

PUBLICADO

20 de abril, 2022

COLUMNA LITERARIA

Heaven strike us all if we don't

**FRIEDRICH STEFAN KLING**

Columnista RHI.

VOL. III COLECCIÓN. C:2 - C3

Charles Dickens' novel "Great Expectations" is a suitable representation of our society's behavior paradoxes; is full of love and hate, loyal friendships and betrayals, guilt and redemption, honesty and deceit, good and evil and a critical perspective on human justice. An impressive way of his work is the contingency of their characters, which let the reader explore many feelings and ways to perceive each one of them. As a reader you will reevaluate the way of

judging people because this novel gives us uncertainty; we can't predict how good or bad a wealthy or a poor person is, or how fair justice really is. The only granted element in this novel is love, as it's the motion of the story. There wouldn't be anything to tell if it wasn't because of how love enacted through the novel; an ex-convict aided by a boy, never forgets him and reward him afterwards by making a gentleman out of this blacksmith apprentice kid; a lawyers seeks an

opportunity to save an unfairly victimized girl; a boy falls in love with a girl, whom she ends up falling in love too, even though she was only supposed to fool around with him and break his heart.

The undertaking of life is death; there isn't any other resolution, especially for such a destructive species as the humankind. But that shouldn't be the point, because then there is no point at all for being and staying alive. What truly matters is the process, the very short but meaningful stage between the moment you are born and the moment you die. The process of living is, all in all, a miracle; the power of life is within us while we breathe and it's all but given; it's not granted or fortuitous. There is an implicit vow for those who live, a promise of being good and do good, otherwise life won't matter, and we've already seen how that is a useless point, a very deep and dark void.

Pip, one of the main characters in Dickens' novel, is raised by his older sister, Mrs. Joe, and her partner, Joe, a blacksmith. His parents are dead, his sister is mean to him, he encounters an ex-convict while visiting his parents' grave and he must obey the will of wealthy people, but nothing took the bloom off him as parting ways from Estella, the girl he falls in love with and the one accountable for his desire to become a gentleman. This wish come true thanks to Magwitch, the ex-convict at the graveyard, so Pip becomes a young gentleman of great expectations. This is something not only remarkable for what it is, but for what it means and represent. Who can be considered a person of great expectations nowadays? I believe that we all are part of it: as long as we live in society, our community and our world expect something from us, we

are all awarded with great expectations, but sometimes we miss the point of it.

Later, in becoming a gentleman, Pip finds himself loathsome after the visit of Joe, the blacksmith he befriended as a kid, who supported, cherished and loved him, because he acknowledged that he treated badly his old friend, he even says "In trying to become a gentleman, I've succeeded to become a snob". This is crucial, because it unveils the worthless value of becoming part of the elite of society. It reveals how power can be wasted in such banal and superficial ways of living that not only contribute in nothing to the world, but also build a form of justice easily corrupted: a form of power that leads to control over others, a mere mean to personal ends and desires. An example of it is Miss Havisham, a vindictive heartbroken wealthy woman who manipulates Estella's life. Despite that, you can't affirm Miss Havisham is a bad person.

At some point in the early stage of the novel, Pip is wondering (just as almost every child is capable of imaging) what kind of people is society punishing. Mrs. Joe tells him it's all about thieves, murderers and spiteful people that once started by asking many questions (like Pip was used to do as a kid). Certainly, we like to think that we created justice in order to punish bad people, those who do wrong and impair the great world we want to live in, and some people might be convinced that's how Justice is built but, when and why did we start punishing critical thinking as Mrs. Joe suggests?

The evolution of the story and the changes on its characters are beyond admirable, it elicits contemporary problems and an intrinsic answer to them. It's a story about

death, poverty, cruelty and many other forms of injustice. But is an exquisite demonstration of an authentic form of justice, one that is within us all and one that we are capable of practicing every day, everywhere and with everybody. This form of justice was the one that made all the good in this story possible. Justice is a big and misunderstood word, but it's rather simple when it blossoms from our most strong type of force: love.

When Pip made a promise to the ex-con, he said, "heaven strike me if I don't" and so he was able to keep the promise and obtain the unexpected reward form it afterwards. Love is our vow to the world and the people of our community, so I say heaven strike as all if we don't start loving each other and building a better world.