

Episode 16

Grammar point: 文法

1. “The living room is big. There’d be no problem with 20 people.”

The first sentence uses the present tense because it states a fact about the present size of the room. The second sentence shifts to the conditional (“There’d” is a contraction for “There would”) because it imagines a situation that does not exist at present (at present, there are not 20 people in the room). Another way to word the second sentence is: “If there were 20 people in the room, there would be no problem.”

2. When in Rome, do as the Romans do: This proverb means that an outsider should adapt his/her behaviour to the practices of the local culture. In the dialogue, Dean means that a non-Westerner attending a Western-style Christmas party should follow Western conventions at that party.
3. “an elegant and graceful May”

Normally in English, it is not correct to put an article before a person’s given name: we don’t say “a May” or “the May.” However, this is a special case, because the name May is defined by the adjectives “elegant and graceful.” By saying “an elegant and graceful May,” Dean is suggesting that May will take on a very special appearance for this party, a new image different from her usual appearance.