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Feifei

大家好, 欢迎收听《地道英语》, 我是冯菲菲, 还有我的搭档...

Rob

And me Rob. Hello!

Feifei

So Rob, what's that thing you've got over there?

Rob

Oh this? It's a barrel [tapping on wooden barrel]...

Feifei

大木桶 a barrel. I see.

Rob

And do you want to know what's inside the barrel?

Feifei

Not really.

Rob

OK – well if I open the lid you'll be able to hear [Opens lid and sounds of laughing] – funny isn't it?!

Feifei

[not impressed] You have a barrel of laughs “一桶笑声”。And that is supposed to be funny?

Rob

It's supposed to illustrate today's piece of authentic real English. It's hilarious, isn't it! And you know what – the phrase 'a barrel of laughs' can be used to describe me – someone who is fun and always joking around.

Feifei

Really? 原来短语 a barrel of laughs 可以用来形容那些总是喜欢开玩笑，给人们带来快乐的人。But this doesn't describe you Rob – you're not funny.

Rob

Oh? What?! I think we better hear some examples of this phrase in action – and I'll show you how funny I really am...

Examples

I shall miss having John in the office. He was such a barrel of laughs.

What a barrel of laughs that bus driver was. He made the long journey much more fun with his funny announcements!

Since I split up with my boyfriend, life hasn't been a barrel of laughs.

Feifei

这么说，其实这个短语可以理解为汉语里常说的“开心果”，形容一个幽默的、逗人开心笑的人。谁说不是呢，我们都喜欢身边有个“开心果”。

Rob

By the way, 'a barrel of laughs' can also be used to describe a thing, such as a TV show. But come on Feifei, you have to agree, this barrel full of laughs is so funny! Listen again [Opens lid again: laughter].

Feifei

Hmm, it's a cheap joke but it's not funny. I know what you can do if you want to make me laugh...

Rob

Oh yes – go on, what is it?

Feifei

Why don't you see if you can fit inside the barrel?

Rob

Oh, right, well, that sounds like a laugh. OK, here goes... [Sound of Rob getting in] Getting in... I'm in Feifei.

Feifei

Wow Rob – you actually fit in the barrel! 我算是佩服了，Rob 还真能钻进这个木桶里去。我只需要把桶盖儿盖上就行了。That's so funny!

Rob

Hey, Feifei, what are you doing?

Feifei

Making you into a real life 'barrel of laughs'

Rob

That's not funny.

Feifei

It's hilarious! See you later.