



# WHAT THE DICKENS?

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When Charles Dickens was 21, he planned to audition for the London's Covent Garden Theatre but was kept home due to a cold. Instead, he took a job as a newspaper reporter and editor and within three years was a celebrated novelist. His interest in the stage continued throughout his life; he performed in amateur productions and was at various times a playwright, director, producer, and librettist.

In spite of numerous attempts, success as a playwright eluded Dickens. Bob Taylor, curator of "Best of Times: The Theater of Charles Dickens" at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, wrote: "I think he really needed the very broad canvas of a novel. He needed to develop his characters, and he always had intricate plots. I don't think he could compact it into two or three hours on stage. It's so ironic that he loved the theater so much and was such a great writer but couldn't get it together to write a good play."

Despite Dickens' struggle, other writers found his novels perfect for dramatic adaptation. In fact, plays based on Dickens' novels often showed up on stage before the final chapters appeared in the serialized form popular at the time.

These stage adaptations infuriated Dickens because playwrights would invent endings and characters. To add insult to injury, he got no money from the productions.

# NOTTINGHAM MECHANICS' INSTITUTION.

Messrs. CHAPPELL and CO. beg to announce that they have made arrangements with  
MRS.

## CHARLES DICKENS

FOR

### ONE FAREWELL READING

(THE ONLY READING THAT MR. DICKENS WILL EVER GIVE IN NOTTINGHAM)

ON

THURSDAY EVENING, FEB. 4th, 1869,

WHEN HE WILL READ HIS

## DOCTOR MARIGOLD,

AND OTHER

## TRIAL FROM PICWICK.

It is scarcely necessary for Messrs. CHAPPELL and CO. to add that any announcement made in connection with these Farewell Readings will be strictly adhered to and considered final; and that on no consideration whatever will Mr. DICKENS be induced to surrender an extra night in any place in which he shall have been announced to read for the last time.

The Reading will commence at Eight o'Clock, and be comprised within Two Hours.

The Audience is earnestly requested to be seated Ten Minutes before the commencement of the Reading.

BALCONY STALLS, 7s. RESERVED SEATS ON FLOOR, 6s.  
SECOND SEATS, 4s. ADMISSION, 1s.

Tickets may be obtained of Mr. H. FARMER, at his Music Warehouse, High Street, where the Plan of the Room may be seen and Places secured.

In the last decade of his life, Dickens performed public readings of his works himself, touring the United States and United Kingdom, reading and acting out scenes to rave reviews. He was a massive celebrity and a consummate performer.

Dickens' novels are extremely theatrical, and we have a tremendous opportunity to bring *Great Expectations* to life in a medium he loved so much.



CHARLES DICKENS READING

Adapted from "Charles Dickens, man of the theater" by Tara Burghart in the Los Angeles Times, Jan. 1, 2003

# GREAT ADAPTATIONS

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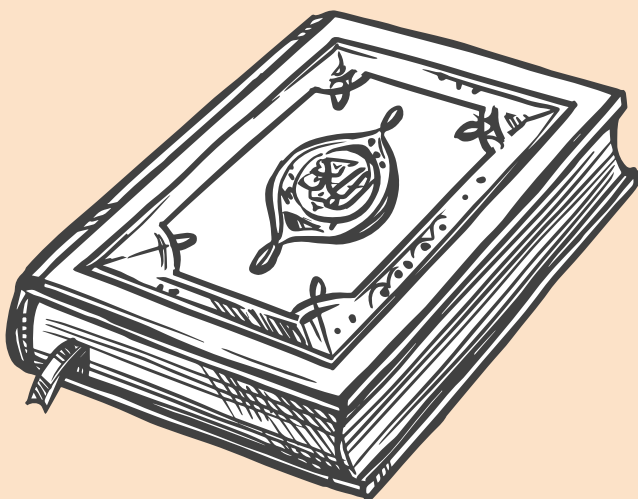
One recent stage adaptation of *Great Expectations* was in the West End's Vaudville Theatre in 2013. This show is set entirely within Satis House, and emphasizes the Gothic elements of the story. It was adapted by Jo Clifford and directed by Graham McLaren.



[Watch the show HERE.](#)

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***What is your relationship with money? Are you comfortable with it? Do finances stress you out? How are you influenced by the way others use money?***



## CHAPTER & SCRIPT ANNOTATION

Need to find the chapter that matches your scene?

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