TRANSCRIPT · EPISODE 207

Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining: 4 Weather Idioms

English learning resource · EN

Full episode script · English

76 lines

Study task: Listen again and notice the expressions you studied.

Martin, you look disappointed.

Our outdoor picnic has been cancelled.

Is that because it is raining cats and dogs?

Wait, Julia.

Are animals really falling from the sky?

No, that is our first weather idiom.

It simply means that it is raining very heavily.

Welcome to Your English Toolbox.

Today we are learning four useful English idioms about weather.

They come from lesson sixteen of our free Idiom Toolbox course.

On our website, you can listen to a dialogue and practise the expressions in interactive exercises.

The direct link to the lesson is in this episode's description.

Now let us return to that very wet picnic.

It is raining cats and dogs.

That means the rain is very heavy.

You would not normally use it for a few light drops.

You might say, take an umbrella, it is raining cats and dogs.

It is a colourful informal expression.

You can also say, it is pouring, to describe heavy rain.

I checked the weather, and the picnic is definitely cancelled.

That is disappointing, but every cloud has a silver lining.

That sounds beautiful, but what does it mean?

It means a difficult or disappointing situation can have a positive side.

For example, we cannot have a picnic outside, but now we have time to cook together.

Exactly, and that is our silver lining.

You do not need to talk about actual clouds.

Someone might lose one opportunity and discover a better one later.

Still, it is wise to be sensitive when someone is facing a serious loss.

A hopeful expression can sound dismissive if the other person needs us to listen first.

Now, Julia, I have another problem.

What happened?

Two friends are arguing because the picnic blanket was the wrong colour.

That sounds like a storm in a teacup.

Is there really a storm inside a cup of tea?

No, it means a lot of worry or anger about something relatively unimportant.

This is a common British expression.

In American English, you may also hear a tempest in a teapot.

But be careful when you use it.

Calling something a storm in a teacup suggests you think the problem is small.

The people involved may not agree with you.

Our last expression is under a cloud.

Does that mean standing outside on a cloudy day?

Not in this idiom.

It means that a person is regarded with suspicion or disapproval.

For example, a manager left the company under a cloud after questions about missing money.

That does not by itself prove the person did anything wrong.

It tells us that suspicion or disapproval was present.

Notice that under a cloud is different from under the weather.

We met under the weather in our health episode, and it means feeling unwell.

Under a cloud is about suspicion or disapproval.

Here is one more contrast before the quiz.

If a friend has a cold, they might say, I am feeling under the weather.

If a public figure is viewed with suspicion, someone might say that person is under a cloud.

One describes health, and the other describes how others regard someone.

Although both expressions mention weather, their meanings are different.

Let us hear two examples that are not about a picnic.

A delivery arrived late, but the customer discovered that the shop had included a free sample.

The free sample might be a silver lining to the delay.

In another situation, a neighbourhood spends weeks arguing over a tiny change to a sign.

Someone who thinks the argument is excessive might call it a storm in a teacup.

Remember that this is the speaker's opinion about the problem.

The person making that comment may not know every reason why the issue matters to the neighbours.

Use the idiom when the size of the reaction is clearly the point you want to discuss.

Now let us practise.

The rain is extremely heavy, and you need an umbrella.

Which idiom describes the rain?

It is raining cats and dogs.

Two people are making a huge argument about a tiny problem.

What might you call it?

A storm in a teacup.

And if a disappointing change leads to a pleasant surprise?

Every cloud has a silver lining.

For more examples, a slow dialogue and interactive practice, visit lesson sixteen of our free idioms course.

The direct link is in the description.

Thanks for learning with Your English Toolbox.

See you next time.