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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## The English We Speak

### A sting in the tail



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*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Feifei**

Hello I'm Feifei and welcome to The English We Speak – and joining me is Rob.

**Rob**

Hello everyone.

**Feifei**

So Rob, I hear you have a new hobby?

**Rob**

Yes that's right – it's very exciting – let me show you...

**Feifei**

Arghh! Bees! I don't like them – shut the door! So your new hobby is bee keeping?

**Rob**

Yes I'm a bee keeper – and I love it - but there is a sting in the tail.

**Feifei**

Of course there's a sting in the tail – bees sting – and it hurts, that's why I don't like bees.

**Rob**

They only sting when they're angry Feifei – and anyway, when I said 'there's a sting in the tail' I wasn't referring to the bees. I meant something unpleasant comes with something that is meant to be pleasurable.

**Feifei**

Yes, as I said – looking after bees means you're likely to get stung.

**Rob**

That's true – but what I meant was bee keeping is fun but I wasn't expecting it to cost so much money – I had to buy all these hives and these special protective clothes.

**Feifei**

Yes, you do look silly! So you're saying bee keeping is fun but the unexpected cost of it is the sting in the tail?

**Rob**

Exactly. Let's hear some examples while I go and get some honey...

**Examples**

We had a great holiday but it had a sting in the tail – when we got home we discovered our house had been broken into.

I love her new book – the story is funny and romantic – but there's a sting in the tail when someone dies.

Yeah, we all got a pay rise this month, but there's a sting in the tail – we're expected to work longer hours.

**Feifei**

So that's 'a sting in the tail' – a phrase that means something unpleasant and sometimes unexpected happens when doing something good or fun.

**Rob**

OK Feifei, one of the good things about bee keeping is you get this delicious honey – and that's free - go on Feifei, try some.

**Feifei**

Hmmm honey, delicious! Oh no, you've brought something else with you... it's a bee!

**Rob**

Don't panic – I'll try to catch it... ouch! That hurt.

**Feifei**

Oh dear – it looks like bee keeping has more than one sting in the tail!

**Rob**

Very funny!

**Feifei**

Bye!