

English Champions Winter 2019 – 2

A new development

Mr Tufty enjoyed a very happy Christmas with his wife and daughter on his estate. They appreciated the time to walk the dogs, enjoy cosy log fires and eat several delicious meals.

They woke up relatively late on Christmas morning. Mr Tufty went downstairs first and put the turkey in the oven (Helen, the Tufty's housekeeper, takes a holiday over Christmas). He then started preparing a light breakfast of bacon, eggs, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans and fried bread. Falmouth, Mr Tufty's corgi dog, was very excited at the sight of his master and even more so when he smelled the delicious aroma of fried food.

Mr Tufty was soon joined by Mrs Tufty and Henrietta wearing their dressing-gowns and looking very well rested. Mr Tufty poured them both a cup of tea and they sat down to enjoy the food that he had prepared. They finished with a few slices of toast topped with butter and Mr Tufty's favorite orange marmalade. Mrs Tufty congratulated Mr Tufty on being such a good cook.

After breakfast the girls went upstairs to shower and get dressed and the family were soon briskly striding through the crisp morning air to the Christmas morning service at the local village church.



Mr Tufty's modest home. The photo was taken earlier in the summer

When they returned from church it was time to open presents. The alluring smell of the turkey in the oven was beginning to pervade the entire house. The family reconvened around the lavishly decorated Christmas tree in the sitting room. Even though Henrietta is a young woman she still retains a child-like excitement when opening her gifts. Mr Tufty had to admit that he was also rather impatient to know what Mrs Tufty was giving him this year. It was a very large parcel, wrapped in shiny golden paper.

He was just about to open his present when something in the garden caught his eye. He got up from his chair and took a closer look. A large white coach had pulled over by the side of the road next to his garden. There were a number of people looking over the garden wall taking photographs of the house!

Mr Tufty quickly went into the boot room, put on his wellingtons and coat, and strolled over the lawn to see what was going on. As he got closer he realized that the unexpected guests were all Chinese!

As he got even closer he was greeted by a great deal of excitement, camera flashes and noise. The coach party became even more animated when they realized that it was Mr Tufty, himself, who was talking to them. They started to take 'selfies' with him and seemed to be thrilled to be meeting him. Mr Tufty was completely mystified. The group eventually got back on the coach and disappeared.

Mr Tufty marched back to the house to tell his wife and daughter about the strange happenings and to continue opening his Christmas presents. He opened the gift from his wife and it appeared to be a brightly colored silk Aladdin costume. Mr Tufty began to wonder if he was losing his grip on reality.

The family pulled their Christmas crackers and after a delicious Christmas lunch, several glasses of Champagne and a bottle of Bourgogne Pinot Noir, Mr Tufty retired to his smoking room to enjoy a glass of Cognac and to try and make sense of the un-explained events of the morning.

Mr Tufty had been very gratified by the success of his radio drama ('The Tufty Chronicles') that he had recently co-produced. He hadn't realized that the rights to the series had been sold in the Chinese market, where it had immediately become incredibly popular, drawing a daily audience of millions. In the Chinese version of the series the part of Mr Tufty is played by Xi Jinping (the namesake of the Chinese president and a very popular actor in China) and the part of Henrietta is played by Angelface Byngbyng another popular actress.

This incredible news set Mr Tufty thinking. He had seen a programme on the television about a popular country house hotel. Increased prosperity in China was drawing wealthy Chinese clients to experience a little bit of traditional English country living for their weddings. Mr Tufty began to realize that he could capitalize on his new found fame in China to offer a country house wedding experience in his own house targeted at the Chinese market.

As always Mr Tufty is turning to the French Management Team to write a business plan. He realizes that you will have a lot of questions for him and he would like you to begin to write them down. For example, you will need to know how much accommodation is available, is Mr Tufty's kitchen equipped to professional standards, how much is Mr Tufty prepared to invest in the project etc.

Activities:

1. What are your first impressions of Mr Tufty's latest idea?
2. Working in groups, write down your top ten questions to ask Mr Tufty at the next meeting.
3. Think of a strength, a weakness, an opportunity, and a threat (SWOT) for Mr Tufty's idea.
4. Can you think of any way that the radio series and the country house 'hotel' idea could help Mr Tufty's core carpet business?

Web site

<https://englishchampions.fr/business-english-class-materials/>

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