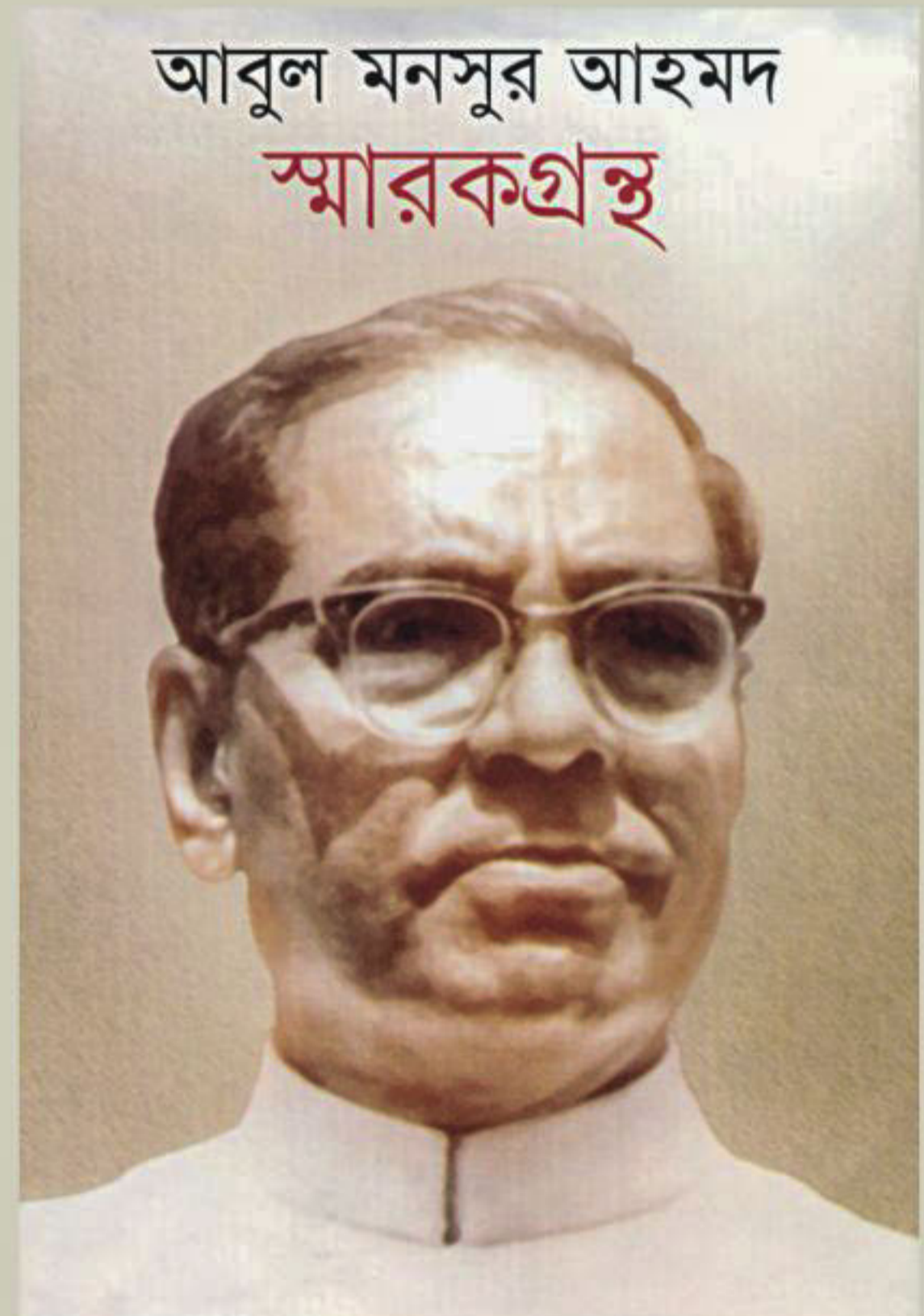
**A**BUL Mansur Ahmed was born in Mymensingh in the year 1898. Primarily known as a Bangladeshi litterateur, he was also a politician and journalist. He passed his Matriculation and Intermediate examination in the time when the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movements were gaining momentum and attracting the educated Muslim class. It comes as no surprise that he partook in these movements. He acquired his college degree in Law from the Ripon College in Kolkata and practiced for nine years in his hometown. He later moved to Kolkata where he worked as a professional journalist and political activist until the partition in 1947.

