(The doorbell rings, the door opens)

Finn
Hi, Feifei. Fancy a lift to the office?

Feifei
Hello, Finn. Sorry, I'm not actually going in to the office today. I'm taking care of my niece.

(Baby talks)

Finn
Oh, what a sweet baby!

Feifei
Isn't she adorable? You know, I'm thinking about becoming a full-time babysitter!

Finn
Oh, really?

Feifei
Hang on, Finn. (To the baby) Time for your bath, little one!

(Baby laughs)

Finn
But Feifei, you don't actually want to change your job, do you?

Feifei
Well, I enjoy my job. But sometimes, you know, it can be very stressful. I feel like a change...

Finn
Really? But you're so good at your job! I know how you love completing projects. And we'd all miss you so much.
Feifei
I know. But dealing with babies is so much easier.

Finn
Well, just don't throw the baby out with the bathwater, Feifei.

Feifei
What do you mean?! I know how to take care of a baby. Why would I throw her out?
(Baby crying)

Feifei
See what you've done.

Finn
Sorry! 'Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater' is an English idiom which means: 'don't lose something valuable while we're getting rid of something else that we don't want'. So I was talking about your job, Feifei. Just because you find it stressful – that's the thing you don't want – don't stop completely and lose what's valuable.

Feifei
Ah, I see. So you think my job gives me satisfaction, in spite of the long hours in the office… so I shouldn't give it up.

Finn
That's right. 'Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater' is the expression in this edition of The English We Speak. Now let's hear some examples of how it's used.

INSERT
I know you don't like the dress, but I think if you make a few changes to it, it will look lovely. It's such beautiful material. Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. I know the wallpaper is ugly, but this is a lovely house. We can always redecorate.

Feifei
Thank you, Finn. Having colleagues like you who care for me is so important. You know what? I don't want to be a babysitter after all.

Finn
That's the spirit!

Feifei
So… here's the baby and … well, the nappies are in that drawer.
Finn
Feifei, what do you mean?

Feifei
Well, Finn, someone has to take care of the baby. I'm going to the office. See you later. Bye!

Finn
And I'm left holding the baby… Bye!

Baby
Ba… Ba…

AUDIO
http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/the-english-we-speak/ep-141014