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**Feifei**

Hello! 大家好。Welcome to Authentic Real English from BBC Learning English. 我是冯菲菲。

**Neil**

... and hello, I'm Neil. Err, sorry to mention it, Feifei, but why is there a big coffee stain on your top?

**Feifei**

Because I spilt coffee all over me!

**Neil**

Oh, that was silly... and did I notice when you arrived that you were limping?

**Feifei**

哎，别提了! Thereby hangs a tale.

**Neil**

What? Did you trip over a tail?

**Feifei**

No, no. I mean there's more to tell you. 在英语里，表达“thereby hangs a tale”的意思是“说来话长，其中大有文章”。当别人问的问题需要一个很长的解释时，我们就可以用“thereby hangs a tale”来告诉他们你的回答会很长，因为有很多要解释的东西。“Thereby hangs a tale”这个表达出自莎士比亚的喜剧《皆大欢喜》。Now, let me explain why I have a coffee stain and a limp.

**Neil**

If it involves me, then no!

**Feifei**

It does.

**Neil**

Oh, well. Shall we have some examples of ‘thereby hangs a tale’?

**Examples**

A: Why are you covered in mud?

B: Well, thereby hangs a tale.

I won that medal for bravery – and thereby hangs a tale.

What a journey! All the main roads were closed so we had to drive cross-country – and thereby hangs a tale.

**Feifei**

你正在收听的是 BBC 英语教学的“地道英语”节目。这期节目中，我们给大家介绍如何用表达“thereby hangs a tale”来告诉别人一个问题的回答有一个很长的解释，也就是我们常说的“说来话长”。Neil, can you guess what’s happened?

**Neil**

Hmm, so you have a limp, and you have a coffee stain on your top – were you dancing with a full cup of coffee?

**Feifei**

I wasn’t. In fact, I was walking to the studio, carefully carrying my coffee, when I tripped over a bag of potatoes in the corridor.

**Neil**

Ah, that’s my bag of potatoes!

**Feifei**

I thought so, but why is there a bag of potatoes in the corridor?

**Neil**

Ah, well, thereby hangs a tale!

**Feifei**

I’m all ears.

**Neil**

I’ll tell you later. It’s time to go now. Bye.

**Feifei**

Bye!