Abul Mansur Ahmed was a philosopher who utilized satirical vocabulary when it came to discussing politics and injustice. He used his knowledge of journalism, advocacy and politics to interact with people from different walks of life, closely. This allowed him to draw conclusions and write about how the Muslim community was still in the dark exploiting religion for their own benefit. Although the literature could be considered humorous to many, it reflected a deep pain, which is hard not to notice and touches the readers' hearts.

The book, "Abul Mansur Ahmed Sharakgrontho" covers different perspectives of well known writers on the different topics that Abul Mansur Ahmed wrote about such as Literature, Journalism, Politics, Intellectual Discussion, Lifestyle and many more. Noted writers include, Mohamad Moniruzzaman, Rafiqul Islam, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, Ashiq Reza, Selina Hossain and many more. Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury describes the qualities and characteristics of Abul Mansur's writings as intense and politically charged in his writing, "Je khaane Abul Mansur Ahmed Swatatanna". He says that for Ahmed writing about politics was not just a talent but his forte as well. In comparison to other contemporary writers of Ahmed's time, many were politically aware of their surround-

ings, but none had the ability to grasp the reality and translate it as articulately as he did.

In respect to Journalism, S.M. Ali in his article, "Ekjon Sampadak Ke Shradhhanjali" he says that words would never be enough to describe how talented Ahmed was. Through his work Abul Mansur Ahmed was not just a social worker but also an intellectual, political leader and author. From a journalistic perspective, Abul Mansur Ahmed contributed a lot as a journalist and even more so as an Editor to his country. Chanchal Bose in his writing, "Durlav Ei Alo" states that in this day and age it is hard to even imagine, let alone have another individual be compared to Abul Mansur Ahmed and the contributions that he has left behind. He discusses Abul Mansur



Ahmed's two books, "Amader Aina and Food Conference" and how the books urge society to lift the veil of superstitions and address our values that are based on double standards.

Abul Mansur Ahmed guided the people of Bangladesh utilizing his intellect and political skills. He contributed to the formation of the Jukto Front and helped to implement the 21 Point Demands and also assisted Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the 6Point Demand that was based on the aforementioned 21 Point Demand. Abul Mansur Ahmed's choice of

weapon was his pen and his ammunition was his use of satire in his literary works. He captured the political essence as well as expressed patriotism through his satire work. His never ending optimism could be felt through the words of each of his stories. With time his work became more influential. His literature was instrumental at cleansing and restoring back people's sense of nationality and patriotism that they had lost. He dreamt of the tolerance that one day people would have to different cultures and wrote various books about it. In order to experience what true patriotism embodies, Abul Mansur Ahmed's books are a must read.

The reviewer is an occasional contributor

**The agony is exquisite, is it not?  
 A broken heart. You think you will die**

is still on the dining room table. Pip falls in love with her adopted daughter, Estella, who is beautiful and polished yet distant and cold. Estella makes Pip conscious of his commonness and he grows uneasy of his social status. He longs to be a "gentleman" and not a blacksmith. His dreams start to take form when an anonymous benefactor sends a lavish amount of allowance to him.

From that moment onwards, Pip's life along with his personality change drastically. He goes to London to learn to become a gentleman and forgets about his sister, Joe and his friend, Biddy. He grows more and more ashamed of his humble origins and thinks that any association with them would demean him before Estella. One of his many twists and turns of the story is when he finds out his benefactor is not Miss Havisham, as he had assumed from the