

Welcome back to English Champions' flagship class

Some surprises for Mr Tufty

It turned out to be a tiring and frustrating day. After a tense few hours of negotiation Mr Tufty and the two union representatives, Sid Brownie and "Ghost" Hawkes, agreed on a temporary factory closure. Mr Tufty was in shock. He had never closed the factory before and to do so now was a gut wrenching experience.

Mr Tufty was on his way home. He and his wife had agreed that Earl-Lea Riser's sister, Halle, could take refuge with them for a few weeks during the coronavirus pandemic. She had been travelling in Hungary, doing a project as part of her medical school course, and had missed the last flight back to the USA where she lived.

Mr Tufty started to imagine what Halle would be like. He knew that she enjoyed duck hunting. If she was anything like her brother she would probably have a slightly stocky build and a strong chin. He imagined her wearing a tweed jacket and jodhpurs, looking rather stern.

Mr Tufty finally arrived home at about 8 p.m. Helen, the housekeeper, was in quarantine at her own home so Mr Tufty let himself in and walked into the hall. He was met, as usual, by Falmouth his faithful Corgi, who barked and jumped excitedly. He took his coat and hat off and as he turned he saw a stunning girl, East Asian in appearance, smiling broadly at him from the sitting room. She was probably in her early twenties, tall, slim and wearing stylish blue jeans and a checked shirt. Her hair was in a neat short bob and her teeth were perfectly white.

She walked gracefully towards him looking straight into his eyes. "Hello, I'm Halle Riser. Thank you for inviting me into your home! I am very excited to be here."

Mr Tufty was speechless for a moment and then blurted out: "But I was expecting someone different."

Halle replied, laughing: "Well unless Earl-Lea has another sister I don't know about, I'm definitely me!"

She continued: "Our parents adopted me when I was a baby, if that's what you mean. My birth mother was from North Korea."

Mr Tufty felt slightly embarrassed and showed Halle into the sitting room and offered her a drink. A few minutes later Mrs Tufty walked in and said smiling: "I see you have met our guest. And I have some other exciting news for you, dear. Terry has just been on the phone. He managed to get a flight to England and is in a car on his way here as I speak!"

The Tuftys and Halle continued to make small talk for a few minutes until there was a loud bang on the door which then swung open revealing Terry and two large suitcases. Falmouth started to bark and whimper.

"Hello Mum and Dad! Lovely to see you!"

"We're so pleased you were able to come." Mrs Tufty replied.

Terry turned slightly and noticed Halle. He smiled and said: "Hello, how do you do? I'm Terry Tufty you must be my new sister-in-law. Welcome to Squirrel's Wood!"

They all sat in front of the fire and enjoyed a gin and tonic accompanied by cheese straws made by Mr Tufty. Mrs Tufty then served a delicious roast venison with scalloped potatoes, creamed spinach, and chorizo and pear red cabbage. Helen had made a large lemon meringue pie for pudding and brought it round as a way of welcoming Halle.

The evening passed very enjoyably. Terry and Halle clearly got on like a house on fire. They sat talking as

if they had known each other for years. They had so many common interests and even knew some of the same people. Mr Tufty finally made some hints that, perhaps, it would be a good time to go to bed and get some rest.

Mrs Tufty showed Halle to her room and got her some fresh towels and then returned as Mr Tufty was pouring Terry a glass of cognac.

Terry was smiling broadly, and then said: "Mother, I think I'm in love!"

Just as the words came out of his mouth, Halle entered the room in her dressing gown.

Halle's face flushed a little and the colour drained from Mr and Mrs Tufty's faces in unison.

Halle said she was sorry to disturb them and asked if she could grab a glass of water.

Questions:

1. What does Terry mean when he said "I think I'm in love!"?
2. For what reasons might Halle have blushed?
3. Do you have any anecdotes of when you have said something that was accidentally overheard?
4. Why might Mr and Mrs Tufty be shocked at the idea of Terry becoming interested in Halle Riser?
5. Can you foresee any problems with Mr and Mrs Tufty, Terry Tufty and Halle Riser living in close quarters for the duration of the Corona Virus pandemic?

Vocabulary

Gut wrenching: emotionally painful

Take refuge: to seek safety or the comfort of being safe in something

Stocky: compact, sturdy, and relatively thick in build.

Tweed: a rough-surfaced woollen cloth, typically of mixed flecked colours, originally produced in Scotland.

Jodphurs: full-length trousers worn for horse riding, which are close-fitting below the knee and have reinforced patches on the inside of the leg.

Stern: serious and unrelenting.

Smiling broadly: have a big smile.

To get on like a house on fire: (idiom) to immediately get on very well with someone, particularly a new acquaintance.

Face flushed: blushed

The colour drained from someone's face: (idiom) they became pale because of the shock of something that has just occurred.

Whimper: whining sound.

Course dates

	janvier	février	mars	avril
Intermédiaire / avancé mardi soir (20h15)	14, 21	4	3, 10, 24*, 31#	7 #

* Cancelled. # On-line