

English Champions

Autumn/Fall 2018 – October 2, 2018

EXPRESSION:

Going to the dogs

Becoming much worse in quality or character

E.g. Since the new owner took over the bar, it has gone to the dogs.

A surprise

Mr Tufty enjoys a good breakfast. He normally has a full English breakfast consisting of bacon, fried egg, sausage, fried bread, black pudding and baked beans, accompanied by hot buttered toast and marmalade and swilled down with a strong cup of tea. Sometimes he prefers kippers. His pet corgi, Falmouth, normally sits under the kitchen table and sometimes gets the occasional scrap from his master.

On Saturday morning Mr Tufty was sitting in his kitchen finishing his breakfast and reading the newspaper. The steady tick-tock sound from the grandfather clock in the hall could be heard. It was about 8:00 a.m. A log fire was burning in the kitchen fire place and Mr Tufty was enjoying his morning.

All of a sudden he heard the crunch of gravel as a car came up the drive. This was followed by a loud knock on the front door. Falmouth jumped up and raced into the hallway to investigate, barking loudly. A minute later Mr Tufty's housekeeper answered the door and shortly afterwards she entered the kitchen looking rather flustered. She was followed by a handsome young man, apparently of Indian origin.

Mr Tufty nearly choked on his tea when it turned out that this surprise visitor was none other than Arthur Hiran, the 30 year old son and heir of Charles Hiran! You may recall from last week that Charles Hiran is the owner of Hiran Ceramica, a big manufacturer and wholesaler of luxury ceramic floor tiles and that Arthur Hiran has been dating Mr Tufty's daughter, Henrietta.

Arthur looked rather nervous and Mr Tufty was suddenly struck with fear that Arthur might be about to seek permission to ask Henrietta to marry him. Mr Tufty asked him to sit down and offered him a cup of tea. Arthur was very polite and they had a very pleasant conversation about the weather and hunting. Mr Tufty was delighted to discover that Arthur shared his love for duck hunting. Eventually Mr Tufty asked him what the purpose of his visit was.

It transpired that, over dinner with Henrietta the evening before, she had mentioned Tufty Carpets export activities in France. Arthur was very excited to hear about the French management team and felt that the

two companies could work closely together to target the French market. Tufty Carpets would bring a strong local presence and Hiran Ceramica would be able to build its export market.

In addition, Tufty Carpets would be able to expand its product line in a market where ceramic tiles are very popular. On the other hand, there are many suppliers of ceramic tiles in France and so competition is fierce. Plus, if Mr Tufty offered Arthur any encouragement he might find himself doing a Bhangra routine at Henrietta's wedding sooner than expected!

Arthur left about 30 minutes later and Mr Tufty watched as Arthur's Aston-Martin Vantage sped up the drive, generating a cloud of dust. Mr Tufty grudgingly admitted to himself that he quite liked his daughter's suitor. Arthur Hiran is a rather impressive young man but, as the dust began to settle, some questions remained in Mr Tufty's mind

Vocabulary

Grudgingly:	in a reluctant or resentful manner
Bhangra:	several types of Punjabi-style dances
Black pudding:	a type of blood sausage originating in Great Britain and Ireland
Baked beans:	a dish containing beans, sometimes baked but, despite the name, usually stewed, in a tomato sauce
Suitor:	1. a man who pursues a relationship with a particular woman, with a view to marriage 2. a prospective buyer of a business or corporation
Kipper:	a herring that has been preserved by being treated with salt and then with smoke
Corgi:	a dog of a short-legged breed with a foxlike head
Flustered:	agitated or confused
Fierce:	having or displaying a violent or ferocious aggressiveness
Let bygones be bygones:	used to tell someone that they should forget about unpleasant things that happened in the past
None other:	no other person
Answer the door:	open the door because a visitor has knocked on it or rung the bell

Questions for discussion

1. Do a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of a possible Tufty-Hiran business partnership.
2. Is it time for Mr Tufty to let bygones be bygones and to put aside the rivalry that has existed between him and Charles Hiran for some time?
3. What are some of the possible motivations for Arthur Hiran's early morning visit?