

# 難以置信

*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*

The saga of bookseller Lee Po “going missing” continues. In the latest development, Lee appeared in a 16-minute television interview and denied having been abducted.

Instead, he said, he smuggled himself across the border with the help of friends and that he “used a mysterious way to go back to the mainland” because “I went there to be a witness to testify against somebody.”

Meanwhile, after Hong Kong law enforcement officers talked to Lee in the mainland, our security chief said there was no evidence that Lee was kidnapped.

Some said these new developments should settle the matter, but others are still skeptical.

Apparently exasperated with the skeptics, Legislative Council security panel chairman Ip Kwok-him of the DAB said: “Those who believe would believe; those who do not believe would not no matter how much one explains.”

But can skeptics be blamed for finding the rather

## Idiom by Lon Yan

bizarre account “難以置信” (*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*)? “難以” (*nan2 yi3*) means “difficult to,” “置” (*zhi4*) “to place at,” and “信” (*xin4*) “to trust,” “to believe in.” Literally, “難以置信” (*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*) is “difficult to place belief in.” “難以置信” (*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*) means “hard to believe,” “beyond belief,” “implausible,” “inconceivable,” “incredible,” “unbelievable.”

When someone tells you something and you respond with “難以置信” (*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*), it means that you do not believe it. But the idiom may also be used as an expression of amazement, like when someone tells you the price of a stock has shot up three times in a day, and you say “That’s 難以置信 (*nan2 yi3 zhi4 xin4*)!”

### Terms containing the character “信” (*xin4*) include:

信心 (*xin4 xin1*) – confidence, faith

信任 (*xin4 ren4*) – to trust in, to believe in

信用 (*xin4 yong4*) – credit, credibility

信用卡 (*xin4 yong4 ka3*) – credit card