

My first memory is of a churchyard. He limped and shivered and glared and growled. Then he limped over to me, grabbed my arms, and tilted me backward. My sobs filled the churchyard. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll eut your throat!" Leg irons bound his ankles. I pointed at the gravestone. "My sister, sir—Mrs. Joe Gargery—wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir." I was only seven years old, and I was frightened of the graves that were all around me. My father and mother were buried there. A man was hiding behind one of the gravestones! The man came toward me. He was wet and muddy. "Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded. "Pip," I said, "Pip, sir." I pointed to our village. My pockets were empty except for one piece of bread, which fell to the ground. Then the prisoner sat me on a gravestone. "Boy," he said between bites, "where's your mother?" I said, pointing to the gravestone over the man's shoulder. "There, sir," I explained, timidly. He muttered. "Blacksmith, eh?" He looked down at his leg irons. He looked powerfully down into my eyes. I looked helplessly up into his. I began to cry. "What's that noise?"