

# English Champions

Autumn/Fall 2018 – October 9, 2018

## Going out for a curry

Following the surprise breakfast visit by Arthur Hiran, Mr Tufty had settled back into his usual routine. Each day he would eat his breakfast, take Falmouth and his hunting dog, Squire for a walk, and then drive to the Tufty Carpets factory at about 8:30 a.m. When he arrived, his secretary would make him a cup of coffee and he would check to see if he had received any new messages.

A few weeks had passed since Arthur's visit and Mr Tufty hadn't thought any more about the Hirans. Mr Hiran's estate borders the Tufty's estate, but apart from the Sikh festival that occurs once a year, they don't often hear or see each other. His daughter Henrietta's romance appeared to have cooled down a little and life seemed to have returned to normal.

One morning Mr Tufty arrived at work and saw the familiar flashing red light on his desk telephone signifying that there was at least one message awaiting his attention. It turned out to be a voice message from none other than Charles Hiran, the father of Arthur (his daughter Henrietta's boyfriend) and the owner of Hiran Ceramica, Tufty Carpets biggest competitor! The message was as follows:

*"Hello Mr Tufty, this is Charles Hiran of Hiran Ceramica. Arthur told me that he enjoyed meeting you the other day. I hope he didn't visit at a bad time, but he was on his way to the airport to take a flight to India. He is visiting some of our suppliers there."*

*"The reason for my call is that Amanpreet, my wife, and I would like to invite you and Mrs Tufty to dinner at my favourite balti house in Wolverhampton, not far from your factory. Are you free on Friday evening? Give me a call. My cell phone number is 0867 5263810. Have a nice day."*

As he replaced the handset Mr Tufty felt the blood drain from his face.

When he returned home that evening he spoke with his wife about his anxieties. She told him not to be so silly. It was very kind of the Hirans to invite them to dinner. He shouldn't read too much into the situation.

That didn't make him feel any better.

Later that evening, Henrietta returned home from work. She was very excited to have received a small package from Arthur Hiran. He had just got back from his business trip to India. She carefully unwrapped the gift while Mr Tufty looked on suspiciously. It turned out to be a large golden ring encrusted with jewels. Mr Tufty thought it was too big to be a ring and too small to be a necklace. Henrietta read the accompanying note and informed everyone that it was a *Nath* but she didn't know what that meant.

Later that evening Mr Tufty was horrified to discover that a *Nath* is an extremely large nose ring, one side of the ring being ornamented with a belt of jewels or with pearls hanging from it. His daughter wearing a nose ring was bad enough but he did some more research and discovered that religious Sikhs were not permitted to marry non Sikhs. Since Mr Tufty is the church warden of the parish church in the village, he realized that it was time to have a heart to heart conversation with Henrietta!

Towards the end of the evening Mr Tufty and Henrietta retired to the candle lit games room and were playing cards. Mr Tufty sipped his brandy and was about to broach the Sikh question when Henrietta suddenly said, in a conspiratorial tone of voice, that she had heard Arthur talking with his father. They hadn't realized that she had taken a foundation course in Hindi at university and understood basic Hindi.

Apparently Mr Hiran senior is planning on offering to make an investment of five million pounds to fund a joint venture with Tufty Carpets to develop the floor covering market in France.

Mr Tufty jumped up from the cards table and immediately phoned Earl Lea Riser (Tufty's head of sales in France and the de facto director of the French Management team.) He asked him to think about the following...

## Questions for the French Management team

1. Mr Hiran's anticipated investment offer sounds very tempting. Think of a list of questions that Mr Tufty should have 'up his sleeve' when the Tuftys and Hirans go to dinner together. (For example, what market research has Mr Hiran done? What investment would Mr Tufty be required to make in this venture? Who will be in charge? etc)
2. What is the risk that a closer business relationship might inspire greater intimacy between the two families and possibly act as an encouragement for the nascent love affair between Henrietta and Arthur?
3. If the joint venture were to proceed, how would you recommend publicizing the Tufty-Hiran or Hiran-Tufty venture in the French market?
4. Can we be sure that Henrietta really understood what was being said between Charles and Arthur Hiran?

## Vocabulary

**Balti house:** a curry house in which balti food is served.

**Silly:** having or showing a lack of common sense or judgement; absurd and foolish.

**Read into:** [read something into something] to find an extra meaning in someone's words or actions that is not obvious or does not exist.

**The blood drains from someone's face:** someone immediately becomes pale because they are shocked or frightened.

**Heart to heart:** a serious conversation between two people, usually close friends, in which they talk honestly about their feelings.

**To sip:** to drink, taking only a very small amount at a time.

**Broach:** raise (a difficult subject) for discussion

**Have something up your sleeve:** to have a secret plan that you can surprise someone with.

**Hushed:** (of a place) very quiet and still. (Of a voice or conversation) quiet and serious.