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Audio Transcript: Sam Weller from 'The Pickwick Papers'

'How de do, sir?' said Mr. Muzzle, as he conducted Mr. Weller down the kitchen stairs.

'Why, no considerable change has taken place in the state of my system, since I see you cocked up behind your governor's chair in the parlour, a little vile ago,' replied Sam.

'You will excuse my not taking more notice of you then,' said Mr. Muzzle. 'You see, master hadn't introduced us, then. Lord, how fond he is of you, Mr. Weller, to be sure!'

'Ah!' said Sam, 'what a pleasant chap he is!'

'Ain't he?' replied Mr. Muzzle.

'So much humour,' said Sam.

'And such a man to speak,' said Mr. Muzzle. 'How his ideas flow, don't they?'

'Wonderful,' replied Sam; 'they comes a-pouring out, knocking each other's heads so fast, that they

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seems to stun one another; you hardly know what he's arter, do you?'

'That's the great merit of his style of speaking,' rejoined Mr. Muzzle. 'Take care of the last step, Mr. Weller. Would you like to wash your hands, sir, before we join the ladies'! Here's a sink, with the water laid on, Sir, and a clean jack towel behind the door.'

'Ah! perhaps I may as well have a rinse,' replied Mr. Weller, applying plenty of yellow soap to the towel, and rubbing away till his face shone again. 'How many ladies are there?'

'Only two in our kitchen,' said Mr. Muzzle; 'cook and 'ouse-maid. We keep a boy to do the dirty work, and a gal besides, but they dine in the wash'us.'

'Oh, they dines in the wash'us, do they?' said Mr. Weller.

'Yes,' replied Mr. Muzzle, 'we tried 'em at our table when they first come, but we couldn't keep 'em. The gal's manners is dreadful vulgar; and the boy breathes

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so very hard while he's eating, that we found it impossible to sit at table with him.'

'Young grampus!' said Mr. Weller.

'Oh, dreadful,' rejoined Mr. Muzzle; 'but that is the worst of country service, Mr. Weller; the juniors is always so very savage. This way, sir, if you please, this way.'

Preceding Mr. Weller, with the utmost politeness, Mr. Muzzle conducted him into the kitchen.

'Mary,' said Mr. Muzzle to the pretty servant-girl, 'this is Mr. Weller; a gentleman as master has sent down, to be made as comfortable as possible.'

'And your master's a knowin' hand, and has just sent me to the right place,' said Mr. Weller, with a glance of admiration at Mary. 'If I wos master o' this here house, I should always find the materials for comfort vere Mary wos.'

'Lor, Mr. Weller!' said Mary blushing.

'Well, I never!' ejaculated the cook.

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'Bless me, cook, I forgot you,' said Mr. Muzzle. 'Mr. Weller, let me introduce you.'

'How are you, ma'am?' said Mr. Weller. 'Wery glad to see you, indeed, and hope our acquaintance may be a long 'un, as the gen'l'm'n said to the fi' pun' note.'

When this ceremony of introduction had been gone through, the cook and Mary retired into the back kitchen to titter, for ten minutes; then returning, all giggles and blushes, they sat down to dinner. Mr. Weller's easy manners and conversational powers had such irresistible influence with his new friends, that before the dinner was half over, they were on a footing of perfect intimacy, and in possession of a full account of the delinquency of Job Trotter.