

**MR BUMBLE**

Yes, he is rather small — there's no denying it. But he'll grow, Mrs Sowerberry — he'll grow.

*MRS SOWERBERRY examines OLIVER doubtfully.*

**MRS SOWERBERRY**

Ah, I dare say he will, on our vittles and our drink. They're a waste of time, these workhouse boys. They always cost more to keep than what they're worth. Still, you men always think you know best.

*(SHE gives a short hysterical laugh)*

**SOWERBERRY**

But there's an expression of melancholy on his face, which is very interesting. He would make a delightful coffin-follower.

*MRS SOWERBERRY stops.*

I don't mean a regular coffin-follower to attend the grown-ups, but only for the children's practice. It would be very novel to have a follower in proportion my sweet

*They all eye OLIVER speculatively.*

**MRS SOWERBERRY**

Yes it's a possibility. Very well, then, boy — what's your name?

**OLIVER**

Oliver — Oliver Twist, ma'am.

**MRS SOWERBERRY**

A singular name.

**MR BUMBLE**

Aye, ma'am, and one of my own choosing.

**MRS SOWERBERRY**

Yours, Mr Bumble?

**MR BUMBLE**

Mine, Mrs Sowerberry. We name our fondlings in alphabetical order. The last was an S-Swubble I named him. This was a T-Twist I named him.

**MRS SOWERBERRY**

An orphan then, Mr Bumble?

**MR BUMBLE**

Indeed Mrs Sowerberry. The child's mother came to us destitute... brings the child into the world... takes one look at him, and promptly dies without leaving so much as a forwarding name and address.